

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF

ERIC VOEGELIN

VOLUME

33



THE DRAMA OF
HUMANITY AND OTHER
MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS
1939–1985

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
WILLIAM PETROPULOS AND GILBERT WEISS

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
ERIC VOEGELIN

VOLUME 33

THE DRAMA OF HUMANITY
AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS
PAPERS, 1939–1985

This page intentionally left blank

PROJECTED VOLUMES IN THE COLLECTED WORKS

1. *On the Form of the American Mind*
2. *Race and State*
3. *The History of the Race Idea: From Ray to Carus*
4. *The Authoritarian State: An Essay on the Problem of the Austrian State*
5. *Modernity without Restraint: The Political Religions; The New Science of Politics; and Science, Politics, and Gnosticism*
6. *Anamnesis: On the Theory of History and Politics*
7. *Published Essays, 1922–1928*
8. *Published Essays, 1928–1933*
9. *Published Essays, 1934–1939*
10. *Published Essays, 1940–1952*
11. *Published Essays, 1953–1965*
12. *Published Essays, 1966–1985*
13. *Selected Book Reviews*
14. *Order and History, Volume I, Israel and Revelation*
15. *Order and History, Volume II, The World of the Polis*
16. *Order and History, Volume III, Plato and Aristotle*
17. *Order and History, Volume IV, The Ecumenic Age*
18. *Order and History, Volume V, In Search of Order*
19. *History of Political Ideas, Volume I, Hellenism, Rome, and Early Christianity*
20. *History of Political Ideas, Volume II, The Middle Ages to Aquinas*
21. *History of Political Ideas, Volume III, The Later Middle Ages*
22. *History of Political Ideas, Volume IV, Renaissance and Reformation*
23. *History of Political Ideas, Volume V, Religion and the Rise of Modernity*
24. *History of Political Ideas, Volume VI, Revolution and the New Science*
25. *History of Political Ideas, Volume VII, The New Order and Last Orientation*
26. *History of Political Ideas, Volume VIII, Crisis and the Apocalypse of Man*
27. *The Nature of the Law, and Related Legal Writings*
28. *What Is History? And Other Late Unpublished Writings*
29. *Selected Correspondence*
30. *Selected Correspondence*
31. *Hitler and the Germans*
32. *The Theory of Governance and Other Miscellaneous Papers, 1921–1938*
33. *The Drama of Humanity and Other Miscellaneous Papers, 1939–1985*
34. *Autobiographical Reflections and Index*

EDITORIAL BOARD

Paul Caringella

Jürgen Gebhardt

Thomas A. Hollweck

Ellis Sandoz

The Editorial Board offers grateful acknowledgment to the Earhart Foundation and Robert J. Cihak, M.D., for support provided at various stages in the preparation of this book for publication. A special thanks for support goes to the Charlotte and Walter Kohler Charitable Trust.

The University of Missouri Press offers its grateful acknowledgment for a generous contribution from the Eric Voegelin Institute in support of the publication of this volume.

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
ERIC VOEGELIN

VOLUME 33



THE DRAMA OF HUMANITY
AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS
PAPERS, 1939–1985

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
WILLIAM PETROPULOS
AND
GILBERT WEISS

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI PRESS
COLUMBIA AND LONDON

Copyright © 2004 by
The Curators of the University of Missouri
University of Missouri Press, Columbia, Missouri 65201
Printed and bound in the United States of America
All rights reserved

5 4 3 2 1 08 07 06 05 04

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Voegelin, Eric, 1901–

[Works. 1989]

The collected works of Eric Voegelin / edited with an introduction by Ellis Sandoz.

p. cm.

Vols. < > published by University of Missouri Press, Columbia.

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

Contents: v. 1. On the form of the American mind — v. 2. Race and state — v. 3. The history of the race idea — [etc.]

ISBN 0-8071-1826-5 (v. 1 : alk. paper) — ISBN 0-8071-1673-4 (v. 2 : alk. paper) — ISBN 0-8071-1843-5 (v. 3 : alk. paper) — [etc.]

I. Philosophy. 2. History—Philosophy. 3. Political science—Philosophy. I. Sandoz, Ellis, 1931- . II. Weiss, Gilbert. III. Title.

B3354.v88 1989

193—dc20

90-032092

ISBN 0-8262-1545-9

Designer: Albert Crochet
Typesetter: BOOKCOMP, Inc.
Printer and binder: Thomson-Shore, Inc.
Typeface: Trump Mediaeval

Contents

Editors' Introduction	I
1. Foreword to the Second Edition of <i>The Political Religions</i> (1939)	19
2. Democracy and the Individual	24
3. Notes on T. S. Eliot's <i>Four Quartets</i>	33
4. Cycle Theory and Disintegration	41
5. What Is Political Theory?	53
6. The Spiritual and Political Future of the Western World	67
7. The West and the Meaning of Industrial Society: Excerpts from the Discussion	89
8. Natural Law in Political Theory: Excerpts from the Discussion	112
9. Man in Political Institutions: Excerpts from the Discussion	150
10. The Drama of Humanity	174
11. Conversations with Eric Voegelin at the Thomas More Institute for Adult Education in Montreal	243
12. Notes on "Civilization and Foreign Affairs"	344
13. Structures of Consciousness	351
14. The Meditative Origin of the Philosophical Knowledge of Order	384
15. The Beyond and Its Parousia	396
16. Responses at the Panel Discussion of "The Beginning of the Beginning"	415
17. Autobiographical Statement at Age Eighty-Two	432
Index	457

THE DRAMA OF HUMANITY
AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS
PAPERS, 1939-1985

This page intentionally left blank

This page intentionally left blank

Editors' Introduction

The second volume of Eric Voegelin's miscellaneous writings contains unpublished and published texts from the time of his forced emigration from Austria until his death in 1985. They range from documents written shortly after his arrival in the United States, such as the foreword to the second edition of *The Political Religions* and a talk on democracy in 1939, to his "Autobiographical Statement at Age Eighty-Two," made in 1983.

The focus of this volume is on dialogue and discussion and presents Voegelin primarily in the role of lecturer, discussant, and respondent. The texts show not only Voegelin engaged in dialogue but also his abiding concern for the practical and theoretical conditions necessary in order that dialogue may take place. It is generally assumed that dialogue partners must share some common ground. However, as Voegelin noted in 1967, "We all have one thing in common: most of us don't know too much about classic philosophy." The result is that "rational dialogue becomes difficult. You just indulge in ideological monologues, you deliver apologies for your opinions, and that's the end of the dialogue. There is no longer a common rational culture."¹ But "if there is no common basis of intellect, how *do* we talk?"² The texts in this volume give Voegelin's answer as he demonstrates *that* dialogue is still possible and, along with reflections on its nature, demonstrates *how* it is to be conducted.

The dialogical character of most of the texts presented here means that it is a spoken language, including the occasional repetitions common to oral communication. But there are repetitions

1. "Theology Confronting World Religions," 245 below.

2. *Ibid.*, 245 below.

of a more essential nature as well. Beginning in the 1960s, and continuing for the rest of his life, Voegelin focused increasingly on the problem of consciousness and language confronting the complex structure of reality. While this theme had always been at the center of Voegelin's concern (compare his analysis of "meditation as the basic form of philosophy" in 1930³), it took on new urgency in his late work. His investigations into the paradoxical structure of language, which is not a "linguistic problem" but reflects the structure of being itself, led to ever new approaches and attempts to express the problems involved more precisely. These texts should help the reader to more closely follow the stages of the meditation that resulted in Voegelin's last work, *In Search Of Order*.⁴

The texts of this volume have been arranged chronologically.

1. The foreword to *The Political Religions* was written for the second edition published in Stockholm in 1939. The first edition appeared in Vienna in 1938 only to be suppressed as a result of the National Socialist seizure of power that also forced Voegelin into exile. The second foreword was written in his new home in the United States; but because the publisher feared that some parts of the text might lead to reprisals against Jews within the reach of Hitler's power, he asked Voegelin to delete them.

Thus the entire foreword, as Voegelin wrote it, including the passages concerning Herschel Grynszpan, who, in response to National Socialist oppression and murder of Jews, killed an official of the German embassy in Paris in 1938, appear here for the first time.

Voegelin states that the nature of the human being is *imago Dei* and asserts the right of the individual to defend himself by any means necessary against those who refuse to treat him as a person.

He also answers the critics of the first edition who feared that Voegelin's touching on religious themes might ennoble the phenomenon of Nazism. He makes it clear that it is because National

3. Eric Voegelin, "The Theory of Governance," in *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin* (hereafter, *CW*), vol. 32, *The Theory of Governance and Other Miscellaneous Papers*, ed. with intro. by William Petropulos and Gilbert Weiss (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003), 224–73.

4. Eric Voegelin, *CW*, vol. 18, *In Search of Order*, vol. V of *Order and History*, ed. with intro. by Ellis Sandoz (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000).

Socialism touches religious roots, but in pursuit of evil, that it must be opposed by an equally deep religious force for good; it cannot be fought from the standpoint of a progressivist notion of history that sees in it only a fallback into the "barbarism" of unenlightened ages. The fact is that National Socialism had taken root in the thin soil of an Enlightenment that, with its view of religion as something that "modern man" must overcome, prepared the ground in which the ersatz religions of communism, fascism, and National Socialism could grow.

2. "Democracy and the Individual" is a short radio address that Voegelin delivered in Evanston, Illinois, in 1939. Besides such democratic prerequisites as participation in government, access to information, and the citizen's willingness to inform himself, Voegelin also points to the problems caused by public and private bureaucracy: The hierarchical structure of modern organizations brings a large segment of the population into a state of helplessness and vulnerability that is inimical to democracy. For this reason there is a need for governmental protection of the weak in the form of social security and health insurance.

Voegelin focuses on how the United States can defend itself from anti-democratic tendencies. As a consequence, much of the discussion is a backward glance at Central Europe, where democracy was lost. Voegelin believes that what happened there, and how it took place, can happen anywhere and therefore warns his audience of this dangerous situation. There is also personal experience behind Voegelin's look at Central Europe, for it was the triumph of anti-democratic movements there that forced him into exile.

The issues Voegelin raises are largely sociological, but the theme of spirit, which is central to Voegelin's understanding of political life, is not neglected. It is mentioned briefly, but its importance underlined, when he speaks of the religious roots of rationality and expresses the hope that the spirit may prevail: "The Spirit of the Lord blows where it will; let us hope that it blows at the right time and in the right direction."⁵

3. "Notes on T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*" is a text presumably written in the middle 1940s. (Voegelin discussed the poem with

5. "Democracy and the Individual," 32 below.

his friend Alfred Schütz in the autumn of 1943⁶—a time in which he was studying mysticism and completing his own “anamnetic” experiments.⁷)

Voegelin's interpretation is governed by the fact that the work is the spiritual autobiography of a Christian poet. The religious meditation and the poetic incantation must be considered together: subject matter and form penetrate each other. The poem begins in the empirical “present” and progresses to the “presence” under God. Within this journey the place names—the titles of the poem's four parts—lose their mere geographical and historical meanings to become meditative places (*topoi*) on the soul's journey toward God. Like the paradigmatic meditation of Saint Augustine that Voegelin analyzed a decade earlier,⁸ Eliot's meditation begins in the individual's intention to seek God and culminates in the discovery that, in reality, it was the divine ground that sought him and that, therefore, the journey's real wellspring was in God. This is the experience of the *conversion*, the realization that the individual's center is not in the “self,” in the naïve sense of the word, but in the self that is rooted in divinity. For that reason, at the journey's end, the soul arrives where it “started from” and knows the place for the “first time.”⁹

4. “Cycle Theory and Disintegration” (circa 1946) discusses an important aspect of the West's reaction to the loss of the Christian vision of sacred and profane history that had characterized historical understanding in Europe until the eighteenth century. Thematically the lecture is related to topics dealt with in the chapter on Giambattista Vico in Voegelin's *History of Political Ideas*.¹⁰

6. See Gilbert Weiss, *Theorie, Relevanz, und Wahrheit: Eine Rekonstruktion des Briefwechsels zwischen Eric Voegelin und Alfred Schütz (1938–1959)* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2000), 114 n51.

7. Eric Voegelin, *CW*, vol. 6, *Anamnesis: On the Theory of History and Politics*, ed. with intro. by David Walsh (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002).

8. See n3 above.

9. Compare Max Scheler concerning the structure of the religious act: “Love stirred within us. At first we thought it our love—love of God—our love of him. We came to know it for his love—the love of God. His love of us.” Max Scheler, “Repentance and Rebirth,” in Max Scheler, *On The Eternal in Man*, trans. Bernard Noble (London: SCM Press, 1960), 33–67.

10. Eric Voegelin, *CW*, vol. 24, *Revolution and the New Science*, vol. VI of *History of Political Ideas*, ed. with intro. by Barry Cooper (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1998), ch. 3.

Here, however, Voegelin concentrates on the fact that modern thinkers have confined themselves to borrowing certain elements from the cyclical theory of history. What features they took, and to what purpose, is important for an understanding of the Western crisis—that combination of optimism concerning civilizational progress and pessimism concerning the spirit's future.

Voegelin discusses the historical origins of the cyclical theory, the internal and external occasions that led to European pessimism, and the ambiguous relationship of the emerging national states to the heritage of Rome out of which modern historical speculation has grown.

5. "What Is Political Theory?" is a paper Voegelin presented at the Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association in November 1954 in Columbia, South Carolina, two years after the publication of *The New Science of Politics*.¹¹ When political scientists raise the question, What is political theory? political science is in crisis. In *The New Science of Politics* Voegelin had argued that political theory must "return to the consciousness of principles";¹² here too he focuses on the return to "principles and beginnings" in order to develop a viable political science for our day.

Following Aristotle he argues that the transfer of authority from the statesman to the philosopher takes place in the crisis in which the "right order of the psyche and society" is belied by the reality of extreme social disorder. Political science has the task of investigating the diseased order with the consciousness of the right order to guide it. However, since the time of Hobbes, the diseased state of the psyche has been mistaken for the "nature of man," and only by restoring the therapeutic motive of classical political thought can political science adequately carry out its perennial task.

6. "The Spiritual and Political Future of the Western World" is a lecture Voegelin held at the Amerika-Haus in Munich in June 1959, shortly after he took up his professorship at the Ludwig Maximilians University.

11. Eric Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics: An Introduction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952); published also in *CW*, vol. 5, *Modernity without Restraint: The Political Religions; the New Science of Politics; and Science, Politics, and Gnosticism*, ed. with intro. by Manfred Henningsen (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000).

12. Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics*, 89, vol. 5, *CW*.

Following a brief introduction Voegelin divides the lecture into two parts. In the first he explains what is necessary, in terms of territory, population, raw materials, technical education, etc., for a society to be viable under the current state of industrial development, and in view of the political competition among states that control entire continents. In the second part he discusses the three sources of spiritual, political, and religious authority and traces them back to their codification at the time of the emperor Justinian. Despite changes in form and content, what we mean by "the West" is the balance among these three sources of order.

While praising the Anglo-Saxon solution of civil society for keeping the balance under modern conditions, Voegelin also points to contemporary signs of decay.

7. "The West and the Meaning of Industrial Society" brings excerpts from discussions at the conference "World Technology and Human Destiny" held at Rheinfelden, Switzerland, in September 1959. Voegelin's paper, "Industrial Society in Search of Reason," has been published in volume 11 of the *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*.¹³ In this volume the excerpt from the discussion begins with Voegelin's argument that the problem of Messianism "is not specifically a modern one, but a general human problem," and must therefore be put in a larger historical and anthropological context.¹⁴ He then gives a historical tour d'horizon of "immanentist symbolisms" to arrive at the general problem of a *theologia civilis* as the necessary bond of a society. Among other questions discussed are the relationship between ethics and politics, the nature of the just war, and social science based on so-called value judgments.

In the course of the debates it becomes clear that Voegelin sees the crucial problem of politics in the question of the "good life" and the "good society." This question, according to Voegelin, confronts those who engage in the theory of politics with the difficulty that "today there is no common accord as to what constitutes a good society and a good life, and the classic definitions are such that they would not be readily accepted."¹⁵ This

13. Eric Voegelin, *CW*, vol. 11, *Published Essays, 1953-1965*, ed. with intro. by Ellis Sandoz (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 178-90.

14. "The West and the Meaning of Industrial Society," 89 below.

15. *Ibid.*, 98 below.

observation leads to a matter of central importance to Voegelin, which we mentioned above, the problem of the conditions for dialogue and reasonable debate itself. But one must be realistic: A dialogue with ideologues is hardly possible, for they simply ignore the rational fundamentals of philosophic inquiry. "A kind of iron curtain exists not between East and West, but within the West itself, between what might be called the 'consubstantial' Western society, which is still living the life of reason and perhaps even advancing within it, and those who turn their backs on it."¹⁶

8. "Natural Law in Political Theory: Excerpts from the Discussion" brings parts of the dialogue of an interdisciplinary conference of scholars held at the University of Salzburg in 1963. The presence of historians, philosophers, political scientists, and theologians provided an abundance of perspectives on the conference topic.¹⁷ Here we can only note a few aspects of Voegelin's contribution. He criticizes the notion of the value-being dichotomy in the study of political order, pointing out that the realm of obligation belongs to the human being by nature. This leads to the question of "representative humanity." We learn what we ought to do, not by taking a poll to see what most of us do, but by studying those who, in an exemplary manner, pursue the life of virtue.

Another point Voegelin emphasizes is the absence of a Christian theory of politics. There are no political elements in the Decalogue and the Sermon on the Mount. The Gospels reflect the state of expectation that the world is about to come to an end, but political theory must contend with the world we have at hand, and the political constitution must, therefore, be a mixed one. On the one hand it must be oriented to the figures whose exemplary character make them the representatives of humanity, and on the other, it must take into account the larger number of human beings who are not representative of humanity. Expressed in the language of classical philosophy, we cannot ignore the presence of the *Libido dominandi*; in Christian terms, we must acknowledge the presence of original sin.

In many of the discussions, including those on international law, Voegelin's perspectives have the effect of extending the di-

16. *Ibid.*, 103 below.

17. Voegelin's lecture "Right by Nature" can be found in *Anamnesis*, 140-47.

ologue beyond the original topic. Indeed, near the end of the discussion, he notes that a good part of the vocabulary familiar to the West is no longer adequate for the investigations into political order that need to be made: "If one analyzes the problems of order in an Egyptian or Chinese context, for example, the expression "natural law" disappears."¹⁸

One biographical note is perhaps appropriate here. Voegelin's contributions are often in opposition, or at least in sharp contrast, to those of Hans Kelsen, the professor who, along with Othmar Spann, directed Voegelin's dissertation at the University of Vienna in 1922 and with whom Voegelin worked as an assistant in the 1920s. In view of the former student-teacher relationship, the Salzburg conference dramatically underlines their fundamental philosophical differences.

9. "The Human Being in Political Institutions: Excerpts From the Discussion" consists, like the preceding text on natural law, of notes from an interdisciplinary dialogue at the University of Salzburg, this time in 1964. According to Voegelin, at the center of this vast subject is the fact that a conventional science of institutions may be appropriate for any given state of order, but beyond this lies the "infinitely differentiated field of social and historical processes, the field of foundation, maturation and decline, of the reform and revolution, of the collapse of institutions."¹⁹ And it is these issues that lead into the questions concerning the nature of humankind that govern the discussions reproduced in this volume.

Voegelin's concern with problems that later become topical in *The Ecumenic Age*²⁰ is also evident in his discussion of history as a symbolical form and his disquieting question: Do we even have a "concept of history for which we can seriously maintain that, with its help, historical reality can be analyzed?"²¹

10. "The Drama of Humanity" is the transcription of the Walter Turner Candler Lectures that Voegelin gave in April 1967 at

18. "Natural Law in Political Theory," 123 below.

19. Eric Voegelin, "Man in Society and History" in *Published Essays, 1953-1965*, 191-207.

20. Eric Voegelin, *CW*, vol. 17, *The Ecumenic Age*, vol. IV of *Order and History*, ed. with intro. by Michael Franz (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003).

21. "The Human Being in Political Institutions," 168 below.

Emory University. They are divided into four parts: "The Contemporary Situation," "Man in the Cosmos," "The Epiphany of Man," and "Man in Revolt." For the late work of Voegelin the lectures' title has programmatic character. In 1972 Voegelin wrote: "[I am] preparing a philosophy of history under the title *The Drama of Humanity*."²²

The notion of "universal humanity" elaborated in the second lecture plays a significant role in *The Ecumenic Age*, providing the theme of the book's last chapter.²³ There Voegelin writes: "The present study is concerned with man's consciousness of his humanity as it differentiates historically."²⁴ In other words, the notion of humanity is inseparably linked to the notion of consciousness. In the introduction to the Emory University lectures Voegelin distinguishes between "man" and "humanity"; the subject is "not about man but about our humanity": "Humanity means man in a mode of understanding himself in his relation to God, world and society, and these modes change. And history would be the drama (if a meaning in it can be discovered) of humanity, of the self-understanding of man."²⁵ For Voegelin, the crucial change in the self-understanding of man—the major event in the drama of history—occurred when "the primary experience of the cosmos" differentiated into three "universals": universal humanity, universal divinity, universal world.²⁶ This differentiation ushered in the "ecumenic age," i.e., the age of philosophy and the universal religions. The three universals are distinguishable from one another but constitute a unity. They must be kept in balance; "as soon as you isolate the one or the other, the other two become senseless."²⁷ In the course of history this balance has often been disturbed, but in the modern age it has collapsed. The last lecture, "Man in Revolt," deals with this collapse.

Taken together the lectures collected under the title "The Drama of Humanity" present Voegelin's theoretical concepts and

22. Letter to Edmund A. Gullion, July 24, 1972, in Voegelin Papers, box 77, folder 9, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, Calif.

23. See Voegelin, *The Ecumenic Age*.

24. *Ibid.*, 302.

25. "The Drama of Humanity," 186 below.

26. *Ibid.*, 205 below.

27. *Ibid.*, 220 below.

methods of analysis in a concentrated and almost colloquial form that provide the reader with a good first survey of his later work as a whole.

11. The "Conversations with Eric Voegelin at the Thomas More Institute" in Montreal include talks and discussions that took place in 1967, 1970, and 1976. Along with a talk from 1965, which is already published within *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*,²⁸ R. Eric O'Connor edited and published these texts in 1980.²⁹ In his introduction he wrote: "This publication [. . .] is an attempt to share with a wider public [. . .] what to many of us at the Thomas More Institute of Montreal were formative intellectual experiences."³⁰

With the exception of a few minor changes, our texts are identical with those edited by O'Connor and preserve the congenial atmosphere of the Montreal conversations. As transcriptions from tape recordings, the style and language differ to some extent from Voegelin's written texts, and he was at first unwilling to see them published. However, after "his assistant Paul Caringella went through the whole typescript carefully suggesting minor amendments,"³¹ he agreed to publication. In retrospect, it is precisely their informal and vivid dialogical character that makes them so valuable for the student of Voegelin's thought.

Of particular significance is the *long durée* of the dialogue—extending over a period of more than ten years—that Voegelin conducted with the Thomas More Institute. This period was characterized by important developments in Voegelin's theoretical approach—the publication of *Anamnesis* in 1966,³² the work leading up to volume IV of *Order and History*, its publication, and the subsequent work on volume V. A number of important issues involved in the development of Voegelin's thought become manifest in the Montreal discussions. O'Connor was certainly right when, in a letter to Voegelin in 1977, he wrote: "The conversations we have recorded provide glimpses of stages on the way [to

28. Voegelin, *Published Essays, 1953–1965*, 224–51.

29. R. Eric O'Connor, ed., *Conversations with Eric Voegelin* (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1980).

30. *Ibid.*, v.

31. *Ibid.*, vi.

32. Eric Voegelin, *Anamnesis: Zur Theorie der Geschichte und Politik* (Munich: Piper Verlag, 1966), English version, *CW*, vol. 6.

volume V of *Order and History*] which are not available in your own writings."³³

The first conversation, "Theology Confronting World Religions" from 1967, contains a lecture by Voegelin followed by an extensive question period. Here Voegelin explores the current meaning of such terms as *theology*, *metaphysics*, and *religion*. In turn, this investigation leads back to the original idea of "noetic theology" in Plato and Aristotle that is the precondition for a "common rational culture." One must return to "the original experiences in the noetic, rational sense, to see what one can do with that as a basis for opening a dialogue."³⁴

The last two conversations at the Thomas More Institute, "Questions Up" (1970) and "Myth as Environment" (1976), are interviews concerned primarily with *The Ecumenic Age*. The former conversation preceded the publication and gives us insight into the making of the book; the second conversation, conducted two years after publication, gives Voegelin the chance to answer questions posed by "a class that had been studying *The Ecumenic Age* for eight weeks of reading and discussion."³⁵ Accordingly, these two conversations are particularly illuminating on the content and background of this important volume. For one thing, they reveal the enormous multicivilizational studies—historical, prehistorical, archeological, and palaeontological—in which Voegelin engaged in its preparation. They also reveal the increasingly important role of his philosophy of consciousness.

The last conversation, in 1976, gives us a deeper insight into the shift in focus of Voegelin's program following the third volume of *Order and History*, which Voegelin also discussed in the introduction to *The Ecumenic Age*.³⁶

12. "Notes on 'Civilization and Foreign Affairs'" underlines the importance of the comparative civilizational perspective for Voegelin's political theory that is found in all the texts included in this volume. This short text sketches a proposal that Voegelin prepared for the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts

33. Letter to Eric Voegelin, May 9, 1977, in Voegelin Papers, box 84, folder 14, Hoover Institution Archives.

34. "Theology Confronting World Religions," 249 below.

35. O'Connor, *Conversations with Eric Voegelin*, v.

36. Voegelin, Introduction, *The Ecumenic Age*.

University for a program to be entitled "Civilization and Foreign Affairs," and it formed the basis for Voegelin's lecture at the Fletcher School in September 1972. In a letter to the dean of the school, Voegelin wrote: "It is indeed high time that the study of politics, as well as the formation of policies, be placed in the context of civilizational and historical awareness,"³⁷ an argument he had been making for many years and that had recently culminated in the theory of the "Ecumenic Age."

The "Notes" give us Voegelin's ideas on how the vast knowledge concerning civilization that had come to light in the twentieth century should be integrated into the teaching plan of an institution of higher learning. In this regard Voegelin's remarks reflect his own experience in founding and developing the Institute for Political Science at the University of Munich in 1958.

13. "Structures of Consciousness" is the transcription of a lecture given by Voegelin at "Hermeneutics and Structuralism: Merging Horizons," a conference held at York University, Toronto, in November 1978. The transcription was done by Professor Zdravko Planinc and published in *Voegelin Research News* in September 1996. In his introduction, Planinc discussed the procedures of transcription that he followed:

Voegelin's lecture was one of several events that were video-taped by the conference organizers. The video-tapes were deposited in the York University Library, where I unearthed them several years later in order to make copies for use in various of my graduate seminars. Instead of limiting myself to a simple transcription of the lecture as given, I have attempted something a bit broader in scope: a reconstruction of Voegelin's intended remarks, on the basis of his lecture outline, using all of the conference video-tapes of his speeches and discussions as sources. My reasons for doing so are simple: Voegelin did not have time to complete his lecture, as he had outlined it. From comparing his lecture outline with the video-tapes of his subsequent impromptu remarks during the question period and on other panels, it became quite evident that Voegelin simply continued to speak along the lines drawn up in his outline throughout the conference. It is thus possible to reconstruct the intended lecture in almost every detail very simply by transcribing all of his remarks in the order in which he made them. I have done so; and I have interpolated the main headings of his outline throughout the text in order that

37. Letter to Edmund A. Gullion, July 24, 1972.

the reader might better follow the argument with reference to the outline itself.³⁸

The texts included here contain Voegelin's lecture, the discussions following the presentation, and his remarks as a participant on two conference panels. This lecture, as the title already suggests, deals with the fundamentals of the philosophy of consciousness developed by Voegelin in his later years, the "meditative complex: reality-consciousness-language."

After introducing the terms *intentionality* and *luminosity* as the two "structures of consciousness," he focuses on the "plurality of languages" used historically to come to grips with "reality," from the ancient Oriental myths to revelation and philosophy, down to the language of the modern apocalyptic and gnostic deformations of consciousness.

As in the "Drama of Humanity," Voegelin elucidates a number of concepts central to his late philosophy, and like the "Drama," this text provides an excellent introduction to his later work.

14. In the 1981 lecture "The Meditative Origin of the Philosophical Knowledge of Order," Voegelin gives a detailed explanation of "thing-reality," "It-reality," "reflective distance," and other central terms that we find in volume V of *Order and History*. In his historical reflection on the development of the present situation in philosophy, he uses these key terms for the work of dissolving the dogmatic and ideological encrustations of language that hinder the return to reality which is the profession of philosophy.

15. Like the three previous texts, "The Beyond and Its Parousia," a lecture delivered in the context of a symposium, "The Meaning of History," at Santa Clara University in California in 1982, shows us Voegelin dealing with central concepts of his late philosophy, this time from the perspective of history as a symbolic form.

Voegelin identifies the topical discussion, the so-called meaning of history, as an expression of the derailment of consciousness that became clearly visible in the eighteenth century, and in which a number of other terms besides *history*—such as *freedom* and *revolution*—were reworked into ideological symbols in doctrines promising the "transformation" of human nature itself.

38. Zdravko Planinc, *Voegelin Research News* 2, no. 3 (September 1996).

The concepts that Voegelin introduced in his York University talk, "thing-Reality," "It-reality," and "reflective distance," here provide Voegelin with the conceptual tools needed to analyze the pneumopathology of the dreams of transforming human nature.

The title of the lecture, the "Beyond and Its Parousia," takes up two terms from Plato that give us an adequate scientific basis for evaluating the historical attempts to find a language appropriate to express the paradoxical structure of reality.

16. The "Responses at the Panel Discussion of 'The Beginning of the Beginning'" consists of transcripts of discussions that took place at a symposium on the work of Voegelin at Boston College in March 1983. They were transcribed, edited, and published by Fred Lawrence in 1984.³⁹ The panel discussion was devoted to the work in progress, volume V of *Order and History*.

Here we see Voegelin the teacher as he tries to find a language that is at once simple and yet adequate to the problems that are of concern to his auditors. When asked about the experience that our questioning is not just ours, but is also a response to the "pull" of the divine ground—the question of "It-reality"—he replies: "Let me formulate it very simply. We are sitting here talking. What is it that moves us?"⁴⁰

17. This volume concludes with Voegelin's "Autobiographical Statement at Age Eighty-Two," which was made at the conference at Boston College in 1983. Here Voegelin reflects on the well-springs of his philosophical calling and reviews the various stages of his life: his education in Vienna during the breakdown of the Austro-Hungarian empire; his university studies; the extremely high level of thought in various Viennese "circles" and discussion groups; his experience in the United States in the 1920s as a Rockefeller Fellow; the increasing fascist threat in the 1930s and the role of reason in opposing it; the emigration to the United States and his work on *Order and History*, including the conceptual changes that led to the questions of the "beginning" and the "beyond" in volume V of *Order and History*. This autobiograph-

39. "Responses at the Panel Discussion of 'The Beginning of the Beginning,'" in *The Beginning and the Beyond: Papers from the Gadamer and Voegelin Conferences*, ed. Frederick G. Lawrence, supplementary issue of *Loneragan Workshop* (Boston College) 4 (1984): 97–110.

40. "Responses at the Panel Discussion of 'The Beginning of the Beginning,'" 428 below.

ical sketch, which should be read in conjunction with the longer *Autobiographical Reflections*,⁴¹ is Voegelin's last public utterance about the course of his life, made one-and-a-half years before his death. Near the end of the statement he speaks of "the strongest influence" on his work, the extreme and extensive political violence that characterized the twentieth century:

It is not simply an academic problem, or a problem in the history of opinion and so on, that evokes my interest in this or that issue in the theory of consciousness, but the very practical problem of mass murder which is manifest in the twentieth century.⁴²

The "drama of humanity" is the life, and therefore the record, of the spiritual experiences of concrete human beings, made in concrete societies, at specific points in time: Thus both Voegelin's theoretical work and his personal remarks on the motivation behind it bring us back to the first text of this volume.

In the foreword to the *Political Religions* Voegelin dealt with the concrete case of a human being faced with his would-be murderers. Surveying the roots of the twentieth century's disastrous descent into spiritual and political disorder he added:

No major thinker is ignorant of the fact that recovery can only be brought about by religious renewal, whether within the framework of the Christian churches or outside it. A significant renewal can proceed only from great religious personalities, but it is possible for everyone to prepare himself, and to do what he can to prepare the ground in which resistance to evil may grow.⁴³

The following texts document some of the steps Voegelin took to prepare that ground.

Editorial Note

Unless otherwise noted, square brackets in the texts that follow are the editors' emendations.

Acknowledgments of individuals whose transcriptions, translations, and editorial work made this volume possible, as well as

41. Eric Voegelin, *Autobiographical Reflections*, ed. with intro. by Ellis Sandoz (1989; available Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999).

42. "Autobiographical Statement at Age Eighty-Two," 440 below.

43. "Foreword to the Second Edition of *The Political Religions*," 22–23 below.

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

acknowledgments for permission to quote previously published material and other specific notes, are given on the first page of each of the items included here.

The editors wish to thank the Eric Voegelin Literary Trust for permission to publish texts that the trust holds in copyright, with particular thanks to Paul Caringella for his advice, assistance, and support over the years.

WILLIAM PETROPULOS
GILBERT WEISS

THE DRAMA OF HUMANITY
AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS
PAPERS, 1939-1985

This page intentionally left blank



Foreword to the Second Edition of *The Political Religions* (1939)

The treatise on *The Political Religions* was first published in Vienna in April 1938. Since the National Socialist provisional management of the publishing house did not promote its circulation, it remained almost unknown. However, it was known enough to gain the same critical response from sympathetic readers that my earlier writings had received. I was reproached for presenting a case so objective that it seemed to advertise for the very world-view and movements—for National Socialism in particular—that I had set out to combat. It was said to lack firmness of judgment and the decisiveness of condemnation that would put my own attitude beyond all doubt.

These critics touch upon fundamental questions concerning the contemporary world situation and the attitude of the individual toward it. Today there is a type of politicizing intellectual—a kind to which such critics usually belong—who declares his profound distaste for National Socialism in strong ethical judgments. He considers it his duty to wage war with all the literary means at his disposal. I can do that, too: In the verse from Dante that precedes the essay,¹ I make clear, to everyone who can read, my deep

Translated from the German for this edition by Jodi Cockerill, this text is the original version of the foreword to the second edition of *The Political Religions* (1939). Typescript in Voegelin Papers, box 55, folder 33, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, Calif. For the shorter published version see *The Political Religions*, 23–25, in *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, vol. 5, *Modernity without Restraint: The Political Religions; The New Science of Politics; and Science, Politics, and Gnosticism*, ed. with intro. by Manfred Henningsen (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000).

1. Per me si va ne la città dolente (through me is the way to the sorrowful city; *Inferno*, canto 3, line 1).

aversion to every kind of political collectivism, and my stock of both cultivated and less-cultivated expressions of condemnation is impressive. There are reasons for my not displaying this aversion before a large audience in the form of political outpourings. But although there are many reasons, I can only touch here on one essential one.

First, and foremost, political collectivism is not merely a political or moral phenomenon; in my view its religious element is much more important, and this is the subject of the following investigation. Literary polemic is important as a means of ethical counterpropaganda, but it becomes questionable when it takes on forms that obscure the essential issue. The concentration on expressing an opposing political enthusiasm impedes one's spiritual and intellectual understanding of the situation. In order to be crystal clear on this point, I will refer to a specific case: Herschel Grynszpan's slaying of the German third secretary in Paris. This case could have been the occasion for a fundamental discussion of the legal and moral relationships between National Socialists and Jews, and of other groups in similar situations. The analysis would have had to touch upon the following issues:

As far as the legal relationship is concerned, one would have to say that within the German Reich Jews, as a group, had been placed outside the community of law; such exclusion, by the nature of the concept itself, cannot be one-sided but must be reciprocal. The individual who stands outside the community of law has no legal obligation to the individual who excludes him. According to the fundamentals of natural law he cannot be condemned, no matter what he does to the one who has refused to enter into a legal relationship (*Rechtsgemeinschaft*) with him.

Even if one were to acknowledge these legal arguments as correct, one still might fall back to the ethical position, that while murder in this situation may not be illegal according to natural law, the intentional destruction of a human life is principally immoral and the murderer ought therefore to be condemned according to moral principles. Now a decision on this question would depend on the axioms of the ethical system within which it was raised. If we assume the system of ethical personalism that is still predominant among the peoples of Western civilization, the ethical combatant would have to state that at present the National

Socialist regime treats Jews, not as persons, but as things. An overwhelming number of individual acts of destruction of Jewish life, freedom, dignity, and possessions bear witness to the correctness of this statement. To select a case that is a matter of public record, I point to the attempt to sell the life and freedom of Jews in return for foreign exchange: in other words, with Jews, to traffic in human beings. In the system of ethical personalism, in which the value of the personality stands higher than the value of life, a person who is robbed, spat upon, and sold is morally obliged to put an end to such actions—if necessary, by murder. In terms of the fundamental principles of ethical personalism, a murder committed by a Jew upon a National Socialist who treats him as a thing would not only be excusable, it would be a duty.

But a stubborn opponent could still fall back on the religious nature of things and claim that it is better to suffer injustice than to commit injustice. Christ said, “For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword” (Matt 26:52). To the gentle soul who uses this argument, the ethical thinker would have to answer: As a rule, the evildoer who reaches for his sword does not die by the same sword but by another one, and the other sword must be wielded by somebody. Here we touch upon a problem of theodicy, to which we may note that this quote from Christ is used repeatedly to justify submission to violence. The attempt to apply a statement concerning the mystery of divine sacrifice (Peter is not to disturb the mystery through his naïve intervention) to mundane affairs would be blasphemous, were it not so naïvely stupid.

The fact that the moral and political opponents of National Socialism have not posed questions of this kind, which they should have, will make my skepticism toward the morally and sentimentally motivated aggression of literary intellectuals understandable. From leading editorialists to higher church dignitaries, the dominant position on the Grynszpan case and its consequences was that while the deed was perhaps inexcusable, under the circumstances it was understandable: the tragic crime of a young person driven to despair—and more empty phrases in the same tenor. I do not know of a single case where anyone dared to pursue the questions raised by this act to their roots and tried to answer them.

This failure appears to me to have taken place for two reasons. First, there is the abysmal mindlessness of our times, and the consequent inability of those who are in a position to respond, to muster the spiritual strength necessary to pursue a problem of these dimensions to its roots. Second, there is the fear of the consequences of radical reflection, for the consequences are unpleasant.

Let us leave the legal and ethical elaborations of the question and linger for a moment on the religious element. A consideration of National Socialism from the standpoint of religion must begin with the assumption that there is evil in the world; and not just as a deficient mode of being, as a negativum, but as a genuine substance and force that must be combated. But here we approach Manichean problems, and in general, a representative of the organized church will prefer to let his church and the entire world be destroyed by evil than to scorch his finger on a problem of dogma. In this fear of discarding dogma, [an action] that must be motivated by a genuine religious experience *of* evil, I see one of the grounds for the otherwise puzzling lack of spiritual resistance on the part of church circles to National Socialism. These circles react with somewhat more life only when their own organizations and influence on education are threatened, and when they fear a loss of revenue. Otherwise their resistance follows the secular position that their feelings of humanity and tolerance have been insulted.

Could the insight into the existence of a substance that is not only morally bad but also religiously evil and satanic be attained, the second insight would follow, that it can only be resisted by an equally strong religious force of good. One cannot combat a satanic force with morality and humanity alone. However, this difficulty cannot be remedied by simple resolve. Today, no major thinker in the Western world is unaware, nor has failed to express the fact, that the world is undergoing a severe crisis, a process of withering, which has its origin in the secularization of the spirit and the ensuing severance of a consequently purely secular spirit from its religious roots. No major thinker is ignorant of the fact that recovery can only be brought about by religious renewal, whether within the framework of the Christian churches or outside it. A significant renewal can proceed only from great religious

personalities, but it is possible for everyone to prepare himself and to do what he can to prepare the ground in which resistance to evil may grow.

It is precisely in this respect that the politicizing intellectuals fail completely. It is intolerable to have to hear, again and again, that National Socialism is a fall back into barbarism, into the dark Middle Ages, and into the ages pre-dating the modern progress of humanity, without those who mouth these sentiments suspecting that the secularization of life, which the humanitarian ideal entails, in fact created the soil out of which anti-Christian religious movements like National Socialism spring up in the first place. For these secularized spirits, the religious question is taboo, and to earnestly and radically raise it seems to them a dubious undertaking, itself perhaps an act of barbarism and a fall back into the dark Middle Ages—in any case a disruption of their humanitarian, tolerant, and ethical peace of mind.

By this I do not wish to say that the fight against National Socialism should not be an ethical one as well. In my view, it is simply not carried out radically; and it is not carried out radically because it lacks its *radix*, its religious roots. Rather than participating in this rootless and hence questionable defensive ethical fight, it seems to me more essential to discuss the fundamental religious issues of our time and to describe the phenomenon of evil that must be combated. If my description gives the impression of being too “objective,” or indeed of “advertising” for National Socialism, then that seems to me to be a sign that my description is good; for the Luciferian aspect is not simply morally negative or abominable, but is a force, and a very seductive one at that. If my description were to create the impression that National Socialism involves only a morally inferior, stupid, barbaric, and contemptible matter, it would be a poor one. That I do not regard the force of evil to be a force of good will be evident to all readers of this treatise who are open to religious questions.



Democracy and the Individual

What is the role of the individual in a democracy?

To answer this question we need not go into elaborate definitions as to what democracy is and what it is not; we only need to point to certain institutions that obviously require some action on the part of the individual.

Our modern democratic system is based on the participation of the adult population in the creation of the organs of government. The citizens have to vote some of their number into government offices, and these have to be ready to accept such office. We consider institutions to be highly democratic when practically all adult citizens, male and female, are permitted to vote, and when the offices are accessible to every citizen, usually with age-qualifications higher than the voting age.

But does voting alone make a democracy?

We should note that voting alone does not make a government democratic. Dictatorial leaders, and not only of our days, have been very skillful in transforming the free democratic elective process into a more or less subtle system of one-way voting. They permit the population to vote, but only with yes or no; and woe to the man who says no. The actual decision as to who should have an office is taken by the group in power. This system produces a practically 100 percent consent of the people in dictatorial countries. In order to make a voting system democratic it has to be complemented by institutions that make it possible for the citizen to form an opinion on issues and to make his opinion politically effective. This end is served by the protection of civil liberties,

Short radio address delivered in Evanston, Ill., in 1939. Typescript in Voegelin Papers, box 56, folder 4, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, Calif.

the rights of free speech, press, assembly, and petition, the right to join a party, or, if the existing parties are not to your liking, to get together with other people and form a new one.

The most delicate problem of democracy is that of the ruling class. No political society can be kept stable when there is a rapid turnover in the group of people who govern, and a democracy is no exception to the rule. There has to be a number of men who make politics their profession, who set the rules of the game, preserve a tradition, and initiate the newcomers and mold them into the traditional type. They cannot be a caste but have to regenerate themselves continuously from the different strata of society. A delicate texture of social interrelations has to link the broad democratic basis of the citizens who form opinions with the governing group in order to make this group truly representative of the sentiment of the people, and at the same time to preserve that element of stability and continuity in the governing set which is essential for efficient and stable government.

The problem of a working democracy can, then, be stated in an abbreviated form as being: a people, consisting of individuals, capable and willing to take an interest in political issues, to form well-reasoned opinions on them, to take the pains to acquire the necessary information, and to make their opinion and will effective by choosing representatives; furthermore there must always be a sufficient number of individuals who are willing to enter the business of government itself and to perform in such a way that the regenerative contact with the opinion-forming multitude remains undisturbed.

The dangers that threaten democracy can be brought into a similar formula: A democracy is in danger when the individual citizens are, for one reason or another, either incapable or unwilling to be well-informed, reasoning, arguing, debating citizens forming opinions and making them effective by speech, writing, association, etc.; or, when the citizens no longer produce out of their midst a sufficient number of individuals who are ready to assume political responsibility in a democratic temper. The two dangers are closely interrelated. When the great mass of the people shirk their democratic duties, it will be increasingly difficult to have a democratic ruling class and democratic leaders because the reservoir from which they can be drawn dwindles down, and those

remaining lose resonance with the broad mass of individuals and no longer appeal to them.

The German case is very instructive in this respect. Opponents of the regime sometimes create the naïve impression that a people has been overpowered and stripped of its democratic institutions by a minority of cunning devils. It is sometimes forgotten that long before the National Socialists came to power the German democratic system had become unworkable because the two anti-democratic parties, the Communists and the National Socialists, had a so-called blocking majority. That means that the two parties held together the majority of seats in the Reichstag, and together could and did block any democratic governmental action. And this anti-democratic majority in Parliament was elected by a majority of voters under strictly democratic institutions. The majority of German citizens had given up, or never obtained, the status of individuals with well-reasoned opinions but preferred to have convictions instead. To sum up this argument: A democracy is in real danger when the individuals do not want to be democratic citizens. The problem of democracy is, therefore, to keep the individuals in a democratic state of mind.

The following type-study of the situations and motives that may change a democratic individual into an individual who prefers dictatorship is largely based on Central European experiences. I think the European developments of recent years are the best experimental laboratory a student of social problems could desire—even when the state of things may seem undesirable to him. The numerous factors that have combined in Central Europe to turn a majority of individuals into anti-democrats have been and are at work everywhere in the Western world today. And if they do not reach a combined force that makes them a serious danger in the older democracies, [still] every single one of them constitutes a danger spot in itself that needs special attention. I shall now try to classify the danger spots, because only when they are clearly seen may they be attacked singly by proper therapeutic methods—just as the dictatorial parties seeing them clearly make use of them in order to destroy democracy.

The classic idea of democracy—as represented, e.g., by John Locke or by the ideas underlying the Constitution of these United States—is the idea of the individual as a reasonable being, hav-

ing a scope of experience covering his personal problems, having sufficient intelligence to form an opinion on them, and enough realistic willpower to advocate and press them. The social reality at the end of the eighteenth century corresponded roughly to these conditions. While there was considerable conflict of interests between independent farming, plantation farming industry, and banking, the situation was such that most of the individuals concerned could clearly see what their interest was and form opinions on a desirable policy.

Compared with the late eighteenth century, social reality today has undergone considerable changes. I shall classify at first certain external changes in the situation of the individual.

It is generally recognized that the technological development of the Industrial Revolution brought vast classes of society into existence which, although not absent in the earlier period, increased in the last century so enormously that they have essentially changed the social structure. In Europe the new classes are the bearers of the anti-democratic revolution; they are the industrial workers and the lower-middle classes. The significant point is that they cannot make an independent living as producers or professional men, as, e.g., a small farmer, but are dependent for work on large technical establishments or organizations that offer them jobs. The large industrial plant or big business or banking enterprises have taken the destiny of the modern working individual to a large extent out of his hands. He is dependent for his job on human decisions on which he has practically no influence whatever.

Formerly, the success or failure of an individual who runs his own small business could be attributed either to him personally or to circumstances beyond his control, which [in turn], however—as, e.g., a bad harvest—could not be attributed to the action of another individual. When a modern factory closes down and the workers lose their jobs, there is always the possibility to attribute the disaster, rightly or wrongly, to a failure of management. The situation of the dependent job-holder has on the one side become more vulnerable, and, in addition, a misfortune has received the unpleasant [connotation] of being due to somebody's action. It is not ideologically inevitable: "Something could be done about it." This type of dependence of the individual has permeated modern

industrial societies to such a degree that practically the greater part of a nation finds itself in it. The industrial worker is the most obvious case, the clerical employee another one; but all employees of modern private and public administration fall into the same category, the job-holder of a trust company, as well as the street-car conductor or the civil-servant. And with the increasing government interference in economic matters through protective tariffs, price regulations, subventions, etc., the producer classes, industrial and agricultural, are drifting at a rapid pace in the same direction. This structure of modern society has been called by European political scientists the specifically totalitarian structure—meaning, a structure that puts the control of the economic existence of individuals into comparatively few hands. This structure touches not only the money-earning capacity of the individual but, at least for the urban population, every detail of private life. Men are dependent for their supply of gas, water, electricity, fuel, etc., on centralized agencies. And an outstanding theorist of totalitarian possibilities already has visions of future control over discontented or reluctant people by cutting whole sections of the population off from the supplies on which they depend. The general effect of this structural change may be summed up as being a serious diminution, a narrowing down of the personal sphere of the individual; the individual today is not as much of an individual as he was 150 years ago; large sections of his realm have become socialized.

The internal, psychological, situation of the individual has changed correspondingly. The great modern organization requires less of personal responsibility and initiative and more of discipline and exactness in obeying orders. [At an early date], political thinkers became aware of these new psychic forces of modern society and set their hopes on them for a reconstruction of an increasingly difficult democratic situation in a totalitarian direction. The most obvious instances of the new discipline have been the modern armies, based on general national conscription. The Franco-Prussian war of 1870 gave rise, for the first time, to ideas of national regeneration, not in terms of new initiative, but of new discipline. Ernest Renan greatly admired the discipline of the Prussian army and played with the hope of similar achievements in France. The Russo-Japanese war had the same effect

on Italian political thought; Corradini's idea of regeneration by national discipline was inspired by the success of the Japanese army. About the same time, the French syndicalist philosopher Georges Sorel built his hope for the future on the labor movement, on the discipline to which the industrial worker has to submit in his factory.

While the hierarchical element in modern organizations makes for new forces of discipline and collective submissive action, the general feature of dependence creates a feeling of [vulnerability] and [leads to] nonparticipation in realistic, responsible action, which produces a peculiar belief in the redeeming power of the planning activity of vast comprehensive organizations in general. We are living in a period that may be styled a period of plan-mysticism. The Russian five-year plan, the German four-year plan, the French three-year plan are outstanding examples of the belief in the collective solution to problems by centralized planning activity. However, the German and Russian plans are not supposed to end with the periods indicated in their names but are permanent plan-institutions. In the minds of millions of people, the "plan" has become the solution to their existential problems. Not a plan made by themselves, but a plan made by somebody else.

The attitude of submission to a plan is facilitated by the fact that the complication of modern economic problems has far outgrown the intellectual possibilities of the average citizen. With their [limited] understanding, the mass of individuals is not in a position to participate in the [deliberation on the] public problems that so intimately affect their personal affairs. The combined effect of these internal factors—the new discipline, the mystical belief in collective planning, the impossibility of participating intellectually in daily problems—is a kind of destruction of the rational active personality. The realistic element in the life of a man has dwindled to the small duties of his job, to a number of family affairs, and to the activities of his leisure hours. The larger part of his personality is not realistically occupied and is exposed, therefore, to daydreaming, emotional reaction, neurotic deviation, etc.

The general correctness of this analysis can be demonstrated by glancing over the social groups that in Central Europe are most

inclined to become totalitarian, and the others that are not. Typically, totalitarian and anti-democratic have proved to be the lower ranks in organized society: post officials, railroad officials, the lower and middle ranks of the civil service and private employees, and school teachers. Another typical group is furnished by the applied sciences, such as engineers, physicians, veterinarians, dentists, chemists, graduates from agricultural colleges. They are not intellectually active scientists but trained in professions that teach them what to do about things. They greatly enjoy doing things and are typically in favor of men who tell them that they will be active and stop a messy situation by doing something about it. They are the ideal human material to submit to a political organizer. They are happily joined by groups who are indifferent to democracy because they lead a life of discipline, such as army officers, and by classes that are economically endangered, such as small craftsmen, unemployed youth, and—in Central Europe—by dissatisfied middle-class groups that lost their economic position in the postwar inflation.

Equally interesting are the centers of resistance. They are represented to a large extent by the peasant population insofar as they can still make a comparatively independent living and don't like too much regimentation—partly because the peasant has stronger church affiliations, and the Christian personality idea does not agree very well with collectivism. This brings us to the churches as great centers of resistance: the Catholic as well as the Protestant, where they are still firmly rooted. It is well worth noticing that the European countries least afraid of anti-democratic movements are Holland and Switzerland, the two countries of strong religious culture. And finally, the industrial workers have been rather reluctant, not because they dislike collective society, but because they already believe in a different brand of it.

Seeing the dangers means seeing the remedies.

When the experience of exposure and insecurity destroys the power of the individual personality, the social institutions have to be changed in such a way that a modicum of security is restored to the individual. The details need not concern us here; the general type of measures are well known: insurance against disease, temporary unemployment, old age infirmity, etc.; relative job-

security; safeguards against abuse of job security; governmental interference in the economic system.

An important [illegible] in this direction will have to be, partly as its cause, partly as its effect, a change in the general outlook on politics. Once it is realized that the standard of living is not the most important problem in human life, but that security of status comes first, the greater percentage of all problems that are political today will be reduced to the emotional insignificance of technical details that can and have to be worked out by administrative experts, such as the actual wage level, price level, rate of accumulation of capital, etc.

This basic change of the institutional structure, while restoring security of status, will at the same time relieve the individual from taking a stand concerning economic measures that he does not understand anyway. The representative institution should have the function of outlining and debating policies and making laws that concern the ethical structure of society, such as civil and criminal law, as they did in the middle of the nineteenth century, while the factual basis for the outline of policies and the technical detail of working them out has to be left to experts in the administration.

I do not think that the experts will do a perfect job. They will make mistakes that will cost the nation billions. But private enterprise is not wholly constructive either but wastes billions of social wealth by bad or speculative investment, bad financing techniques, bad management. And I do not see why the destruction of social wealth should be a privilege of private individuals; let government experts have a hand at it, too. Anyway, it will be the price that has to be paid for creating a society with security of status for the individual.

Within the general framework of comparative safety, there is ample room for public problems that can keep a democracy busy and the individual active. Nobody can predict them in detail, but they will arise, as they have always done in the history of mankind, out of the basic attitude of individuals toward life. When this attitude exhausts itself in a pleasure hunt the public life will be rotten, there will not be much of a democracy and that not for long. When the attitude is religiously well-founded, the implications of a basic creed will furnish a wealth of problems

concerning the organization of social life. I have mentioned that the European countries of strong religious culture are fairly safe against anti-democratic movements. But that is a problem beyond the control of human organizational power. The Spirit of the Lord blows where it will; let us hope that it blows at the right time and in the right direction.



Notes on T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*

I.

Eliot is a poet; and Eliot is a Christian. Can the life of the artist have a meaning as the life of a Christian? is Eliot's question. His answer:

The LORD who created must wish us to create
 And employ our creation again in His service
 Which is already His service in creating.
 [Chorus IX from "The Rock"]¹

God has not created the world once and for all and left it to shift for itself.

The creation is a continuous process; and the creativeness of man enables him to participate in his humble way in God's creation—as the instrument through which God creates order out of formlessness, and as the creature that offers in service to God the products of the gifts it has received from God. To be God's creature is a power and an obligation, for

The soul of Man must quicken to creation.
 [Chorus IX from "The Rock"]

Out of the formless stone spring new forms when the soul of the artist is joined to the stone,

This text, written ca. 1944, is found in Voegelin Papers, box 63, folder 1, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, Calif.

1. [T. S. Eliot, *Choruses from "The Rock,"* in Eliot, *The Complete Poems and Plays* (London: Faber & Faber, 1969), 145–69.] The editors thank the publisher for permission to quote from this work.

Out of the sea of sound the life of music,
Out of the slimy mud of words, out of the sleet
and hail of verbal imprecisions,
Approximate thoughts and feelings, words that
have taken the place of thoughts and feelings,
There spring the perfect order of speech, and the beauty of
incantation.

[Chorus IX from "The Rock"]

These powers have to be brought to the service of the Lord—
"the powers for life, for dignity, grace and order, and intellectual
pleasures of the senses."

For man is joined spirit and body,
And therefore must serve as spirit and body.
Visible and invisible, two worlds meet in Man;
Visible and invisible must meet in His Temple;
You must not deny the body.

Man is the meeting place of spirit and body, of the invisible and
the visible. In his creations, when the soul is joined to matter, a
form appears that figurates the invisible spirit. It is God Who has
moved us "to building, to finding, to forming at the ends of our
fingers and the beams of our eyes" [Chorus X from "The Rock"].
The creation of Man, bodily, visibly, in the light, builds the temple
and dresses the altar and lifts the light[:]

The visible reminder of Invisible Light.
(Chorus IX from "The Rock")

II.

The *Four Quartets* are the spiritual autobiography of a Christian
poet. As the history of a Christian soul they are a meditation; as
the work of a poet they are an incantation. The two qualities of
meditation and incantation are not separable in the work. The
subject matter of the meditation and the form of the poem pen-
etrate each other so intimately that the topical elements of the
reflection become the structural elements of the work of art. The
contents become form, and the form determines the contents;
exploring the one is exploring the other. As a meditation, the

poem deals with the life of man and his death, with time and eternity, with the world unredeemed and redemption, with ecstasy and contemplation, with action and stillness. As a poem, the meditation is organized in four cycles of five poems each, the *Four Quartets*, corresponding to the fourfold nature of Divinity as the Demiurgos, the Redeemer, the Lady, and the Spirit.

The interpenetration of form and subject matter needs the most careful attention. The *Quartets* are not a prose work, and their medium is not rational discourse—although the poem contains frequent periphrastic passages in which the discourse comes close to the *oratio directa* of prose, as for instance in the paraphrase of II.[21]:

That was a way of putting it—not very satisfactory:
A periphrastic study in a worn-out poetical fashion,
Leaving one still with the intolerable wrestle
With words and meanings. The poetry does not matter. Etc.²

But precisely the conceptual subject-matter that furnishes the intellectual framework of the meditation does not enter the rational discourse but is presented on the level of allusive titles and mottoes and of symbolical lyrics. From such focus points of presentation, the conceptual subject-matter [spreads] through [the] parts or the whole of the poem by means of allusive resumption of the *motifs*. This technique of dealing with conceptual materials enables Eliot to write a metaphysical poem without writing a metaphysical disquisition. He operates with rational ideas thematically, in the musical sense—a procedure that is indicated by the designation of the poems as *Quartets*. In spite of the periphrastic parts the poems as a whole preserve, therefore, the lyrical level; they are, indeed, an incantation and do not become didactic.

For the poet, the technique of allusive introduction and thematic elaboration of ideas has the advantage that he can penetrate his poems with a system of theological, cosmological, metaphysical, and biographical categories that determine with a high degree of strictness the organization of the whole work. For the reader, this technique has the consequence that, for a full understanding, he has to go beyond the text of the poem in order to reconstruct the

2. [T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*, *ibid.*, 169–99.]

conceptual elements that have been transposed into the musical medium. An interpretation of the *Four Quartets* cannot begin at the beginning; it has to begin with the nucleuses of allusion that determine the intellectual structure of the whole poem.

III.

“Man is joined spirit and body.” The spiritual autobiography is the history of a spirit joined to body, and the body lives in the here and now of a definite locale. Each of the four Quartets has for its title a place-name, signifying the locale, that corresponds to the phase of spiritual evolution. The four places are Burnt Norton, East Coker, the Dry Salvages, and Little Gidding.

Burnt Norton is a place in England, in Gloucestershire. Eliot lived in its neighborhood. In this Quartet we are in the present—in the present both of the poem and the poet, at the beginning of the meditation in empirical time and space; it is the time and space of the individual that embarks on his reflections.

East Coker is a village in Somerset, the place where Eliot’s family lived to the time of its emigration to America in the seventeenth century. The locale is expanding beyond the place of the individual to the home of the family; and with the expansion of the locale, time is expanded into the historical dimension: the second Quartet deals with the spirit in its historical relations. East Coker is, furthermore, reputed [to be] the birthplace of Sir Thomas Elyot, the author of *The Booke named The Governour* (1531), perhaps a member of T. S. Eliot’s family. A few passages from Sir Thomas Elyot’s chapter “Wherefore in the good ordre of daunsynge a man and a woman do daunse together” (I. 21) have been resumed by T. S. Eliot in II.1:

The association of man and woman
 In daunsinge, signifying matrimonie—
 A dignified and commodious sacrament.
 Two and two, necessarye coniunction,
 Holding eche other by the hand or the arm
 Whiche betokeneth concorde.

The resumption of the passages from Sir Thomas is, however, more than an antiquarian reminiscence, exploiting an accident of

family history. The first Elyot was a humanist and a Christian like the second, and his interests went toward the problems of language. *The Booke named The Gouvernour* is the first treatise on education written in English; it is the first attempt to express philosophical thought in the English language. Elyot was breaking deliberately with the clique-spirit of the humanists and wanted to have his treatise accessible to the English-speaking general public. His desire for the improvement of men through opening to them the treasures of classical literature, his desire for "the institution of man's life in virtue," inspired him to his work as translator and to his authorship of the Latin-English *Dictionary* of 1538. He was the first Englishman to take up the demand of Vivès, who came to England in the train of Catherine of Aragon, that boys should be educated in their mother tongue. It will not be out of place to quote a passage from Vivès's *De Tradendis Disciplinis* of 1523, which may illuminate the intentions of the first Elyot as well as of the second: "Let the teacher preserve in his memory all the old forms of vernacular words, and let him develop the knowledge not only of modern forms but also of the old words and those which have gone out of use, and let him be as it were the guardian of the treasury of his language. Unless this be so, when any language undergoes numerous changes, books written a hundred years ago will not be understood by succeeding generations." History is constituted in the continuity of generations and of civilizational meaning. The Elyot of the "commodious sacrament," the educator and the cultivator of language, is the symbol of the historical continuity that appears as a stratum in the soul of the second Eliot:

Home is where one starts from. As we grow older
 The world becomes stranger, the pattern more complicated
 Of dead and living. Not the intense moment
 Isolated, with no before and after,
 But a lifetime burning in every moment
 And not the lifetime of one man only
 But of old stones that cannot be deciphered.
 [II.5]

With *The Dry Salvages* the scene shifts to America. The *Dry Salvages* are a group of rocks off Cape Ann. This is the Quartet of

nature, of the sea “all about us” and the river “within us,” of the ocean of the “many gods and many voices,” and of the river that “is a strong brown god,” of “the longest river,” the Mississippi, “at first recognized as a frontier.” This America from the ocean to the river is not a new adventure in history. The emigration from the past does not lead into a new future:

Fare forward, traveller! not escaping from the past
 Into different lives, or into any future.
 (III.3.14 f.)

Still, emigration is not senseless—“Fare forward, voyagers” is the imperative (III.3.47); emigration is the symbol for a beyond of history:

And on the deck of the drumming liner
 Watching the furrow that widens behind you,
 You shall not think “the past is finished”
 Or “the future is before us.”
 (III.3.19 ff.)

Those who travel are “between the hither and farther shore while time is withdrawn” (29 f.). Here, “at the moment which is not of action or inaction” (32), the spell of historical meaning is broken, and a still deeper stratum of the soul is touched where action is experienced pragmatically, not in its relation to the historical community, but in its immediacy to death. Such action *sub specie mortis* is beyond the texture of history, but it is not beyond effectiveness in community, for it is precisely “the one action which shall fructify in the lives of others” (35 ff.). There is a community of the living beyond that of the historically living. It will be apposite to recall a passage from another Thomas of the Tudor period to whom for the first time the new horizon beyond the shelter of European historical meaning opened: that “the way to heaven is the same from all places; and he who has no grave still has the heaven over him.”

Little Gidding, which has given the title to the last poem, is the place where Nicholas Ferrar, the Anglican monk, founded his religious community in 1623. Under the direct influence of Ferrar were the metaphysical poets George Herbert (1593–1633) and Richard Crashaw (1613–1649). The place of the saintly from

whom the metaphysical poets drew their inspiration signifies the last stage in the history of the soul, the stage where it comes closest to "the intersection of the timeless with time"—though it may not reach this point—for:

To apprehend
The point of intersection of the timeless
With time, is an occupation for the saint—
No occupation either, but something given
And taken, in a lifetime's death in love,
Ardour and selflessness and self-surrender.
(IV.[5.17 ff.]

But for most of us

there is only the unattended
Moment, the moment in and out of time.
([II.5].23 f.)

In this intention toward the timeless, the empirical significance of the place names is dissolving. In proceeding from the first Quartet to the last we can observe the gradual dematerialization of the empirical meaning of the places. Burnt Norton was still the empirical here and now where the meditation begins. But it was also a state of the soul which is desirous to move from the "world" in the Christian sense toward the timeless, for "Here is a place of disaffection" (I.3.1). East Coker, while burdened heavily with empirical historical meaning, transcended the individual and introduced history as a stratum of the meditating soul.

The Dry Salvages transcended history into the suspense between action and inaction where the immediacy of death becomes visible. Little Gidding, finally, is journey's end—but "To make an end is to make a beginning"; at the end of the journey—when a "condition of complete simplicity" is reached (IV.5.40)—we return to life in this world, which now is transfigured by the gained intersection with timelessness:

So, while the light fails
On a winter's afternoon, in a secluded chapel
History is now and England.
(IV.5.22 ff.)

“The end is where we start from” corresponds in the fourth Quartet to the “Home is where one starts from” of the second.

The places are the “body” of meditation. In moving from place to place, Eliot uses the symbol of the “explorer” or the “traveller.” “Old men ought to be explorers”—demands the second Quartet—so that “here and there does not matter” (II.5.31 f.). The third Quartet commands “Fare forward. O voyagers, O seamen” (III.3.39 f.). In the fourth Quartet, when beginning and end are joined,

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
(IV.5.26 ff.)



Cycle Theory and Disintegration

[Introduction]

I. Spengler and Toynbee

II. The Cycle

III. The Apprehension of Extinction

IV. The Roman Debate

V. Sacred and Profane History

VI. Conclusion

[Introduction]

The term *cycle theory* has been used of late somewhat loosely for designating an interpretation of history of which Spengler's *Decline of the West* is a representative instance. In this loose usage we associate the term with a complex of ideas concerning the nature of civilization in general and the fate of Western civilization in particular. Civilizations are, according to this history, the great units of history; they run a course in time from growth, through efflorescence, to decay, whereby the course in time has a typical pattern to which all civilizations conform. The regularity is due to the inner necessity of the course—there is no escape from its fatality; history and its meaning are exhausted by the fatal courses of civilizations—there is no meaningful history of mankind as a whole. The regularity of the course can be used for diagnosing the place of our present age in the course of Western civilization and for predicting in outline the future course; such diagnosis results

This text, written ca. 1946, is found in Voegelin Papers, box 47, folder 3, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, Calif.

in the insight that our time is a late phase of the course. It is a phase of cultural decline, preceding complete breakdown.

Obviously, a theory of this kind must encounter opposition from various quarters. It runs counter to the Christian idea of history as the drama of salvation for mankind; it runs counter to the secular progressive idea of human self-salvation through the steady action of enlightened reason; and it runs counter to the Marxian materialistic dialectics that expect the redemption from evil through the imminent change of the economic system.

As a consequence of this socially widespread resistance, the cycle theory (I am still using the term in its loose meaning) has been unduly neglected by wider circles of students of politics. By wider circles only; for in narrow circles, the theory has had a prodigious career, which has recently culminated in Toynbee's *Study of History*. But again, Toynbee's work, while receiving praise as the outstanding contribution to a philosophy of history in our generation, has hardly been digested. This state of things is regrettable, for the cycle theory, particularly in the form given to it by Toynbee, is not only a magnificent interpretation of history, it has also renewed materially the foundations of theoretical politics that had become distinctly unstable since the heyday of positivism and utilitarianism. The cycle theory, together with the closely related theory of the political myth, are the great advancements that the theory of politics has received in our time.

A theoretical development of such proportions cannot be discussed in a brief paper. I propose to do no more than to analyze some of the principal component factors of the cycle theory. This analysis of factors, however, has to be preceded by a brief characterization of the recent variants of cycle theory in order to penetrate beyond the popular conceits to the actual problems that we have to study.

I. Spengler and Toynbee

In surveying the recent variants of cycle theories we are struck, first of all, by the fact that they are not cycle theories at all in any strict sense of the term. In a strict sense, a cyclical movement implies (1) a return to the beginning, and (2) the repetition of the cycle, in principle *ad infinitum*. Measured by this strict

sense, none of the modern so-called cycle theories is a cycle theory, with the exception of Nietzsche's idea of eternal recurrence. Spengler's definitely is not a cycle theory; it is a theory concerning the regularity and fatality of civilizational courses. Neither does a civilization return to its beginnings; nor can it be renewed and repeated. When the course is run, the civilization levels out in the monotonous fellah-period, which may last until an external catastrophe overtakes the civilization. If we strip Spengler's theory of its metaphysical garnishing, it boils down to an empirical core: (1) that there exists a plurality of civilizations; (2) that they have a habit of growth and decay; and (3) that we have no particular reason to assume that our Western civilization is an exception to the rule.

Still less is Toynbee's interpretation of history a cycle theory in the strict sense. Again, civilizations are the units of history; and again, we can observe regularities in their courses. But Toynbee rejects the category of fatality. The rhythm of growth and decay, as well as the subrhythms within a civilizational course, are due to the quite unmysterious fact that every civilization originates in a successful response to an environmental challenge. In the further course, new challenges arise from both external and internal sources. The civilization will grow as long as creative minorities respond successfully to the challenges; and the civilization will begin to decay when challenges arise that are objectively insurmountable or when the challenges become insurmountable for a dominant minority, which, however, is too well entrenched to be dislodged by a new creative minority. For this rhythm in the enterprise of a civilization, Toynbee uses the Chinese category of yin-yang.

Yin is the state of tranquillity from which rises the creative activity of yang, to be followed by a disintegration of the creation until a new state of yin tranquillity is reached. This rhythm continues *in infinitum*. Toynbee, furthermore, rejects the Spenglerian theory that with the disintegration of civilization the end has come. The rhythm of yin and yang continues; and in the very disintegration we can discern the symptoms of Palingenesia, of the rebirth of integrated communities that may become the chrysalis of new civilizations. Moreover, rebirth does not imply a repetition of the former course; it means, for Toynbee, expressly that the new

great societal rhythm that is to begin will take place on a higher level of spiritual consciousness. The civilizations do not follow each other as monadic units (that is Spengler's idea). A transmission of cultural heritage takes place; and not only a transmission: through the successive civilizations we can discern a rise in the spiritual level of mankind and, insofar, a meaningful advancement in the realization of the idea of man. In order to convey his idea, Toynbee uses the metaphor of a wheel and the vehicle that moves with the turns of the wheel. The civilizational course is the wheel of history; the destiny of mankind is the vehicle advancing by means of the civilizational wheel.

This conceptual apparatus is a much more adequate instrument than Spengler's for organizing the subject matter of history. A good deal of the shortcomings of Spengler's empirical core are removed. Moreover, the theory is supported by an awe-inspiring marshalling of materials in accordance with the present state of science. There is still ample occasion for improvement, even in accordance with this present state of empirical history. Furthermore, many points are not brought into sharp focus; and a good number of theoretical questions are still open. Nevertheless, through Toynbee's study the theory of civilizational courses has reached a degree of theoretical refinement and empirical support that permits the judgment that, in one form or another, the theory will remain an integral part of a critical science of history and politics.

We have seen now that the modern theories of civilizational courses are not cycle theories in a strict sense. Toynbee's theory in particular recognizes a meaning of history on the supra-civilizational level of mankind. But we also see at what point the modern theories have absorbed the problem of the cycle. Spengler supports the theory of the course by the analogy of the growth and decay of a human being, as well as by the analogy of seasonal rhythms; Toynbee uses the Chinese nature rhythms. The idea of a finite course of growth and decay finds its model in the rhythms of nature. On a most general level, the appearance of this idea in modern historical interpretation reflects the insight that the life of man in society is not a life of reason alone, but that nature also has something to do with it. Under this aspect the theory

of courses and rhythms is part of the general movement toward regaining meaning on the level of nature following the medieval-Christian contraction of meaning on the level of natureless spirit. The expression of meaning on the level of nature need not, of necessity, use the symbol of the cycle—as a matter of fact, neither Spengler nor Toynbee uses this symbol—but under certain circumstances, the cycle may, indeed, be used. Let us, therefore, now isolate the components of this obviously somewhat complex theoretical situation.

II. The Cycle

First let us isolate the symbol of the cycle. The symbol, as you know, has its origin in Babylonian cosmological speculation. Other early civilizations that emphasize the myth of nature as their spiritual language have not used it at all. In China, the functionally corresponding symbol is the yin-yang rhythm that was resumed by Toynbee. The Babylonian idea of the Great Year (determined by the precession of the equinoxes) assumes a repetition of the cosmic cycle *ad infinitum*; and the world of man follows suit because on the level of the myth of nature it is not differentiated from the life of the cosmos. The idea penetrates into Hellenic civilization. In the *Problemata* [of Pseudo-Aristotle], for instance, Aristotle raises the question whether his age is closer to the Trojan War in the direction of the past, where it occurred the last time, or in the direction of the future, where it will occur the next time. The atmosphere of the discussion is that of an intellectual conundrum. No feeling of depression is noticeable that the same things should happen again and again. We are still on the level of the myth of nature, as the substance of which man and society are a part.

This attitude becomes impossible with the introduction on the world scene of the Hebrew-Christian idea of a spiritual destiny of man, for this [insight] requires that history move in a dramatic straight line toward fulfillment. Hence in the course of Western civilization, the idea of the cycle has no historical continuity. It appears, on and off, under specific impacts of the Hellenic tradition. Typical instances are the following. In the late thirteenth century, Arabic philosophy exerts its influence in the Western

movement of Latin Averroism. The idea of eternal recurrence promptly appears in Siger de Brabant, and it is promptly suppressed as heretical because the infinity of the world is incompatible with the Christian ideas of creation and historical uniqueness. Still, the Averroist attitude leads an underground existence, and we find traces of it in the *Defensor Pacis* of Marsilius of Padua in 1324. Then, as might be expected, the idea reappears in the course of the humanist movement. In the context of political speculation, we find it in the sixteenth century in Louis LeRoy's commentary on the Platonic *Timaeus*. And again, at a distance of three hundred years, we find a vehement outburst in that aftermath of German Hellenism, in Nietzsche's *Zarathustra*. I would grant that this enumeration does not exhaust the instances, but I do not know of any other. Rare as these instances are, they have their importance as symptoms of a weakening of Christian civilization and as attempts to regain non-Christian sectors of human experience.

III. The Apprehension of Extinction

Let us next isolate the component in the modern complex that we may call the sentiment of civilizational pessimism, the feeling that Western civilization will be overcome by some catastrophe and find its end. For the apprehension of catastrophe we need not go as far back as the idea of the cosmic cycle; nevertheless, this apprehension is distinctly not a recent phenomenon. It is an experience inherent in our civilization from its beginnings. This problem received partial illumination through Toynbee when he raised the question of where the catastrophe in a civilization occurs: at the end with its disintegration, or rather at the beginning, when the response of civilization becomes necessary in order to master a catastrophe that had broken into the previously tranquil state. The problem was suggested by the myth in Plato's *Politicus*: that the divine helmsman let go the rudder of the world, that the world, left to itself, began to rotate in the wrong direction, with the dire consequences that we call civilization.

If we apply the myth to Western civilization we find, indeed, that it originates in a terrific catastrophe, that is, in the disaster of the Great Migration. The Germanic tribes, which ultimately

became the creative minority of Western civilization, were on the run before the inner-Asiatic nomads; the end of the run was reached in the contact with the Roman empire. Squeezed between the Asiatic pressure and the Roman resistance, the majority of the tribes perished—some so thoroughly that no trace of them is left in history. The danger of complete extinction continued into the tenth century, when the last of the Asiatic waves, that of the Magyars, was fought to a standstill. In the century after the Magyars, the horror of this bloodletting to the brink of extinction found expression in the great epic of the Eastern Germanic tribes, in the *Nibelungenlied*. Here we find crystallized for the first time the myth of the Western ultimate defeat at the hands of Asiatic forces, in the myth of the Nibelungen who find their end in the flaming hall of Etzel's court as a consequence of their fratricidal disunion. The Mongol invasion of the thirteenth century has left no monument like the *Nibelungenlied*. The impact was sudden and brief; the magnitude of the danger was not understood; and the accident that averted it was unknown at the time. The next major expression of imminent extinction comes in the sixteenth century with the advance of the Turks to Central Europe. In the philosophy of history of LeRoy (mentioned above) we find assembled the constellation of sentiments that today again characterizes Western apprehension: the profound pessimism caused by the eight civil wars of the sixteenth century in France; the awareness of the Asiatic menace bearing down on Europe torn by internal wars; and at the same time an irrepressible optimism inspired by the age of discovery and invention and of the humanist revival of learning. Then after three hundred years of aggressive expansion, which [erased the memory of] the degree to which Europe lives at the mercy of Asia, the apprehension of extinction sprang up again through the sudden realization of the Russian danger. Of the publicistic literature that voices this new fear, I should like to mention the work of Bruno Bauer; its great expression is found in the speculation of Nietzsche on the end of the West through Russia and in his hope against hope that a regenerated, unified Europe might arise in time to meet the Asiatic danger. The catastrophe came sooner than even Nietzsche had expected. Under a mountain of insincere propaganda, there is discernible in Hitler's writings, as well as in his actions, the sincere fear of Russia and

the insight into the necessity of a saving act before it is too late. This apprehension of extinction was one of the driving forces in a policy that tried to avert the disaster and thereby brought it [about]—complete with the mythical Nibelungen end in flames.

IV. The Roman Debate

The studies of Spengler and Toynbee purport to discover the pattern to which all civilizations conform in their course. The proof of the thesis depends on the demonstration of actual parallelisms between the several courses. In reading the studies of the two historians, we find, however, that not all of the civilizations contribute equally to the evidence. One of the civilizations is distinguished insofar as it supplies more empirical materials for the construction of the pattern than any of the others; it has the rank of a model civilization that furnishes the clues for the construction. This model civilization is the Greco-Roman. The preference is striking in Toynbee, though he assembles a wealth of materials from twenty-odd individuals of the species, while Spengler declares expressly in the preface to the *Decline of the West* that by *decline* he means the late phase of Western civilization in analogy to the decline of Rome. One of the reasons for this preference is technical; we have to use the Greco-Roman course as the model because, of the completed course, it is the one about which we know the most. Nevertheless, there is a bit more to this preference than mere technical compulsion. Insofar as the fate of Rome becomes the model of the construction, the theory of the courses continues “das römische Gespräch,” the great debate on the decline and fall of Rome that Western historians began to conduct in the eighteenth century, the debate participated in by Vico and Montesquieu, Ferguson and Gibbon, Niebuhr and Mommsen, Eduard Meyer and Rostoftzeff. We have to reflect for a moment on this aspect of the theory.

We have already dealt with the sentiment of pessimism insofar as it is caused by the apprehension of a catastrophe that may overcome the West as a whole from an external source. We now have to isolate the sentiment of pessimism insofar as it is caused by the internal moral and spiritual disintegration of the West. The disintegration is a process of some length; and it was well under

way for a considerable time before it found its alarmed expression in the pessimistic psychology of Pascal and Hobbes and in their moralistic critique of the age. After 1700 the Roman debate becomes one of the most important instruments for this critique of the age, with the implication that in the decline of Rome we find the forces at work which also determine the decline of the West. In order to make the Roman debate a suitable instrument of critique, certain preconditions had to be fulfilled. The spell of the Roman myth, which made Roman history a continuation of, if not a postscript to, the history of antiquity, had to be broken. The Western course had to emerge as an autonomous course, distinct from the Roman. This was possible only after the national states had become the dominant political entities of the Western world—entities which did not trace their origin in continuity to Rome, like the Church and the Empire, but which had gained their identity in opposition to the imperial idea. The disintegration of imperial Christianity had to be a *fait accompli* recognized as such before the West could recognize itself as something different from antiquity. You will understand that the sentiments engendered in this process must be ambivalent: a disintegration, with the terrible convulsions of the Wars of Religion, was going on, visible to everybody; and a new identity was emerging at the same time, also visible to everybody, in the national states, in the new churches, and in the advancement of science. The discovery of a Western identity, though long in preparation, must have come as a shock; for the discoverers immediately overshot the mark and placed the beginning of this identity in the time of its discovery, that is, somewhere in the Renaissance, and discarded the period of Western growth as something dark and barbaric, not properly belonging to this shiny new identity. In the bewilderment of this situation originates the *embarras de richesse* of historical interpretation since the eighteenth century. We cannot enter on this question here. Let us insist only on the ambivalence of sentiments in this consciousness of identity: at the moment it was gained in opposition to Rome, its bearers [had] also [to] consider the fate of Rome as potentially their own. We had to observe that this tension of optimism and pessimism is already in LeRoy; it becomes now, in the opposition and parallel to Rome, one of the fundamental structures in the economy of Western sentiment.

V. Sacred and Profane History

Our analysis is drawing to its close. We have to consider one more problem in the theory of the courses, a problem that is closely related to the Roman question. The new consciousness of Western identity required a revision of the traditional, dominant interpretation of history, and this was, at the critical time, around 1700, still the Augustinian; it had just manifested itself again in Bossuet's *Discourse sur l'histoire universelle*, of 1681. The instrument of interpretation was the fundamental dichotomy of sacred and profane history. Sacred history is the spiritual history of mankind, culminating in the appearance of Christ and closing with His Second Coming. Profane history, in the period between the First and Second Coming, is a time of waiting, without a meaningful structure of its own. The recognition of an autonomous Western history, the pride in its civilizational creations, could hardly be reconciled with its classification as a more or less irrelevant occupation while waiting for the one and only really important event, that is, the Second Coming. The question of the meaning of profane history had to arise. The answer to this question was given by Giambattista Vico in his *Scienza Nuova* of 1725 (to be followed by the recast, final edition of 1744). Here we find the problem raised in the freshness of its first discovery, and here we find assembled all the elements that have entered into Spengler's and Toynbee's theory of civilizational courses—and quite a few more that might have entered the modern theories to their great improvement, if Vico's recent successors had cared to study the greatest philosopher of history of the modern West a bit more closely. But this is not the time to enter into a discussion of Vico. Let us recall only what is essential to our purpose. Vico solves the problem of the profane meaning by leaving sacred history untouched and by constructing a meaningful course of Roman profane history. The pattern of the Roman *corso* he, then, uses as the model of the *storia eternal ideale*, of the eternal, ideal history to which all civilizations conform in their course like the Roman. Western history, in particular, is the *ricorso*, the second course, following the Roman; distinguished from it, however, insofar as the Roman *corso* has for its substance the unfolding and exhaustion of the gentilian myth, while the Western *ricorso*

is conducted on the new spiritual level of Christianity. You will recognize, in principle, Toynbee's metaphor of the wheel and the vehicle.

Vico's theory of the profane course, as we said, does not touch sacred history; Vico accepts it in its traditional form. Here is the wide-open problem of his theory of the *corsi*. The theory of the courses is, for Vico, a theory of profane history; it was definitely not meant as an integral philosophy of history, nor does Toynbee understand it in this sense. The history of mankind, as a whole, comprises a wealth of phenomena that does not enter into the pattern of the courses; Toynbee accepts a civilizational, spiritual history—and it is to be expected that the remaining volumes of his *Study* will deal with this problem at length. And even Spengler does not mean to exhaust by his theory the phenomena of history, though this erroneous assumption might [have] easily arisen through his own fault; for Spengler dodges the issue through the device of calling all spiritual phenomena that do not fit the course, by definition, nonhistorical.

With the problems of spiritual history we have reached the limits of our discussion that is confined to the theory of the courses proper. We may perhaps just mention, as the most important influence in recasting the problems of spiritual history, Schelling's *Philosophy of Mythology and Revelation*. Schelling has strongly influenced some of the recent interpretations of spiritual history, such as Berdyaev's *Meaning of History* and Bergson's *Deux Sources de la morale et de la religion*; and the influence extends, indirectly, to Toynbee, insofar as the English historian is inspired in his conception of a supra-civilizational history by Bergson.

VI. Conclusion

We can now summarize the results of the analysis: We have started out with a characterization of Spengler's and Toynbee's theories of the courses that, however brief and sketchy, has carried us beyond the popular concepts to the real problems.

The characterization could become the basis for the analysis of the principal factors that determine the modern theory of civilizational courses: the idea of the cycle, the apprehension of extinc-

tion, the Roman debate, and the dichotomy of sacred and profane history. A warning may be in place, that this selection of factors is woefully incomplete. In order to [assuage] my conscience I should like to stress that no presentation of this problem can claim completeness, even with regard to the bare essentials, that does not consider the place of Machiavelli in the development of a theory of courses.

In spite of all such shortcomings and omissions, I hope, finally, to have conveyed the impression that in the theory of civilizational courses we face one of the major complexes of sentiments and ideas in our Western philosophy of history; and that this complex of long standing cannot be dismissed lightly, as has become the custom among a certain type of political intellectuals.

To have conveyed this impression is the minimum I hope [to have achieved]. Personally I think—and I did not hide my opinion—that the theory of the courses is one of the few great advancements that the sciences of history and politics have made since the eighteenth century; and that in the course of the last two hundred years no thinker has arisen who would equal Giambattista Vico—the creator of the theory—as a philosopher of history and of the political myth.



What Is Political Theory?

When political scientists have come to the point where they must ask themselves the question, What is political theory? something is badly out of order in the state of their science. Clearly, a question of this kind is not raised, among professionals, with a desire for sophomoric information; and nobody will be satisfied with a sophomoric definition as an answer. The question is caused rather by a lack of clarity about the principles on which depends the relevance of the work done on the more concrete levels. (And we have indeed arrived at a situation where the work on fundamentals has come almost to a standstill and where consequently the monographs on the concrete level force the reader more often than not to the question, So what?)

When we raise the question, What is political theory? today among us, you will not expect me, however, dolorously to complain about a state of confusion, but rather to point the way out of it. And when an enterprise of the intellect and the spirit, like political science, is corroded by confusion with regard to its fundamentals, the way out of it is prescribed by the counsel of one of the great masters of our science, by the *ritornar ai principij* of Machiavelli, in the double sense of a return to the principles and the beginnings.

In following the counsel of Machiavelli I know of no better way to approach both principles and beginnings than the reading of a famous page of Aristotle:

Paper presented at the Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, Columbia, S.C., November 5, 1954. Typescript in Voegelin Papers, box 22, folder 6, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, Calif.

The true *politikos* is supposed to be a man who has concerned himself with particular care with the nature of *Arete*, for he wishes to make the citizens good and law-abiding men. As an example of this we have the lawgivers of the Cretans and Lacedaemonians, as well as any others of the kind there may have been. And if this inquiry belongs to political science, clearly its pursuit will be in accordance with our original plan. But clearly the *Arete* that we must study is human *Arete*; for we were in search of human good and human happiness.

And by human *Arete* we mean not that of the body but of the soul; and happiness we also call an activity of the soul. Now if this is so, the *politikos* clearly must know something about the psyche, just as the man who is to heal the eyes or the body as a whole must know something about the eyes or the body. All the more so, since political science is more honorable and better than medicine. And even among physicians the better ones labor hard at acquiring knowledge of the body. The *politikos*, therefore, must study the psyche; and he must study it with these objects in view, and to the extent that is sufficient for the purposes of his inquiry.¹

The page assembles the principal motives that have led to the foundation of political science by Aristotle himself, as well as by his predecessors, especially by Plato. I shall first consider the multiple meaning of the term *politikos* that has remained untranslated: (a) On its first occurrence in the passage the *politikos* is exemplified by the lawgivers of the Cretans and Lacedaemonians. He is the statesman who, in a public position, is entrusted with the drafting of the fundamental laws for a political community. (b) On its second occurrence the *politikos* is likened to the physician, in his capacity as a craftsman, who must have knowledge of human *Arete* and *Eudaimonia*, as the physician must know about the eyes and the body. He is a professional man who knows his art; but such professional knowledge, while the statesman ought to have it, will perhaps also be found in private individuals without a public position. (c) On the third occurrence the *politikos* is the man who engages in the studies that will enable him to be a good craftsman, and perhaps even a statesman if the occasion should arise. But the study of the psyche to the extent sufficient for political craftsmanship is distinctly open to a man without public office. The *politikos* in the third sense has become the student

1. [Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* I, ch. 13, 1102a 8–25. This is Voegelin's own translation from the Greek.]

of politics, the political scientist, without regard to the question whether his knowledge and talents will find public employment or not. Aristotle, in fact, was a *politikos* in the sense of a student of politics, who never had an opportunity to function as a *politikos* in the sense of a statesman, so that one could have seen whether he was a good *politikos* in the sense of a practical craftsman.

The multiplicity of meanings reflects the appearance of the private citizen as a new figure in the field of political authority. The affairs of the polis were no longer the monopoly of the statesmen and the constitutional organs of government; private citizens engaged in the study of politics and expressed the results of their inquiries concerning right order in literary form. The development was of comparatively recent date. The mystic-philosophers, around 500 B.C., and especially Heraclitus, were the first to assert their critical authority with regard to public affairs, and Aristotle stresses that Hippodamus of Miletus, in the fifth century, was the first man not engaged in politics to make an inquiry about the "best constitution." It is a development that at the same time, around 500 B.C., took place in other high civilizations, as for instance in China. And in the Chinese case its implications can be discerned more clearly than in Hellas, because the authority of the philosopher had to assert itself against a much more firmly institutionalized mediation of political order. The Chinese Son of Heaven was by his virtue, the *teh*, the exclusive mediator of cosmic order, the *tao*, to the society. Mediation of the substance of cosmic order, and its transformation into social order, was strictly the function of the prince, the *ch'un*. When in the Chinese disintegration under the Chou dynasty the autonomous personality of the philosopher appeared, in Confucius, with the claim to counsel authoritatively with regard to public order, it was clear that the philosopher had arrogated the function of the prince. The new type of the Sage was, therefore, the *ch'un-tse*, the princely man, who by his own virtue, his own *teh*, could mediate the *tao* of the cosmos to those who would follow his discipline. The Sage was the man who could supply to society the *tao* that the Prince was no longer able to furnish. In Hellas no language symbol comparable to the *ch'un-tse* was developed to express the transfer of authority from the Prince to the Sage; but the transfer from the statesmen of tradition to the philosophers

took place nonetheless, and it was even made explicit by Plato in the *Gorgias*, when the Socrates of the dialogue arrogated the true statesmanship of Athens to himself, in competition with, and opposition to, Themistocles, Miltiades, and Pericles.

We have spoken of a transfer of authority from the statesman to the philosopher and of a competition between the two types. Obviously such a development will occur only when a society is in crisis in the sense that the public authorities are no longer experienced as the representatives of true order for man and society. A schism must have developed between public order and the order that is understood as the true one by the more sensitive personalities. They will experience the public order as diseased, and they will try to restore it to health by their investigations. You will have noticed, in the page from Aristotle, the comparison between the political craftsman and the physician. The comparison is not a rhetorical metaphor but an expression of the actual genesis of political science as the art of healing the diseased order of society. The fundamental terms of the Platonic-Aristotelian science of politics, signifying the nature or essence of true order, were taken over from the medical vocabulary. The terms *eidōs* and *idea*, which today we take for granted as terms of Platonic and Aristotelian metaphysics, have their origin in the Hippocratic Treatises of the fifth century B.C. The *eidōs* or *idea* is the aggregate of symptoms that enables the physician to diagnose a disease; it is the clinical picture in the medical sense, the syndrome, as it was called by the Greek physicians of the Roman imperial period. The terms were applied to a state of social disease for the first time by Thucydides in the *History of the Peloponnesian War* when he explored the Hellenic disease, the *kinesis* of the fifth century that culminated in the disaster of the great war. In the fourth century, through Plato, the terms *eidōs* and *idea*, then, were used to signify, not the aggregate of symptoms that characterizes a diseased state of society, but the characteristics of a healthy order.

The philosopher, thus, opposes his knowledge of the healthy order of society to the surrounding order, which he diagnoses as affected by a disease, by a *nosos*. That is the opposition in which originates the role of the *politikos* as the physician. The attempt to assume the role of the healer, however, may have to be abandoned as hopeless; for in the concrete situation neither the diagnosis

of the disease nor the knowledge of right order may lead to the discovery of a remedy. The situation may be incurable. In that case the role of the statesman-physician, even if not explicitly renounced, must be surrendered in fact, and what remains is the *politikos* in the third sense, the student of politics, who faces reality in the contemplative attitude. Still, the physician's knowledge of health and disease is retained in the contemplative attitude, and the result is the peculiar development of two branches of political science that still puzzles the interpreters of Aristotle. On the one side, there will develop a science of the right order of psyche and society; on the other side, the incurable reality of the surrounding society will become an object of inquiry, regardless of its incurability. These are the two political sciences contained in *Politics* iii, vii, viii, and iv, v, vi, respectively. Chronologically, Aristotle's early concern was with the problems of right order, while in the later phase he became increasingly preoccupied with the unregenerate reality of politics. The two phases, however, do not reflect a transition from an idealistic to a realistic position, nor are they systematically in conflict with each other. For in both phases Aristotle was concerned with reality, though in the first phase with the reality of healthy order and in the later phase with the reality of diseased order.

The two branches of political science will be adequately treated, however, only if the tension between them is preserved through the personality of the philosopher. For the disease of a society remains a disease even if nothing can be done about it; and the understanding of right order is not invalidated by the impossibility of putting it to use. Hence the distinction of the two areas of investigation retains its sense only as long as the empirical study of the surrounding society is conducted with the consciousness that it is a study in pathology, while the study of right order is conducted with the consciousness that it is a study of the healthy psyche and its manifestation in society. This tension, now, can be relaxed, or completely disappear, for one reason or another. Either the political scientist is not a philosopher, or not a very intense one, and the science of right order will consequently atrophy or be completely abandoned; and parallel with the decline of the sense for right order the sense for the pathological character of the surrounding society will be lost. Or the political scientist, while

having some philosophical sensitiveness, cannot stand the strain of preserving the contemplative tension between pathological and true reality and consequently will indulge in advice for remedial action, and thereby compromise the science of right order without curing the patient.

The manifold of derailments is as rich as the variety of personalities who engage in the pursuit of political science. Still, a few examples will aid in understanding the typical elements of the problem:

(1) In Thucydides we see the thinker who suffers under the decline of the beloved country and, in a historical analysis both grandiose and penetrating, presents for the first time the clinical picture of the *kinesis*. For his standards, however, he has to rely on the traditions of a better age, as well as on the poets. He has not yet at his disposition the Platonic philosophy of right order, nor is he himself the Plato who could create it. The mood of the analysis is, therefore, something like a discipline of the intellect in despair. He knows what is evil, but he knows of no remedy; and he is not the great spiritual personality who could oppose the order of his own soul as the paradigmatic order to the disease of the time.

(2) In some respects the attitude of certain contemporary existentialists is related. Here we find the same awareness of the disease, as well as the knowledge that there is no remedy; and we also find, negatively, the absence of a spiritual stature that could manifest itself in the evocation of the alternative right order. The discipline in despair, however, frequently leaves much to be desired. A peculiar activism, nihilistic because unguided by knowledge of right order, induces participation in politics, either actively or by counsel and connivance. It is not a cheap opportunism but a mysticism that senses in action a remedial quality; on man seems to rest the obligation not to withhold his share in the therapy, even if he does not see whither the way goes. It is a mystical trust in Being that unfolds in history, and the manner of participation will depend on the situation of the existentialist, as well as on his judgment concerning the direction in which the historical forces are moving. Some, like Heidegger, will temporarily give way to National Socialist inclinations; others, like Sartre, will commit themselves to communism. The attitude is

not new, but it has become more frequent in our time and acquired a label. It is essentially not different from the activist mysticism of Bakunin, or from Spengler's acceptance of a technological age, which he discerned as the inevitable future on the basis of his analysis. Moreover, it manifests itself in numerous intermediate varieties, such as Laski's transition from a mixture of Lockean constitutionalism and Fabian socialism to an existentialist acceptance of communism because it seemed the creed in which the greatest number believed with the greatest fervor. And this formulation, with its Benthamite association, should remind us that the historical nihilism of the existentialists has roots in regions where ordinarily they are not sought.

(3) Behind such phenomena of our time, more interesting because of their contemporaneousness than because of their intrinsic merit, lie issues of fundamental importance. In the development of the two branches of political science by Aristotle, there is inherent the possibility that the science of order will be abandoned by a later thinker, while the science of the pathological states of society, the *parekbasis*, will be cultivated independently. In isolation, however, a science of the diseased states of society is liable to lose its character as a study in pathology. With the science of right order disappears the tension between health and disease, and the diseased state will acquire a neutral character of normality. In the theory of politics the pathological case will become the "nature of man," without the qualification of disease. That was, indeed, the theoretical position of Hobbes, with far-reaching consequences for the course of political theory in the modern centuries down to the just adumbrated derailments of existentialism. Nevertheless, even when the diseased nature becomes the nature of man without a qualifying index, the therapeutic desire of the *politikos* as the physician does not disappear. Hobbes, like the Thucydides whom he studied with care, was shocked by the evils of the surrounding society. But since, as a theorist, he would not admit its pathological character, he indulged in institutional devices as remedial action and evoked the idea of the Leviathan as the power instrument that would keep the nature of man in check.

(4) The Hobbesian type of political science is far removed from the Platonic-Aristotelian. For both Plato and Aristotle knew that

the disease of society had its cause in a disorder of the psyche; that an effective therapy had to treat the cause of the disease, not its symptoms; and that a cure of symptoms through institutional devices was of doubtful value, if of any at all. Hobbes, on the contrary, starts from the premise that a therapy of the soul is impossible; that the disorder of the psyche is its nature; and that only the worst symptoms can be repressed by the fear of institutional violence. The principle of institutional therapy, now, is a type that can separate from the concrete conditions of the Hobbesian problem, that is, from the repression of Puritan fanatics. (a) It can assume the vulgarian form of a not overly clear search for institutional devices that will take care of the not too clearly seen bad spots in human nature, and create a stable and happy political organization for all future—the vulgarian derailment satirized by T. S. Eliot in the lines: “They want a system so perfect that nobody need to be good.”² (b) Or it can enter into combination with the neo-Pelagianism of the eighteenth century, as represented by Rousseau. Man will then be considered basically good, but corrupted by inadequate institutions; and the solution for all evils will be found in correctly constructed institutions that will give free rein to the essential goodness of man. (c) Or it can assume the form, more deeply indebted to eighteenth-century Pelagianism than usually admitted, of considering the political institutions as such the source of evil and of finding the solution in the “withering away of the state.”

(5) A good deal of the contemporary confusion in political science can be traced to the Hobbesian abolition of the science of right order of the psyche and the consequent reliance on institutional therapy. Nevertheless, another factor of at least equal importance is the mysticism of action in the wake of Hegel’s philosophy of history and politics. The causal relation has to be formulated with some caution because Hegel’s gnosticism, while lending itself to the activist interpretation in its wake, does not necessitate it. When a great thinker falls into an error, his mistake

2. [Quoted from T. S. Eliot, *Choruses from “The Rock,”* in Eliot, *The Complete Poems and Plays* (London: Faber & Faber, 1969); see also Eric Voegelin, “Wisdom and the Magic of the Extreme,” in *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, vol. 12, *Published Essays, 1966–1985*, ed. with intro. by Ellis Sandoz (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 317.]

might be a warning to the successors rather than a model to be imitated. Hence, one cannot make Hegel responsible for all of the political existentialism from Marx and Bakunin to such contemporaries as Mussolini, Heidegger, or Sartre. Nevertheless, there is in Hegel's philosophy of history the point that lends itself to the activist derailment unless it is hedged with ample warnings, and that point is the discrepancy between the subjective intentions of human action and the objective meaning of history revealed in retrospect. Hegel had correctly observed that the historian finds, in retrospect, a meaning in the course of history that has not been created intentionally by any of the actors in history. An independent factor must be assumed, the *List der Vernunft*, which bends the actions of human beings to its own purposes and weaves a secular pattern of meaning out of the ephemeral actions of men. The discrepancy, as I said, is correctly observed; but unless it retains its status as a paradox of human existence it will destroy existence. If the meanings of history, discernible in retrospect by an observer at a finite point of time, lose their transparency as *symbola* of the one meaning of history that is known to God alone; if that unknown meaning of history is conceived as an *eidos* that can be brought within the grasp of human cognition (an error of which Hegel cannot be quite absolved); then the ultimate purpose of man to create and preserve the order within himself will be abandoned in favor of the apparently much more important purpose to fit his life of action into the ultimate purpose of history. When the mystery of transcendent order in history is objectified; when the meaning of human existence in society and history, which is hidden in the *scientia divina*, is made an object for a *scientia humana*; then the divine inflation of man will destroy the one and only order of the psyche that is within the range of human action. Man will then attempt the shortcut of creating finite order by throwing himself, through his action, into a delusionary stream of transcendent order.

(6) I have pointed to the origin of this contemporary obsession in the philosophy of Hegel. But the inevitable brevity of these remarks should nevertheless be qualified by the observation that the tendency to indulge in the delusionary transformation of *scientia divina* into *scientia humana* does not begin in the nineteenth century. If we look for its first major manifestation in the modern

period, we should have to go back to Calvin's misconstruction of the paradox of predestination as a foreknowledge that is firmly enough in the grasp of man to serve even as a basis for the formation of churches of the elect.

Let us return from the modern derailments to the classic beginnings. The tension between the two political sciences, that is, the sciences of the true and the diseased orders of psyche and society, posed a number of theoretical problems. What was the peculiar factor in the nature of man that inclined it so heavily toward disease in both the individual and society? What were the forces that caused the disorder? And why was it so difficult, if not impossible, to find a cure?

The answers to these questions bulk heavily in the Platonic-Aristotelian science of politics. And you are, of course, familiar with them. I shall point, therefore, only to one or two major issues:

(1) The problem overriding all others was the task of finding a formula for the nature of man that would make the equality of men compatible with the actually observed inequalities. That problem, for certain technical reasons, has never been solved satisfactorily. Nevertheless, an approximately adequate construction was furnished through the assumption that all men are equal with regard to the potentiality of their nature, while they are unequal through the mode of actualization achieved in each individual case. The man whose nature has become maximally actualized Plato designates as the philosopher, while Aristotle prefers the term *spoudaios*, the mature man.

(2) The next fundamental issue is created through the fact that the number of men who achieve maximal actualization of their human potentiality is at all times rather limited. That fact enters as one of the recognized constants about human nature into classic political science. As a consequence, the best knowledge of the true order of the psyche can never lead in practice to the organization of a society of mature men. The *Politeia* evoked in Plato's *Republic* is not a philosophers' polis, as is sometimes loosely asserted, but a polis in which the philosophers, understood as the most fully developed human beings, furnish the personnel of the ruling class. But Plato himself was the first to assert that even his model of a best polis (which already had incorporated the recognition that one can never have a whole society of mature

men) was not a recipe for institutional reform, for the good reason that the number of men required to form a philosophical ruling class could hardly be found in a concrete society. And Aristotle dismissed with a contemptuous snort the idea that in any Greek polis of his time there could be found a hundred mature men to form the ruling nucleus of a polis according to the standards developed in his *Politics* vii–viii. Hence, when the classic philosophers created a science of the right order in psyche and society, it was clearly not their purpose, as modern interpreters so often erroneously assume, to develop a blueprint for institutions to be used in politics. They were no impractical dreamers who wasted the time of their lives with the elaboration of unrealizable ideals. They rather constructed models of a maximally actualized order, which are valid regardless of the degree of actualization in the surrounding society. And into these models, as we have seen, they had built the important assumption that maximal actualization of order in the individual psyche is rare.

(3) In the light of these observations the tension between healthy and diseased order, which animated the classic political science, will appear as something more than a futile complaint about the evils of the age. For the tension is inherent in all societies at all times; and the idea of a perfect society is so obviously an illusion that Plato and Aristotle never even thought of it. Nevertheless, both thinkers diagnosed a disease of society that went beyond the varieties of human inequalities accepted as a constant factor. Hence we must distinguish between degrees of tension. The Platonic-Aristotelian models, we may say, incorporate what must be considered the normal degree of tension. The human beings who form a society reveal a wide spread of maturity, from the low degree, which Aristotle characterized as the “slave by nature,” to the mature man; and even within the range of maturity in the full sense Aristotle allows for a spread from the maturity that enables a man to be a full-fledged, responsible citizen to the rarer kind that enables him to be a political leader. It is the “normal” task of the student of politics to show how such variegated human raw material can be organized in a political society in such a manner that a maximum of good order will result. And the Platonic-Aristotelian answer to this problem was the model of a society in which the maturest types furnished the ruling class.

(4) The degree of tensions incorporated in the models was considered by Plato and Aristotle the good order of society. The category of disease (*nosos*) or perversion (*parekbasis*) was applied only to social states in which the rule of the best was no longer secured. And these further degrees of tension were considered, for all practical purposes, beyond repair. The analysis of this second degree of tension, of its social forms, its causes, and of the reasons for its incurability is the other large sector of Platonic-Aristotelian political science. It is the area of problems that today is treated under the title of the cycle theory of history. To the classic philosophers we owe the insight that the object of investigation for the student of politics is not the single polis and its constitution but the civilizational society and the series of institutions unfolding in its course.

We have returned to the beginnings of political science. And the return has rewarded us with an understanding of the range of problems that is relevant to the student of politics today, as it was to the founders of the science. Let me briefly enumerate the main divisions within the range, in systematic order:

(1) The philosophical anthropology that furnishes the basis for the exploration of right order in the soul

(2) The exploration of the right order itself, that is, the Aristotelian science of the virtues and their hierarchical order

(3) The manifold of characters, within the range of the nature equal for all men, that must be recognized as the normal diversification of human nature

(4) The construction of institutional models that will furnish an optimal environment for the unfolding of human nature, with due regard to the diversification of characters

(5) The historical process of a society as an element of its nature; and the recognition of its autonomy as a limitation to the realization of optimal models

(6) The recognition of the civilizational course, in its full time dimension, as the unit of observation for the political scientist.

Moreover, in penetrating to the therapeutic motive, which made this range of problems relevant to the student of politics, we have gained criteria for understanding certain modern developments in theory as derailments.

While the return to the beginning, thus, has clarified the range of problems both positively and negatively, we must be aware that the beginning was not the end. Between the foundation of political science and our present lie the Christian centuries. Political phenomena have emerged that were yet beyond the horizon of Plato and Aristotle. We have only to ask why we have political creed movements today, such as Communism or National Socialism, while they were absent from the Hellenic scene, in order to see whole areas of relevant problems arise to which classic political science offers no guidance. Of more fundamental importance, however, is the fact that the rise of Christianity has affected the structure of classic political science at its core. In conclusion this problem must at least be adumbrated.

The Platonic-Aristotelian science originated, as you have seen, in the opposition of the philosopher's healthy order to the diseased order of society. The therapeutic intention, however, had to be severely restrained, because the patient proved intractable. The philosopher's way did not lead from the diseased polis, through skillful political intervention, to a healthy polis, but to the Academy and the Lykeion, that is, to foundations in which the *bios theoretikos* could be cultivated in a community congenial to philosophers. The cultivation of *episteme* as a way of life emerged as the alternative to politics; the fulfillment of existence could be found through methodical, rational exploration, in community, of the position of man in world and society. The realm of science had gained its autonomy and separated from politics. Clearly, however, that was a solution only for men with philosophical inclinations. As far as the mass of mankind was concerned the disease of the psyche, which could not be cured by politics, could not be cured by philosophy either. The solution was found through the world religions, and in the West specifically through Christianity. The rise of Christianity has purified, as so many other things, classical political science, insofar as it has relieved it of the task of curing the souls of men and left it with the burden, heavy enough, of the rational exploration of the problems of order in society.

Since the expansion of Christianity over the Mediterranean and Western world our civilization rests on the balance of State, Church, and Science. Whenever the balance is disturbed, the result is stagnation, crisis, revolution, and retrogression. When the

Church becomes politically ambitious, as it did in the Middle Ages, spiritual reform movements will arise. When the imperial power becomes hieratically ambitious, as it did in the Middle Ages, the national temporal powers will go their own way. When science becomes ambitious, hieratically or politically, it will degenerate into the handmaid of theology or politics. In our own time we see totalitarian movements arrogate the spiritual to the temporal power and at the same time prescribe the interpretation of politics and history by their gnostic creed. And in the West, while the worst has fortunately been averted as yet, we are still suffering badly from the national parochialism, since the sixteenth century, which tends to transform political science into an apologetics of the respective national systems of government.

Since the authority of reason can be supported neither by arms nor by damnation, its social effectiveness will always be precarious, though it is not more precarious today than at various other times in the history of our civilization. And in any case, there is no sense in worrying about problems beyond our range of action. As far as the internal situation of political science is concerned, however, it is suffering today, not from stagnation, but rather from confusion. In part that confusion is the aftermath of past derailments, which I have briefly indicated, and can be overcome by critical reflection on the beginnings; while to another part it is caused by the wealth of new materials and problems pouring in on us from all sides—from a contemporary scene that has become earthwide, as well as from the steadily advancing historical sciences. That, however, should be a cause, not of dismay, but rather of joy, to the philosopher who is in love with the richness of human nature and, at the same time, senses the imperial power of ordering reason.



The Spiritual and Political Future of the Western World

I. Introduction

The title of this lecture, "The Spiritual and Political Future of the Western World," calls for a note of caution. This is especially true when the person delivering it claims to be a scientist (*Wissenschaftler*). For we should not indulge in the illusion that in political science, or indeed in the social sciences in general, predictions concerning the future can be made in the same way the natural sciences make them regarding specific events in nature. Of course it has been tried. Perhaps, by way of introduction, I may remind you of Oswald Spengler, who, in his *Decline of the West*, posited a pattern of civilizational cycles applicable to all civilizations, including our own. With the help of such a scheme Spengler could determine at what stage of the cycle's development our civilization found itself and predict what was about to follow. Spengler's enterprise was doomed to failure, however, because he neglected a very important factor: the matter of freedom. As it turned out Spengler found successors who were somewhat more careful, especially Arnold Toynbee. He also posited civilizational cycles but was more cautious in his predictions of what might possibly happen in the Western world. Toynbee took the factor

Translated for this edition from the German by William Petropulos, this lecture was delivered by Voegelin at the Amerika-Haus in Munich on June 9, 1959. The editors have taken their text from the German edition transcribed and edited by Peter J. Opitz, to whom we offer our thanks here. See Eric Voegelin, *Die geistige und politische Zukunft der westlichen Welt*, Occasional Papers of the Eric-Voegelin-Archive at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich, no. 1, ed. with intro. by Peter J. Opitz (Munich: Eric-Voegelin-Archiv, 1996).

of freedom into account and said: In any particular situation we cannot know how human beings will react or what they will do. In a lecture, which Toynbee recently held in Munich, he strongly emphasized this point. Spengler's scheme was also inadequate for another reason. He conceived cultures to be closed organisms. But societies are not organisms, and to maintain the notion of organism, he was forced to ignore a whole series of important phenomena that did not fit his model. It was again Toynbee who took them into account. Most important, Spengler had to forgo consideration and examination of the world religions, for their course ran outside the civilizational cycles and therefore constituted one of the phenomena of which his cycle theory could not take account.

I have recalled these things in order to caution against too quickly making predictions. The situation is much too complicated to even make predictions concerning processes about which we can be pretty certain that they will continue in the future as they are now. In addition, we have the factor of freedom, with its various turns and surprises, that interferes even in the course of processes that are seemingly the most easy to predict. Thus, when we speak of the future, we must be clear about what we mean by the term. In what follows, *the future* will refer to the attempt to extrapolate from factors that are presently empirically identifiable. A current situation that has developed over time has a structure that continues to be effective; if we can identify this structure, essentially, we have also identified the factors emanating out of the past that will most probably continue into the future. To the extent that some of these factors are present in the current situation as gauges, so to speak, of the present situation, we can also conceive them as continuing into the future. Even if we cannot speak with certainty about the outcome of a particular matter, we can at least identify the factors—the things that Toynbee refers to as the “challenges”—which we will have to face, independent of the substance of our actual responses.

Beyond this we must establish the criteria by which we make our selections. What do we want to focus on in the present? What do we want to know about the future? The object of our statements should be that which is technically called the *societas perfecta*, that is, the society perfect by nature. Such a social order

must fulfill two conditions, in the light of which it should be examined. First, it must be able to survive; second, it must be endowed with the correct spiritual order. This division covers the whole field. What aspects of our society can we characterize as viable, or capable of survival? What does our society look like viewed from this perspective? That is the part of the question that is usually called the political aspect, whereby "the political" in the narrow sense of the word—the structure of power—is only a small part of the problem. As we will presently see, the issue of viability goes far beyond the question of mere political power. The second aspect is that of the correct spiritual order, and it will concern us in the second half of the lecture.

II. Viable Order

Let me address the question of a viable order. In what respect is the Western order viable? What makes a political order viable under modern conditions? The conditions under which we live, and which can be considered as viable, are determined by the fact that we live in the "Age of Industrial Society." By the term *industrial society* we mean the type of society in which productivity and economic supply are based on modern technology, which is itself built on a natural science foundation. If society exists on the basis of conditions provided by modern technology, then certain criteria must be met in order for a modern society to exist; these conditions can be outlined in a number of points. I will briefly list these conditions, without telling you anything you don't already know, but it is sometimes useful to bring these things into some order.

First, such a society must command an extensive territory; it cannot be a small state. It must be as large as Europe, or the Russian empire, or the United States of America, or all of Latin America, or China, or India. An industrial society requires such a large territory because it cannot function without a certain minimum population; and for two reasons: first, in order to keep the industrial plant running, second, to provide an adequate market for its goods. Thus, a certain minimum population is required: in the range of the 175 million Americans in the United States, the approximately 300 million Europeans, the 200 million Russians,

the 600 million Chinese, etc. In order to keep the industrial society running and feed its machine with the resources it requires, it needs raw materials. These can be provided either by its own territory or by friendly territories under its control. In addition, it requires a certain level of education; first, in the technical sense, in order to keep the industrial apparatus functioning. That means the people must be able to read and write, they must be capable of carrying out tasks they have been taught, they must be capable of becoming engineers, etc. If these conditions are met, they create the industrial and power potential that a society must have in order to survive under modern conditions and among societies of comparable size. If there were not, at the same time, rival and enemy societies engaged in so-called friendly co-existence, a society of this size would not be necessary; we could live in smaller societies and do without the advantages of the large market economy that industrial society requires.

Because the optimal size varies with the state of technology, just how large such a society should be is an open question. That is to say, if the current technology is such that its potential is only optimally used when a market of 200 million people is available, then, to function optimally, the society needs these 200 million people. That is approximately the state of technology today; in twenty or thirty years it may have changed to the extent that, for the most efficient use of its industrial capacity, the optimal size of a society will be 500 million people. Here we have a variable factor that may be decisive for the future but of which we can have no knowledge today. But we must keep in mind the question whether, for example, societies of the size of the Soviet Union, with its now 210 million people, or the United States, with its 175 million, in twenty years might not be too small to form optimal industrial societies; it could be that in twenty years the optimal size for the state of technology will have shifted to the extent that societies the size of China are needed for the most efficient use of a society's power and industrial potential. In this case, federations between the East and the West would become necessary in order to counterbalance the optimal order of the Chinese society. This variable factor, which could become decisive in the future, must always be kept in mind. Everything that we can say today concerning the adequacy of the size of an industrial society is made

with the tacit assumption that the state of technology stays at approximately the same level it is today, that it does not radically change and make radically new dimensions of market relations necessary.

Thus, these are the conditions, seen from the perspective of industrial development, that must be fulfilled in order to create a *societas perfecta* as a viable entity of industrial and political power. Insight into the necessity of these conditions has grown slowly; let me list a few of the steps that mark this growth of understanding.

In the early nineteenth century it became clear, for the first time, that, as societies, the national states were too small. This occurred as the result of recognizing the rivalry for political power with the East, and not as the result of considerations concerning industrial society—for that purpose the national states were still large enough. Napoleon's famous dictum, that there are only two nations in the world, Russia and the Occident, was made in 1802. His later policy, which was primarily directed against Russia, was formulated with the intention of creating a West European occidental power bloc to counterbalance the expansionist Russia of that time in terms of territory and population. In the course of the First and Second World Wars, [the truth of Napoleon's dictum] became manifest. However it was made all the more acute by the advent of a technologically based industrial development that resulted in the national states becoming too small. The optimal use of technical possibilities was no longer in balance with the optimal benefit to the internal political structure. Please recall what I said earlier: Forty years ago—a relatively short span of time—the national states of England, France, and Germany were still large enough for the optimal use of the technology available at the time. Today they are no longer large enough; nor is there any reason to suppose that in another forty years the situation will not shift again and render societies the size of Europe or the United States too small for the new state of technology.

But as the course of the Second World War revealed, it is not just the national states in Europe that have grown too small, it is Europe itself. Therefore, since the end of the war, at all levels that can be organized, efforts have been made to create a large Western unity. In the face of continuing national resistance, this

takes place in the form of various economic communities—for example, the European Coal and Steel Community—that correspond to NATO on the military level. People have grasped the fact that Europe alone is too small and must therefore be organized into a larger Western context, one that also includes America. That may sound like only Europe sees things this way; but it is also true from the American point of view. American intervention in World Wars I and II did not take place as acts of Christian charity but were based on insight into the very solid political reason that a Western Europe ruled by an antidemocratic state, a regime, so to speak, opposed to the West—whether National Socialist or Communist—would be politically unacceptable to the United States. It would force the United States into an isolation that would diminish its political power. In order for the United States to maintain its position Europe must be oriented to the West and allied to the United States. For in this political sense, America by itself has also grown too small. America is too small to operate on its own. It needs the European *glacis* in order to realize the power potential necessary for it to compete militarily, economically, industrially, and in terms of population. If this *glacis*, which constitutes a substantial power potential in its own right, were, for example, occupied by the Soviet Union, a power shift would take place that the United States could hardly endure. It would lead to very extensive readjustments, both in national and foreign policy, and possibly to warlike situations. Thus, not just Europe but also America has grown too small. Because both are too small when faced with such colossal territorial structures as the Soviet Union or China, at the level of the question of viability or survival, of the capacity of such a “societas perfecta” to live, we have more or less a problem of the West in general. That is to say: It is not a problem of individual national states, nor a problem of a European federation, but also a problem that includes the United States—namely, a problem of the Western world. We have a power bloc here that—under the assumption that it holds together—is now capable of counterbalancing the other power blocs that are beginning to form, such as the Chinese. Power blocs of this size are necessary, and it is this Western power bloc that I have in mind when I speak of the “West” that has, or does not have, a future, and of what that future may look like etc.

Beyond that we have an additional problem that has been created by the development of military technology in recent decades—I mean the problem of atomic weapons. In the case of an atomic war the United States and the Soviet Union, which possess atomic weapons, would suffer very heavy damages, perhaps to such an extent that hardly any continuity would exist between what they were before and what they would be after such an event. We are dealing with a suicidal military technology that must not be used. In the shadow of this new military technology, which cannot be used but only functions as a deterrent in order to maintain the balance of power, something else is taking place, the seeds of which were also planted earlier: A global society is coming into being that transcends the civilizational communities that are also coming into view. This global society consists of such large power blocs that have to get along with each other because a nuclear conflict between them would lead to their destruction. This society is now a global society because it has a particular intellectual content, about which I do not intend to say a great deal today because my topic is the problems of the occident and not the problems of global society. It has a spiritual unity insofar as that which welds the various civilizations together into one society, making them partners in one set of problems, consists of forms of intellectual behavior and technique that have their center in Europe and America and, thus, are at home in the West. The entire world outside the West is being Westernized insofar as the Western standard of living, developed first in the United States, has become a paradigm, the example, for all other parts of the world. All wish to live under such pleasant material conditions as the Americans have—an understandable material desire that can be realized if industrial society is introduced.

Thus a world revolution has taken place with the revolutionary center in the West—in Europe and the United States. It is a revolution that has the goal of bringing the entire world up to a level of civilization—in the material sense of the word—comparable to that found in the West. It seems to be a worldwide movement that cannot be stopped and in which the various civilizational societies intend to maintain their independence and their own organization. This world revolution expresses itself politically insofar as Western colonial imperialism has come to an end. This is also the

case where it has not yet been admitted to have come to an end and where the other civilizational societies—the Indian, Chinese, Islamic, African, and Latin American peoples—want to organize themselves as industrial societies that will make possible a standard of living similar to that enjoyed by the United States and Western Europe today.

Thus, at the level of the material basis we find ourselves in a world revolution with a European-Western center. I emphasize this fact so strongly because, under the impact made by the theses of Spengler and the occasional pessimism of Toynbee, some people still speak of a “decline of the West,” of the *Untergang des Abendlandes*. There are good reasons for speaking in this manner, and I will touch upon them briefly, because we must now begin to talk about the spiritual aspects of our topic.

Spengler's *Decline of the West* achieved an enormous public success following the First World War. It had become clear to everyone that Europe was in disorder and that something would have to pass away before anything new could be built. But one must not overlook the fact that Spengler did not discover this as a result of World War I but wrote his book before the war, when the catastrophe of the war was not yet visible. The first volume appeared in 1917, at a time when, as it is expressed in the foreword to the first edition, Spengler believed that Germany would win the war. Thus, as far as material circumstances are concerned, the book was written in a situation he judged optimistically, and in this sense it is not a pessimistic work. When, despite this, Spengler spoke of a “decline of the West,” he meant such symptoms of decline as were abundantly visible in the Victorian and Wilhelminian period: namely, signs of spiritual decline. Let us now turn to these problems.

But before we begin, I must repeat one thing: The fact that particular forms die and new ones come into existence must not be allowed to deceive us concerning [the important fact] that, if at any time in history we can identify the victorious progress of one civilizational society then in ours when a style of life and thought, which originated in Europe and America, has developed into a worldwide ferment of revolution. In this sense the entire world is being Europeanized and Americanized. Even if its reception is mixed with feelings of hate, still this way of life is now

the acknowledged standard for humanity. One cannot have more success than that: to be the revolutionary center of all humanity.

In order for us to make a judgment concerning the second, spiritual, level, we must enquire into the question of spiritual order. Of course, here too I must confine myself to a broad outline of the issues involved, for one could easily write a book about the problems of spiritual order in the West and their lines of possible development.

III. Spiritual Order

The problem of spiritual order is something about which one can speak with precision. It is not at all necessary, as too often takes place, to indulge in unfounded opining. We find the exact categories [needed for such a discussion] at the very beginning of Western civilization. In the question of order we must distinguish between temporal and spiritual power. The differentiation between these two estates (*Stände*) of order was made by Pope Gelasius near the end of the fifth century and has become known as the Gelasian principle. According to this principle the human being exists in two orders: the world organized by the emperor, and the church organized by the pope. For the world at that time, the secular order was that of the empire and the spiritual order was the church. The representatives of these two estates, the emperor and the pope, counterbalance one another: each is autonomous in his own realm and has authority there over the other. This mutual limitation, relative authority, and cooperation in the question of order is the principle of the Gelasian order. Throughout the entire Middle Ages it determined the West until it collapsed during the period of the Reformation, about which we will have speak in a moment. This basic principle of the West's concept of order continues through Western history, although the instances that carry it, the representatives of order, change.

Let me briefly list the phases through which this division between temporal and spiritual power has passed. The first division is that which I have just mentioned, the so-called Gelasian, between emperor and pope. But as early as the High Middle Ages, we find in Dante's thought, created under the impact of the Averroist philosophy of the time, a level that does not accord to what we

find later in the *Divina Comedia*. In his work *De Monarchia*, Dante sees the world monarch as the bearer of the temporal power; but the bearer of the spiritual is, not the pope, but rather the philosopher as he presents him in that work. However, the only philosopher who is identified by name in *De Monarchia* is the Arabian philosopher Averroës. Without being able to go into details here, it may be said that he sets a type of Averroist-oriented intellectual at the side of the world emperor.

Just after the Reformation, as national states came into being, a new problem emerged: how to organize the national state so that, on the one hand, the internal order, the power of the king, would be absolute (in the place of the emperor or Dante's world emperor, the national king appears) and, on the other hand, [spiritual power would be maintained]. In order to do away with the conflict of the churches, an adogmatic mystical philosopher [was put in their place]. Those are the two bearers [of authority] that we find near the end of the sixteenth century in the great work of Jean Bodin, *Six livres de la Republique*. In these six books concerning the republic Bodin developed the concept of two bearers of order, the national king in the sovereign national state, who determines the national state's legal order, and the adogmatic philosopher as his adviser. In contrast, the churches, which are continually involved in wars with one another, are denied any public status. In the sixteenth century there were eight religiously motivated civil wars in France; for that reason we find the adogmatic philosopher, the mystic, as the bearer of the spiritual order.

A third phase began in the nineteenth century. In place of the emperor, world monarch, and national king, we find in August Comte's conception of order the industrial manager; in place of the pope, philosopher, and adogmatic mystic, we find the positivist intellectual. Here we have two new types: a sort of technocracy in which the temporal power, the administration, is assumed by the leaders of industrial society, while the spiritual order is represented by the positivist intellectuals, an ideological type developed by Comte.

This development is interesting for two reasons. First, it reveals that, as far as the issue of order is concerned, i.e., the question of temporal and spiritual power, nothing has changed since the beginning of Western civilization. The problem exists today just

as it did in the fifth century. Fourteen hundred years later we are still preoccupied with the problems of temporal and spiritual order. The only questions are, What should the spiritual and temporal order look like? and Who are its representatives? A second reason why this development is interesting is that, in the area of spiritual representation, first the philosopher assumed the role of the pope, then later the adogmatic mystic took the place of the philosopher, and, finally, Comte assigned the role to the positivist intellectual, the ideologue. Here, on the spiritual side of the question, something has taken place that goes far beyond the original Gelasian concept. It is very obvious that here we have an idea of temporal order that requires a representative—not a temporal order in the sense of a mere power structure but rather a spiritual order of the world—that cannot be adequately filled by the church, by revelation, or by representatives of the church. I will have to return to this matter in more detail, but for the time being, let me express it by saying that the philosopher appears as a third figure of authority.

And with this we have a triangle of authorities that is as old as the Gelasian bifurcation that collapses when the pope's place is taken by the temporal philosophical authority. We find this tripartite division in Justinian. It is the basis of his great law-codifying work and is carried out in the *Constitutio imperatoria majestas* that prefaces his law-codifying work, especially the *Institutions*. This work attributes three functions to the ruler. First, he must be the *Imperator*, the emperor who commands the army, the strategist, the general. The structure of power lies in the emperor's hands, and this order of power has its foundation in military power—thus, the *Imperator*, the general. The second function is rooted in Roman religious tradition. In Rome there was the *Pontifex Maximus*, whose function was taken over by the emperor and maintained right up into the Christian era. Thus, at the same time, the emperor is something like a *Pontifex Maximus* and, in this office, a defender of the faith in the form this had assumed after the first council. Therefore, the entire corpus of dogma, in particular the dogma of the Nicean Council, became the contents of Justinian's legislation. The Nicean Council was binding in the Byzantine empire, not because it was promulgated by the church, but because, at the same time, the emperor made

it the content of a legislative act. Church dogma was made into a statute by the emperor, and in this capacity the emperor now becomes the defender of the faith. Finally, in the third function, that is also dealt with in the *Constitutio imperatoria majestas*, the emperor is the *religiosissimus juris*, i.e., the person most profoundly committed to seeing that the obligations of justice are carried out.

It is in the question of justice, the main issue in Justinian's entire work of codification, that we find the philosophical problem. For it is not a matter of positive law, such as it is understood today by theorists of positive law, but it is concerned with a law that has its foundation in philosophy. The philosophical foundations have their roots in the Stoics and in Aristotle. They are only referred to in a few sentences in the Codex and the commentaries, principally by the Renaissance commentators, for example by Jacques de Cujas in the sixteenth century. The content of Roman Law is referred back to Aristotelian ethics and, therewith, its philosophical basis in Aristotelian philosophy. Thus, in order to be just, the emperor must not only bring forth positive law, which can be very unjust, but must also bring the substance of justice into the positive law; this is found in an understanding of a just order among human beings, conceived now as a human world order. The structure of this human world order is provided by the analysis of reason, the work of philosophers.

Therewith we have the three sources of authority for order that were binding in the Middle Ages and that slowly emerged in an increasingly clear manner: the imperative, or purely power-oriented, temporal reason through philosophy, and the understanding of the human being's relationship to God that is given to us in revelation. In a manner of speaking, we may speak of a law of Western order: When these three sources of authority hold each other in balance and one does not overpower the others, we have order. But if one absorbs one of the others, or assumes the functions of all three, disorder reigns. Disorder is present, for example, if, as in a totalitarian state, an ideological sect rules and the holder of the "imperial *majestas*," the holder of power in Justinian's sense of the term, who has the military and state power in his hand at the same time under the aegis of an ideology, takes the spiritual leadership into his hands and performs the functions that would

otherwise be reserved for the church or philosophy. Consequently, when the three functions of power, philosophy, and revelation lie in one hand, we have the maximum of disorder.

Of course there are mixed forms. Today in the West there are intellectual-ideological movements that do not take power into their own hands. For example, a movement like Comte's positivism, especially in the social science schools in America, is so strong that, de facto, it rules the universities in these areas. But, thank God, it does not control state power. Nevertheless, here we find the fusion of two functions. The positivist ideologue as we find him massively present in American social science—naturally, there are exceptions—constitutes a fusion of philosophy and revelation. In matters of the spirit it undertakes to supply complete prescriptions for society, organization, etc. At the same time, it replaces philosophy and revelation with ideology. Thus, ideology fuses together two sources of authority. If it comes to power, and thereby gets the power of the state into its hands, all three sources of authority are then fused into one. Here we have something akin to objective criteria for determining what order is: namely, when the three sources of order counterbalance one another and each is acknowledged by the others in its relative autonomy. Disorder exists if any one of the three disturbs the relative autonomy and balance among them.

Let me remind you that one of the most important thinkers of the nineteenth century, the French scholar Ernest Renan, once defined Europe: Europe has three roots (and European order therefore has the same three): the Roman organization of power, Hellenic philosophy, and the Jewish-Christian religion. That is a somewhat more general statement of what I have tried to say here more specifically, and in more detail, for the three sources of authority: power, revelation, and reason. One can also say that is European order. Where this order continues to exist, Europe continues to exist; where it is disturbed, Europe is also. And the notion of "decline" can be very precisely defined: it is the destruction of this kind of order.

This raises the following questions: Why does it come to these disorders? Why do philosophy, Christianity, and power not function in this ideal balance in which they should be held? The source of disorder is to be looked for in a place where it is generally not

sought: in the structure of Christianity itself. But don't expect me to viciously attack Christianity; far from it, you may expect the opposite. My intention is rather to identify where Christianity is effective and where it is not. But this is not a criticism of Christianity, because in the sphere in which disorder occurs, it was not Christianity's task to be active. Christianity achieved something that the philosophy of the ancient world was unable to: a clear separation of transcendent, godly, being from the temporal realm. Divine being, divinity, is concentrated in the world transcending "Beyond." That statement is very easily made but, when accepted, has far-reaching consequences. From the standpoint of the ancient civilizations, and today for the ethnic cultures and for Asian civilizations, it has the incredible consequence of dissolving the older notion of a world full of gods. There are no more gods in the world; when divinity is concentrated in a world-transcendent sphere, the intracosmic divine order disappears.

Once the insight is accepted that divinity transcends the world, the world that remains is no longer filled with godly powers to whom respect is due. It is at this point, when the world has been stripped of divinity, that it becomes the field for human activity without restraint. For now, the human being no longer needs to be considerate, there being nothing more in the world that requires human consideration. The entire development, which is specific to the West—for example, science—is made possible by the fact that Christianity de-divinized the world. Now you can view the de-divinization of the world from the standpoint of the romantics, who favored paganism, as Hölderlin still did, as a great misfortune. Or you can look at it from the standpoint of modern man as a great advantage; I am not speaking of Christians, but of modern romantic, progressive, human beings. One can play freely with the forces of nature, investigate them without taboo, do what one wants, and have dominion over the world.

This consciousness of power is the consciousness of power of the new philosophy promulgated by Bacon in the seventeenth century: "Knowledge is power" over the world. But before knowledge could become power over the world—and this is, unfortunately, easily forgotten—the world had first to be cleared of powers for which one had to have respect. Those, however, were the divine powers. The de-divinization of the world through Christianity

and the creation of a god-empty world are the prerequisites for Western existence as a whole. It is especially important to keep this in mind because today, in the age of natural science romanticism, without looking further back into the causal connexion, it is assumed that the modern world was shaped by natural science. And then one has these great guessing games: Why is there no natural science in India? Why is there no natural science in China? Why haven't the Arabs developed natural science? The answer is, because they were not radical Christians. To go back, beyond the origins of science, means that one ask the question concerning the world that had to be emptied of the gods in order to legitimize the activity of science.

Into this world [emptied of divinity]—Christianity says nothing about the world itself and its structure—the Roman empire entered by an accident. We come now to some complicated matters that I have to talk about because the entire modern problematic is determined by them. Through its empire representatives, the Roman empire chose to accept Christianity as its state religion. Viewed historically, that event is always seen from the side of the Roman empire, that it accepted Christianity. But the fact is often overlooked, that by this means Christianity came into a social order with forms that already existed. That means that Christians did not have to worry about what a society should look like; it already existed in the form of the Roman empire. For this the rulers of the empire had made provision and did not wait to enquire of the Church Fathers.

Consequently, the entire world of social organization was already provided for by the Roman empire's modes of operation, and the question of how to properly organize the world did not need to become an object of speculation. Such speculation does not exist within Christianity; there is nothing about it in the Gospels. As a result there is no such thing as an originally Christian theory of social order. Today this point is often overlooked. Everyone talks of "Christian socialism," or "Christian democracy," or Christian this and Christian that, but in the Gospels there is not a single word about the organization of society. As far as the Gospels are concerned every social order and form of the state is compatible with Christianity as long as it does not persecute Christians; whether the state be a monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy is a

matter of complete indifference. Because Christianity has nothing to say to society concerning the order of this world, there is, in this sense, no Christian political theory.

In addition, and this is still a part of the Jewish tradition, Christianity has no philosophy. Just as the Roman empire entered Christianity by accident, so philosophy also became a part of it by accident. For, with the alliance between Christianity and the Roman empire, the Church authorities naturally had to say something about the communal life of Christians in the world; and because there is nothing about this in the Gospels, it had to adopt classical natural law. Beyond the theory of natural law, through the Dominicans during the Middle Ages, in particular by Albertus Magnus and Thomas of Aquinas, the entire body of classical philosophy, especially Aristotelianism, was incorporated. (Saint Augustine had already integrated Platonism.) All of these are imports from outside of Christianity. Therefore, there is no independent Christian philosophy, but, instead, a philosophy adopted from the classical tradition and adapted to Christian purposes.

This situation must be kept in mind for two reasons. First, [it must be kept in mind] in order to demonstrate the nature of an opposite case. What happens where these accidental receptions, these accidental additions that concern the order of the world, are not brought into Christianity? For this case we have the experimental laboratory of Russia. In Russia there is no independent development of natural law as there is in the West, no continuation of classical philosophy, no Renaissance, and no Scholasticism. Why not? Put negatively: because in Christianity there is no inner reason to concern oneself with such matters. That only happens when, by accident, one enters the Roman empire. This accident did not take place in Russia because, from the very beginning, the language of the Church was the native one; and this native language was a Slavic dialect, the Macedonian-Bulgarian dialect in which there were no written works worth reading. On the other hand, in the Latin and Greek churches the clerics had to learn Greek or Latin for the language of the liturgy and therewith acquired the languages in which one could read Cicero, Virgil, Ovid, Plato, and Aristotle.

There is nothing comparable in the development of the Russian church. For that reason we find these ideological oddities in

Russia—a whole series of them (none apparently too stupid for Western ideologists). They find fruitful soil there because, over the centuries, there has been no constant and developing tradition of intellectual discipline that could oppose them. In this intellectual vacuum a man like Lenin, who was by no means stupid, can compile the grotesque idiocy that one finds in his work *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*. Such unbearable nonsense can only be written by a Russian who has no philosophical tradition to give him some kind of discipline or perspective. That is a cultural and historical phenomenon that has nothing to do with communism. That is a problem that confronts every Russian: He must find his way into a philosophical tradition; a philosophical tradition must first be created because, through the accident of the Bulgarian-Macedonian liturgical language, it does not exist. That is the reason why there is no philosophical development there that could be compared to the one in the West. That is another very apt counterexample for the fact that the Western philosophical development is, not Christian, but classical.

Those are the origins of disorder. Here is an empty space, left untouched by Christianity, into which anything can penetrate that somebody takes into his head. In the West it is at least still restrained because, emanating from the classical tradition, philosophy is present. On the other hand, in Russia it takes place completely uncontrolled, or is only restrained when one type of ideology seizes state power and can suppress the other ideologies that might possibly enter into competition with it.

Now let me say a few things to describe the process of disorder. The process in which disorder entered through these empty spaces is marked by the great phases that only need to be named [in order for you to recognize them]. First there is the separation of the churches in the sixteenth century and the wars of religion in the sixteenth and seventeenth [centuries], which end with both churches being completely discredited. Then we have the dissolution of the empire and the rise of national states. Both of these, the dissolution of the Church and the dissolution of the Empire, resulted in pope and emperor being eliminated as the representatives of spiritual and temporal power. The pope was eliminated on the occasion of the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. Although a number of reorganizations of bishoprics were undertaken there, no

church representative, no representative of the curia, was admitted to the peace negotiations in Münster and Osnabrück. When the curia protested that decisions were being made concerning church property without a church representative present, the note went unanswered. In this somewhat unceremonious way the pope disappeared from international law, in which, up to that time, he had played a significant role. The emperor disappeared, as you know, in 1806. After Napoleon let himself be crowned emperor in 1804 the last holder of the Roman empire's crown judged the time ripe to lay down this title. Now anyone can be an emperor, just as in various nineteenth-century ideologies anyone can become a messiah and a pope. The result of this discrediting [of pope and emperor] is the separation of Church and State and therewith the creation of a free religious sphere; as a result the temporal sphere in politics is reduced to an organization in which the churches no longer have a say.

Perhaps even more disastrous than this first separation is the second, between science and philosophy. We now live in the age of natural science domination and ideological hegemony. Philosophy as a public factor might as well not exist. That is, there are philosophers, but nobody pays any attention to what they say; sometimes this is all right, but sometimes it isn't. In any case, philosophy is no longer a public factor that has influence with anyone: natural science, yes; ideology, too; but philosophy, no. The public sphere is now occupied by political power that is no longer religiously determined but is determined by a natural science power and an ideological power, neither of which is guided by philosophy. The result is that two of the sources of authority, revelation and philosophy, no longer have public status. As a consequence, where this development has come to its end, in the ideological regimes of the totalitarian empires, we have the fusion of all three sources of authority in one hand. And with that we have the end of European order.

This raises the question, Are there any prospects in view to indicate that things might develop differently in the future for these three areas, that of power, the church, and philosophy? In what follows I will briefly sketch how things are today. And now that I have described the dangers in detail, you will better understand what an enormous task lies before us to try to get European order,

and Western order in general, back on course and to resist falling prey to ideological destruction.

Concerning the aspect of power, the question arises, How do we organize a temporal society so that it is compatible with Christianity and philosophy and, at the same time, not neglect the problems of power? This enterprise was experimentally, and successfully, undertaken by what, in the Anglo-Saxon cultural area, is called civil government. It is a regime that has separated from the church but in its practice acknowledges the Christian personality and therefore conducts itself in a manner that respects, and protects, the personality. This type of civil regime when joined to democratic forms, in the institutional sense of the word (i.e., with universal, free, and equal suffrage, regular change of rulers, or at least with the opportunity to change them by elections, etc.), is what we mean by the word *democracy* today. But it is only really a "democracy" when it is a valid democracy for Christians, in the sense of the regime in the Anglo-Saxon [tradition]. Such a civil regime is not viable if the voting population that can determine the regime is full of non-Christian ideologies and the rulers themselves no longer govern in the spirit of Christianity. That by no means requires that the particular ruler be an enthusiastic member of a church; one can have the spirit of Christianity without being a church member. (In order to ward off potential criticism I believe Eisenhower joined the Presbyterian church a few weeks before he became a candidate for the presidency; up to that time he was not a member of any particular denomination.)

This civil regime only functions when the population itself is substantially Christian. That is why, today, every democracy that adopts this civil regime, or intends to maintain it, is forced into a position of conflict with the ideologies. That is: Such a democracy cannot permit ideological (anti-Christian or anti-philosophical) parties to command a large minority, or indeed a majority of the population. If these are thought to constitute a real danger, one must energetically impose prohibitions on them. That takes place in various Western countries with varying degrees of intensity. One can say that the United States is the country where communism is held in such low esteem that, socially, no one can afford to speak up for it, in any of its forms, without immediately ruining his reputation. This state of things, in which the

civil regime functions optimally against its strongest enemy, is unfortunately not found everywhere [in the West]. You see the large Communist parties in France and Italy; you see the very strong Communist minorities in England; you also know that in Germany some consider themselves Marxists. But nevertheless, in the country that is militarily and technologically the most important for the task of holding Western civilization together and for maintaining its order, awareness of the [dangers of] ideology is most highly developed. There we find the deepest awareness of the fact that civil society depends on the suppression of anti-Christian ideologies. If that is not possible civil society cannot function. Thus, if a European order is to be maintained, i.e., if it is not to fall into the hands of one ideology or another, it must suppress them and, among the populace, keep the Christian spirit alive that makes civil regimes possible. That is an enormous task.

Second, it requires a very energetic self-reflection on the part of the churches. The situation that resulted from the split between the churches—the separation of State and Church—is not a pleasant one, for the churches have a lot to give. After all, they are the protectors of the *depositum fidei*; they are the keepers of revelation and its theology and have unfortunately come into a position in which they are attacked, and not without cause. What is necessary today, and what the Church must come to realize, is, first: to reach an understanding concerning its own theology and to give up the last bits of fundamentalism in theology. Until these last traces of fundamentalism are discarded, there will be millions of intelligent people, intellectuals, who will throw the baby out with the bath water, who reject, *in toto*, a fundamentalist interpretation of theological dogma or the Bible. For fundamentalism is unbearable. A philosophy of mythology and of dogma is an essential condition for the continued existence of the churches' social effectiveness; otherwise they will not be able to compete at the new level at which these problems are scientifically studied. The Church cannot be permitted to become an intellectual ghetto; but it is in danger of becoming one—I mean both churches. Here is a very great problem for which very little is being done, although, in general, theologians and clergy are thoroughly aware of it.

Third, we have the problem of the restoration of philosophy. This is an extremely difficult problem because philosophy is an

entirely free activity. In the churches we have at least the complex of dogma and the church organization behind it. However, philosophy takes place in the freedom of the philosophizing individual; philosophy cannot be organized. But philosophy is also in a very bad state. Today it is no longer a rational activity; a great percentage of what takes place under the name of philosophy is in reality gnosis, or is the ideology of one or the other contemporary mass movements, or positivism, or gnostic Hegelianism, etc. It is not philosophy in the rational sense, in which the autonomy of reason finds expression. Thus the discredit into which philosophy has fallen is every bit as justified, if not more so, than that which has befallen the churches because they neglected their theological-intellectual problem. Here too there is much to be done before order can be restored. The biggest problem that confronts us today is not that we have no starting points, nor that they could not be further developed, but that their social effectiveness is blocked. In conclusion let me say a word or two about this problem.

I would say that the mass media constitute the greatest danger to the restoration of European spiritual order: newspapers, radio, television, the illustrated magazines, etc. The reason for this is that they erect an iron curtain that separates a large segment of the population from the spiritual problematic of the West. Nobody has access to what is going on today in the Western world. That is not the case just because important philosophical works or important events in theology are passed over in silence—although that also takes place—but because it is simply not registered. It is also not the case that it is simply negatively criticized, although that happens often enough, too. Every day you can read in the book review section of the *New York Times* [that] the minute a book is good the reviewer complains that it is too difficult for the average reader who would like to read it—in the evening after a cocktail. The reader is thus discouraged from even picking the book up. One can almost say that if in the daily reviews in the *New York Times* a book is severely criticized it is perhaps worth reading, that it is quite possibly a good book.

The worst, and the most difficult, problem to overcome is media mass production. Good and bad are reported equally. When one reports on everything, that's called objectivity; and because there is much more that is bad than there is good, when everything

is treated equally, and each individual production is given the same space, the good disappears from sight. Consequently, we have mass communication for an overly rich production of intellectual and spiritual goods, whether books, paintings, or works of music. We have a more-than-abundant media presence trying to get our attention with everything possible, and the result is just as effective as a radical systematic destruction [would be]: We can simply no longer find out what is going on.

Just how this problem can be solved at the organizational level, i.e., how, for example, the average person who is not engaged professionally with these things will be able to find out who among the contemporary philosophers is worth reading and who among them he should read, I don't know. Through the means of communications available to the average person, the general magazines, the daily paper, etc., he will not be confronted with these problems or find out what is important for him to read concerning them, although there is much that it would be worth his while [to read]. Here is where I see the main organizational obstacle to renewing [the life of the spirit]: [in] the mass nature of the communication media. It is not always evil in intent, but the spirit is smothered by the sheer weight of mass communication that treats good and bad equally.



The West and the Meaning of Industrial Society

Excerpts from the Discussion

I. The Decline of Messianism?

E. VOEGELIN: I would like to cite a few historical examples as a reminder that the problem we are dealing with is not specifically a modern one but a general human problem that in one form or another has existed throughout history.

The origins of what Professor Talmon calls "messianism" obviously go back to Israel. We can in fact situate them fairly closely in a political event that took place eight centuries before Christ. At the time of the siege of Jerusalem by the Aramaeans, who were allies of the Israelites, the prophet Isaiah came to the king and asked him not to take up arms but to disarm and put his trust in God, believing that, with His help, their enemies would destroy each other or be decimated by an epidemic. Here we have the

Discussions at a conference in Rheinfelden, Switzerland, in September 1959. Besides Eric Voegelin, participants in the discussion, whose contributions are reproduced here, were (in order of appearance): Michael Polanyi, scholar and philosopher, Merton College, Oxford; J. Robert Oppenheimer, nuclear physicist, director of the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton; M. M. Postan, historian and economist, Cambridge University; Bertrand de Jouvenel, author, economist, Paris; Raymond Aron, philosopher and sociologist, Sorbonne University, Paris; S. Andrzejewski, sociologist, Brunel College of Technology, United Kingdom; Raghavan Iyer, fellow of St. Antony's College, Oxford. Originally published in *Colloques de Rheinfelden*, ed. Raymond Aron (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1960), 213-26, 278-81, 284-303, 319-28. The English version herein is taken from *World Technology and Human Destiny*, ed. Raymond Aron, trans. Richard Seaver (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963), 163-73, 213-15, 218-32, 242-44. Reprinted by kind permission of the University of Michigan Press.

model or prototype of the disarmament concept: If you put your trust in nature, not as it is but as it will one day be, if you really do believe, then all the annoyances or unpleasantness of politics, including the necessity to resort to arms, will vanish.

This sort of faith calls for a new term. I have provisionally proposed the term *metastasis*. By this I mean an attitude on the part of the person who believes that through an act of faith—or any other act—human nature will cease to be what it is and, in one way or another, will be replaced by a new, transfigured human nature, a new society, and a new, transfigured history. Nineteenth-century political messianism belongs to this type of metastatic belief.

The various historical types of metastasis, which begin with the history of Judaism, can roughly be broken down into two stages. The first opens after the exile, in apocalyptic times, when apocalyptic symbols were used to portray the coming of paradise on earth. These symbols passed over into Christianity through the revelations of Saint John, chapters 21 and 22, and are the sources of subsequent credos of this sort, particularly those at the basis of the "Puritan Revolution." Apocalyptic symbolism came to an end about the beginning of the eighteenth century, after the Puritan Revolution when the transcendental faith sustaining apocalyptic symbolism was replaced by what we shall call secularism or "immanentism." We then find ourselves confronted with a new kind of messianism, which no longer utilizes the old apocalyptic symbols but instead employs that sort of symbolism that in the nineteenth century was termed *the philosophy of history*. The philosophy of history—as Condorcet, Comte, Hegel, and Marx understood it—is that school of thought that replaced the old apocalyptic symbolism. In order to distinguish it from the earlier form, we should perhaps speak of a secular or "immanentist" symbolism.

The quest for another constituent element of this messianism compels me to raise the problem of gnosis, which in itself has no direct bearing either on apocalyptic or immanentist symbolism. It originated independently of, but at approximately the same time as, Christianity and taught that terrestrial paradise will not come to pass through divine intervention but through man's own efforts. There can be no doubt that the gnostic movement has

continued from antiquity down to the present day. We must therefore constantly keep in mind this notion of the redemption of the individual through his own efforts, and his salvation through action. At what times in history do such gnostic movements, based on this idea of immanentist self-redemption, become fanatic and constitute a danger to society?

This intriguing question also takes us back to antiquity. Jeremiah was the first to make the interesting anthropological observation that men remain faithful to their gods as long as they are false gods; it is only when you have the real God, as Israel had, that you betray him. Translated into modern terms, this is the same as saying that when one's spiritual and intellectual life has reached a certain degree of differentiation one is struck by the uncertainty of the transcendental relationship. Most people find this unbearable and seek to replace the uncertainty of truth by the certitude of error. This is a general phenomenon in society—it was at the core of the Platonic and Aristotelian conceptions of politics. Both these philosophers realistically admit that for most people the philosophic life, which they consider man's real life, is inaccessible. This is why their conceptions, including all the Platonic designs, are always based on the premise of a philosophic ruling class and the recognition that there is nothing one can do about the masses, who will never attain the philosophic level of existence. This is an admission of fact. We can verify it empirically by noting that this is true for Greece, in the history of Israel, and again in the twelfth century of our Western civilization, at the time of the great spiritual ferment of the cities and, in the religious orders, when there began the elaboration of immanentist theories according to which there will be a third kingdom of the spirit within history, which the Paraclete will introduce. Here we see the contribution—if we can call it that—of Joachim de Fiore. This descent into immanentism begins at the height of the spirituality of the Middle Ages and has one curious political repercussion, for the history of Christianity reveals no original political theory. In the early days of Christianity, the notion prevailed that politics was the province of the Roman empire. The problem of political theory arose only when that empire was visibly beginning to crumble in the Middle Ages and new types of communities—national states—were slowly beginning to emerge. It then became

necessary to evolve a theory for this new type of society, which was bound neither to the Empire nor to the Church. In its modern form, political theory thus begins roughly in the middle of the fifteenth century: Its real beginning—and this is a highly significant fact—is in Fortescue's *Governance of England*. In answering the question, What are the people? the Christian notion of *corpus mysticum* is transferred to England as a nation, which is then a *corpus mysticum* in need of a kind of organization.

This proves that, apart from transcendental religiousness in the Christian sense, man also yearns for an explanation of his social existence, of his "community," in immanentist terms. There is also a technical term for this need, which goes back to antiquity, to Varro and Cicero, who refer to it as the desire for a *theologia civilis*. Besides a natural and supernatural theology, people need a civil theology. Throughout the political history of the West, the movements that Mr. Talmon referred to aimed at supplying the masses with a civil theology, otherwise lacking. This enormous social pressure, which the need for a civil theology engenders, is an emotional pressure strong enough to sustain any ideology. From all this we can draw the following conclusion: Wherever civil theology arose during a profoundly Christian era, such as in England and subsequently in America, the notion of the "civil government," which is the institutional translation of the vestiges of classical and Christian tradition, prevails. In these places, false ideologies have less of a chance to flourish and seem less enticing than in the countries that have never known such institutions, such as those of Central Europe, which will be much more vulnerable to an ideology than, say, England or America.

These historical phenomena must be taken seriously. I do not share Mr. Kennan's views when he declares that all will be well in Russia when the young people will no longer be taken in by an ideology that is patently worthless. Russian youth is like youth anywhere: It aspires to some form or other of civil theology, and if it rejects communism—which seems possible—I hate to think what it may espouse in its place. Nothing says that Russian youth will simply revert to "rational theologies," to the "life of reason." Whenever one ideology is abandoned and there is nothing to replace it, when there is no civil theology for the people, we can

expect the worst. This is why I wanted to emphasize the historical aspects of the problem.

[. . .]

II. Renaissance of Philosophy?

M. POLANYI: Mr. Oppenheimer expressed profound regret that the major political and military decisions of our time are made without any general discussion about the ethical problems they raise. But our cruelty and disdain of any moral consideration during the last war may be due precisely to the fact that this war saw an unprecedented wave of moral passions that manifested themselves in this violent manner. Moreover, our moral discourse is paralyzed in its own terms, so much so that any statesman who would defer to, or show any sincere interest in, moral considerations as they apply to public action would either be dismissed as a hypocrite or reduced to silence by the doubts his words would engender.

R. OPPENHEIMER: Perhaps I did not express myself clearly: I do not maintain that a government must be influenced by ethical discussions. I believe that it is difficult to know how much governments are capable of expressing a "consensus" or an ethical point of view; this is an extremely difficult problem to solve. What concerns me is that, in spite of Jaspers, so many days have passed and so little has been said that is worth listening to. We can ignore ethics; but it has to be there to be ignored. There is no need for man to act virtuously, but it is necessary that we discuss virtue.

M. M. POSTAN: I submit that the efficaciousness and power of ethical elements in our civilization are—for good or bad—greater today than they were in the past. I believe they are constantly increasing, even in the field of arms. Compare the lack of any moral indignation at the time TNT was invented—Nobel was a notable exception—with the effects the invention of the bomb had upon the consciences both of its inventors and those who had a hand in its development.

In democratic countries—especially during World War II—we can observe the importance of purely ethical and moral feelings by the way in which various major political or strategic decisions,

including the declaration of war itself, had to be adjusted so that statesmen could forecast what public reaction would be on the ethical plane. You remember, for example, the important role played in both wars by what was termed the *propaganda of atrocities*. What we tend to forget is that this “propaganda of atrocities” is a tribute paid by the state to the strength and frequency of the ethical point of view. I submit that the trouble with our democratic society is not that moral or ethical stimulants are not widespread enough but rather that it is easier to provoke them than get rid of them. And once they have been mobilized, not only are they a major force toward converting a moral intention into a public act, they may also serve as the justification for a whole range of cruel and destructive acts, to which our era seems especially prone. The problem is not to assess the depth or breadth of the ethical content in our civilization but to study it from the institutional and sociological standpoint and define the methods not only of mobilizing it but especially of demobilizing it.

VOEGELIN: The question of the use of arms was discussed long before the appearance of the atomic bomb—during the 1930s, for instance, when it was a question of gas or bacteriological warfare. In fact, this is a classic question of politics, which is a part of the concept of the *bellum justum*, the “just war.” One of the principal assumptions is that a war can begin as a “just war,” become extremely unjust by the way it is fought, and even more unjust by the type of peace settlement imposed after it is over. These are questions of the most elementary sort, and I do not believe anyone should complain if we refrain from constantly bringing them up in public.

The question you pose is, I believe, essentially a sociological one. It concerns this type of society in which we live and in which an elementary knowledge perfectly acquired for centuries is not publicly efficacious. But there is a reason it is not: As you have quite rightly pointed out, an atomic bombardment is not a moral matter but depends on politics and questions of existence. And when a social process is involved, we cannot, in the name of morality, refuse to use certain types of weapons and make certain kinds of decisions. The classic treatise on this point is Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*. The necessity of the process he terms

kinesis, and he considers *kinesis* a kind of social illness. When you are caught in such an illness you cannot extricate yourself as long as you are a statesman; you can only get out of it personally. The Platonic attitude of withdrawal from "sick politics," in the Thucydidean sense of the term, is a personal possibility, but it does not eliminate the public necessity of taking on the sickness as long as it lasts.

OPPENHEIMER: I agree with Professor Voegelin that tradition is, of course, indispensable in dealing with any problem whatsoever. But it is equally essential that we realize when the same words are being used to describe different phenomena. I do not claim that the problem raised by the atomic bomb is new in the sense that it is unrelated to what men have done and experienced in the past. But the idea that this was resolved, whereas the subject we are concerned with was completely different, does not strike me as particularly helpful. Nor does it seem to me to correspond to what we think aside from our studies.

[. . .]

B. DE JOUVENEL: First Professor Catlin and then Mr. Kennan have posed the problem of the "good life," a subject which in the words of Mr. Asoka Mehta constitutes the best common ground for men "from different planets." If, as I suspect, the "good life" is the *terminus ad quem* of our seminar, it follows that we should take the "good life" as the *terminus a quo* of our judgments in the social sciences—whence certain changes I deem most desirable.

Take, for example, the science of economics. Swayed by concepts such as "productivity" and methods such as "econometry," we tend increasingly to consider man as a "factor of production" who has to be used as rationally as possible to effect maximum production of durable goods or objects. No doubt these goods are destined for man; but what a difference between our meticulous concern for the maximum flow of goods through the optimal utilization of man, and our neglect in researching the best use of products to achieve the optimal form of human existence! Is it even conceivable to try and find this optimal form for "man-the-consumer" as opposed to "man-the-producer"? How can he

ever know the “good life” if his existence is divided into joyless working hours and meaningless consumption hours? It would seem to me that the “good life” should presuppose that man finds self-realization and self-fulfillment both in his work and in his leisure.

The idea of the “good life” can in itself furnish us a criterion for the various blessings, which differ in kind and immediate objective. For example, the national input of working hours can be equally cut by shortening the work week or by prolonging the period of schooling. It is obvious that both these diminutions, quantitatively equal, are in no wise identical from the standpoint of the “good life.”

Sociology should also modify its approach. From the point of view of the good life lived by the individual—and who else can do it?—sociology is not the study of society but rather of the individual in society. Here you have such and such an individual: around him, a social context already informed and organized by others. In this environment he has to adapt himself and find self-fulfillment, and depending on whether he fails or succeeds, he either feels oppressed or discovers a possibility of expression. I think that the contrast between “oppression” and “expression” is both suitable and rife with meaning. Here then is the real sociological problem: how to insure that man—every human being—can gain access to an environment wherein he can earn the esteem and affection of his peers through self-expression and self-fulfillment.

Finally, of course, we should arrive at a radical reversal in political science. There exists a political science wrongly based on the premise that the only *potentia* is that which derives from *potestas*, from the accrual of power. But this is untrue. Such an affirmation is simply controverted by the facts and implies an unbounded optimism. On the contrary, we know that *potentia*, as Shakespeare has so wonderfully described it, takes root here and there. The problem is not that there should not be any other *potentia* except that which derives from *potestas* but rather that all *potentia* should be considered and utilized as a *potestas*.

Let me interrupt this rapid survey of the various social sciences to pose the problem in its most general form. It is strange that for several generations the West has been able to live without the image of the “good life,” without any general concept from

which to judge what is best or most suited to man. Yet Descartes said that reason is the faculty which enables man to evaluate the various opportunities that are more or less within our reach and thus to apportion our efforts according to the various merits of these opportunities. In this sense, reason could be exercised only if there were a clear assumption of what man aspires to and what the "good life" consists of. And if there is no such basic premise, the classification of opportunities and the division of efforts can rely only on the irrational preferences of the moment. We may say that one of the characteristics of modern civilization is its high degree of rationality, if we consider that we in fact approach all problems rationally; but these problems are posed from unreasoned preferences that are admitted as final criteria.

In all the social sciences we flatter ourselves that we have eliminated all value judgments, but this is not, nor cannot, be true. Any comparison of objects that differ in nature presupposes the utilization of parameters. The indifference to value judgments manifests itself practically only by the utilization as *ex ante* elements of the value judgments that the conduct of men enables us to observe *ex post*. But we cannot expect that the "immediate preferences" thus noted will be either constant or coherent, as Arrow has pointed out. The rule of revealed preferences is utilitarianism, which lacks the dimension of time. As Peter Wiles has noted, we can sense it so well that in the most liberal economies the nation is compelled to save in various ways much more than would result from the exercise of revealed preferences.

I have no intention of contesting the necessity of utilizing revealed preferences as data at the physical or positive stage of the social sciences. But the awareness toward which Mr. Aron is leading us indicates that we cannot neglect a higher metaphysical or normative stage of the social sciences. It is at this stage that the conditions of the "good life" are posed, and from these conditions emerge the "reasonable preferences" that we have to compare to the "revealed preferences." Since none of us is an expert, there is no question of tyrannically imposing "reasonable preferences" on the "revealed preferences," but merely ascertaining how the latter can be made to approximate the former. If the intellectual were not bound to work for what is reasonable, and toward its acceptance, to what then should he devote himself?

VOEGELIN: I would like to raise one problem as briefly as possible, the one I consider most essential, namely, the organization of a “good society” for the “good life.” This is an extremely delicate matter, a very difficult speculation for many reasons, which I shall try to explain. The difficulty lies in the fact that today there is no common accord as to what constitutes a good society and a good life, and the classic definitions are such that they would not be readily accepted today. Still, it will be necessary for me to go back to these classic definitions and use them at least as a point of departure, because they offer important insights into the meaning of the terms *good society* and *good life*.

What I liked most about Mr. Aron’s paper was his insistence on the fact that for a society to be well ruled from any standpoint it must defer to the process of reasonable debate. One might say that this is the cornerstone of Western belief in constitutional government—government through reason. What then are the conditions for reasonable debate?

I would like to begin with a remark Einstein made about physics. One day Einstein remarked that the only unintelligible thing in the universe is its intelligibility. This admirably describes the problems of physics and the natural sciences in general, but especially physics. In the social sciences, and more especially in political science, we find ourselves in a much less favorable situation. We might say that there are many unintelligible things and that the only one which is not unintelligible is intelligibility. Here we find ourselves involved with a number of mysteries, which we must recognize as such, because we falsify the structure of reality as soon as we attempt to pierce the mystery by scientific means.

First let us see how the question of a “science of society” came about. We sometimes tend to forget this; and it is important to recall, since it will immediately enable us to define the limits of what we can or cannot do through political science and political philosophy. The idea of a social science, of a political science in the classic sense, originated with medicine. The term *eidos*—ideas—originally signified the syndrome or set of symptoms used to identify an illness. This medical term subsequently passed over from Hippocratic medicine to the analysis of society, and in *The Peloponnesian War*, where the syndrome of *kinesis* was outlined,

Thucydides uses the terms *eidōs* and *idea* to describe the complex of symptoms characteristic of a social illness. It was only following this transfer of terms that Plato was able to ask himself whether it would be possible to conceive of a syndrome, or series of symptoms, for a healthy society. Thus any approach to political science is psychologically or emotionally colored by the realization of the evil in society and the desire to transform an unhealthy condition into a more healthy one. But this is more easily said than done. We are all sensitive to all sorts of ills in our society, for which we each doubtless have our own drastic remedies. But then we find ourselves stumbling, so to speak, from one unsatisfactory state to another, from one unhealthy society to another that may be even more unhealthy, unless we can actually claim that for one reason or another the newly created situation will be a definite improvement over the present. It is at this point that the following question arises: Do there exist objective criteria that enable us to define what is "better"? This is where we get into certain problems of actual political science and what I refer to as the "life of reason," which is nothing more than a fairly free translation of what Aristotle would have called *bios theoretikos*.

How can we arrive at objective opinions? First of all, distinctions have been made that ought to be used nowadays, but unfortunately they have gotten lost in the course of our daily lives. When Plato tried to compare what he considered objective truth with the prevailing opinions of what was good and bad in society, that is, the *doxa*, he introduced the term *philosophos* for the person who was striving to achieve this objective truth, and *epistēmē*, or science, for his knowledge. And he used the word *philosopher*—a term that has survived—as the antithesis of the *philodox*, or amateur of prevailing opinions. The latter term has been forgotten. But a number of the difficulties we run into in intellectual discussions today stem from the fact that we use the word *philosophies* in precisely the opposite sense that Plato intended it, that is, we apply it to the *doxai* and use the word *philosopher* where Plato would have used *philodox*. Thus it is impossible today even to define or clarify the nature of the illness, because the illness itself has assumed the name of health.

At the risk of incurring the displeasure of certain people, I submit that what Plato called *philodox* we generally term *intellectual*. Personally, I would be very upset if anyone classified me as an intellectual. I am opposed to the intellectual in the sense of *philodox*, that is, I am against the expression of an opinion that is not justified by rational analysis.

This brings us back to the question of where does rational analysis begin. I use the term *analysis* because Plato used it. By *analysis* I mean that we approach any study of society from the standpoint of the opinions of those around us. We find in our immediate circle both the opinions and the terminology expressing ideas of right or wrong; our job is to find the path leading from this vocabulary and these customs toward the objective element. This is introduced by the postulate that there is such a thing as human nature, and if we can discover what it consists of we can offer advice as to how society ought to be organized, since the organization of society should aim at the full flowering of human nature. However, there is no sense talking about good or bad institutions or making concrete suggestions about this or that social problem unless we first know what purpose or end these institutions are supposed to serve. This we cannot know unless we are familiar with the human nature that is going to develop within this social context. Thus the focal point of political science should always be what today we call philosophical anthropology, which in fact corresponds to the first chapter of *The Nicomachean Ethics*.

I shall concentrate on one basic point to which too little attention is currently paid. Plato and Aristotle suggested that human nature develops fully if it actualizes the participation in the transcendent being. Man is a creature who participates in the transcendent Nous and the transcendent Logos. Man leads a life of reason insofar as he cultivates this participation. Otherwise, if he begins to express ideas without cultivating this participation in the transcendent Logos, his conception of the human order will be twisted, for the overall order of the individual is formed by his relation with the transcendent being. If this is eliminated, the result will be a warped idea of man's position in the universe. Then all the opinions expressed by those who maintain that man need not concern himself with the participation in transcendental reality—that is, the *immanentists* or *secularists*, to employ con-

temporary terms—fall into the category of *doxa*, or *opinion* in the technical sense of the term. So the “immanentists” or “secularists” are actually the disorganized spirits who are quite incapable of conceiving of ideas about the just order of society.

All this may seem somewhat aggressive, but let us now come to the facts of the matter. If we fail to adopt this attitude, the consequences will be unpleasant, because the rational arguments concerning man's action and the order of society are based on certain premises that are closely connected with the attitude I have just described. The first problem I want to stress is the problem of action. It is easy enough for us to talk of action—of rational action in that we coordinate the means with a view toward the end without wondering whether the end is particularly rational or reasonable, as Mr. de Jouvenel would call it. But we cannot settle for this if we want to speak objectively about problems of action. As long as we live in a group or society or within a larger cultural complex where there are accepted canons of action, there will be no problem, since we do not have to ask ourselves whether or not they are really rational. All we have to do is coordinate the means with the premises that tradition supplies us. But where tradition is questioned, or when we live in a pluralistic society of many varying opinions, we must have criteria in order to distinguish between opinions that are valid and those that are not. This means we can have no science of action, or no rational discussion or debate, as long as we have failed to agree rationally as to the ultimate goal, or, to hark back to the classical expression, the *summum bonum*. This is a matter of analysis. It does not follow that we can rationally determine the “sovereign good.” Many people will say that perhaps it cannot be determined by rational means; but we must accept the consequences of these words, for if we subscribe to this thesis, then we may as well stop our discussions right now, for our debates will no longer have any rational basis.

The second point is that the *summum bonum* is not unrelated to the actualization of human nature. Here again we have the problem of transcendence, for the full flowering of human nature on the highest level is itself the search for transcendence. In classical antiquity, human nature was defined by man's openness to the transcendent being, or, to use a Bergsonian term, by the openness of the soul to transcendence. Thus this “openness of the soul,” as

a historical phenomenon which is the basis for all rational debate, is a postulate that we ought to take as our point of departure. If we do, however, we find ourselves faced with another problem concerning human nature. We all talk about human nature as though it were a concept descended from heaven. But we should remember that *human nature* is something the classical philosophers defined, and when we do not use it in the technical sense it is meaningless. This is why we ought to realize that certain uses of the term *human nature* are actually misuses. Nowadays we all talk about changing human nature, saying that by revolutions and reorganizing society we can effect such a change. This is patently impossible, because *human nature* in the classical sense, by its technical definition, is what cannot be changed, what remains constant.

Human nature is therefore a multiple problem: On the one hand it leads us to the question of transcendence and involvement in this transcendence, and on the other it is a term that has to be accepted in its classical sense, failing which it becomes meaningless. But when it is taken in its classical sense, the greatest part of contemporary ideological politics crumbles as material for debate, since we cannot discuss changes in human nature, which is the basis of Comtian positivism or any kind of Marxism: Their whole credo is founded on the conviction that human nature *can* be changed, or in some way transfigured.

Everything I have just said was largely hypothetical, but I would like to emphasize that I personally agree with the classical position and would thus contend that a good society (in the classical sense, but also as the expression was used by John Stuart Mill in 1859) is one in which there is room for a life of reason to develop and flourish in such a way that men can devote themselves to it without embarrassment and make it an effective part of social organization. Such would be the definition of a good society. Where these conditions are lacking, serious spiritual troubles will develop. Then this problem: If our era is marked by such spiritual troubles, where do we have to begin in order to restore something resembling a good society? Here I should like to mention the positive aspect of the situation. To my mind, this is an aspect that has been sadly neglected, because the discussion has always turned

around questions of ideology but never around what is important for a good society.

It is striking that the places where we note a renaissance of the life of reason in our society, that is, a renewed awareness that participation in transcendence is central to the life of man and society, are in the sciences (and this does not mean the social sciences), whose very goal embodies an element that is healthy. The very fact of working at something healthy draws the attention of the researcher to the problems of rational order. This is why I find myself in the following curious situation when I try to orient myself and learn something: I discover I have very little to learn from the specialists in political science, who for the most part are not concerned about problems that relate to the order of the good society. Where I do find this concern is with the classical philologists, the specialists in mythology, the orientalists, and especially among theologians and philosophers who work closely with the various religions. Here you discover the foundations for reconstructing a Science of Order.

This brings us to the curious situation mentioned in Mr. Aron's paper. A unilateral debate is constantly emanating from these enclaves of the life of reason that still do exist in our society and at the present time are perhaps even increasing. Here rational discussion does go on, and a compact body of science concerning the ideologies, for instance, is being compiled. But there is no dialogue, for those for whom the discussion is intended, the ideologists, refuse to participate; they simply ignore the works in question. A kind of iron curtain exists not between East and West, but within the West itself, between what might be called the "consubstantial" Western society, which is still living the life of reason and perhaps even advancing within it, and those who turn their backs on it.

In order to present clearly all sides of the problem, I shall have to list the various ways and techniques used to keep the life of reason from making its unpleasant presence felt. As a matter of fact, we have developed a whole range of techniques to prevent discussion: the use of long speeches in place of rational give-and-take, in keeping with the tactics used by Protagoras in the Platonic dialogue of the same name; the "valet" psychology, which consists of trying

to figure out the opponent's motives instead of engaging him in rational discussion; classification, which means pinning a label on him, etc. Beside these evasive tactics, which aim at skirting the problem, we should also mention the systematic techniques that have been elaborated into whole systems whose goal is to stifle any discussion. For example, positivism and logical empiricism are based on the premise that from the standpoint of methodology only those methods analogous to the methods of the physical sciences can produce valid results in the field of the social sciences. Anyone who resorts to this argument automatically precludes any possibility of discussion about anything relating to political science in the classical sense of the term.

One specifically German invention, which unfortunately, like so many other German inventions such as Marxism, seems to have spread throughout the world, is the theory of *Wertbeziehung* and the idea that in science it is possible to constitute an object by relating the subject or question to a set of values, preferably contemporary values. If you introduce the notion of values as the point of reference for the choice of objects to be studied, you have simultaneously stifled any discussion of these values, since the question is limited to ascertaining what the controlling categories are for the selection of the objects. Whenever anyone refers to values and says that they lie beyond the pale of rational discussion and must be accepted as contemporary values without resubmitting them to further debate, it becomes obvious that the whole system of the *Wertbeziehende Methode*, as the Germans call it, is merely another instrument for preventing discussion.

I could list a number of other similar techniques, and if you add them all up you will doubtless see that a large portion of what currently passes as rational discussion in political science and the social sciences is not that at all; it is pure ideological rhetoric. This situation should be of major interest to all of us, and I submit that a renaissance of the life of reason, consonant with its original definition, is one of the most urgent tasks that lies before us.

R. ARON: The doctrine we have just heard presented with such uncompromising rationality can be summed up as follows: For there to be any rational or reasonable discussion of politics, there first has to be agreement on the common good. There can be no

agreement on the supreme good, however, if one does not have a conception of human nature. This conception implies the immutability of human nature, however, and this is linked to a certain conception of man's participation in a transcendent reality, a transcendent *Nous*. I believe that Professor Voegelin himself would admit that in a given cultural system, such as that of the United States, the possibility for rational discussion does exist, even if there is no conscious awareness of the supreme good. But he would perhaps add that the only reason this rational discussion is possible under the American system is because in a sense this system is the translation of a philosophy of the supreme good and of human nature. This "translation" is debased because the superior concepts have tended to be lost. Yet it is their invisible presence that enables rational dialogue to persist and go on. Professor Voegelin has already reminded us how difficult it is to discuss a thesis of this sort. If one rejects his premises and postulates, rational discussion is obviously circumscribed, since the most one can do is pursue the discussion to the point of irreconcilable values. This means at best a partial discussion, which will break down when one reaches the point of supreme values. This first hypothesis is the one that proved true in the course of the present conference, and this is the type of discussion for which someone Professor Voegelin knows as well as I, and perhaps even better, provided the model: Max Weber. Weber accepted the possibility of rational discussion as to the means, the institutions, and the organizations, but he said that this discussion ended and came to grief when it came to fundamental affirmations of values. Rational dialogue, he claimed, stopped at this point.

But the other hypothesis, whereby one accepts the supreme good and human nature, poses at least two difficulties. First, we have to know how far reason is capable of determining the transcendent *Nous* in which the minds of men participate. Second, even if we accept the immutability of human nature—and to my mind this is self-evident; if we talk of human nature, it means it does not change, it is a question of definition—then on what level of abstraction does what we call human nature reveal itself, and to what extent can this conception of human nature comprise a kind of finality and not be defined simply by what psychoanalysis would call a system of impulses.

Thus we see that no matter which of the two terms we choose, the problems remain impressive.

S. ANDRZEJEWSKI: Is the idea that human nature can change really such a mad one? Personally, I do not believe it is all that absurd. We already have sufficient knowledge of biology to know that the species is not fixed, that selection does operate on the human level, and that certain types do disappear while others multiply more rapidly. If we move toward the possibility of a planned, manipulated selection, we could probably change human nature fairly rapidly. Moreover, there is the imminent possibility that we will find a way to manipulate the genes. If all this helps increase man's average intelligence or lower the level of his aggressive tendencies, the impact on future societies will obviously be tremendous.

VOEGELIN: We must realize that the idea of man is not given to us automatically by history, but emerges gradually. That men are truly men and that all men are equal represents a considerable advance, which is imputable to Western philosophy beginning with the fifth century B.C. The idea of human equality became clear only in the light of man's equality before God. The idea of man grew up through the experience of the universal existence of men equal before a universal God, and no problem of biology can alter this concept. When you introduce the problem of perfectibility, you move to another plane. On the one hand we have history, during which man has realized his possibilities in a most remarkable way: Think of his domination of nature, for example. But this has not altered nature, which remains immutably consistent with the classical definition. But the idea of perfectibility in the ideological sense, the "transfiguration" à la Condorcet into a progressive or communist superhuman, into Nietzsche's Dionysian or Comte's positivist superman, poses a totally different problem. Rational argumentation can show you that a specific type of perfectibility is the equivalent of metastasis or transfiguration and that here we come in conflict with what we know empirically about human nature.

R. IYER: The question of perfectibility or nonperfectibility cannot be resolved through experience. This is true not only because the facts and values are intermixed, but also because this question implies a whole cosmology. If you really want to start a debate on the subject of human nature, its possibilities of change and perfection, you must answer the question, What is your cosmology? In fact it is significant that Plato, Rousseau, and Gandhi, as opposed to Marx and numerous other political theorists, all had a theory of education. Is it really possible to speak of changes in human nature without proposing some theory of education?

VOEGELIN: I would like to re-emphasize that what I presented was not a personal opinion, but more or less a rundown of historical facts. Reason and its works were discovered at a certain period in history. The attendant concepts such as human nature, human rights, freedom, etc., are symbolic extrapolations, if I may call them that, of certain experiences that I called transcendent. I doubt that the terms we use every day in our discussions have other roots than these experiences. For this reason, it is impossible to analyze the structure of society without referring to the operations of the life of reason. We did not really go into detail about social structures in the spiritual or intellectual sense of the term, but if, for instance, you want to know in which direction Chinese civilization is evolving or what its affinities and differences with communism are, you cannot reply without studying the history of China and the spiritual edifice of Chinese civilization. If you pose a similar question about India and Indian civilization, the same will hold true. And this cannot be accomplished by the methods of logical positivism or empiricism, which deny that there is a problem of the life of reason.

What is more, there are political overtones to what I suggest. By concentrating on the problems of the industrial society, we have perhaps tended to forget that we live not only in the age of industrial society but also in the era of ideological movements, ideological regimes, and ideological wars, and that in our time tens of millions of people have died to further these ideologies. This is a fundamental fact. And I shall add here that to insist on the problems of the life of reason is equivalent to a sort of new

declaration of human rights *against* the ideologies. I often say to my students: "God did not create this world for the ideologists alone; man also has the right to live here." What then is man? Here is a problem for the life of reason.

To come back to our discussion, obviously it is possible to carry on an important discussion within the framework of a given set of cultural traditions and general premises, about which there is common accord. This is what we have done here. It can be done with complete rationality, without questioning any of the premises, because they are far enough removed not to interfere with the concrete problems under review. For all practical purposes, this level of concrete discussion probably suffices for international exchanges, unless we run afoul of an ideology with universal pretensions. Then, of course, we have to move to another kind of discussion. But our level suffices for most of our purposes. It is in this sense that I would qualify our discussions as most enlightening and fruitful.

[. . .]

III. Conclusion

R. ARON: [. . .] There is no denying the fact that the discussions we have had throughout this week have been difficult—it could hardly be otherwise—because in a way we were all asking the same ultimate questions, but the criteria and the methods used differed widely. In my paper I noted at the very outset this absence of philosophical unity. I think that on the whole the evolution of the seminar confirmed that the problem of discussion was a difficult one. But though it was difficult it was not impossible, since most of us recognized simultaneously that we were asking the same questions and trying to answer them by different means and with different words.

On one level, the discussions took the form of a critical review of society and mass culture and a reminder of the precautions that have to be taken to prevent the evolution of this society from ruining men's lives and eliminating the contact between man and nature. Second, in many of the papers there was an obvious yearning for what I shall vaguely call "something religious." Several of the speakers felt that the great question men would have to

discuss and deal with, whenever they had solved their material problems, would be the meaning of human existence; at the same time they thought that religion—whether or not it assumed one of its several dogmatic forms—would be an increasingly important problem of future history, one which would occupy each of us more and more.

Professor Oppenheimer led our discussions in a third direction by pondering the multiplicity of intellectual worlds and the quest for unity. The arts and sciences have become so specialized and separated from each other that no one is any longer capable of embracing the whole world of culture. This we know. But for the very reason that a complete unity of the world of culture is out of the question, it is essential that our words, addressed to the world at large, contain the maximum of essential truths uncovered by the various sciences. We all realized the extraordinary difficulty of the problems, but I believe that we were also aware that we were debating, not a problem raised arbitrarily in terms of a conference, but a serious and real problem that affects the very life of the culture at a time when the accumulation of knowledge and the subtlety of specific methods no longer permits any single mind, however ubiquitous, to embrace the whole.

Another area of discussion was that of the social scientists, who talked in terms of political or social sciences. These speakers hoped to see the ultimate questions—and I might almost say the answers to the ultimate questions—emerge from social practice itself. I think that many sociologists would tell us that it is impossible to codify into a system our replies to the ultimate questions, because each one of us states what he is and what he wants; what we can do, though, is discover from the lives of various individuals what they really want as ultimate values. It is impossible to list the replies, but the essence of them is contained in social practice itself, as the sciences of society understand it.

Finally, Professor Voegelin made a very careful distinction between the ideologies that imprison the majority of men—and perhaps, if he had been less polite, he might have said the majority of those participating in this seminar—and the truths of reason that philosophy is capable of grasping.

I presented this attitude in a humorous form, and I apologize for it, but I do not in the least think that Professor Voegelin was

wrong, for the necessary condition for a philosophical discussion is not to be ideologists, not men of opinion, or *doxa*, to borrow a word from Plato. If we are merely men of *doxa*, all we can do is contradict each other's views, and reasonable discussion becomes impossible. Perhaps, however, he exaggerated the situation slightly, in that a considerable amount of reasonable discussion is possible if we presuppose common values or common desires. Within societies, even though there may not be a rational awareness of the supreme good, there is nonetheless an obscure or imperfect awareness of it. Thanks to this fact and to human nature, there can be reasonable discussions, even among people who resort to dogmatism. Those who claim to deny reason are not as bad as they think they are. They, too, in a way believe in some kind of reason, even though they may state that only opinions and ideologies matter.

I believe that this sums up fairly well the essence of our discussions, including the answers we gave or those we were hesitant to give, the questions we shelved and those we concentrated on. I think that the two essential points might well be the following: Is there a fundamental difference between Soviet society and Western society? It would be rash, and probably erroneous, to assert it. Is a reconciliation likely in the near future between these two types of social organization? It would be almost as dangerous to believe this. In all probability, the exchanges—which we trust will be nonviolent—between the Soviet and Western societies will continue over a relatively long period; but it is possible that, realizing the absurdity of war, this exchange may become more and more a real dialogue and not, as it has been so often in the past, a double monologue. The problem is not that both societies should be identical but rather that they should mutually recognize the right of the other to exist and discover the points on which a difference actually exists between them.

I shall sum up the second basic point in the following manner: the awareness of the need for and the difficulty of having a philosophical discussion within the West itself. I believe that we are all convinced of the need for this exchange, and we also know how difficult it is, not simply because science so impresses the layman, but also because in the past there was generally an

accepted method of philosophical reflection. Today there is no such unanimously accepted method of philosophical reflection; there are several methods, and even when professional philosophers meet they are not always able to come to an agreement any more easily than we were able to here.



Natural Law in Political Theory

Excerpts from the Discussion

Ontological Status

VOEGELIN: The discussion has taken a very interesting turn. It began with Professor Kelsen's presentation of natural law. Directly following it, the question was raised whether natural law, or indeed any imperative at all, has an ontological status of its own. The question was asked, What is the being (*das Sein*) within which the obligation (*das Sollen*) arises? It seems to me that classical philosophy answers this question: It is the human being. The obligation occurs within the human being! And here the questions arise concerning the relations of being and obligation, and of knowledge and will. Being, i.e., the nature of the human being, can be known; but that is not enough—it must also be willed.

Translated for this edition from the German by Jodi Cockerill and William Petropulos, this text originally appeared in *Das Naturrecht in der politischen Theorie*, ed. Franx-Martin Schmölz (Vienna: Springer-Verlag, 1963), 122–23, 127–32, 135–37, 140–60. Reprinted by kind permission of Springer-Verlag, Vienna. Besides Eric Voegelin, participants in the discussion were: Albert Auer, OSB, professor of political philosophy at the University of Salzburg; Giorgio Del Vecchio, professor at the University of Rome; Gustav Kafka, professor for public law at the College for World Trade in Vienna; Hans Kelsen, professor at the Universities of Berkeley, Cologne, and Vienna; René Marcic, professor of law at the University of Vienna; Franz-Martin Schmölz, OP, professor for political philosophy at the University of Salzburg; Alfred Verdross-Drossberg, professor of international law and the philosophy of law at the University of Vienna; Friedrich August Freiherr von der Heyde, professor of international law and political science at the University of Würzburg; Eberhard Welty, OP, professor of social philosophy and social ethic in Walberberg. For the English translation of Eric Voegelin's lecture "Right by Nature," see *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, vol. 6, *Anamnesis: On the Theory of History and Politics*, ed. with intro. by David Walsh (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002), 140–57.

The Aristotelian ethic presupposes that the human being can set goals entirely different from the goal of fulfilling his nature. For Aristotle, the man who wants to be what he should be, according to his nature, is the measure of knowledge in questions of ethics. He is called the *spoudaios*. Historically, however, there are also other standards of knowledge; in Christianity, it is Christ. With this insight, we have determined more closely the place of obligation in being; it is found in *representative humanity*. From the analysis of representative humanity, as it emerges in the sources of revelation in the Old and New Testaments and in classical philosophy, we discover what *ought to be willed*. Yet in concrete historical societies we encounter the problem that most human beings are little inclined to orient conduct to the models of representative humanity, but prefer other paths. With natural law, by contrast, we have to begin with the assumption that we want to interpret the norms of representative humanity, and not the conduct of some kind of corrupt humanity.

In this way, I would trace the Catholic set of problems back to the ontological one.

KELSEN: It is my conviction as well, that obligation is also a type of being, but *ideal* being. The being of obligation is completely different from the being of natural fact, but it too is being, it is also present.

VOEGELIN: And indeed, I would agree with you: It is present, but as the will of a representative human being.

KELSEN: No, my esteemed colleague, that is not correct. There is a logical mistake in that. The will's existence is a completely different type of existence than the will's meaning. An act has a specific meaning. The being of this act is a natural being that I can perceive, that I can see, hear, and touch; but I cannot see, hear, or feel the meaning of the act. That is an *ideal* being, in contrast to real being. Husserl made this distinction in his *Logical Investigations*—and, in my view, with good reason. In particular he asserted it against Sigwart's *Logic*. This distinction between the being of an act and the being of that act's meaning, which is of fundamental importance, is confused over and over again.

When, for example, one states that one ought to do something, this means nothing more than that someone wants someone else to do something. The entire, materialistic ethic rests upon the erroneous identification of the being of an act with the being of the act's meaning. Schlick, the founder of positivistic logic, propounded the thesis in his basic norm of ethics: People speak continually of obligation. But what does that mean? There is no such thing as obligation! The statement that someone ought to do something means nothing more than that someone else wants something done. A fundamental error! Willing is an act with real existence; the meaning of this act has merely ideal existence. Here we have two completely different kinds of being and two completely different kinds of object, yet two that are all too often confused with one another.

VOEGELIN: There is a misunderstanding here. I have expressly added that insight into obligation is gained on the model of representative humanity, and not on that of a random humanity. This introduces the problem of representation. Certain human beings, for example, those who have been the recipients of revelation, but also human beings who exist in philosophical openness to the divine, become representative by virtue of such openness of their being to transcendence. In representation, we find true obligation, as opposed to false obligation. Of course, sophists can also tell us what the human being ought to do. But what they say is false because they are not representative, because they are not a measure of humanity in the Aristotelian sense. That is the heart of the matter!

[...]

The Interpretation of Aristotle¹

VOEGELIN: When we ask the question, Did Aristotle have a doctrine of natural law? or What was his position on natural law? we presuppose the topical concept of the doctrine of natural law, which also includes the entire Stoic and Scholastic traditions. But there is no reason why we need to begin with this topos. For my

1. Discussion following Voegelin's presentation "Right by Nature."

part, I cannot conceive of what the doctrine of natural law might refer to, if not to the principles by which the essence of the human being is translated into norms in order that it might be realized in the world. In this sense, one can build a doctrine of natural law upon statements about the nature of the human being. Yet one need not necessarily do this: After all, the general normative principles are not very interesting, because they are not concretely applicable. Of importance is solely the insight into the nature of the human being itself. And Aristotle has something to say about that nature. In precisely the same passage of Book V in the *Ethics* he states that, of all *politeiai*, only one is right by nature; and that is the best one, which he describes in the *Politics*. Books VII and VIII of the *Politics* sketch the model of a social order based upon the Aristotelian insights into the nature of the human being. Books vii and viii are Aristotle's "natural law."

KELSEN: My colleague, Mr. Voegelin, is entirely correct in stating that, in Aristotle's view, the *physei dikaion* is changeable. That is of the utmost importance.

Gentlemen, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the theory of a mutable natural law has once again become very fashionable. In my lecture yesterday, however, I took the liberty of arguing that the doctrine of a *mutable natural law* surrenders the idea of natural law. As soon as one states that natural law is mutable, one has given up the original idea of natural law as an eternal and immutable law. It is changeable; that means it must adapt to each changing circumstance. Its only objective criterion is that the legal order be *effective*. If a legal order is not adapted to the prevailing circumstances, it cannot be effective. For how do we know that the order corresponds to the natural law? By its *effectiveness*! Any other judgment is merely a *subjective* value judgment. The Communist will say, "Yes, of course, but only a communist order corresponds to the circumstances"; the capitalist will say, "Yes, but only a capitalistic order corresponds to the circumstances." But which of the two value systems is the right one? We cannot determine that unless we believe in absolute values! But I do not believe in them! The only objective criterion is effectiveness! Effectiveness is a prerequisite for the validity of positive law.

SCHMÖLZ: I also want to speak to the point that the *physei dikaion* is mutable. On this matter, Professor Voegelin has said that there are several *constants* within mutability!

KELSEN: I concede that that too is correct. Aristotle's idea is that the *physei dikaion* itself is changeable!—but changeable to a lesser extent than merely positive law. Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery, etc.—that is the *physei dikaion*. Of course, it is not completely identical in all legal orders. Murder is punished by death in one legal order and by imprisonment in another. But the essential thing in the *Nicomachean Ethics* is that this *physei dikaion* is a part of the *nomikon dikaion*—that it is *physei dikaion* within positive law.

MARCIC: I would say the opposite, that the *nomikon dikaion* is a part of the *physikon dikaion*.

SCHMÖLZ: Natural law always becomes problematic with regard to evil. It should be engaged as a critique of a state of evil.

KELSEN: That is its essential function.

SCHMÖLZ: But for that we need the *normal condition*, and where do we get that?

Misconstructions of Natural Law

VOEGELIN: Let me comment on Professor Kelsen's question concerning absolute values. I do not believe in absolute values. Indeed, I would have the word *value* excluded from the philosophical vocabulary. I am interested in the objective criteria according to which statements about human nature and, in their wake, statements about its realization can be judged as true or false. And here, a whole series of criteria can be listed.

The Platonic-Aristotelian concern with the nature of the human being was occasioned both by the ongoing existence of unjust deeds and by the *misconstructions* of human nature that emerged in the society of the time. Let me give several examples:

1. A first misconception arises on the occasion of the conflict between normalcy in the sense of frequency of occurrence and normalcy in the sense of representative humanity. The conduct of many human beings, perhaps of the majority, is guided by a striving for power: stated in classical terms, by *pleonexia*, in Christian terms, by the *libido dominandi*. If one declares this majority to be the normal case for the human being and constructs, as the sophists or Hobbes did, a natural law that assumes it, the result is not just one more construction among others with their assumptions regarding "values." Rather, it is a false statement about human nature and can be objectively determined as such, for *pleonexia*, precisely that which does intend the human being's *telos* has been proclaimed to be the criterion of nature.

2. A second misconception works with the idea of the empirical average. Plato already polemicized against this misconception in the case of the sophist, Hippias, who supported it. We cannot just hold a Gallup poll in order to find out which norms appear in all legal orders and then conclude that those which appear everywhere are natural and that those wherein legal orders differ are not. The *representative humanity* of which I spoke yesterday is to be taken as the standard. If one does not take it as the standard, one cannot justify oneself by invoking other "values," for [without representative humanity as the measure], the natural law construction itself is objectively false.

3. Yet other misconstructions point to the empirical fact that the potentiality of human nature (which is the same for all human beings) is fully actualized in only a minority of cases. If one were to attempt to orient a society's order upon the equal potential of nature in all human beings, one would arrive at the natural law of an egalitarian democracy. If one were to attempt to orient society's order upon the actualization [of human nature] in the minority of cases, one would arrive at an elitist natural right. For classical politics, therefore, the great problem of social order is how to unite the egalitarian and elite factors in a reasonably stable mixed constitution.

4. The task of attaining a "Christian" natural law is particularly difficult, for neither the Decalogue nor the Sermon on the Mount has anything to say about social order in a world of power

politics. We are thus confronted with the great problem that there is no truly “Christian” theory of political order at all; in order to construct a “Christian natural law,” we have to return to classical politics.

The great achievement of Aristotle was to have held in balance the various factors that lead to misconstructions if they are erected into independent principles. On the one hand, he developed general theses about the right order by nature—as, for example, in *Politics* vii and viii or in the book about *philia* in the *Ethics*. On the other hand, he freely admitted that further problems in the historical process render the right by nature a constantly changing one in the concrete instance.

Then, there is a further problem area: for example, in the conception of a constitution. One cannot orient a constitution (this is already Aristotle’s polemic against Plato) to the principle that the virtuous should rule, for example. For if the virtuous are made into rulers, then all those who are without virtue are insulted and withhold their consent. So that does not work; one must do it differently. Thus, part of the nature of the right constitution is this: Because the majority does not achieve the perfection of human nature, perfected human nature is *not* made into the principle by which a constitution is to be established. This too is a part of nature. Therefore there is an entire series of criteria that reveal that, in any case, egalitarian democracies cannot be constructed on the basis of natural law. They must either base their equality upon perfectly realized human nature, in which case they fail to gain consent, or upon the guarantee of the majority, in which case they are corrupt. The great problem, therefore, is this: How do I incorporate perfected, representative human nature into an egalitarian mass and thereby attain on the whole, not the *state* (that has nothing to do with it), but the *polis*—that is, the society oriented to the *euzen*?

Those, therefore, are a few misconstructions. There are others. In particular, eminent misconstructions seem to me to exist in the Christian theory of the law of nature, and for the following reason: in the Decalogue, the relationship between the human being and God and the relationship between human being and human being are correctly ordered. But nothing is said about the governing order of society. This leads to what Buber, for example,

calls the content of the Decalogue, the “genuine theocracy” that, however, is incapable of survival. This, then, is our problem. It is a misconception because one element has been isolated and other elements have not been included. The same holds for the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon on the Mount is delivered under the assumption of an apocalyptic existence for which, so to speak, the end of the world and the kingdom of God will come in fourteen days. But what does one do when the world does not come to an end and the *parousia* fails to materialize and we must live in the world as it is? What function does the Sermon on the Mount have then? Other things would have to be taken up into it. A law of nature oriented *exclusively* to the Sermon on the Mount would also be a misconception: for, once again, no political element is present! That is the great problem: We have no Christian political theory because, even with the best of intentions, we cannot extract political content from either the Decalogue or from the Sermon on the Mount. Aristotle’s great achievement was to hold all these factors in balance. Thus, on the one hand, he could make general statements about nature—for example, in the eighth book with its depiction of *philia*, or in the *Politics*—but, on the other hand, he could also see that there are problems in the historical process in which the concrete things change, but without ceasing to be *physei*.

AUER: For the first time, I hear someone assert that the Sermon on the Mount is natural law. The Sermon on the Mount can never be natural law.

WELTY: You have often stated that the criterion for the natural law is representative humanity. Have I understood you correctly?

VOEGELIN: Yes, yes.

WELTY: Mr. Voegelin, you speak of representative humanity! As far as faith is concerned, *the* representative human being is found only in *Christ*, the Son of God incarnate in his full perfection. Where is he to be found otherwise?

VOEGELIN: Nowhere!

VON DER HEYDTE: I believe that this is the decisive point in Voegelin's theory, the idea of representation! Who decides what is representative? That implies a value judgment—specifically, a value judgment that each answers in terms of his own ideas of value.

KELSEN: Correct.

VON DER HEYDTE: But if I connect the natural law to representation, then I relativize it. The Communist will answer completely differently than the Christian.

WELTY: But that affects only the problem that each *answers* in terms of his own *standpoint*. The question is this: Is there a foundation in terms of which one can answer *validly*? Not bound to a standpoint, therefore, but in terms of the natural order of being. Professor Voegelin, I too am of the opinion that one must be very careful when using the word *value*. One does better to speak of the good, of virtue, etc., *ens et bonum convertuntur*.

VOEGELIN: In the first book of the *Ethics*, Aristotle begins with a depiction of the various standpoints that humans take concerning the highest good that they want to realize in life. *Science* begins beyond these standpoints, with the questions, Can one determine whether one of these standpoints is the correct one? and What are the criteria of truth? The task of philosophical science is to answer this question. Thus, I would avoid entering into arguments about "value judgments" at all. Talk of "values" and "value judgments" is a piece of ideological mischief that began in the nineteenth century and has persisted to this day, although it is now in decline. Our question is this: Do we have objective criteria by which we can decide who is right—Marx or Aristotle? And we have them! That is what philosophy is.

SCHMÖLZ: This afternoon, I will attempt to name some of these objective criteria: the so-called *inclinationes naturales*, to which Thomas gives names. There are objective criteria, and we also know—even before Thomas Aquinas—what is good and what is not good. One knows this already with classical philosophy. One

has knowledge of the existence of the virtues, both the intellectual and the practical virtues. About that, there is no debate. . . .

[. . .]

Therapeutic Knowledge

VOEGELIN: This raises a further question: Does the matter end in the relation of *lex naturalis* and *determinatio* for the concrete cases in which the [question of] natural law becomes acute? It would appear to me that the general principles serve not only as eminent determinants for concrete cases, but also as *therapeutic knowledge* in the face of false assertions. For the problem of *true* and *false* arises precisely in confronting false assertions. Further, as theologians also emphasize, it is very important to clearly separate the philosophical and theological vocabularies. And that is in fact possible. We have the Christian concept of original sin, but the problem can also be expressed by the Greek *pleonexia* or *alazoneia* or by the Latin *superbia* or *libido dominandi*; there are more such examples. There is even a vocabulary of pagan philosophy that very nearly approaches the Christian problematic of grace: such as, for example, the concept of the *arche* that Aristotle develops in the *Eudaemonian Ethics*. The *arche* is the wellspring of right action in the absence of deliberation—the human being's divine instinct for right action, so to speak. These would be examples of a pre-Christian vocabulary that approaches the problems of Christian theology.

WELTY: Professor Voegelin, what you have just said is very significant and has been too little emphasized in the debate on natural law. Thomas calls them the intuitive principles and orders. Even in the condition of original sin, the human being can recognize the right, true, and good. This applies not merely to the general principles but to the possibilities of application as well. These are the emanations; these are the *irradiatio* of the *lex aeterna*! That is eminently important.

VOEGELIN: You see what I am trying to get at here. It involves the daily debate with young people who have been formed in a

secular way. When one explains a philosophical problem to them, they believe one wants to convert them to Catholicism.

VON DER HEYDTE: That is also a problem of method. We say that the essence of the human being is so constituted; we indeed possess an analysis of the nature [*Seinsanalyse*] of the human being. With an analysis of the nature of the human being alone, however, I cannot arrive at natural *obligation* unless I assume a natural destiny of the human being. And this I can provide only metaphysically, whether with a rational or a nonrational metaphysics. But the next question must be whether there is a rational knowledge of metaphysics.

SCHMÖLZ: I believe that I have answered both questions raised by Professor von der Heydte in my presentation. First, the human being's natural destiny consists in its actualization—that is, in his becoming holy—in order to attain the *finis ultimus* through it.

VON DER HEYDTE: Thomas says that and we say that. But try to say that in a lecture hall to the people of our time who have only a pitying smile to spare for it.

SCHMÖLZ: My esteemed colleague, to that we can only say that that is a problem of spiritual experience. If one reflects upon it, one understands it. Just because the majority of people today do not reflect upon it does not make the problem disappear from human existence.

VOEGELIN: We have arrived at a controversial point. Your reservations, Mr. von der Heydte, are occasioned by the question, How can one make philosophical statements credible in our time? That is in fact a problem we must confront constantly, particularly in the pedagogical debate. Permit me to say the following: By no means can one make these things credible by repeating the metaphysical vocabulary, for this vocabulary was created in order to interpret experiences. Therefore, in order to make the philosophical problematic convincing, one must reactivate and repeat the experiences. Therefore, one must return to the texts containing

revelatory experience and philosophical meditation and demonstrate the reality in them that is demonstrated by the metaphysical vocabulary. If one contents oneself with tossing philosophical principles at the student, the student will justifiably ask, "How do you know that?" To formulate it unambiguously, the basis for treating philosophical problems must always be the *praxis* of meditation.

[. . .]

"Natural Law" or the Order of Being²

VOEGELIN: I have never concerned myself extensively with questions of natural law because political science deals with other problems: the orders of concrete historical societies, the founding of these orders, the evils that give rise to complaints and demands for reform. These questions of order—of its foundation, maintenance, disruption, reform, etc.—are the same, whether a modern, an ancient, a Western or an Oriental society is involved. In treating them, it strikes me that certain theoretical starting points are assumed as a matter of course, but in fact they should not be assumed as a matter of course.

In order to work one's way out of the spiritual confusion of our time, one tries to reconstruct the ontological problem through recourse to the Scholastics—particularly to Thomas—or to classical philosophy. Yet one notices entirely different theoretical starting points if one studies Mesopotamian or Egyptian societies, as, for example, the scholars of the Chicago Oriental Institute have done. If one investigates the older, cosmological societies, a good part of the vocabulary that is familiar to us becomes irrelevant; if one analyzes problems of order in an Egyptian or Chinese context, for example, the expression "natural law" disappears. These societies have their own *categories of order*, which serve at the same time as legal categories: the Egyptian *ma'at*, Chinese *tao*, or Indian *dharma* all describe the structures of order of both cosmos and society. Wherever the human being still experiences his consubstantiality with the cosmos, he creates, by virtue of this participation, a social order that is analogous to the cosmos. The

2. Discussion following the presentation by Albert Auer.

categories just cited cannot be expressed in the concept of “natural law,” even if they intend the same thing as natural law. If one conducts political science upon a historically comparative basis—as today one must—one will get by without the category of natural law. This is because one encounters the background area of problems that Father Schmözl identified in his presentation as the *lex naturae*. If we leave off the word *nature*, we come to general categories of the order of being. Thus a *general ontology of order* needs to be developed in which the problems of the order of historical societies, with their very different degrees of differentiation, would be treated as specific instances. This undertaking seems to me to be particularly important today; for our political relations have become international, and we are confronted with conflicts among various conceptions of order. We face the practical question of why a declining Confucian order like that of the Chinese is more susceptible to communism and less inclined to accept a Western, Christian conception of order. Or, of what type are those structures of order, the traditional institutions and their symbolic expressions, that impel Asiatic cultures to resist democratization? And so on.

KELSEN: That is a psychological question.

VOEGELIN: No, it is not a psychological question. It is a question of the respective degrees of the differentiation of ontological insights.

KELSEN: From there, no path whatsoever leads to the problem of the justice of natural law.

VOEGELIN: But perhaps after all! Consider, for example, the question that was discussed yesterday: whether one can in any way apply the expression “international law” to other types of organization—let us say, to the Confucian family of peoples. Our entire vocabulary is oriented so specifically to a Western problematic that it has become almost obsolete in the current state of science, which must incorporate the Asiatic civilizations. In the comparative investigation of order, we have now come much further than we could ever have come if we had worked with an unanalyzed

topos of "natural law." "Natural law" is one among many variants symbolizing a return to the ground of being. In Chinese and Indian societies, symbols other than natural law are applied because the problems there are less differentiated. The core of the Western conception of order—and this holds for both classical philosophy and Scholastic philosophy—is the theomorphy of the human being. In the Oriental cases, by contrast, there is an experiential type that does not penetrate to the image of God in human beings; here, rather, the image of man is constructed anthropomorphically. But if natural law has a theomorphic foundation, as Professor Kelsen has stated, then this phenomenon that is historically unique to the West would have to be developed further in order to be fruitful in treating concrete cases that are differently situated. We must be clear about it: The varying concepts of the human being give rise to significant cultural conflicts that are not solvable within the framework of an international law determined by the West. Yet once we are clear about the theomorphic conception of the human being, we can apply it *directly* to the concrete cases and no longer require the mediation of "natural law." I believe that we are now making very substantial methodological progress in these matters.

Natural Law and History

SCHMÖLZ: A second problem has surfaced. It too concerns a formulation of Father Auer: his statement that natural law is not something that has arisen through a historical process. Now, that formulation seems to contradict my presentation. For we recorded as our result that natural law includes not only the "invariable" element of human nature but the *entire* human nature, that natural right is contained *in* positive law, and that both human nature and the entire order are subject to the historical process. In this example, we again see that the traditional terminology does not help us achieve clarity concerning the problem. Would we not then have to return to the *primary experiences of being* and their terminology in order to eliminate this misunderstanding? We would do better, therefore, to say that the *natura humana* is unchangeable as regards its structure. The actualization of the structure is variable, not only because there are different character

types and because such actualization is achieved differently in different societies, but because entirely different things enter into it—things we have not yet even mentioned.

VOEGELIN: One should perhaps include a further point. When one speaks of the sphere of natural law, one indeed acknowledges the participation of the human being in all levels of the hierarchy of being. In theoretical debates, however, the person-central problems always tend to be shoved into the foreground. But in practice, it is the person-peripheral problems that occupy us. (I use the expressions “person-central” and “person-peripheral” in Max Scheler’s sense.) The sphere of property, for example, is a decidedly person-peripheral problem. Yet in the practice of political debate in our spiritually confused time, there arises the oddity that person-peripheral problems are turned into person-central ones. An example: Not long ago, the BBC conducted a survey and asked, “Why are the Americans so unpopular?” One reason why they are so unpopular with the Left is that American economic development and social practice have demonstrated that a very high standard of living can be attained with a free economic system. Yet with this collapses the worldview of the Labour Party people, who believe that this is possible only with the help of socialism. The economic system becomes a spiritually central problem instead of remaining in the person-peripheral sphere where one can debate whether socialism or a free economy produces better results. Thus a symbolism is created, and posited as a model, that cannot be questioned, in order to obscure the real problem of the person-central sphere and propagate those of the person-peripheral sphere.

Is “Law” “Being” or “Aliquid Rationis”?³

SCHMÖLZ: I attempted in my presentation to define the natural law as *aliquid rationis*. Mr. Marcic has presented the counterposition in that he has identified natural law with being as such and presented it as a *primum datum* of our experience. That is almost equivalent to an *idea innata* and violates the Scholastic principle:

3. Discussion following the presentation by René Marcic.

omnis cognitio incipit a sensibus! Consequently, Marcic makes the following series of identifications: Natural law is identical to being; natural law is also identical to the fundamental norm; the fundamental norm, in turn, is identical to the constitution. With that, we have speculatively eliminated our entire problem, because now, no difficulties, and no clash between constitution and fundamental norm or between the fundamental norm and natural law can arise. The three are identical.

MARCIC: The main intention of my presentation was to establish the connection between positive law and natural law. But even when the formal context is established, the difficulties are as great as they are without it. To the jurist, the problem of an unconstitutional law is a very weighty one. One can of course interpret as Professor Kelsen does; then it is easy to solve logically. Yet despite this, every jurist who reflects upon it, wrestles with the natural law solution. Thus, I wanted at least to frame the problems uniformly.

SCHMÖLZ: May I raise the issue again in the form of a concrete question? Is the law—the natural law as well—a *productum rationis*, *aliquid rationis* or is it an ontic being? That is the question.

MARCIC: The ground or foundation of law is clearly being, the *ens*, *in quantum habet rationem boni*.

SCHMÖLZ: Granted. But, once again, my question concerns not the *foundation* of law, but *law*. Is the law *aliquid rationis* or is it ontically a primary experience, does it have an ontic status?

MARCIC: May I state the following in answer to that question? Thomas Aquinas distinguishes two kinds of principles of being. The one consists in no more than principles, pure forms; the other consists in principles that at the same time are also causes of an effect. Thus, I would say that the law is an *ens reale*. It is, therefore, not an *ens rationis* but an *ens* in the broadest sense of the word.

KELSEN: An ideal being?

MARCIC: An ideal being!

SCHMÖLZ: Then we derive all positive law from a legal *idea*.

MARCIC: Yes, but I would passionately dispute the word *idea*.

SCHMÖLZ: Might I reformulate my question, then? Do we then derive law from ideal law? That was just stated.

MARCIC: If we have terminologically clarified it as such beforehand, we can affirm it as such.

SCHMÖLZ: But that is what I must deny. I have to repeat: *lex est aliquid rationis*. The ratio has made the reflexive connection to being, but *lex* and *ius* arise only in the *ratio*.

VERDROSS: One can perhaps say that *lex* and *ius* are only *knowable* in the *ratio*?

SCHMÖLZ: *Being*, the order of being, is known to us.

VERDROSS: Father Schmölz means that the natural law is not given to us as a completed statement; rather, we formulate it based on our knowledge of being.

SCHMÖLZ: This formulation occurs in the *ratio*. If I were to formulate the difference between my thesis and that of Mr. Marcic ontologically, then mine states, *ens et verum et bonum convertuntur*, and Mr. Marcic's states, *ens et verum et bonum et ius convertuntur*. And I cannot subscribe to that addition.

MARCIC: But we are dealing here with the foundation. Without positivity, one can not even begin to lay the foundations of positive law. But then one must ask, what is pre-positivity? Pre-positivity lies solely with God, where there is an *intuitus ordinarius*. Thus the *lex aeterna* is at the same time the ground of being.

VERDROSS: At this point the question arises, How do I attain to natural law? Do I possess direct insight into this idea or not? That is the problem.

SCHMÖLZ: We are again brought back to the problem that I treated in my presentation, to the *plus vel minus participare*. This is an anthropological problem again; and the legal problematic only begins here, not in the order of being itself.

VOEGELIN: First, I must say that Mr. Marcic's lecture was a pure pleasure. The vitality with which he has constructed the problem, regardless as to whether we agree with the theses, was a pleasure to behold. Nonetheless, a few questions appear to me to be in order. First, *can* one in fact carry out the constructions that you have presented? Of course, for you have done so, and brilliantly! But the second question, the one that concerned Father Schmölz as well, asks, Is one *permitted* to do it? And such permission must be assessed according to objective criteria. One might begin with the following point of your presentation: At the very start, you offered the fine Heidegger citation about the trees. As far as trees are concerned, I agree. But can one say what was said about the trees about the law too? Does the law have an ontic status in the same sense that trees do? That seems doubtful to me. In part, your construction depends upon an imprecise definition of what you understand by the law, even if what you mean is implied by the title. You seek to make natural law the basic norm of law; it is positive law. Yet the problem of a legal order's basic norm arises, not from the general problematic of law, but from the particular historical situation in which a society's law is construed as a graduated order [*Stufenordnung*] of legal propositions culminating in a law-creating [*rechtssetzenden*] sovereign. However, for societies that do not use this construction of sovereignty, the problem of the fundamental norm does not arise. The hierarchical construction emerged at a certain time, in the sixteenth century, when it was radically executed for the first time by Bodin. Only if one equates this type of legal construction with law can one ascribe ontic status to the law; perhaps, then, the law would require your construction to interpret it. Yet if one glances at the legal phenomena in Europe before the sixteenth century or at legal phenomena

outside Europe, then such a construction is not required. Thus, your construction seems to me to violate the principle that a theory must take into account the empirical material for which it seeks to offer a theory. But your theory is not necessary for any material outside European law since the sixteenth century. This is why Father Schmölz seems to me to be correct when he states that the right of which you speak has no ontic status but is an *ens rationis*! Especially if one refers to Thomas, one has to return to the thing that is ontically primary: namely, to the human being and right conduct. Yet for that, one requires neither the basic norm nor the additional construction that you have explicated. That is my reservation in the matter.

MARCIC: You are right, there are various concepts of law and of being. Of course, I have assumed here that my efforts cannot include legal and cultural circles outside Europe. But I would energetically dispute that there is not a theory of levels in Roman and Greek legal thought—certainly regarding the primacy of the constitution! The first theorist of constitutional primacy was Aristotle. In the *Politics* alone one can find at least a dozen passages where he repeatedly emphasizes that the law is determined by the constitution and that the constitution is the higher-ranking norm compared to the law. And then: What is the constitution? The legislated constitution, in turn, is of a rank lower than the *common law*—custom and mores. Custom and mores have nothing whatsoever to do with ethics in our sense. This is a pure, legal construction. Thus, I have attempted to build precisely upon the idea that the Western legal theory of the Greeks and Romans, continued by Thomas, accepts the graduated order of the law and builds upon this whole. I have attempted to demonstrate that this is a characteristic of all Western legal theory. Of course, I admit that other legal constructions are conceivable. But in the context of the established tradition of Western legal and political philosophy, I believe I can modestly state that, on the whole, mine accounts for what is present in the material.

VOEGELIN: If you are referring to the passages in which the *politeia* is spoken of as the condition of the law, I must reply that this is not a theory of levels! Only if one translates *politeia* as “constitution”

can one derive a theory of levels from these passages—but such a translation is incorrect. The *politeia* is the condition of the society as a whole, the regime within which the legislator is effective. Certainly, the laws that the *nomothetes* gives will differ according to the regime. But this kind of dependence is not a problem of graduated levels.

MARCIC: I beg your pardon. In this, Professor Voegelin, you are completely correct: Unfortunately, *politeia* is not applicable here. But that which we call a constitution is custom, the *patrios politeia*, the higher-ranking, the older law—the constitution.

VOEGELIN: The higher-ranking law indeed, but not the constitution: for the higher-ranking law can lie upon the same level as the law that is to be newly established. Its priority is that of age, not that it is of a higher level. In certain legal cultures, it is a principle that one should not willfully change old law. But respect for the old law is not a theory of levels.

KAFKA: There is something I do not understand in the argumentation of my colleague Mr. Marcic. Each positive legal order assumes a constitution in the legal-logical sense; it is the assumed ground of validity of a positive legal order. But Marcic identifies this constitution in the legal-logical sense with the fundamental norm, and this in turn is connected with the natural law. From this, it would then follow that even the immoral legal order would be covered by natural law. That is what I do not understand.

MARCIC: Mr. Kafka, you will concede that there are such things as illegitimate laws. And you will find in a positive legal order that a judge is obliged to uphold even an unconstitutional law until the question has been clarified.

KAFKA: That is a question of positive law.

MARCIC: Naturally. But that is precisely the meaning of my entire construction. Ultimately, the act of a positive legal order is not “law”—I mean, not ontologically founded—unless it is reducible to the fundamental norm in the absolute sense, thus, to natural

law. But that is precisely the sense of the entire construction: that a positive law, unless it is *derivatur a lege naturali*, cannot be incorporated into the structure of the order.

KELSEN: Permit me one comment. Mr. Marcic asked: What is the difference between natural law and the fundamental norm of the pure theory of law? The difference is very simple. Between a positive legal order and its fundamental norm, conflict is impossible. Whereas in the relationship of a positive legal order to the natural law, such conflict is not only possible, but must be possible in principle. For if such conflict is not possible, the natural law cannot serve as a standard for the positive legal order! In that case, every positive legal order would be just. But then the natural law would be completely superfluous! The thesis maintained by our colleague Mr. Marcic is that the natural law is the fundamental norm of a positive legal order. Yet this is only possible if the norm of natural law reads as Saint Paul formulated it: Obey the authorities! That means, one should conduct oneself as a state's constitution prescribes. If the natural law were to contain no other norm than this, then Mr. Marcic's thesis would be correct. But, gentlemen, perhaps Mr. Marcic is more correct than you are willing to concede. Namely, if the norm "obey the authorities" is valid, then no other norm of natural law can be valid if it contradicts a positive legal order. For how can one obey an authority who commands something that contradicts substantial natural law? In that case, the norm "obey the authorities" is not so unconditionally valid as Paul formulated it; rather, in that case, it would have to read, "obey the authorities if the authorities are just."

SCHMÖLZ: And *only* thus can it be valid!

MARCIC: I have not concerned myself with this problem in my lecture. I must clarify that, of course, I assume that the constitution-giver—and the so-called sovereign, too—*applies* law; he does not arbitrarily establish law, but applies natural law. Yet this natural law has material principles and criteria as well. Aristotle offers clear, objective criteria when he states what he understands by the *bonum commune*, the *euzen*. It is the entire theory of the *dignitas humana*. That is, the basic norm says that I must obey

the authorities, but also that obedience is not unconditional. Its limits lie in the condition of the common good, and that is an objective standard that can be experienced and whose limits are found in accordance with the dignity of the human being.

VERDROSS: But if you assume that, you do not need the concept of the formal basic norm.

KELSEN: From the standpoint of legal science, the law under Nazi rule is *law*. We can regret it, but we cannot deny that it was law. The law of the Soviet Union is law. We can loathe it as we loathe a poisonous snake, but we cannot deny that it exists. That means that it is valid. That is the essence of positive law. Once again, gentlemen, I repeat: The basic norm can change nothing about the givenness of the law! And one more comment. If we distinguish a constitution from an instrument that is called a constitution but that regulates all possible matters, then *constitution* means, in the substantial sense of the word, the rule that determines the procedure in which legal norms are generated. Nothing more. *Constitution* is the rule that determines how laws are made; *constitution* is the rule as to how judicial decisions are made, the procedure in which the administrative acts are established. *Constitution* is the regulation of the generation of law. That is the concept of the constitution.

VOEGELIN: For the life of me, I cannot see in a law thus defined—and one that must be thus defined in order to justify the construction—anything that would have ontic status. I see only that we are continually referred back to the problems of man and society, of right conduct in the context of the social order, etc., and with that, to Aristotle or Thomas or other metaphysicians who have concerned themselves with these questions.

KELSEN: I believe that the lecture of my colleague Mr. Marcic is exceedingly valuable from the following standpoint: He sees legal philosophy from the standpoint of the theory of natural law, whereby certain categories of the pure theory of law are also applied. If one assumes the standpoint of the pure theory of law, then this is a logical and extremely informative portrayal of natural law

theory. I hold this to be of extraordinary value; and although I am no natural law theorist, I am extremely pleased to see that the categories created by the pure theory of law can also be applied from the standpoint of natural law theory—even if, when they can be applied, of course, with another material result. But perhaps that is not so important. What is important is the structural analysis. And Marcic has presented the structural analysis in an outstanding way.

VOEGELIN: I disagree and must now utter a word in defense of the pure theory of law. I will not let myself be deprived of the basic norm—whether in the older form or in the one you now prefer. No matter if one agrees with every detail, it is the indispensable prerequisite for the interpretation of positive law. Without it, positive law cannot be recognized in its context as *positive*. I would resist *this* sense of the basic norm (which works through the problematic of the validity of the positive law) being robbed of its nature by a contamination of the basic norm with natural law. For precisely this is the achievement of the pure theory of law: that, in terms of the basic norm, there is no criterion—no ground for indignation, so to speak—according to which Soviet law or National Socialist law is any less just law than any other. One really should not confuse the question of the positive validity of law with the problematic of natural law. For it is precisely the merit of the pure theory of law that, in terms of its basic norm, one has no criterion and, so to speak, no ground for indignation that Soviet law or National Socialist law does not exist just as much as any other law. The other problematic is that of natural law or nature. One ought not to confuse the two.

KELSEN: I only wanted to say that, if I were a natural law theorist, I would reproach myself as follows: My dear fellow, do not be so proud of your achievement. If it is your task to establish the validity of the positive law, then you can of course do it, but only in a *restricted* way! I, as representative of the theory of natural law, can demonstrate why it is valid! Not conditionally, but unconditionally! That is a great advantage! But it has of course the disadvantage that one must then assume that Soviet law is not

law, that Nazi law is not law, that only that which I hold to be law is law.

Law—A Coercive Order?⁴

KELSEN: I am convinced that the law is a coercive order. Yet, in all modesty, I would like to draw Professor von der Heydte's attention to the fact that my definition of law concerns only *positive* law. Never in my life have I had the absurd idea that natural law is a coercive order. Natural law is not a coercive order; indeed, its very meaning states that natural law—precisely because it is the right, the good, and the just—requires no coercion to be valid or effective.

Second, you say that law is an order of protected freedom. Who protects the freedom, and how is it protected? As far as I can see, freedom is protected by the law. Thus, the law is the protection of freedom and not the protected freedom. The law is the protection of freedom. But how does law protect freedom? The law protects certain interests of human beings in precisely the sense that it responds to a violation of these interests with a coercive act. That is the meaning of the assertion that law is a coercive order: because it protects the interests of human beings precisely by reacting to the violation of interests with a coercive act (coercive withdrawal of life, freedom, health, of economic or other goods). That and nothing else is what the definition stating that the law is a coercive order means. If we say that the law protects freedom, then we do not of course mean moral freedom—the freedom of the will. The freedom of the will can be neither protected nor even sheltered. The freedom of the will is either present or it is not, and this moral freedom has nothing to do with the law as such. This is why it is better, in my opinion, not to speak of the protection of freedom, but of the protection of particular interests.

Now to international law. The consequence of an injustice in international law is by no means only war, but also reprisals. The coercive acts that international law establishes as the consequences of injustice are war or reprisals. That means if a state

4. Discussion following the presentation by Friedrich August Freiherr von der Heydte.

is violated in terms of certain interests or goods by the act of some other state, universal international law empowers it to react either with war or with reprisals. If we must characterize war and reprisals as coercive acts, then international law, too, is a coercive order in this sense. You say, Mr. von der Heydte, that if international law were a coercive order, then only the right of war would be international law. Against this, too, I must respond: The right of war is only a very specific part of international law, those rules of international law that regulate the conduct of war. It is of course senseless to establish war as a sanction, but not reprisals. This can even occur during the conduct of war, legally or illegally. If we take these circumstances into consideration, then I can accept your theory only to the extent that we state that we want to incorporate natural law into our definition of law as well. Then we cannot define law as a coercive order. Here I agree with you unreservedly! The definition of coercive order pertains only to positive law, not to natural law.

VERDROSS: Before we proceed further, I would like to raise another idea. I could raise the question as to whether the principle that was valid in the old, classical international law—the principle holding that the state is justified to react with war—is still valid law today. I doubt that very much.

KELSEN: I am in complete agreement.

VERDROSS: For even states that are not members of the United Nations have acknowledged the principle.

KELSEN: On this, I agree completely. In your presentation, you spoke very impressively of the disparity involved in the fact that positive international law requires the protection of prisoners of war and of the civilian population; it prohibits the killing of prisoners of war and of the civilian population in war. We perceive the disparity as particularly blatant with regard to modern atomic weapons. International law prohibits the killing of prisoners of war and of the civilian population; it prescribes a limitation of the killing to members of the armed forces. If weapons exist that make such restriction impossible—but that holds already for the

common dynamite bomb—then use of them is prohibited according even to *positive* international law. According to positive international law! One cannot say here that international law has failed. *International law forbids the use of such weapons if they make this restriction impossible.* Here, I find no reproach against positive international law—against which I would make a number of reproaches, but not this one. As an incidental note: it does not at all matter to me whether I am killed by an atomic bomb or by a dynamite bomb or by a simple rifle shot.

VON DER HEYDTE: I do not believe that establishing the coercive act is part of the essence of law. It is part of the essence of law to no longer protect the violator of the law, and with that, to create a possibility for the injured party to exercise coercion. The coercion itself does not belong to the essence of law, but only the possibility for the injured party to react coercively.

KELSEN: It is not entirely correct that the law withdraws its protection from the one who violates it. The violator of the law is also protected by law. We can say nothing more about the law than that it establishes a coercive act against the violator of the law—an act that would *otherwise* be illegal but is not illegal if it is directed against a violator of the law. What is the substantive content of the law's withdrawal of protection from the violator of the law? The substantive content is only this: that the coercive act which is then directed against him must not be regarded as illegal.

VOEGELIN: First, I doubt the correctness of the claim that we have made eminent progress in the technique of killing and that this distinguishes the present from the past. If one takes into account the history of war and the international law of earlier periods—the procedures described by Thucydides, for example, or think of Plato's suggestion to moderate the right of war among the *poleis* such that no more than half of the population should be killed when the war is conducted among Greeks—from this, one can conclude that more than half usually were killed. Here it must be said that, in modern wars (before atomic wars, at least), the percentage of the population that was killed was extremely low

compared to something like the wars of the *poleis*. Or in the case of the Wars of Religion in France in the sixteenth century or in that of the Thirty Years War—and this even according to estimates including protection from atomic bombs—the percentages in future wars would by no means be so high as they were in these cases. That is the empirical question. But what does a specialist on the law of war say to that?

VON DER HEYDTE: Undoubtedly, the principle that war is—how should one put it?—humane murder is applicable up to the Second World War. That definitely applies if we compare it to the numbers involved in the Napoleonic Wars. Here, the losses were infinitely higher than those of 1870. And this is the strange thing: If we compare a war like the war of 1870 with the First World War, then the relative number of casualties—in proportion to the number of armed forces—was lower in the First World War than in the war of 1870 and 1871. That is an established fact. The *absolute* numbers were higher, but this is simply because entirely different numbers of people were drawn into the war.

Nuclear War

VON DER HEYDTE: The terrible and completely new thing is that we now have a weapon that brings about mass extermination, whereby I refer only to the destruction of the armed forces. The terrible thing is that at one stroke, in one second, something now occurs that had not been possible in the entire history of war: One can destroy the armed forces, a group of ten thousand men, through a single push of a button. This is no longer a process that slowly unfolds, but takes place suddenly. Something new has come in here and can change the nature of war.

SCHMÖLZ: Mr. Heydte, you wish to state that a qualitative rather than a quantitative distinction is present here.

VON DER HEYDTE: Yes, indeed. It is a qualitative distinction, a qualitatively new development. But something even beyond that:

One can now kill without endangering oneself in any way as one pushes the button.

MARCIC: I believe that the essential thing lies in the *unforeseeable* element. That is truly a new, qualitative element. Earlier, a certain degree of prediction was always possible. Now, the conduct of war cannot be supervised.

VON DER HEYDTE: Between the extensive bombardment of the Second World War and atomic war, an absolutely essential difference exists as well. The effect of the bombs of the Second World War was restricted to the moment of detonation. But possibly, the entire effects of an atomic detonation are felt only by the second generation. In earlier wars, the conduct of war occurred somewhere on the fringes of the state—that is, on the *front*. The first breakthrough came via the air force, which could reach farther back. But the problem that must be posed today, when a weapon can reach any place, when a space that cannot be reached by a weapon no longer exists, is this: Where do the armed forces begin? Do they begin with the one who uses a weapon, or do they begin with the one who brings it into position? Do they begin with the one who transports it to the front? Do they begin with the one who manufactures it? Or do they begin with the one who produces the raw material? The statement that only the armed forces are involved remains undisputed. But the question as to where the armed forces are, where the use of the weapon begins, has not been solved! We know that in order to send a Starfighter into the air, one now needs eight hundred men to generate merely the possibility that this one man can take off in his Starfighter. Question: Is the one man alone a soldier, or are the fifty men who help at the beginning soldiers? Or is it the two hundred and fifty that were required earlier for maintenance? Is it all eight hundred? Or perhaps the eight thousand who collaborated technically in order that the Starfighter could come into existence at all—the scientists, all that? That is the question that must now be posed. Through *that*, the law of war has been completely, qualitatively changed.

VERDROSS: I am of the opinion that if one begins a war today, it will ultimately be almost always an unrestrained war. This is why war can be combated only if it is eliminated altogether, if an organization that eliminates it is created. Anything else is very nice in theory, but impossible in practice.

VON DER HEYDTE: We see the horrible thing, that no great power is prepared to acknowledge the violation of international law posed by atomic weapons. We could remain within the bounds of purely positive international law and state that only what the states collectively acknowledge as a norm is law. But then, I am afraid that no direct norm that might counteract and restrict the qualitative expansion of war exists.

Does International Law Still Exist?

KAFKA: Thus, the following question now arises: How do things stand with the effectiveness of international law?

KELSEN: Are you directing the question to me? I share your opinion entirely, that effectiveness is also a condition of the validity of international law. And if we were now to conclude that international law lacks the minimum effectiveness that is the condition of its validity, then we must unfortunately arrive at the very regrettable conclusion *that there is no valid international law!*

KAFKA: Thornier still, it seems to me, is the question of the state of the basic norm of international law in general—which Professor von der Heydte did not discuss. If one says that international law is a tradition that continually changes, what remains? For we have a number of states that do not acknowledge other political formations as states at all. The Arabic states, for example, declare that Israel does not exist. We have an international legal community composed of political structures, but some individual members of that community declare that others do not even exist.

VERDROSS: As long as there is no single instance that can establish what a state is and what is not a state, each must do it for itself.

KAFKA: As a result of that, do we not arrive at the assumption that informs international law as a whole: that international law, if it is not based upon natural law, is without standards?

The Image of Man from the Perspective of International Law

VOEGELIN: The question goes back to the range of problems that was outlined yesterday following Father Schmölz's presentation: Certain "natural laws" are misconstructions due to a false image of the human being or a false ontology, etc. There is the progressivist misconception of the eighteenth century, for example, or the Comtean one of the nineteenth century, or the communist one with which we have to deal today. And here, our discussion has returned to solid ground. What concerns us are the objective criteria. Are there objective criteria according to which the Marxist conception can be recognized as false? Can one objectively criticize it and can one expect social results from one's objective criticism? In practice, I would say that there has been success in the past fifty years; for today, everyone who concerns himself with questions of this nature knows that something is not ontologically quite right with Marxism, even if one does not perhaps always know *what* is not quite right. If one speaks of natural law as the *forma* of positive law, therefore, one must determine what the nature that is supposed to inform the law is. Further, one must develop the critical apparatus that demonstrates why the *forma* of communism is false. For if there is an international law, there is also one that is characteristic for communists. Indeed, communist international law indicates a surprising structural relation to international laws that existed at other times. I have continually referred to the fact that the expansion of the Mongolian kingdom in the thirteenth century worked with a principle of international law identical to that of the Soviet Union. According to the Mongolian conception, all humanity, the earth's entire population, the entire ecumene, belongs *de jure* under the reign of the Great Khan; whoever resists this rule is a rebel; against him it is not war that is conducted, but an imperial execution; the Mongolian khans were thoroughly "peace-loving" rulers. That is the same principle that Khrushchev has repeatedly formulated.

SCHMÖLZ: And now we return to the cardinal question of the ontological image of the human being that lies at the base of any version of international law.

KELSEN: But, gentlemen! Forgive me, but this ontological idea is a political ideology! No one can claim that it is the foundational thesis of positive international law! International law is a very specific group of norms that can be clearly formulated. One cannot claim that the ontological image of man is a foundational thesis of international law. That is not a question of international law, that is a philosophical question.

WELTY: But then the decisive question is, Which image of man is capable of constituting an international law and which is not?

KELSEN: . . . which image of man *should* constitute international law. That is the correct formulation! That does not have to be natural law!

VON DER HEYDTE: International law can exist only if one has natural law.

KELSEN: I don't believe that! It does not have to be *natural law*; one should assume a very specific image of man. I agree with that formulation completely!

WELTY: But now I must add something—and then perhaps you will no longer agree. In international law, one can distinguish the valid *positive* law from the international law upon which it is based. The latter has a decisive influence upon this positive international law because it is in accord with the natural law for the human being, because things that can be justified in terms of the image of man are codified, because it does justice to the structure and content of nature. And that would be the embodiment of positive international law in natural law.

KELSEN: The view that I share with the theory of natural law is this: I concede that one can speak of the validity of positive law only under an assumption that itself is not positive law. I have

emphasized that a hundred times. But I have never maintained that this assumption is *law*. It is not positive law. What it is, is another question. I see here nothing more than a *hypothetical, imaginary* assumption. I have repeatedly emphasized the fact that, compared to my own situation, the theory of natural law is in a much more favorable position. The theory of natural law states: The assumption is the law established by God, the norm established by God. My objection to it is that, unfortunately, the norm established by God very often contradicts the content of the positive law that I must assume to be valid. How, then, can I regard this norm, which does not harmonize with the positive law, that I must assume to be valid, as the ground of that law's validity?

WELTY: You restrict the concept of validity to purely positive effectiveness. We say that there is a *double* validity: a positive validity based upon the established law, which thereby results in the effectiveness of the established law; and there is also validity based upon a higher foundation. Whether or not it is acknowledged in fact is of minor importance to its validity. We say that this validity exists even if it is neither acknowledged nor made positive or effective among human beings.

KELSEN: But if you admit that two different validities are involved, you cannot claim that a validity of one particular kind can be deduced from the validity of a kind altogether different.

WELTY: That is a different question. In his presentation, Professor von der Heydte has made a further contribution—one that I believe is very essential—to what we discussed yesterday: namely, that natural law is *in* positive law. That is, natural law is immanent to positive law, and positive law exerts its validity and effectiveness not only on the basis of natural law but for the most part in the form of natural law as well.

KELSEN: You touch here on a very important point. If one believes that natural law exists, then one must arrive at the conclusion that positive law is valid only to the extent that natural law is immanent within positive law. But that means that there is only a single validity—the validity of natural law. The conclusion that

Thomas Aquinas reached is this: Positive law is valid only to the extent that it *derivatur de iure naturali*.

WELTY: But he also says, *habet ex seipso vigorem*.

VOEGELIN: I share Mr. von der Heydte's view that indeed a central problem is involved here. Whether this problem is best expressed by speaking of natural law as the *forma* of international law is another matter. But that international law works with assumptions rooted in what is referred to as Christian natural law cannot be disputed. Yet other governing orders that include more than one people also exist, and some are animated by ideas of man and society that differ from the Christian ones. Thus, as you quite correctly say, in fact we do not have international law now. This is because the ruling order of one of the greatest powers—namely, the Soviet Union—is animated by an image of man and society that is incompatible with classical international law. Thus, there is communist international law—or shall we say a communist “governing order” in order to avoid arguing over terminology. It is animated by the idea of achieving the unification of all humanity by means of ecumenic-centralist rule. There exists a problem of the ecumene, as opposed to the universality of the human being. That is the decisive point. Now, the problem of the ecumene—of an imperial order making an ecumenic claim—has already arisen in discussions of international legal situations of the most varied kinds. It was treated for the first time by Polybius with regard to the ecumenic claim of the Roman empire. And Polybius had already discovered the catch with ecumenicity. What good does it do me, he wonders quite correctly, if I have united all people living at the same time into one empire? It still will not be “humanity,” because the human beings living in the past and the future are part of humanity, too. The mission of the Gospel to convert the ecumene sounds almost like an answer to the ecumenic problem of Polybius; for only the establishment of universal humanity, not imperial rule, can ensure that the ecumene achieves its *telos*. Universality of the human being is never ecumenicity. *The disrupting factor in our time, therefore, is the predominance of ecumenic conceptions of society.* The international law that has

developed in the West is built upon the principle of the universality of human nature, not upon the idea of an ecumenic empire. The communist conception, by contrast, is built upon the idea of ecumenic rule by a directorate of intellectuals.

VON DER HEYDTE: That brings us back to the question of centralization or decentralization. Ultimately, I believe, it is not only a matter of conceiving legal orders as either centralist or decentralist; here the deeper problem of ecumenicity vs. universality remains, to adopt Mr. Voegelin's terminology. That in turn leads us back to the decisive matter of the various images of human society. Depending on what this idea is, the problem presents itself differently. There are, in any case, certain pre-positive assumptions in international law. These pre-positive assumptions are a certain image of the human being and human society. And we have become accustomed to understanding these pre-positive assumptions as *natural law*.

KELSEN: I want to go a step further and say that the positivity of law is, not an absolute, but only a very relative positivity. Here lies the bridge to natural law, that I readily concede. But to reach natural law, one must take yet another step.

SCHMÖLZ: Please, let us just leave the term *natural law* out of the debate for the moment and see that an ontological image of man indeed lies at the base of international law. Then we are upon common ground.

KELSEN: The assumption of a particular image of man does not mean that this assumption implies the validity of natural law. The image of man is not natural law.

SCHMÖLZ: Then let us call it *natural order*! Yesterday in my presentation, I spoke not of the natural *legal* order, but of the *natural order*. On this you still agreed; our foundation is a certain natural order that is ascertainable according to objective criteria upon which alone—as you yourself formulated it a few minutes ago—international law is possible. And if one construes international

law outside this natural order, then it is no longer international law. The other, ideological, image of humanity cannot result in international law. We find ourselves upon the Western Christian basis, which we acknowledge, philosophically and ontologically, to be a natural order, and which we find true according to objective criteria. That is *the* pre-positive sphere from which alone international law can emerge.

KELSEN: No objection! I agree with that entirely!

SCHMÖLZ: And that seems to me to be the decisive thing: that we still place the “natural law”—hence, the *transformed* natural order—between the two. Let us please leave that temporarily out of the debate.

The International Order⁵

VERDROSS: May I say something on the question of the order of peace? Following the thought of Saint Augustine, the following ideas occur to me. He says that everyone strives for peace. Even thieves want to enjoy its fruits. The difference is only that in one peaceful order one subjects others to one’s will, whereas in another order one finds himself enjoying equal rights. Those are the two fundamentally different principles. But that is also the essence of international law: It is an order of peace among equals who mutually regard and acknowledge themselves to be legal subjects. Indeed, this was the special historical achievement of Vitoria: At a time when the official jurisprudence under Charles V still propagated an order of peace under Spanish rule, he attempted to draft an international order in which others would be acknowledged as legal subjects as well.

MARCIC: Despite the contemporary world situation, is it conceivable that we might one day attain an international, obligatory legal jurisdiction analogous to a constitutional court? Or do you hold that to be utopian?

5. Discussion following the presentations by Alfred Verdross-Drossberg and Giorgio Del Vecchio.

VERDROSS: I would answer that if we can maintain world peace, let us say, for two generations, I believe that essential changes will yet occur in the Soviet Union. One can see that already. At the highest levels, of this generation of scholars, essential intellectual changes have already taken place. If peace is maintained, I still believe that certain substantial changes will occur in these states as well. I cannot say more on that; I am not a prophet.

MARCIC: If we could obtain this international legal jurisdiction, we would have a truly common, unified, order of peace in the world.

VERDROSS: . . . only if we had a genuine international law in the first place.

MARCIC: Without such an instance, it will not work. I believe firmly that some such thing will come about.

VERDROSS: I have often said that today's utopia is tomorrow's reality.

SCHMÖLZ: At this stage, the question is one for the future and not suitable for a scientific discussion. Let us therefore turn back to the precondition for this "utopia." The question then would be, Can we expect a change in the Soviet Union? Here, we again open the philosophical question as to the essence of the ideology. Can one expect that the ideologues will relinquish their concept and suddenly become reasonable human beings? I very much doubt it.

KAFKA: The old thesis holds in international law as well: *Res nolunt diu male administrari*. This is why I believe that reality can still bring people to give up a false ideological position. Ultimately, we saw that with the Puritans, and we experienced that with Marxists in our own country as well. At first, they held fast to their ideology, but in the end, reason reached its goal.

VERDROSS: I always say that something new comes into the world with each newborn human being. The old ones will never give up

their ideology. But if new generations come, for whom that is no longer a problem, then new ideas return.

VOEGELIN: International law is burdened with a variety of problems that should give rise to serious concern. The question has already emerged several times in the discussion: Under the surface of the vocabulary of international law, interstate law, etc., lie the problems of what I would call *intercivilizational* law. What it involves can be grasped by examining certain historical junctures, such as, for example, the case of Francisco de Vitoria in the sixteenth century or of John Quincy Adams in his statements on the Opium War, or again today in the case of communism. If one goes beyond the passages that you have cited in the case of Vitoria, for example, then one finds the following remarkable observations: Barbarous states should indeed be acknowledged as such, but Christian missionaries also have the right, in the name of *christianitas* and the *commercium*, to evangelize in barbarian states. Now, if these missionaries are poorly treated by the native rulers, then *casus belli* is given. But if one lets them gain influence and they are successful, and the native prince grows nervous because the population has been lured away from him and, therefore, begins to suppress the native Christians, then a *casus belli* is given again. In short, Vitoria develops the basic principles according to which National Socialism and Communism operate: Agents must be admitted. If they are successful and the converted are oppressed, then the right to intervention is given. Thus, the question of tensions between two civilizations can emerge in extremely varied situations. As a further example, let us take the Opium War and the comment of John Quincy Adams that a war of intervention is thoroughly justified. Why? These despicable Chinese have had the impertinence to demand that they be left in peace! And whoever wants to be left in peace and closes himself off from commerce with the superior civilization of the Europeans—against the likes of such a one, war is justly waged. Here again, the principle of the right of intervention, occasioned by civilizational difference, is established.

But now imagine the reverse situation. The Chinese are not only communists; they are also Chinese. As such, they too have very specific ideas as to how peoples should conduct themselves

toward one another: The ecumenic dynamic of order requires that all other peoples must assimilate to the Chinese civilizational type. That was in practice uninteresting, at least for the West, so long as they were left in peace. But if they are, so to speak, violently Westernized, if they successfully industrialize in the more distant future and produce atomic bombs, then a very interesting situation could arise. What if they were to get serious with their principle of "international law" and treat the Western peoples as they have treated the Chinese since the eighteenth century?

VERDROSS: Our colleague, Mr. Voegelin, is absolutely right. Other principles of rule emerge and compete with international law.

KELSEN: Yes, of course, but those are ideologies. Of course these exist. But they are to a certain degree not reconcilable with existing international law; their realization constitutes a violation of international law. You are completely correct in ascertaining the fact, but I cannot see exactly what that has to do with the question of the validity of international law.

VERDROSS: Mr. Voegelin, you are absolutely correct. International law is based upon very particular assumptions. If these are not acknowledged, then it ceases to have influence. The question is only whether we will succeed in transmitting these principles representing the foundation of international law to other civilizations. Even if it is certain that the Chinese empire poses an enormous danger, I nonetheless believe that precisely this danger will make other peoples, too—peoples who are also ultimately threatened by this danger—more inclined to side with those who acknowledge the principle of equal rights. And even if the white peoples have sinned a great deal, I nonetheless believe that the Western conception of international law has a great opportunity today.



Man in Political Institutions

Excerpts from the Discussion

The Misconstructions of Political Institutions¹

SCHMÖLZ: Mr. Voegelin's presentation opens a series of perspectives on the problem of political institutions that seem to me to be utterly new. Probably the most exciting aspect of his presentation is the list of the four misconstructions of political institutions. With your permission, I would like to begin our discussion by focusing on this complex. Perhaps it would be best to call to mind once again the four categories: 1. The idea of a Chosen People—whereby *choseness* refers to worldly existence. 2. The intermediate solution in the form of apocalypse—thus, the perfected kingdom, the "fifth monarchy." 3. Ancient gnosis—the

Translated for this edition from the German by Jodi Cockerill and William Petropulos, this text originally appeared in *Der Mensch in der politischen Institution*, ed. Franz-Martin Schmölz (Vienna: Springer-Verlag, 1964), 125–28, 129–36, 140–41, 142–44, 162, 169–73. Reprinted by kind permission of Springer Verlag, Vienna. Besides Eric Voegelin, participants in the discussion were: Alois Dempf, professor of philosophy at the University of Munich; Thomas Michels, OSB, professor of liturgy and the history of ancient religions at the University of Salzburg; Franz-Martin Schmölz, OP, professor of political philosophy at the University of Salzburg; Alexander von Randa, honorary professor of theology at the University of Salzburg; Hans Maier, professor of political science at the University of Munich; Jürgen Gebhardt, professor of political science at Western Reserve University; Ernst Fraenkel, professor of political science at the Free University of Berlin; René Marcic, professor of law and political science at the University of Salzburg; Gerhard A. Ritter, professor of political science at the Free University of Berlin. For the English translation of Eric Voegelin's lecture "Man in Society and History," see *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, vol. 11, *Published Essays, 1953–1965*, ed. with intro. by Ellis Sandoz (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 191–207.

1. Discussion following Voegelin's presentation "Man in Society and History."

flight into pneumatic existence. 4. Modern gnosis—the immanentization of this idea and its combination with the second, apocalyptic form. In this last category we find the questions that are decisive for the contemporary institutional problems of our world. I am not entirely sure whether everyone readily understands this, for it takes place against an extensive intellectual background that not everyone is capable of grasping. This is why we ought to follow up on it and ask: What, concretely, is meant by these new, gnostic institutional political forms? Where are they to be found geographically—and not just geographically, but in the various contemporary ideological concepts as well?

GEBHARDT: The first thing to be said about these four types of derailment is that the institutions as such do not exist. The typical thing about the four attitudes is that the institutional organization of the entire society plays no role. However, I have a completely different question about these four derailments. Is there perhaps a type of derailment that has not been considered here? Is there not also the case in which the consciousness of the entire society is still present—in which the indices have been objectified and transcendence, immanence, and the human being are recognized—but in which nevertheless the society as a whole is still identified with the index of transcendence? As an example let me refer to the medieval theory of natural law, a theory in which the pneumatic experience is objectified and identified with social institutions. Another type of this same attitude would be the theory of the divine institution of the king in the late Middle Ages and early modernity—the political philosophy of someone like James I. Would that not also be a kind of derailment? In this case, the social institutions would be identified with the pneumatic and noetic content that was gained from the experience of transcendence but was already objectified and politicized. This is why it has caused great difficulties in modern societies: because such an identification is impermissible.

RITTER: The assumption that all rule returns to God did not just emerge with the idea of the divine right of kings; it is a general fact in the history of political theory. The theory of James I has

a different precursor. The interesting thing about it is the question whether one can derive from the fact that the king's rule is granted by *God* the consequence that it is *unlimited*. In the English context, this conclusion was by no means drawn prior to the sixteenth century. Thus, one can completely accept the *divine right* of the king without having to reach the conclusion that the king possesses *unlimited* power. For his rights are in fact limited. This seems to me to be the burning issue. It becomes especially clear in the case of James I and, in English theory in general, in the work of Richard Hooker. Specifically: Here it is made very clear that the king represents only one, albeit a decisive, realm of the God-given order of the world. This view has had a lasting influence and is thus of decisive importance to political theory.

GEBHARDT: I do not think that the question whether the political representative also represents transcendental truth has anything to do with the problem I raised. That is a different category altogether. The problem, in my view, consists in the following: In all compact societies conceived along cosmological lines, god and the world have not yet been differentiated. We have a compact order of the cosmos—one in which the king participates and can represent the divine. Such a tradition can be found in the Western tradition, too. It is derived from the Germanic one: In my opinion, this tradition also includes the divine right of kings. But the interesting thing in the case of someone like James I, or of similar doctrines in the Spanish sphere, is that the complex of revelation is brought back again. The only argument for political order is based upon the fundamentalism with which a literary corpus is read (the Old Testament) in order to disseminate ideas of political rule that lead to the divine right of kings. *That* is the decisive issue and not whether there is a divine justification for political power *in principle*. And I would call that an additional type of "derailment."

RITTER: You are correct that the doctrine of the *divine right* of kings is derived from the fact that all rule is granted by God, that this doctrine is actualized with respect to kings. If we want to discuss that, then we are also confronted with perfectly concrete historical questions concerning Reformation England and

the establishment of the state church by Henry VIII. The *divine right* of kings is the official political theory of all shades of English Protestantism—including Puritanism up to somewhere around 1637–1638. In the work of Filmer this doctrine enters into a very strange alliance with the strong patriarchal ideas of the time—including the idea of patriarchalism that we find in James I. Nonetheless, James's ideas were not intensified toward the political realm in the pronounced and one-sided way that we find in the case of Filmer. I would see differences here. It is not just a coincidence that Filmer published excerpts from Bodin's *République* and in general relied so heavily on Bodin. The concept of sovereignty enters in as an additional new element. A further, even more disputed, question would be the following: Is the idea of sovereignty actually present in James I? One might very much doubt that it is. With Filmer, by contrast, it is present with absolute clarity. Here, the doctrine of *divine right* first attains the explosive power that later leads to an unrestricted absolutism—much more intensely, say, than in the practice of the French monarchy during the same period.

SCHMÖLZ: Mr. Gebhardt has focused his question on the issue of whether the institution of the divine right of kings fits into the scheme that Mr. Voegelin presented in his conclusion. I think we must allow Mr. Voegelin himself to answer this question.

VOEGLIN: The discussion has centered on a very concrete institutional case: that of James I. May I pose a question on this matter to a specialist like Mr. Ritter—just for my information? I had the impression that all the factors that have emerged in the discussion—and a few more besides—are indeed historical facts. With James I, one of the elements seems to me to be that his divine right was a counterstrike to the monarchomachian conception of the divine right of the people. The tension that emerges here between the divine right of the people and the right of James I reflects the revival of Old Testament ideas and the two versions of kingship that are offered in the book of Samuel: the populist justification of the monarchy on the one hand and the royalist on the other. Both appeal to the principle that the people as a whole is a people under God. But then the procedural question arises:

Who decides what the right order is, the people or the king? Both are endowed with the authority to say what is right.

The Hebraicization appears to me to be an independent factor alongside the others. The derailments come in only with the Puritan Revolution—only with the return to such apocalyptic elements as the Apocalypse of John, in other words, with the serious attempts to realize the Kingdom of God. But in the situation of James I, the problems of worldly institutions are still present to such a degree that one cannot, I think, speak of a derailment.

VERDROSS: I believe that my colleague Mr. Voegelin is absolutely correct. Ernst Reibstein has in fact demonstrated that the theory of the qualified sovereignty of the people (therefore, prior to Rousseau) was connected to Spanish moral theology. He pointed out numerous sources in Fernando Vasquez, so that one can safely assume that this has nothing to do with the problem of derailments. . . .

VOEGELIN: In order to take the issue a step further, I would like to consider more closely a point that Mr. Gebhardt has brought into the debate. He stated that no institutions whatsoever exist in the case of these derailments.

Of course they exist, for if the pneumatic pole has been differentiated to the point that its unique problem area becomes visible, then institutions—primarily, the churches—emerge to represent it socially. Here the great problems of ecclesiastical theory arise that were treated by Augustine. Will the church become the *civitas Dei*? As an institution, is it always to be regarded as the representation of the divine rather than as a temporal institution? One cannot attempt to develop a theory of the Church from the standpoint of empirical sociology and modes of conduct, for, in that case, the Church's own self-interpretation—namely, the view that it represents eternity—would no longer be acknowledged.

Of course the same holds true for the derailed institutions. If, for example, one has a communist understanding of the historical process, then one must also institutionalize that understanding. The most important organ of institutionalization is the foundation of a Communist party, which (according to its own self-interpretation) is the *avant garde* of the proletariat. This in turn

produces the problem of the class struggle, which (viewed under the same aspect) leads to the final kingdom of the classless society. Here, the institution of the party becomes the instrument of history. But do not a whole series of institutions exist that we would not describe as "institutions" in terms of our normal, commonsense perspective? A party that seeks to eliminate all other institutions, for example? In any case, here we have an institution that is oriented toward the eternal pole just as much as the Church is, even if in an objectified, immanentized, and derailed way.

Such things also belong to the interpretation of institutions. For in practical politics, we are continually confronted with the problem that the perfect kingdom of communism, or of some other ideological movement, cannot be realized. Nonetheless there is an institution—a party or an intellectual movement—that seeks to realize it. And when it actively injects itself into the process of action in history and does not achieve the desired goal, it nevertheless accomplishes something. The question as to what in fact it does achieve is of the utmost importance for predicting how the Russian Communist regime might develop in the future. It cannot of course become a Communist kingdom. So what will actually happen if the Communist party constantly tries to act in history? That is an eminently practical problem of politics that has to be addressed. You see what kind of practical significance these theoretical distinctions have.

The Political Significance of Intellectuals

SCHMÖLZ: Permit me to draw your attention to another point made by Mr. Voegelin in his presentation. The Aristotelian model has no place for the appearance of those who claim to be in possession of truth. Now, here is the question: How then did Aristotle understand himself? We know that Plato and Aristotle drafted their model constructions with the accompanying awareness that the models cannot be realized in the form. Yet, after all, they did their work with the consciousness that it was good for something.

MARCIC: I cannot help but wonder whether Aristotle did not refrain from confronting those who claimed to be in possession of the truth because, to him, the human being as *zoon politikon*

was at the same time a *zoon logon echon*. By the term *logos*, of course, one must understand not just language but also the deeper meaning beyond it: *reason*, which in turn presupposes the material-apriori, truth. *Logos* presupposes truth. As social beings, therefore, all human beings are originally equal co-possessors of the truth. In my opinion, this is the reason why Aristotle did not need to enter into the question.

GEBHARDT: I believe that the problem is a bit more complicated than that. The phrase “those in possession of the truth” refers to the representatives of pneumatic experience. But none of those were present in the *polis*. The pneumatic experience of revelation was not relevant there because it did not exist.

MARCIC: On the contrary, I believe that the problem did not become visible because the democratic society of classical Attica did not tolerate those who claimed to be in possession of the truth. As soon as an outstanding mind emerged somewhere, it was expelled in some way or another from society (ostracism). Politically, therefore, those in possession of the truth were not a problem because the entire Attic society experienced itself as a closed, reasonable society. As a result, it did not have to rely in any way on the various possessors of truth that emerged as political phenomena.

VOEGELIN: As a theoretician, I find myself in the strange situation of continually being forced to remind us of practical problems. Of course the attitude of Aristotle that has just been called into question was of eminently practical importance; and the significance of this question remained constant well into the institutions of the Roman empire. In his role as emperor, Marcus Aurelius understood himself at the same time as a philosopher, and he even defined what philosophy is. Marcus Aurelius did not understand himself to be in possession of the truth, but [he understood himself] as a philosopher in the Aristotelian, classical sense: as a servant and helper of the gods. This kind of philosophical attitude involves the incorporation of the noetic order, which becomes visible through the experience of transcendence, into the imperial

order, which, in the self-interpretation of Marcus Aurelius, is institutionalized in the type of the emperor. My colleague Mr. Marcic has just reflected upon the modification made by Justinian. Let me draw your attention to a magnificent passage in the introduction to the *constitutio* of the *Institutions*. Here the nature of the institution of the emperor is defined. He has two functions. He is: 1. *Imperator* in the sense of the commander who must be victorious, who must maintain and expand the order of the empire. 2. *Religiosissimus iuris*: Here all the questions of classical philosophy are taken up. The *religiosissimus iuris* is the representative of justice—of justice understood in the philosophical sense, as the realization of noetically interpreted justice. This is why one reads in the commentaries to the *Digest* that *iustitia* is a dianoetic virtue in the Aristotelian sense. *Ius* is the ethical virtue. If you take a look at the German pandectists of the nineteenth century, on the other hand, that has all disappeared. It still exists in the sixteenth century. Thus, very interesting institutional problems are present here: As long as philosophy remains alive in the tradition of its literary material, the self-interpretation of the Roman legal jurist with regard to the function of his institution in society also remains. Later, this is gone.

SCHMÖLZ: In the lecture on the Middle Ages, we will see that with Thomas we also find the idea that the people (*populos*)—not the entire people, but the intelligent portion of it, the "*superiores*"—has the right to "*corrigerere*." *Populus debet habere hanc necessariam potestatem*. This, then, is an anticipation of insight that we find later in England formulated in terms of *we the intellectuals, the conscience of the nation*. In both cases the political function of intellectuals becomes evident.

VOEGELIN: The problematic of the institutionalization of certain ideas that were developed by philosophy still plays a large role today. In the contemporary Negro revolution in America, for example, one of the Negro leaders used the formula "Peace is not the absence of violence; peace is the presence of justice."² I do not know whether he invented it, but it is in any case brilliant. Here

2. Martin Luther King Jr.: "True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice." "Letter from Birmingham Jail," April 16, 1963.

you have the substance of the classical formula of justice captured in one sentence.

Institution as a Problem of “Tension”

SCHMÖLZ: We have heard that Aristotle sought to treat the problem of political institutions on the basis of the metaphysical doctrine of form and matter—and that this did not work. Undoubtedly, this question still causes headaches for philosophy today—and above all for scholastic philosophy. Yet if one cannot solve the problem on the basis of the form-matter doctrine, the question arises: How can it be solved?

VOEGELIN: I have already emphasized that the sphere of philosophical problems must be expanded beyond the metaphysics of form into the theory of tensions, of their poles and objectification. This is a theme that was not worked out by classical philosophy, although it was inspired by it. If one narrows philosophy to the doctrine of form and matter, one cannot lay hold of the problem. That would be an answer to your question.

MICHELS: This question has preoccupied me all along: Professor Voegelin, if I understood you correctly, the first type of derailment—that of the Chosen People—was the derailment of the *kingship* in its opposition to the leadership of the prophets. Can one go so far as to say that?

VOEGELIN: I would say the exact opposite: The derailment is the idea that it is institutionally possible to establish the existence of a society in the world through the conclusion of the Sinaitic covenant and prophetic leadership. The creation of a kingship corrects the derailment.

MICHELS: I have a further question. Augustine once spoke of the *prophetica administratio* of the Chosen People. He appears, therefore, to have had a different conception entirely; he is then, so to speak, a pneumatic. Do you see a derailment there?

VOEGELIN: I see a derailment in the idea that one can institute a society as a *theopolity*, for this idea must break upon the actual conditions that are present with existence in a hostile environment.

Under certain conditions, such a situation can be successfully dealt with through charismatic leadership. But if stronger powers appear—such as the Philistines or Babylonians, for example—the charismatic leadership must be replaced by a permanent organization. That would have to be the establishment of the normal state. But the normal state of the monarchy is still burdened by the idea that a Chosen People can attain mastery over all other peoples in historical time. With this notion, the difficulties arise that empires must cope with.

MICHELS: I believe that it can be demonstrated that prophecy was a legitimate institution even as late as the church of the first centuries. The tension emerges only when prophecy becomes illegitimate: in the moment when it is driven one-sidedly in a certain direction by gnosticism. Then, namely, it is present in an entirely different form in the Church. The achievement of the Church is to be found in its taking into account the conditions of worldly existence: that is, in its introducing philosophy and philosophy's social effectiveness.

SCHMÖLZ: As the result of our discussion, up to this point, the characteristic element of the first kind of derailment can be formulated as follows: The fact of election is unjustifiably transposed from the religious into the political sphere, and the whole thing no longer functions there because of worldly realities. Thus, a second aspect of the same problem would be the general human tension of the temporal (imperfect) condition toward the (perfected) condition of the ultimate goal. This tension also lies within the sphere of institutional problems.

VERDROSS: Here we run into the concept of the *euzen*, which in my opinion lies at the heart of this question. I believe that the legal theoretical construction of our colleague Mr. Kelsen is questionable because he has not approached the Aristotelian theory of natural law in terms of the problem of the *euzen*.

VOEGELIN: I am sometimes reproached for having perhaps too much interest in classical politics, and this is why I would like to stress its limitations as well. Of course the *euzen* is a central problem. But if the *euzen* is understood as an orientation toward God

that is not answered by the loving word of God, then it does not have a community-forming effect. Wherever one finds the love of God merely in the philosophic sense, in the personal existential tension of the philosopher, one finds that it never leads to the constitution of community. The tension that actually leads to the formation of community always begins in the pneumatic experience. Then, there is a Chosen People; then, there is a Christian community, etc. Philosophy alone has never led to community.

VERDROSS: But I believe that the word *euzen* is emphasized too one-sidedly in this case. Aristotle stipulates that the necessary material basis must exist for the *euzen* to develop; he points to the entirely worldly spheres that form the basis of the *euzen*.

VOEGELIN: I now speak, not as a historian of theory, but as an empiricist who looks at the institutions and must conclude that, de facto, philosophy has never led to the formation of a community other than that of a school. On the other hand, the representations issuing from the pneumatic side have truly been realized in images of community.

SCHMÖLZ: As an example of such representation arising from the pneumatic side, one could certainly view that which Dempf has described in his *Sacrum Imperium*. Dempf refers to the Christology of Thomas Aquinas (III, 8). As *imperator* and as *rex*, Christ was a formative force of community for the Christian West. From the side of the human being, this community was made possible through faith in Christ. To be sure, this faith culminates in transcendence, but it is already politically effective in time and de facto through the *institutio eucharistiae*. De facto, it forms community. That would be an example of institutionalization that emanates from the pneumatic side.

MICHELS: That brings us a step further. It is astonishing that this idea is present in Thomas, who consciously departs from the sacramental order of the early Middle Ages—an order that extends well into the political realm—in favor of a foundation of the political based more on natural law.

SCHMÖLZ: At this point I must issue a corrective. Although this idea has been particularly emphasized by Dempf, I believe that I can demonstrate that in fact Thomas constructed the community on a different basis, namely, on justice, on *amicitia* (that is, on a common, spiritual foundation), on *prudencia*, and several other things upon which I will have the chance to speak in my lecture.

The Genesis of the High Cultures³

VOEGELIN: I would like very much to draw your attention to a few points of Professor Dempf's lecture that are of great importance for the genesis of certain institutions.

Two years ago, when I spoke with Dempf about matters regarding the genesis of those cultures that he likes to call the master high-cultures [*Herrenhochkulturen*], he was still of the opinion that they arose through shepherd peoples imposing themselves upon agricultural peoples. This idea concerning the genesis of high culture was maintained by liberal Marxists (most prominently, Oppenheimer) writing at about 1900. Since that time, ethnology and the history of ancient cultures have made progress. Today one can say with certainty that there has never been an imposition of shepherd peoples upon agricultural peoples. And not only was there no such imposition: Good ethnologists like Mr. Baumann in Munich assure us that the horse-mounted peoples that play such a large role in the work of Alfred Weber and Rüstow never existed either. So now, the problem of how the institutions of the high cultures arose must be posed from another angle entirely. I do not know to what degree Dempf has returned to the sources here. According to the current state of archeology and ethnography, the thesis of a "tribal federation" that originates through a religiously and spiritually gifted personality appears to be the correct one. The genesis of the Indus civilization in particular can scarcely be explained in any other way. With cultures like the Chinese and Egyptian, we can still accept a gradual emergence of the institutions. But the geography of the Indus Valley, for climactic and territorial reasons, is of the type that can only be settled and organized by a planned undertaking and not by

3. Discussion following the presentation by Alois Dempf.

small tribes or groups. Thus, the only possibility consisted in the formation of this kind of tribal federation from the neighboring mountain tribes of the Iranian highlands. Then this was subordinated to a dynasty whose spiritual power could also create a new cult for the federation.

Similar processes can be observed in the genesis and decline of the empire of the Huns. Here, too, we find tribal federations that arise through a gifted, dynastic personality and disintegrate with the death of the dynasty. We can now form an approximate picture of how the so-called high cultures arose.

Added to this is the question of the external cause. Why does such a thing happen? And further, why does it take place everywhere at approximately the same time? Very interesting investigations by ethnologists at Princeton have revealed that external factors cause settlements to be made in river valleys or in similar locations that are very unsuited to settlement. The occasion for this having taken place is found in the desiccation of what has come to be called the Great Desert Belt. Under the pressure of this development the agricultural peoples leave entire large areas that are no longer inhabitable. Thus the federations are formed that settle in the still fruitful river valleys—in the Hoang Ho Valley, for example, or the Indus Valley, the Nile Valley, etc. This is the external pressure that works as a motivating force here. This seems to me to be very important for the problems of the institutional sphere.

Now how do things stand with the polis? We do not know how the polis actually arose; we can only make conjectures. One of the best seems to be the following: The polis originated as the settlements of ship crews that fled in the face of the Doric migration. This dislocation appears to have been the organizational impulse to create new cultic units: namely, the poleis. Beginning in Anatolia, the polis expands to the border area of the Doric migration over the islands, into Italy; and only at the very end does it include the Greek mainland. Athens is the last to enter the sphere of the polis culture. This, therefore, would be one possible way in which, under external pressure, warrior groups and their ship crews formed settlement communities and developed new cults. Thus, the factor upon which Dempf places particular emphasis

remains at the center—that the great foundations of community are always cultic and divine creations of some kind [. . .]

State and Sovereignty

[. . .]

RANDA: Christianity brought forth a series of conceptions of empire: 1. The Byzantine and those derived from it—the Bulgarian, Serbian, Russian, Vlachian, and Moldavian; 2. Special forms developed out of the Western concept of empire, so that Spanish and English ideas of the emperor were added to the so-called Roman-German empire. We have a Spanish titular empire of the early *Reconquista* as well as the English emperor, Egbert. We would then have to discuss how *majestas* relates to the *serenissimus* concept or, stated more correctly, to the *serenitas* concept. That complicates the matter further. Only then would the *regna* have its turn.

VOEGELIN: In addition, I would also point to the Toynbeeian conception of empire and the problematic that emerges parallel to the Asian empires. It is Toynbee's view that the universal state, the empire, is the culmination of a civilizational development. This is true in a number of cases: The older universal states are truly empires with an executive and an administration, etc. But this is not the case with the medieval *sacrum imperium*. In the first case, the empires stand at the end of a cultural development that has been preceded by smaller, regional political units—for example, the Hellenistic *polis* preceded the empire of Alexander. But when the empire emerges, the problem of orthodoxy, which Mr. Dempf has so diligently examined, also arises. Specifically: It turns out that control of a large territory is not merely a problem of the expansion of power. For beyond this, an attempt must be made to associate such control with a spiritual movement that endows it with legitimacy. In China, this association was with Confucianism, Taoism, or Buddhism; in India, with Buddhism; in Rome, with various Near Eastern religions and Christianity. Orthodoxy's connection with empire is a late phenomenon of the first level

of empire formation that emerges from the ecumene. Toynbee continues: After the orthodox empires have arisen, later civilizational forms can imitate them in their own cultural spheres. In the case of the *sacrum imperium*, the attempt to develop a central administration fails because the general state of education is too low. Thus, at the outset of such cultural developments as the Western one (and the Japanese one as well), there is an early, imitative imperial period, which later collapses. Only then begin the respective civilization's political difficulties with feudalism or with the gradual emergence of lower state units. Only now has something that would correspond to an empire emerged: At the end of our present-day civilization, an Atlantic community arises, and not the medieval kingdom. That is, so to speak, a misconstruction of political organization through *mimesis* that occurs at the beginning of a culture.

VERDROSS: But Mr. Voegelin, did you not say that the medieval empire was a reality at the time of Charlemagne? It decomposed only later.

VOEGELIN: The early empire was a partially successful imitation, but it was not sustainable for the *entire* territory, due to the lack of a sufficiently high cultural level. The fiefdom followed. [. . .]

Iustitia—Oikonomia?⁴

SCHMÖLZ: In the course of Professor Michels's presentation, I made note of the following points:

1. In Ambrose, the concept of *iustitia* includes all human society. Thus, we have a kind of Christian universalism here that was developed out of theology. Yet Ambrose did not further differentiate this type to include the possible political institution of a universal world-society.

2. This concept of *iustitia* includes another major difficulty, which results from the running together of the created order and the reconstructed order of the *forma iustitiae*; in other words, mixing the orders of natural and positive law. This, too, is not

4. Discussion following the presentation of Thomas Michels.

rationally differentiated. Thus, very great care will have to be taken to avoid legal ontologism.

3. However, I find the real problem in the conceptual definition of the *oikonomia*. Professor Michels characterized the central idea of the concept of *oikonomia* as a process of salvation. As a *theological* problem, it is applicable to all humanity. But if one transposes the "process of salvation" to the *political* level, things become difficult, because this notion comes dangerously close to an ideology in the ecclesiastical realm. The suspicion that this might have happened appears to have been confirmed by what Professor Michels said about Philo's influence on Ambrose, because clearly a case of gnosis is involved here. I would like to pass the question on to the appropriate specialists.

VOEGELIN: I find myself unable to bring all the terms that arose in the quotations up to the level of rational philosophy in order to make them intelligible. Therefore permit me the following question. In the classical ethics of Aristotle, we have the difference between justice in the broader sense and justice in the narrower sense. Justice in the narrower sense concerns the special virtue of just conduct toward the human being—thus, in social contexts. Justice in the broader sense is the general virtue. For this reason, it is neither a noetic nor an ethical virtue, but an *existential* virtue in accordance with which the entire human being is just, as long as he follows the laws (the *nomos*). In this broader sense the entire legal order, as an institution, is intended, of course under the assumption that its substantial content has been correctly determined. If the individual follows this kind of justice, the virtue of justice will arise within him. I would call this type of justice *existential*. But with this *forma iustitiae*, what are we speaking of? I have the impression that it is existential justice and not merely the special virtue (*iustitia commutativa* and *distributiva*) that is also intended here, but now, not with respect to philosophical existence as just existence, but to a kind of Christian existence. Is this impression correct?

MICHELS: Yes! This definition of justice also approaches what the Old Testament in general denotes as *iustitia*. It includes the entire conduct of the human being of faith.

VOEGELIN: With that one can also see how institutions come to the *forma iustitiae*. It is exactly the same with Aristotle. Assuming that the institutions are just, so are the human beings who live within the institutions and who follow them just in their entire being. It would be the same with Ambrose, under the assumption of the salvational dispensation that was mentioned.

My next question, therefore, concerns the *oikonomia* itself. Is the *oikonomia* what one calls “dispensation” in English?

MICHELS: I think I can answer this question with a “yes” too, because the Latin expression for it is also *dispensatio salutis*. I agree in any case with what Mr. Schmölz has said: The gnostic distortion enters in here very early. It was the Gnostics who took up this concept in order to set something entirely different in place of the “salvational leadership of God” or of “sacred history.”

VOEGELIN: The matter has now become clear: Here we have existential justice transposed into the historical situation of revelation. The *oikonomia*, in the sense of *dispensation*, is the background that plays a role similar to that played by philosophical experience with Aristotle.

MICHELS: The interesting thing is that Ambrose did not treat the *dispensatio salutis* at all theoretically. This question remained open.

VOEGELIN: This question has never been treated. In order to do that a philosophical categorization of the problem of revelation would have to be undertaken.

[. . .]

Obedience in the Authoritarian States⁵

[. . .]

VOEGELIN: Permit me to follow up on a few points that have just been raised. Father Schmölz has stated that an authority that is called good is perhaps not so good after all. Mr. Gebhardt has

5. Discussion following the presentation by Hans Maier.

used the expression "a provincial development." I would like to go a bit further and pose a question concerning the quotation of Madame de Staël, who spoke of the Germans' intellectual daring combined with their subservience and weakness of character in action. I question this intellectual daring. One can very easily be intellectually daring if one speculates and does not take responsibility for seeing to it that one's daring corresponds to reality. In your reference to Kant and Luther, you have already indicated the consequences that followed from this attitude. Luther was still clear about the fact that one must obey the authorities if they are just in the Christian sense; if they are not, then of course one should not obey them. With Kant, this has changed. Here you have the formulation "authority is sacred" and, for that reason, must be acknowledged and respected even if it is grossly unjust, grossly un-Christian and grossly immoral. I very much doubt that we can call that progress in intellectual daring. On the contrary, I would say that the provincialism of the authoritarian state had destroyed thought. To return once again to Kant, one finds that the good will has replaced the good. The first seven theses of the *Critique of Practical Reason* are actually the classical work in the destruction of ethical thought. One cannot call that intellectual daring. It is perhaps daring to attempt such a thing; but one can attempt it only if one confronts the matter in an exceedingly irresponsible way. I would also extend that statement to include the great speculative systems of German idealism. One can of course be daring, like Schelling and Hegel, if one remains within the sphere of pure speculation rather than troubling oneself with the concrete matter. Thus, this destruction of concrete thinking through the provincialism of the authoritarian state seems to me to be a very essential feature that has not been overcome to this day.

[. . .]

Does a Philosophy of History Exist?

VOEGELIN: I have another question, concerning method, that was induced by Mr. Maier. Mr. Maier maintained the view that we can remain within Marxist categories and judge in accordance with their self-interpretation in order to determine at what point we stand in the historical process. But this raises the following

problem: Is what Marx or Lenin analyzed or what Khrushchev or a Chinese interpreted a historical process at all, or merely the speculative image of a Gnostic? That is the question. Where do we find the real historical process with which we can work methodologically in the first place? I do not believe that we can speak about history and of the historical process on the basis of the Marxist interpretation.

Thus the second question arises: On what basis can we speak of it? Let us look at the modern philosophy of history. Besides the Marxist one, there is the progressivist one beginning with Voltaire and Condorcet. Yet these too are already deeply involved in gnostic speculation. The question, therefore, remains: Has the process of history ever been realistically analyzed at all? The modern philosophy of history is preceded by the Christian interpretation of history. And we can raise the same question here: From Augustine to Bossuet, has it ever been realistically interpreted, or is it only the dogmatization of a particular apocalyptic attitude?

This is why I would seriously raise the following question: Do we have a concept of history for which we can seriously maintain that, with its help, historical reality can be analyzed? This seems to me to be a very serious problem: We do not even know what is historically relevant. I suspect that we had misunderstandings in our discussion because this point has not been clarified.

SCHMÖLZ: Because the problem of history has not yet been solved, we provisionally face the following alternatives. The first possibility would be to treat the object with the help of its own "immanent vocabulary." A second possibility might be to consider whether a newly developed conceptual scheme could be taken as a starting point, or as the result of a new understanding of history. This would be all the more convincing if the vocabulary had already proved its value in other cases.

MAIER: The texts must decide, the material must decide. A theory will prove its reasonableness if it meaningfully organizes the material so that nothing is left out. This is the way I work as a historian or a political scientist: As soon as I have familiarized myself with the material, I construct certain theories that organize it. I

always select these according to their relevance for organizing the material. With that, I would be in complete agreement.

GEBHARDT: May I ask what the relevance is?

MAIER: What is relevant cannot be answered at first. What is relevant reveals itself from the standpoint of its fruitfulness. I will grant a lower degree of relevance to a theory that compels me to leave a portion of the material out than to a theory that is capable of comprehending the material entirely.

SCHMÖLZ: That is methodological relevance. However, beyond that there is metaphysical relevance, which is an orientation toward criteria for a concept of order. It is from this orientation that we can judge what is relevant. For the correctness of our image of order there are again objective criteria. . . .

MAIER: I agree with that.

VOEGELIN: This discussion, which became rather heated at times, brings us to the essential problems after all. We have introduced the problem of relevance. The writing of history itself is a historical phenomenon. From the beginning, it has been concerned with particular problems and has deemed particular matters to be relevant. Historiography emerged for the first time in specific contexts—in Greek, Israelite, and Chinese historiography. In all cases where historiography initially appears, it is concerned with a conflict between the imperial order and another, philosophical order, or an order seen under the aspect of an experience of transcendence. This is the problem of the Persian Wars: the confrontation between a Hellas that is already philosophical in the classical sense and an ecumenic empire. In the Israelite case, it is the collision between the order of a Chosen People and revelation with an empire that is at first cosmological, later ecumenical. In the Chinese case, it is the collision between classical China and the ecumenic imperialism of the Ch'in and Han dynasties. This collision, therefore, is the object of historiography—and its theoretical relevance must be perceived from the very beginning. But this raises the problem that prompted my question. We should begin

with the sources! Of course we must all begin with the sources. But what is the source material for historical and theoretical treatment? The materials are infinite! We select as relevant only those that are related to conflicts of order of a particular kind, those that can be theorized and which, on the basis of their philosophical position, become historical problems in the first place.

SCHMÖLZ: I do not believe that we can solve these momentous problems in the present discussion. The thought has occurred to me, therefore, that perhaps we should make the philosophy of history the theme of next year's meeting. By all indications, there is a darkness here the illumination of which would be an important contribution to progress in the entire sphere of political science.

Democracy and Pluralism⁶

VOEGELIN: In the course of Mr. Fraenkel's presentation, the problem has emerged concerning the functions of parliament and government. In what has been called "classical" French theory, misunderstandings developed that became thematic in the nineteenth century. Earl Grey wrote very extensively about it in the English debate on the electoral reform of 1867. He suggested that a parliament exists, not in order to represent the opinions of the people, but to serve as a support for the government. And for its part, the government exists, not in order to amuse the parliament, but to conduct the business of state. Conducting public business is the problem faced by every kind of politically organized society. One can set up empirical standards for the conduct of public business—standards independent of the form of the regime.

My second question is prompted by the problem of pluralism. Today, pluralism has two meanings that have to be distinguished. The one leads to the Aristotelian problem of *stasis*: In light of individual interests and the understanding of the common good, various opinions exist as to how public business should be conducted. The other meaning, which is preferred by American intellectuals, is that of the freedom of all kinds of opinion, including

6. Discussion following the presentation by Ernst Fraenkel.

that of ideologies. There is of course a limit to this second kind of pluralism: The fundamental rights and freedoms are not a suicide pact! There is no license for being so pluralistic that the *divisive issues* destroy the consensus.

Now, as for the German situation, I doubt that it can be cured institutionally. Two things would have to be considered: first, that the basic *consensus*—what you have called the “value codex”—has been destroyed by the ideological past. Second, the government has not mastered the art of conducting state business very well. Think, for example, of the federal budget. Every budget in a democracy (and in other constitutional forms as well) contains a certain percentage of corrupt elements. But the federal budget contains six billion in subsidies for social insurance, four billion for a Green Plan, and I do not know how many additional billions for a Black Plan, so that one-third of the entire federal budget is de facto a corruption budget. That is a percentage that goes beyond what is compatible with the proper conduct of political affairs.

FRAENKEL: I, too, do not believe that it is possible or even necessary to institutionally repair the defects of democracy. With a constitution like the one we have with the Basic Law, I believe that one can work in the most diverse ways without having to alter its foundations. This is not a problem that requires constitutional revision.

Now, Mr. Voegelin was critical of two points in my presentation. He doubts that the value codex has been as generally accepted in Germany as I assume it to have been. I have listed the minimal requirements that, in my opinion, have to exist in order to afford the luxury of a pluralistic, autonomous, democracy of social justice. Perhaps I might be permitted to mention that Carl Schmitt published an essay on pluralism in 1931 that is among the most brilliant things I know by him. I have always had the feeling that many people in Germany made the leap into totalitarianism because they did not believe in the possibility of a unified value codex—because they did not think it possible to establish a broad enough consensus for a pluralistic democracy to function. I am convinced that this phenomenon can be traced back to the excesses of sociologism in German political thought, to the almost fanatical rage to unmask every point of view and to

find in everything nothing more than the reflection of economic and social phenomena. If political science is to be nothing more than an ideology for de-masking, then I want no part of it. The question of the existence of a shared value codex is absolutely fundamental. Does the problem exist today or does it not? That is not a theoretical question; one must answer either positively or negatively, based on one's own experience. I believe that we have this commonly recognized value codex. And from this standpoint, I believe myself justified in supporting this system and rejecting totalitarian ideas of the state and constitution. But if we reach the conclusion that the shared basis is no longer present and that, because of the entirely different basic attitudes toward ideas of value, a consensus cannot be reached, then it is all over for democracy.

A second question Mr. Voegelin has touched upon concerns the budget. I believe that the question as to how the national income should be distributed is something that belongs within the controversial sector of the life of a society and that there can very well be various opinions as to whether agriculture gets more or the workers, etc. To make a decision about this is not solely a government matter; there are also groups and parties that influence the distribution of the social product through their participation in drawing up the budget. For this, I do not believe that there is an ideal or fundamentally correct solution; there is always only a solution that is regarded as the correct one according to the existing power relationships within a society. I am also not entirely in agreement with the concept of a "corruption budget," for this concept assumes that one is capable—based on some kind of deduction that is unknown to me—of arriving at an absolutely correct budget and is then able to say that what deviates from this correct budget is corrupt. That seems to me to be incorrect. Mr. Voegelin, I believe you overestimate the possibility of reaching the rationally correct solution.

VOEGELIN: It is very nice to set up radical alternatives. But between the controversies about how the budget should be formed and an absolutely inspired insight as to how it is to be formed *correctly* lies the broad field of the rational conduct of political business. If, for example, in the opinion of military technicians a

certain kind of army and its equipment is required, I enter that in as a datum. For that I require no inspiration. A certain amount of money is required in order to make this army fit for the protection of the society. Now if the budget is formed in such a way that so much is handed out for the amusement of agriculture and the coal industry and social security that money for the military budget is no longer available, one does not need inspiration to realize that the existence of the society is then endangered. There are, after all, objective criteria, here at any rate. This problem exists everywhere, by the way, not just in Germany. The particularly unsettling thing in Germany is only the percentage of the monies that flow into false channels.

[. . .]



The Drama of Humanity

I. The Contemporary Situation

Ladies and gentlemen, [let me] now come to the subject matter itself, which is linking what I have to say about the drama of humanity to the contemporary situation. Now the first thing that is perhaps unusual, even if used as a technical term, is to speak of a drama of humanity and not of a drama of man. We will presently see why there is an important difference.

But it gives us a starting point; we have to be clear about it: What is the present conception of man in a public sense? You must always distinguish between how a few specialist philosophers [deal] with such problems and what is generally accepted and generally known. Therefore, I want to give first, simply enumerating them, the terms in which modern man is popularly characterized in a general topical fashion. Then, in opposition, [I want to] formulate how the same features have to be characterized from a critical position. You will see best by a clear enumeration of categories that there is a wide gap between the publicly accepted conception and what is done in philosophy today.

When we speak of modern man and use the self-characterization of him in the society [in] which we all live as modern men, you find such terms as, first, *modern man*; then, frequently used, it

Text of the Walter Turner Candler Lectures that Eric Voegelin delivered at Emory University, Atlanta, on April 17, 18, and 20, 1967. Transcribed typescript in Voegelin Papers, box 74, folder 1, Hoover Institution Archives. The editors wish to express their thanks to Edmund Carroll, who originally transcribed the text, and to Brendan Purcell for editorial corrections and bibliographical references. Our text begins after Voegelin's short introduction containing a few personal remarks appropriate to the occasion but not essential to an understanding of his theme.

is peculiarly modern to be a *secular man*; then, [having] come very much into fashion, beginning especially with Toynbee, [there is] the idea that modern man is living in a post-Christian age and therefore is [a] *post-Christian man*. If the matter gets some sort of philosophical polish, post-Christian man [will be called] *immanentist* or *world-immanent man*. These are the most usual terms in which we speak about man if we want to characterize him as a modern man. Of course modern man is living in an "age"—everything that is elegant lives in an Age, and so we all live in an age that is modern or something like that, and you will see [in a moment] what that means. These are the terms of self-characterization.

If we now use a critical empirical and philosophical vocabulary to characterize the same situation, you would have to say that the modern man who is intended by these more or less cliché terms is in the first place a fundamentalist, in the second place he is illiterate, in the third place he is burning with apocalyptic fire, and is therefore torn between being frightened by the world and full of expectations that something [better] will come. This ambivalent attitude, of being frightened and expectant at the same time, is usually called alienation, again a general term: alienation, an "alienated man." Now let me explain in detail the characteristics of fundamentalism, illiteracy, and apocalypse.

Frequently, [these terms have been used to characterize] a peculiar "compound," which the German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer (who became a victim of Hitler) called "man has come of age"—these three adjectives. Now let me elaborate on them.

I said the first characteristic is the dogmatist, the fundamentalist. By *fundamentalist* is meant a peculiarity of our modern civilization, which already starts in the sixteenth century. The great war-periods of the West since the sixteenth century are intellectual war-periods—in the sense of wars among dogmas. Let's call them briefly dogmatomachies—"fights among dogmas." In the sixteenth century these were the religious fights between the various types of dogmatic theologies. In the twentieth century they have become the great fights between various dogmatic ideologies.

Thus we have a series of dogmas crystallizing since the sixteenth century, roughly the three that have entered into the Comt-

ean philosophy of history. We begin with a theological dogma; that is then followed by a metaphysical dogma; and metaphysical dogma then by an ideological dogma. So there is a series of three dogmas. As soon as you get out of one you fall into the next. At present we are still living in an ideological dogma, insofar as theological dogmas or metaphysical dogmas are not preserved. Now when I speak of *dogma* I do not mean what is usually called an orthodoxy, but the specific kind of literalism or fundamentalism (and these are of a religious attitude or of an attitude concerned with the relationship between man and divinity). There is nothing left but the literalist formulation, which is the dogma, and there is no original experience of the experiences that produced [the] symbolism [that was dogmatized], but only the dogma itself is left. So while the situation has arrived, that only the dogma itself is left, be it theological or metaphysical or ideological, we are in the fundamentalist situation. This fundamentalist situation (that's why I mentioned the whole thing), you must realize, has lasted now for well over four hundred years. If anywhere, at present, [we are] at the end of this fundamentalist attitude and [are now] recapturing experiences from various sources. That is what I mean by *fundamentalism*. Fundamentalism is one of the characteristics of modern man.

Parallel with the permanently aggravating fundamentalism of dogma, we have the attempts, again since the sixteenth century, to recapture [. . .] original experiences, which will again get back of the dogma, into the reality of relations between man and his surrounding reality[. . .] Such attempts have been undertaken, for instance, in the seventeenth century by Descartes and very energetically by Hegel in his *Phänomenologie* of 1807. The Introduction to Hegel's *Phänomenologie des Geistes* is an essay on the question that, after the dogmatism of the Enlightenment, we have to have recourse to experience in order to reconstitute the understanding of man's relation to his surrounding reality, including divine reality. One cannot simply go on with mere dogma, [the origins of which are not understood]. In the twentieth century, parallel with the ideological wars, we also have [. . .] philosophers who tried to recapture experience. At the beginning of the century stands an American philosopher. I should say William James's essay of 1904, "Does Consciousness Exist?" has

perhaps an importance for the twentieth century comparable to the *Méditations* of Descartes in the sixteenth century. Similar attempts to recapture experience were made by Bergson, especially in his *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion*, and in the metaphysical works of Whitehead, beginning in 1924. (I could mention others; for instance I very much like the English physicist Eddington, who has given a fine analysis of the problem of experience posed by the advance of the natural sciences.) Now this double game of an ever deeper sinking into dogmatism and fundamentalism, and more or less desperate attempts to recapture reality, the reality of experience, that has gone on for four hundred years has a very peculiar consequence. And here I come to the second characteristic, what I call illiteracy.

On the level of dogma, we have a very high degree of literacy. At no other time did we have such a perfect knowledge of all sorts of religions, of comparative religions, of religions of ancient civilizations, of religions of contemporary Asiatic civilizations, and so on—but not a very good analysis of the experiences on which they rest. So the characteristic of literacy pertains to the understanding of experiences and the symbols in which they have to be expressed. For instance, there is extremely little active culture of meditation in the Christian or philosophical [sense], or any other sense, of the symbols that rest on meditation. (I [will] talk about them in the second lecture, tomorrow.) In that sense we have a peculiar illiteracy with regard to the most essential problems of human reality, coupled with an enormous literacy with regard to peripheral problems. That is one of the peculiarities—and it has particularly disastrous effects under Western conditions—which lead to the third characteristic, to the apocalyptic characteristic.

And that is, that our whole Western civilization, as distinguished, say, from a Greek civilization or Egyptian civilization, is a civilization that has grown through acculturation. It does not grow on the original basis of the older cosmic civilizations and the cosmological myth, drawing for its substance on that older phase, but starts on the comparatively primitive level of the Germanic tribes taking over a highly developed civilization, a Mediterranean civilization of approximately the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries. This process of acculturation is now exposed to great dangers, because if these cultural concepts, which have been acquired but

have not been originally grounded by the civilization, get lost, there is nothing on which one can fall back. As distinguished from a Greek civilization or Egyptian civilization, there is no archaism, for instance, possible in the Western civilization because Western civilization has no archaic period. There is no such thing in Western civilization as, for instance, the late Egyptian period, in which one can fall back on the sculpture and art forms of the third millennium B.C. And you cannot fall back on the Vikings; they are just too [remote] from any developed civilization.

Thus, from the early beginnings to the present, there is no internal coherence in Western civilization. But when you have an acculturation process of this kind, the deculturation process, with the resultant disorder, is considerably more dangerous than periods of disorder in other civilizations that have connections with an original mythical order. We have nothing we can fall back on. Therefore the phenomenon of alienation, which, for instance, as you will see, we find amply [present] around 2000 B.C. in the Egyptian great crisis, has a particular acuteness in Western civilization in our time; [it becomes] a radical alienation, because there is nothing on which one can fall back. If certain cultural concepts are destroyed, you have to go about [trying] to recapture them somehow.

That is one of the problems of the twentieth century. That is the reason why so many people today, since we don't have a myth of our own in our civilization, will now go back into archeology, into comparative religion, into comparative literature and similar subject matter, because that is the place where they can recapture the substance that in our acculturated, and now decultured, civilization is getting lost. That is why people all of a sudden become Zen Buddhists. You have to become a Zen Buddhist because there is nothing comparable in Western civilization to which you can fall back, if a dogmatism has run out, as the Christian has in the Age of Enlightenment. Therefore, in this sense, beginning with the nineteenth century, we have a peculiar development of historical constructions in which all previous history is thrown out. A sort of original beginning is made, always in the present, with the present state of consciousness, be it in the Hegelian, or the Comtean, or the Marxian system, or any of the [other] ideological systems of the nineteenth century—a sort of apocalyptic

construction by which all past history is thrown out as more or less irrelevant, or having its relevance only as leading up to its present point, [. . .] the modern point in which we all have to live. Living on a point, throwing out all past history, that is perhaps the characteristic of the modern apocalyptic mood.

One should, however, introduce a slight differentiation (about which I will have more [to say] in the last lecture): that the great apocalyptic thinkers of the nineteenth century—I have just mentioned them, men like Hegel, Comte, or Marx—still base their apocalyptic view of history on a very thorough knowledge of historical materials—they are themselves very good historians—while today the apocalyptic position that resulted is usually taken over, but not taken over with all the historical knowledge that went into its formation. Therefore we have a peculiar epigonal apocalypse in the twentieth century that, for instance, results in an attitude of what today in Russia is called Soviet Communism, a special sort of communism that is not identical with Marxism. Genuine Marxists oppose this kind of communism. There is an internal revolt going on, from the Marxists against the Communists, who are the epigonal type from whom the bureaucrats are recruited. The intellectuals would go back to Hegel and Marx because they are where the origins, the existential origins of this apocalyptic, are to be found. Thus, in that manner you have a peculiar epigonal dogmatism that does not even retain the older historical knowledge that was still present in the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s. That's all gone.

In this way you therefore have a peculiar deculturation process, resulting in relegating to a realm of practical ignorance such areas of reality as are symbolized by myth, by philosophy, by revelation symbols, and by mysticism. These are the four major symbolizations of original experiences, and together with the original experiences, they are mostly removed from present intellectual discourse. When I say that, I am thinking of quite concrete things. For instance, in the Anglo-American area of philosophy the dominant philosophical movement is still, you might say, British analysis; and without being in any way critical of British analysis, if you confine your knowledge to British analysis you have eliminated all the areas of reality symbolized by myth, philosophy, revelation, and mysticism. Practically everything that's important in

life is removed if you confine yourself to that type of logical analysis, which is quite solid in itself. I am a great adherent in that respect of British analysis, but it is confined to a type of logic that takes its model from the act of sense perception. And all these other areas are not areas of sense perception; as such, they are entirely different.

In this development which I have just characterized, you have certain outstanding milestones. You can, for instance, see the progress of this deculturation process in the change of the meaning of the term *immanence* from the nineteenth century to the twentieth. When you look at the authors in the first half of the nineteenth century, say, at men like De Quincey or Browning, or Matthew Arnold, who already worried about the problem of God disappearing from this world, the word *immanence* is always used in the sense that God somehow disappears and ceases to be immanent. (That he is transcendent anyway, and in addition should be immanent, is taken for granted.) But somehow he ceases to be immanent. The term *immanence* appears in that connection. Today, if you read contemporary literature, you will find that immanence is not characterized as an absence of God, but as a presence of man; that is, man is the subject of whom immanence is predicated, man is very much immanent. That is the meaning in which the term is used now, while Browning or De Quincey or Matthew Arnold would say that God should be immanent and is unfortunately not immanent. In this shift in the meaning of the term *immanence* in common usage in literature, you can see how the accent has shifted from still a measure of consciousness where the problem lies—that some piece of reality is getting lost because it is no longer immanent—to, you might say, an unknowing acceptance of the loss and the statement that “man is the subject of immanence.” You have an immanentist man now, and not a lack of an immanentist God.

From the position which I have just outlined, we have to distinguish between immanentist constructions of history: Man is constructed as a function of history in such philosophies of history as those of Comte, Hegel, and Marx, with an apocalyptic present, that is, a present in which all past reality is relegated to a dead past and all present is concentrated in this empirical present in time, loaded with expectations that something meaningful will

come out of this present. That is the characteristic of the apocalyptic attitude, projecting into the future and forgetting about the past: the dead past and the living future. With regard to such an opposition of a dead past to the living future, one should, for instance, be aware that these ideas of a time that flows from a past into a future on a symbolized line—just one line running through the point of present—is a conception, a meaning of the word *future*, which does not become current before the middle of the eighteenth century. Up to the middle of the eighteenth century we have no term for what today we call “the future”—a better future, a more peaceful future, or God knows what. This term, [or] meaning of, *future* did not exist in any European language before 1750—but an entirely different one to which I shall return presently.

Against such immanentist constructions of history, I shall develop in these lectures a different concept of history: history as an open field of existence. The difference between the constructions just characterized and what I shall present here can be formulated diagrammatically in the following manner. If you have this late-eighteenth-century concept of time you would have to have something like a line of time going in this direction. [From now on in this lecture, Voegelin intermittently writes on a blackboard.]

If you have the problem of open time, you would always have to consider that at every point of presence on this line [Voegelin has drawn a line on the board] we are not moving only on this line, but in openness toward divine reality, so that every point of presence is as T. S. Eliot formulated it, a point of intersection of time with the timeless. That is the point of presence. Thus, the whole series of time would not be a series on a line at all but a series of present points in which none is ever past, but only past in relation to their present, not really past. Ontologically, really, it is always in relation to the presence, which is the same presence that constitutes my present here and now. On this conception of a divine presence, which is the presence in every present point on the line, depends every conception of history that makes sense, every sense of history at all. There would be no reason whatsoever why we should worry about anything that happened three thousand years ago, or three minutes ago, unless there were a reason perhaps to remember it, because it is connected with our present point

three minutes later, because it has a presence just as our point has a presence. So a proper diagrammatic formulation would not be the line, but you would have to make it something like a flow of presence, as I call it, with a direction in which there is permanently a tension between the immanent and transcendent poles. That would be a proper diagram of time, but not a straight line.

But I should say a few words more about that because, as I said, this line point, this line diagram of time, arose in the eighteenth century and already Kant had his trouble with that conception of a straight line of time. Because he had to ask himself: If we have such a straight line of time going in one direction and approaching a point of perfection somewhere in an indefinite future, in an indefinite future you would have then, on the one hand, "Indefinite," and on the other hand, in capital letters, "PERFECTION." That is his conception of history, history as an indefinite approach to the realm of perfection. And then he would ask himself, How large is our perfection in any finite time in which we live?—because, after all, we don't live infinitely, but only for a span of time.

Now take any finite piece of time, make it small "t" (which may represent ten years or fifty years or a century or a human lifetime), and then ask yourself the question, How large is progress within that finite time? And then you would have to formulate that this finite time is equal to large "PERFECTION," so that small "perfection" is related to complete perfection like "t" to infinity, which gives you then the equation, "t" is capital "T" times "t" by infinity, which is equal to . . . what? [Member of audience:] "Zero." If you have that conception of a line of time in indefinite perfection, all finite progress in time is zero, so that is an illogical term.

I am operating with the conception of a flow of presence. By the way, in the third lecture, we will have to deal more with these things, but let me go on with this question of time just one more step. For instance, Merleau Ponty has given, in his *Phenomenologie de la perception*, a further very amusing analogy of the problem of time. Time is nothing but a relation between myself and what I imagine to be time. Therefore, if I have such a line here, now, I cannot talk about it in the abstract, but I have to place myself in relation to it. And if I imagine it to be a flow, and myself

standing as a person here on the border of that river of time, it flows past me in this direction, a flow presumably ending in some sort of ocean. Therefore all past time lies here in the future and all future time comes back here from very late in the past. That's a lovely concept!—which has considerable importance in reality, because this past time is what we try to recapture sometimes. For instance, De Quincey has this symbolization in his "savannah-la-Mar," that all time in his concern is the past of his life, appearing as an underground or undersea, and it has to be recaptured somehow, enlightened perhaps. It is the past time, and you have a similar problem in Proust's *Recherche du temps perdu*, the time that got lost, and that is the time with which you are occupied, if you operate with such a conception of a line.

Of course you can take another situation. You can assume that you are in the middle of the flow and you are infinite: then the flow would go past you. You would be a constant at some point, and then indeed you would be in the stream flowing with it into the future—which has another very interesting consequence that I cannot go into now.

But you see, I just want to loosen up a bit your idea about time. It is not an easy matter, but you can use all sorts of symbolisms. You should be aware that you use symbolisms, why you use symbolisms, and that the question, Which is the proper symbolism to be used? can only be solved by an analysis of reality, and not just by talking about time. One has to analyze reality. Here I am using the concept of the flow of presence, to which I shall have to come back presently, in detail. That is the general position of history which I shall use here.

The title of these lectures is "The Drama Of Humanity." They are not about man but about our humanity. Now why? We are accustomed, for instance, to talk about the nature of man, and then you usually have the great fights between adherents of classical philosophy, who will tell you that the nature of man is a constant, and the apocalyptically excited intellectuals, who will tell you that the nature of man changes and that it will change ever more in the future, [that] all our expectations for the future and for a new realm on this earth depend on changes in the nature of man. Now obviously, here again [we have] a logical problem, because

if by the nature of anything you mean the constant features, the constant features cannot change, because then they would not be constant. That is logically impossible: By definition a nature can't change.

But there is a real problem nevertheless, and that real problem is present already at the time when the conception of the nature of man is formed in antiquity, in classical philosophy. That is where it is formed, and there arises the conception that man has a nature in the sense of a form like any object of sense perception—like a table that is developed according to a plan or like a plant that obviously has an organism's plan in its growth, and so on. That is the decisive point; you see we are still very close—even in our English empiricism since the eighteenth century—to the Aristotelian conception that a metaphysics of man has to be formulated in terms of form and matter. So either the artifact or the organism is the model on which you philosophize, but it isn't really man.

If you transfer the model of a form, and matter organized by that form, to human persons, or to society, you run into difficulties because society isn't an artifact or an organism, but something entirely different. It is engaged in some sort of process which is not the same as that of the model of an artifact or organism. Therefore, you run into the problem that there is a process of change in conflict with the assumed form. One can only solve that problem by admitting that there is a difficulty here, and run the risk. There are obviously enough stable features in man to recognize him as a human being and, obviously, enough of process in him in order to recognize that there is a process going on in him, not only on the organic level, as an animal, but also on the mental, intellectual, [and] spiritual levels.

Such a process of the human soul (or whatever you wish to call it where this process takes place, because it doesn't take place in the organism, but it is a mental or spiritual process) has produced its own adequate form of symbolization that is called autobiography. Wherever there is a consciousness of man in process, the problem of autobiography begins to develop as an interesting subject matter. Otherwise you would simply have only a solid type, which never changes. But when you become aware of this change, of the importance of change, then autobiographical problems begin to present themselves. Also in antiquity, that is where autobiogra-

phy begins. We always have the problem that, on the one hand, there are stable features in man, on the other, there is a process going on, especially the process of discovering that man has stable features. Because man as a subject matter to be defined in any terms at all is not omnipresent in history, but arises in Greek civilization with specific definitions of man as, for instance, the *animal rationale*, the *zoon noun echon*—in Greek an animal that has mind or *nous* or reason—and such a definition itself is an event in the history of mankind.

Now one characteristic of this event, as it happened in Greek philosophy, however, is that there results a formulation of the nature of man in stable terms. Such a definition as “man is a rational animal,” *animal rationale*, is the result; but not included in this observation [is the fact] that the observation itself is a new event in history. Therewith, you have a peculiar structure of all classic philosophy of order. You have insight into the personal structure of man as a stable structure in a given situation of the late polis.

That is for instance the typical content of Aristotelian ethics: the structure of man and the structure of his behavior, through behavior according to his nature in society and the world. Or you can expand the picture of man as the perfect stable structure into a perfect stable structure of society as it ought to be. That is the content of the paradigm, or best constitution, in Aristotelian politics or in Platonic politics. But nowhere in the series of *Ethics* and *Politics*, which are after all the two volumes of a philosophy of order, is a third volume that would have to be called *Historics*, where one would go into the problem: that such stable features as described in *Ethics* and *Politics* are discovered at a certain point in history, in Plato and Aristotle, and why, and what, went before, and what could possibly come after. The event-character itself does not become thematic, only the result.

If unfolded, this reflective element—which is the process-element in the nature of man—would contain the problem that the nature of man, at any given time, though it has stable features, [also] contains [a specific] self-understanding of man in his relations to all other sectors of reality: the world, God, and society. Thus all these other relations are envisaged in a certain manner in which they were not envisaged before, and in a manner in which

we no longer envisage them today. This element of envisaging the nature of man [as] understanding himself, [and] developing these images of self-understanding in addition to the result, [or the] picture of a specific humanity, [is what I call humanity]; (i.e., not only the recognition of the structure of man, but [the recognition] of humanity in the sense of being man in a certain manner in relation to all other elements of reality). [Humanity is] distinguished from a stable nature of man; that is what is meant by humanity.

That leaves us with a number of definitions with which I may conclude this section. *Humanity* means man in a mode of understanding himself in his relation to God, world, and society, and these modes change. *History* would be the drama (if a meaning in it can be discovered) of humanity, of the self-understanding of man. With that I want to leave the introductory part, in the hope that I have done my duties in that respect and can now come to the subject matter of the three lectures.

Here we have to deal with the plan of the three lectures. I shall develop only the first lecture, and mention the others. The titles for the three lectures are “Man in the Cosmos,” “The Epiphany of Man,” and “Man in Revolt.”

II. Man in the Cosmos

I shall now give again only in diagrammatic form—because that is sometimes more persuasive than any other elaborate declaration—the relation of these three topics to one another. If you take on the level of the cosmic experience some nice pudding like that [Voegelin draws a diagram on the board], as including all realities, such as man, God, heaven, earth, society, and God knows what: with that order given, you have a sort of ordered community of partners in this whole global reality. When, in this global reality, there springs up the element of consciousness in man to the level of self-consciousness, you will get a sort of smaller globe in this, representing the consciousness of man in which he is conscious of [his] being in relation to the divine ground of existence. That is the actual constant of consciousness when it appears. Now that

would be an event within cosmic reality, the differentiation of consciousness.

It is possible, of course, to isolate that consciousness against the rest of the cosmic reality in which it has arisen. Then you would have a second such globe containing only this part here, with this tension in which there is nothing but God as a transcendent pole and man as an immanent pole, and all the rest of reality is forgotten. That is a possibility which actually happened. Then you can go on and forget, for instance, the transcendent pole—man rarely forgets himself. And then there is nothing left but a sort of decapitated immanence, and that is the situation in the contemporary conception of man. You take one sector of reality out of the larger reality, isolate it against the whole cosmic reality, call that the reality of philosophy or revelation, and then you cut that in half, decapitate the transcendent half, and you are left with the lower part, immanent reality.

This first part, this first diagram, would be man in the cosmos; the second part in isolation, the epiphany of man, the differentiation of that consciousness out of the general reality of the cosmos; and then the breaking in two, the snapping out of this tension to the Divine Ground, and man in revolt would be the third part. That is of course a very rough draft, but you will see that it is not too far from the truth. So that is what I want to say about the organization of these lectures.

The first lecture [is] about man in the cosmos, and there we have to deal with the primary experience of the cosmos represented by that first nice round pudding there. In that reality, the historical sites are the ancient civilizations, especially the civilizations of Egypt, Sumer, and Babylon. Now let's be clear about the terminology: *cosmos* [is the term] we have to refer to this type of experience. (I shall explain it later. It is a late Greek term, not a term that appears in the ancient Oriental civilizations themselves.) In the original cosmological civilizations there is no comprehensive term for *cosmos*; there we talk only about the realities that we concretely have there, for instance, heaven and earth. (Even when you get into the prophetic period, the best you can predict is a "new heaven" and a "new earth." You sometimes see it translated as a "new world" or a "new cosmos," but the original cosmolog-

ical reality is a “heaven” and an “earth,” the heaven and earth you can see.) [There is] no speculative content yet. Or: the “gods, man, and society,” or within society: a “ruler, the king, and the people.” These are the terms in which one talks about reality in the literary texts of the cosmological civilizations. A term for the cosmos [itself] does not appear. There is only a term for the order of this “community of partners” in some sort of community for which [we have] no term except the later Greek term *cosmos*.

I especially want to draw your attention to the problem that the gods are intracosmic. There is no such thing as a world-transcendent God in any cosmological civilization; and for [a] very long [time] even in revelation and philosophy there is no world-transcendent God. That’s a very peculiar problem, how that problem arises at all. But in the cosmological civilizations, the gods are intracosmic, part of the cosmos.

With that in mind, let me say a word about the expressive forms, the symbolizations, in which such an idea, such an experience, is expressed. It is usually called the myth. And here practical science is still in a considerable methodological quandary. The comparative religionists and mythologists and archeologists usually subscribe to the older conceptions of myth, which are rooted in the general phenomenology of religion. That is [to say] that they are fundamentalists: One takes the phenomenon of a symbol and does not go back to the experience that produced it. Therefore, if you take the myth as the phenomenon of a symbol, you arrive at such a definition of the myth as you find in Eliade’s *Myth and Reality*. Let me read that to you, because then you will most easily see what the new problem is. Eliade defines *myth*:

Myth narrates a sacred history; it relates an event that took place in primordial Time, the fabled time of the “beginnings.” In other words, myth tells how, through the deeds of Supernatural Beings, a reality came into existence, be it the whole of reality, the Cosmos, or only a fragment of reality—an island, a species of plant, a particular kind of human behavior, an institution. Myth, then, is always an account of a “creation”; it relates how something was produced, began to *be*.¹

1. [Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1964), 5–6.]

Against this very much accepted definition of myth, I would like to make the following exceptions:

In the first place, when you go strictly empirically to the materials, the Babylonian literary documents of a cosmological civilization, the Egyptians, the Sumerians, the Assyrian, or even the Hindu, only a very small percentage of all the materials are stories of anything. When you have to deal, for instance, with the tension between a Ruler and the Gods, or a Ruler and the People, or with the invasion, say, of the Hyksos, that complex example in Egypt, no stories of the gods will tell you anything. They are quite different forms of expression than stories. So the formulation "Myth is always an account of a creation" is wrong in the face of the empirical facts. There are quite [a number of] other types of myth.

The second point is that the gods are designated as "supernatural Beings." That, of course, is impermissible. The term *supernatural*, as opposed to *natural*, is Scholastic terminology very commonly used by Thomas Aquinas. From Scholasticism, as part of dogma, it entered into the dogmatism of the Enlightenment in the eighteenth century. Eliade is rather an Enlightenment ideologue in this respect to the Scholastics. In that connection we speak of supernatural as opposed to natural. As I have indicated, no man living in a cosmological civilization ever knew that the gods were a super nature against a nature; there were heaven and earth, the gods and men and the king, and all was part of this partnership. Nothing in it was more natural than anything else. So the terms *natural* and *supernatural* just make no sense when used anachronistically with regard to cosmological civilization. That makes sense in the thirteenth century of Scholasticism, that makes sense in the Enlightenment under the influence of the natural sciences, but it makes no sense when you deal with an ancient civilization.

For that reason one cannot accept these nominalist definitions. You have to take a realistic definition, which is very much simpler. You can simply say: Myth is that body of symbols that had in fact been found adequate by the members of such civilizations for expressing their experiences of the cosmos in which they lived. Nobody can object to that—you simply go back to empirical facts.

Now let me make good what I have said, that in the myth you have a lot of things that are not stories. For instance, I have listed

nine different types. Let me just enumerate them; I shall deal with two of them as examples.

1. These are symbolizations of the established order of empire. The empire is an analogy of the cosmos; you might call it a small cosmos—a *cosmion*. Such formulations of the analogy between empire structure and cosmic structure are, for instance, found in the famous preamble to the Code of Hammurabi—no story at all; rather, parallel structures between the heavens and the earth. The empire, the small *cosmion*, is parallel to the heavens.
2. Then a case in which you have history, but a history of a very peculiar kind, a foundation myth of empire. In the case of establishment, the myth is symbolized by the parallel, the analogy, while the foundation myth must be symbolized by an action among the gods. The form is not strictly a history but a drama, such as the Theology of Memphis, of probably 3000 B.C., a drama that tells the story of the foundation of Egypt as a drama enacted among the gods.
3. Then in the crisis periods, for instance, in the First Intermediate Period—about 2200 to 2000 B.C. was the height of the crisis in Egypt—you find highly intricate discussions of the contemporary skeptical arguments, with the existential analysis of the two existences leading out of this mess. We'll come back to that.
4. Or you have literary lyrics expressing skepticism of the gods, not a story of the gods at all, but expressing skepticism of man with regard to the stories told about the gods; for instance the "song of the Harper"—songs of skepticism.
5. Then a vast body is roughly equivalent to what you would find on the ordinary level of common sense, in the eighteenth century [meaning of that word], the Wisdom literature; nothing about the gods, only about man, but in this context of a cosmological civilization.
6. Then the great expressions of defeat, victory, and restoration of empire; no story at all, but the relation between the ruler and gods. That is the problem.
7. Then the ritual renewals of order in the New Year Festivals,

what Eliade usually brings under the “*éternel retour*,” the “eternal return.” There is no “eternal return” in any ancient civilization; there is only a rhythmical renewal, and the rhythm is not an eternal renewal. Let me briefly explain that, because there is still a lot of misunderstanding about it. When you have a rhythmical renewal you have something like a sine wave, like the annual spring, summer, fall, and winter, time going on and on. But then there is something like a return, an eternal return of the same, and that would be really a circle of events. [Aristotle touches upon this] problem, when he asks the question, “If I am living at this point here, that being my present, and then I have a historical event, like the war against Troy, I can ask myself the question, Which way am I nearer to the war against Troy, going backward, or going forward?” That would be eternal return. But such an eternal return in a historical conception is nowhere to be found before the seventh century B.C., in Hinduism and in Hellas. No ancient civilization had any conception of an eternal return, but only of rhythmic renewal. That was not a story either, but the question of ritual renewal.

8. Then something else, which does not properly come under [the term] *myth* in the sense of a story of the gods, is the construction of unilinear history, from the beginning of the creation of the world, down to the imperial present, to the empire. We have—that is also very easy to [ascertain]—unilinear history in ancient civilizations, but we have no cyclical history. There is no concept of cyclical history in the ancient civilizations of the cosmological empires, but there is unilinear history. I shall come back to that in the second lecture.
9. And here we have all sorts of symptoms of a breakthrough beyond cosmic experience in the direction of either a beginning in time, [. . .] extrapolation into the past to the point of origin, or to [. . .] the origin in the transcendent. We have speculations or extrapolations of a long past history, [. . .] extrapolating [one part of] it back to the beginning—that is one way of putting it—or prayers directed, without benefit of other parts of reality, to an unknown God, beyond all

the known gods. Thus, the problem of the unknown God is already a problem in Egyptian civilization. The main god of the later period is Amon, and the Egyptian word Amon means “the hidden one.” So the hidden god, which becomes very relevant in gnosticism, is already present in the Amon Hymns, at the latest in the eighth century B.C..

Here we have all sorts of literature and symbolic expressions, which are always lumped [together] as myth and of which only a small part has the character of a story. As we have seen already from the enumeration, all human problems and situations with which we are familiar [are also myths]. The question of the loss of existence, questions of alienation, of crisis, of empire, of personal crisis, and so on, all are subject matter for expression in a peculiar medium, so [there is] not only one blocklike, peculiar conception of this or that.

Now I want to give you one or two examples of what that looks like in times of crisis, and what expression in the medium of cosmological civilization really is, what it looks like if it is not a story. I want to give two examples: one—perhaps I can still do that today—from the point of view of the ruler, and the other example from the point of view of the commoner.

From the point of view of the ruler, there is preserved a very interesting [gap in text]. There is no term for that, a declaration of the only female Pharaoh, Queen Hatshepsut (1501–1480 B.C.), on the occasion of the restoration of order after the expulsion of the nomad invaders, the Hyksos. Let me read you that information of the queen to the people:

Hear all you people and folk, as many as they may be:
I have done these things through the counsel of my heart.

Now she tells what she has been doing:

I have not forgetfully slept,
but have restored what has been ruined—
I have raised up what had gone to pieces,
When the Asiatics were in the midst of Avaris, in the Northland,
and among them were nomads, overthrowing what had been made.
They ruled without Re [the Egyptian god] and He did not
act through divine command down to my majesty.

That was the crisis. Now comes the result of restoration:

I am established on the thrones of Re
I was foretold for the limits of the years as the one born to conquer.
I am come as the uraeus-serpent of Horus, flaming against my
enemies.
I have made distant those whom the gods abominate
And earth has carried off their footprints.

That was the restoration, and now the interpretation:

This is the command of the Father of my Fathers
Who comes at his appointed times, of Re [the sun god],
And there shall not occur damage to what Amon has commanded.
My own command endures like the mountains.
The sun-disc shines forth
And spreads rays over the titles of my majesty,
And my falcon is high above my name standard
for the duration of eternity.²

Now here you see what a so-called mythical expression is. Here a ruler speaks after the Hyksos have been expelled from the country. And now comes, in two ordered pairs, first, the achievement of the queen. She has restored what had been ruined, and the characteristic of ruin is: These invaders ruled without the sun god. So there is rule without proper rule: "and God did not act through divine command down to my majesty." That is the order that is mediated through the pharaoh from the gods. God did not let the order flow from himself through the pharaoh down to the empire of the people living in the empire. That is a definition of disorder. Now when it is re-established, the pharaoh is again the mediator of divine order to the people, thanks to the god.

Then comes in the second part, again opposed to one another: "This is the command of my Father" and "My own command endures like the mountains"—always the parallel between the role of the king and order. The term for order in the Egyptian, by the way, is *ma'at*. So that goes all through the gods. The *ma'at* is dispensed from the gods down through the pharaoh to the empire,

2. [Voegelin seems to have slightly modernized the version given in James B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 231.]

the administrators of the people. When this process is interrupted then of course there is disorder. You may call it a story. I don't know if you think it is a story, but it is a description of the dynamics of order in terms of the relations between the gods, the king, the people, and the invaders.

Here there is trouble. In this kind of trouble, you also have the commoners bitterly suffering from it. In the famous "Dispute of a Man, Who Wants to Commit Suicide, With His Soul," [the subject] is not the pharaoh but a commoner. He wants to commit suicide [because] there is disorder; he doesn't [want] to live in that sort of empire. (I just want to give a few examples of the question. I cannot give the whole analysis because time is too far advanced. But at least a few examples.) He describes the disordered social world in which he lives. Now look at the formulations: They are given in tristichs in which the first line is repeated. He says for instance,

To whom can I speak today?
 One's fellows are evil;
 The friends of today do not love.

If you translate it into classical philosophy or Christian terminology, it means that the classical *philia politike*, or the love among men in community, has disappeared, the order emanating from the gods is gone. Everyone has become a man alone, for himself, and has therefore become evil. Very drastically, this loneliness and loss of character are described in the following tristich:

To whom can I speak today?
 Faces have disappeared
 Every man has a face downcast toward his fellows.

Like a modern urbanized society, you might say. Riesman's *Lonely Crowd* and such parallels emerge immediately. Or:

To whom can I speak today?
 There is no one contented of heart.
 The man with whom one went no longer exists.

So the dissolution of society, destruction, the disappearance of contentment, the phenomenon of alienation makes itself felt. That is the description of the society when there is disorder, and how is that to be interpreted? When there is such disorder, man turns away from a life that has become senseless and contemplates suicide. Let me give you at least two of these suicide phrases:

Death faces me today
Like the recovery of a sick man,
Like going out into the open after confinement.

Death faces me today
Like the longing of a man to see his home again,
After many years that he was held in captivity.

And so he goes on and on with all the metaphors of escape from this reality as a release from a sickness, a release from prison, a release from a darkness that makes you see the light, and so on, and returning to a sort of home. And what should result from such an escape from this senseless reality: a sort of judgment in the Beyond. In the last group of tristichs he says:

Why surely he who is yonder
Will be a living god,
Punishing the sin of him who commits it

Why surely he who is yonder
Will stand in the barque of the sun,
Causing the choicest therein to be given to the temples.

Why surely he who is yonder
Will be a man of wisdom,
Not hindered from appealing to Re when he speaks.

[It is the] conception of a sort of judgment in the Beyond, in which man can participate because he is immortal, when he commits suicide in order to escape a world in which he is completely alienated, which has become strange to him; and against which death is then the real life. This is very similar, for instance, to the formulation that you find in Plato's *Gorgias*.

Here you have almost a complete analysis of a deficient existence in society when the *ma'at*, the order, has disappeared, or the recovery of the truth of existence, in the sense of the divine order which is necessary. But in this particular situation [there is] despair that through any sort of social action [recovery] could be achieved. Therefore, the only sensible and meaningful course of action would be suicide. That would bring man into immortality, into the company of the sun god, and there reinforce his ordering power—again for the world, for the restoration of the empire of Egypt.

This is an Egyptian condition, of course, but a revolutionary conception, because under the empire conception only the pharaoh is the mediator of divine order. A single Egyptian can do nothing about it; he can only create disorder. When here the single man appears, who by way of suicide becomes a living god like the pharaoh in the barque of the sun god, he places himself in the place of the pharaoh.

So the center of order is understood to be man and not the ruler, the ultimate center of order. This existential insight that the order is man—not only the social organization, [not] only pharaoh—is absolutely present here. But it cannot crystallize into—though under other conditions it might become—a revolutionary movement, or a prophet who could assemble a sect around himself, or a philosopher who could found an academy or something like that, because all this is still impossible under Egyptian conditions. The empire in the cosmological sense is so strongly institutionalized that if you have no status on the administrative level, or on the priestly level of the temple, and so on, you are, with regard to the order of the empire among the living, nobody.

You would have to join the dead in the barque of the sun god in order to count for something, and that is why suicide becomes an [issue]. If the empire institutions are no longer so strongly alive that they are an absolute block to individual activity, then you [can] only get into the problem of revolutionary action through new intellectual or other spiritual movements, with the center of personality, a prophet or something like that. [Here] that is not yet possible. Let me close there. The next time we come to the “Epiphany of Man,” when just such things become possible, [when] all that can be done. Thank you very much.

III. The Epiphany of Man

There is a period in the history of mankind that has been recognized as a peculiar period for more than a hundred years, particularly since Romanticism, when more and more historical materials became known. What is peculiar about that period, which roughly extends from the eighth to the third century B.C., is that a number of great men appeared, representing spiritual or intellectual breakthroughs, with a clustering of these men around 500 B.C. Around that time there lived as contemporaries, in the West, Xenophanes, Heraclitus, and Parmenides; in India, the Buddha; and in China, Confucius. All these men were contemporaries, and that fact attracted considerable attention in the 1820s. Jaspers, in his philosophy of history, called [it] the axis time of mankind. Now this axis time is a somewhat difficult problem. I shall not go into the details: Toynbee has criticized it heavily for good reasons. But still, this peculiar clustering of great men, and intellectual and spiritual breakthroughs in that period, is a fact. I refer to this period, and to the fact of these breakthroughs, [as] "The Epiphany of Man." Thereby I mean that man becomes conscious of himself, as distinguished from his existence in the cosmos, where you have the hard realities (as I said yesterday) of heaven and earth, of society, of the king, and the people. Now you have the self-consciousness of man in his immediacy under God. However, in the Egyptian empire, as you saw yesterday, the single individual (the author of the "Dispute") had no center of meaning as an independent personality. Rather, the meaning of existence was mediated by the empire and its representative, the pharaoh, who mediated the order of the gods to the empire and to the people living in the empire.

Now, however, the single individual, in the shape of a wise man, a sage like Confucius, or an enlightened person like the Buddha, or a philosopher like Xenophanes or Parmenides, becomes a center of the formation of communities in which humanity—the peculiar character of man in his relation to all other entities in the cosmos—is understood and can form a rival community to the existing political institutions. That was still unthinkable in the Egyptian or in the Sumerian context. [There] one could only replace one empire with another, one ruler by another, a whole

empire by a fractionized empire, and so on, and then a reunification of the empire. But one could not have, say, a philosophical school or a prophet and his adherents and so on. This is new in the period about which I want to talk today, and the decisive point in [this period] is that here man experiences himself in his immediacy under God. What gives him his autonomy is that he is under God without mediation. We might say the new understanding of man, his new view of his own humanity, is that of his immediate relation to divinity.

Now the types of experience in which this new understanding crystallizes into symbolization can be classified. I do not want to go too far in the classification here and now, but we will have to go into more detail later, because as soon as you start forming type concepts and giving definitions, you run into the difficulty that I indicated yesterday, because the types, while stable for a while, change permanently. Man is in movement, and if you really go into the matter, you might dissolve every stable type into the preparatory and the succeeding types so that you get more of the transitional types than the stable types. We will have to talk about the problem of transition quite a bit today. But with this reservation, one might say that there are two outstanding experiences in the West. (I do not reflect now on India or China, where there are other problems.) In the West, [where] new experiences have given themselves names, you can distinguish between philosophy and revelation, [represented respectively] by Hellas and Israel. In the case of philosophy you have an experience that we might call the "noetic" experience, because its center, the area in which the immediacy under God is experienced, is the differentiation of *nous* or "reason." In the other case, of revelation, you might speak of a pneumatic experience, because the *pneuma* (in Hebrew the *ruach*) is again the area in which the immediacy is experienced. The differentiations of the meanings I shall give later.

We now have two types, a noetic and a pneumatic type, or philosophy and revelation; or, if you reflect directly on the question of the *nous* (translated as "reason"), you may call it the distinction [between] reason and revelation. Here are two distinct types. Anticipating what I have to explain in detail later, one might say in the noetic type, in the philosophic type, you get a tendency toward exploring the structure of the experience. (Of course, you cannot

explore the structure without having the substance, the substance must also be there, but the tendency goes toward exploring the structure of the experience.) In the pneumatic, or revelatory, type, you have the substance so strongly predominant that an analysis of its structure is never done, at least not in the Israelitic and Judaic context. (The analysis of structure is introduced into the pneumatic experience only through Christianity and the development of theology, and theology is based on classic and Stoic philosophy.)

These are the two types. If we want a vocabulary for expressing these types of experience, and the site where they take place, we have a choice of terms. It doesn't matter very much which terms one chooses, but under modern conditions, some are preferable to others. In antiquity, in the philosophical context, the site of such an experience was defined as the *psyche*. Now the term *psyche* occurs earlier than the classic philosophers. You already find the term *psyche* in Homer, but [there] it still means the life force in the physical sense, which leaves a man when he dies, for instance, in battle, with the blood streaming from him. So the blood is the seat of the *psyche* as a life force, and when that leaves him it remains a shadow that goes into the underworld. That is exactly the same meaning of *psyche* that you find paralleled in Hebrew in the concept of *nephesh*. It has the same meaning as the *psyche* in the Homeric sense. Beginning approximately with Pythagoras, one can notice the transformation of the meaning of the term *psyche* into the site in which this experience of immediacy under God, or a divine ground of one's own existence, takes place. That is the transformation of the meaning of the term *psyche*. I don't object to the term *psyche* as long as you do not objectify it and make it a *hypostasis*, but just accept it as a term, a convenient handle, that is an analogy to other organs of the human body, the feet or the hands or so on. You don't experience immediacy under God with your feet or your hands, but with what do you experience it? If you want to call that part of man *psyche*, it's perfectly all right, call it *psyche*. But we don't need the term because, in the modern period, it has almost been completely replaced, to give an example, beginning with the seventeenth century by the term *consciousness*. Man has consciousness, and *consciousness* means the experience of a tension in existence toward the ground of one's

own existence. That is consciousness. The term *consciousness* in this meaning already appears on occasion in classic philosophy. You find passages for instance in the *Nicomachean Ethics* of Aristotle where the term *aesthesis* is not used in the usual meaning of sense perception but in the meaning of consciousness; it already occurs there. The term *consciousness* is perhaps a better handle today than the term *psyche*.

Consciousness [. . .] is the site in which participation in the ground of man's existence is experienced. It is the site of participation itself. We must now distinguish between the actual participation and the awareness of participation. That is a very important point for the interpretation of historical phenomena, because participation itself always takes place when there is man. Of course, all cosmological experience incorporates the participation of man in the surrounding reality, the divine reality of nature, and all other such parts of the general cosmic reality; but it is not yet thematic, it has not become reflective. And when you become aware of it, you have to distinguish between consciousness that was always there as the site of participation, expressing itself in all sorts of other symbolisms besides philosophy, for instance in prayer, or in myth, or in the "Dispute."

Now with that awareness you would have to say that, when it becomes self-reflective, consciousness always has a double meaning. First, it is the site of participation in the divine ground. Second, it is the *sensorium* by which you have become aware of that participation and make it topical and use concepts to describe it. Thus, on the philosophical level of experience, consciousness is always the site and the *sensorium*. Therefore, when [consciousness] becomes conscious, [it] is now the center of all order. The order is no longer simply there [as a given]. There is still that order in the cosmos, but it is not in your own person and in society unless you produce it by virtue of the understanding of your own existence and its order in consciousness. Therefore you find, for instance, in classic politics, that a paradigmatic constitution for society can be developed on the basis of an analysis of consciousness. Consciousness blown up on the larger screen of society will then deliver the right type of constitution. If you are informed about the right order of consciousness, you can describe approximately what would be the right order for society. In that

sense consciousness becomes the center of all philosophy and speculation on problems or order.

Now—[continuing with the general characteristics]—this coming of consciousness to self-consciousness has, you might say, a disastrous effect on the previous cosmological experience, on the experience of the cosmos in the primary sense. You remember what I said last night about the experience of the cosmos: The cosmos is the reality within which you live unreflectively and uncritically, and in that cosmos you find all parts of reality embraced. There are the gods and man, society, the king and the people, heaven and earth. Everything is in the cosmos, including the gods. When you now have a self-reflectiveness in which man experiences his immediacy under God, God is no longer one of the realities within a cosmos but a reality beyond all other realities, including your own. All the realities of the cosmos, including your own, are now divided into two classes of reality—the one which is not God and the other which is God: God and the non-God realities. In that situation you get the dissociation of the cosmos into the world-transcendent God and the world that does not contain God. The gods are thrown out and concentrated into the one transcendent God. You see why one has to be careful with the vocabulary. We do not have too large a vocabulary. I will therefore use the term *cosmos* deliberately, only for the purpose of describing that still-compact community of partners in the community of being. That is what I have called cosmos.

When the cosmos dissociates, we need another vocabulary, because then we do not have intracosmic gods but a world-transcendent God, and the term *cosmos* should then be replaced by the term *world*. When we speak of the world in this technical context, I mean the remnant of the cosmos that remains when the gods are thrown out of the cosmos and have been concentrated into the one world-transcendent God. The world and the world-transcendent God then replace the cosmos and the intracosmic gods. We see here already a severe problem of re-symbolization. And since these symbols are not all developed at one [time], as soon as such an experience appears, you will find in the texts considerable transitional difficulties and confusion, because the older terms are used in the new meaning, or when a new term is developed it might be associated with an older meaning. For

instance, the term *psyche*, as I have just explained, has undergone such a change, from a life force that leaves you with the blood in battle to the area in which you experience the consciousness of immediacy under God. One has to distinguish very carefully in what context the word appears. You cannot get anywhere on that question with definitions, but [have to] make a careful analysis of the sources in every single case, [to see] what the words mean.

So we now have that dissociation of the cosmos into the world and the world-transcendent ground. I am speaking of the ground, and I know from experience that some people believe that I have invented the term *transcendent ground*, or at least that I have taken it from Tillich, or that Tillich has invented it, or something like that. Now you can rest [assured] that the word *ground* is a translation of the classical term *aition*, which is the ground and cause, and the ultimate ground is called *arche*. That is classical vocabulary in philosophy. The divine ground is called the ground; that is the technical term for it.

A further pair of concepts that arise in connection with this (I have used this hitherto without explaining it further) are the terms *immanence* and *transcendence*. The term *transcendence* probably originates with Plato, who used it on occasion in the *Politeia* as the *epekeina*, the Beyond. The Idea, especially the idea of the *Agathon*, is beyond all context of the world. Here you have the occasion on which such terms as *immanence* and *transcendence* arise. You might speak of the God that is no longer an intracosmic god, as a world-transcendent God; he is transcendent, and the world in relation to that God then becomes immanent. Nothing is simply transcendent and nothing is simply immanent, but immanence and transcendence are a pair of correlatives which appear as indices, attached to the former, not so differentiated, content of the cosmos, and must never be used in isolation.

To speak for instance (as I explained at the beginning of yesterday's lecture) of immanent man, or of an immanent world, or of an immanentist conception of the world, or something like that, is pure nonsense. There is nothing that is immanent; immanence is only something in relation to transcendence. If there is no transcendence, nothing is immanent either; you have simply confused philosophy. Let us be clear about that. In order to get that clear

I have some analyses, which I published in *Anamnesis*,³ which distinguish such language symbols as immanence and transcendence, or the world and the world-transcendent God, from type concepts that refer to world-immanent things, and the “linguistic indices,” or the experience of participation.

When you have an experience of participation and want to express its content, you develop such indices for the poles: a world-immanent pole and a world-transcendent pole, a world-transcendent God and a world content that is immanent in relation to that God, and so on. All these things have no meaning except with regard to the experience that engenders them. If you separate them from the experience that engenders them they become dead letters that mean nothing and refer to nothing. Let’s be clear about that. There is a correlation between the terms *consciousness*, *transcendence*, *immanence*, *transcendent God*, *immanent world*, and so on, which must not be broken. If you break this triangle of the consciousness that engenders the symbol of immanence and transcendence and speak of a consciousness without immanence or transcendence, or say consciousness is immanent, or if you speak of an immanent reality without a transcendent reality, or of a transcendent reality without an immanent reality; if you break it in any way and objectify these linguistic symbols of the experiences, you get hopelessly into nonsense propositions. This triangle must never be broken terminologically.

Now that is as far as consciousness has become the site of such participation. But as I have said, there is also a *sensorium* of such participation, and you can express the result of such a dissociation of the cosmos by (now I am going to use the term in its technical sense) *ideas*, and we can call them the “universal ideas.” You will immediately see why. Because when this consciousness is recognized as the human specific character—man is the creature who has consciousness of such a nature which is self-reflective and produces such linguistic symbols and so on—and [you] say, that is specifically human, you have created the idea of man that has not hitherto existed. One has to be aware of that. There is no idea of man before this philosophical differentiation. There is an

3. [*The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, vol. 6, *Anamnesis: On the Theory of History and Politics*, ed. with intro. by David Walsh (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002), 373–81.]

idea of man and, if you take man collectively throughout history, the idea of mankind. The idea of man and mankind is an idea that has arisen concretely, on occasion of this differentiating process in which consciousness becomes self-consciousness or self-reflective. There is no mankind independent of that experience; otherwise [the term] makes no sense.

That has practical [implications]. When the origin in the experience of transcendence, of the immediacy of all men under God as the source of common humanity, is destroyed for one reason or another—as it is, for instance, in modern ideologies—you get the universal idea of man replaced by some other idea of man. For instance, [you get] the idea that the true man is the proletarian, or the adherent of a communist ideology, or the person belonging to this or that race, or something like that. You get partial ideas that lay claim to being universal, a kind of process that was not possible before there were universal ideas at all. Once the universal idea of man is developed, you can take partial ideas of man, or fragmented ideas of man, and attribute to them the quality of being universal. That means that you have to kill off everyone who doesn't agree with you because he isn't a man—one of the important sources of contemporary politics. One has to see the structure of universality. Before the structure of universality developed, nobody claimed to be universally man. But once it [was] developed, every idiot [could] claim that idiocy is the universal characteristic of man. And as soon as somebody doesn't agree [with him, he has to be killed]. That is only possible after the idea of man has developed.

That gives us the idea of universal humanity, the one that's universal. The second idea is equally important: that in contradistinction to the primary experience of the cosmos all divinity is concentrated into a world-transcendent divinity. There is only one divinity, the one world-transcendent divinity, to be found nowhere within the world. Thus, you have an idea of universal divinity corresponding to the universality of man. That is also very important because the idea of a universal divinity is long in the making, for thousands of years before Christ. For instance, in the early Egyptologists—in Breasted's study of the problem of Egyptian monotheism—you already find an attempt to [attribute] the prestige of having developed the idea of monotheism

at least to Akhenaton, so that the Egyptians are the true originators of monotheism. And somehow today, a man like Albright still adheres to that [position] and writes a book on the genesis of monotheism. Now, I don't think one can do that, because monotheism is one of the "-isms," and the "-isms" are a typically eighteenth-century product. One cannot simply throw around these "-isms," monotheism, polytheism, or whatever it is.

The real problem [behind it is that there is a tendency, a drive, to discover in the Egyptian texts] the idea of a universal divinity already recognizable in the third millennium before Christ. That is true. [Universal divinity] comes to an approximately good expression in Christianity, but only approximately, because even Christianity is still burdened with the idea that universal divinity is, so to speak, a privilege of Christians. Everybody born before Christ is more or less relegated to limbo, if not to Hell, because he was not yet under universal divinity. As a problem, the extension of universal [divinity] to the rest of mankind before Christ was consciously formulated for the first time, I think, by Thomas in the Middle Ages, and [the notion] was not very effective. A real philosophy of history based on the problem of universal divinity, as I'm trying it here for example, has, as far as I know, never been done. It's an idea very slow in developing. We have a prehistory of two thousand years before Christ and a post-history of two thousand years following Christ, and it is still not, you might say, generally accepted. One still makes exceptions to that universal divinity as the one divine ground of all being.

The third universal idea that arises on this occasion is the world as the common world of all, with an autonomous structure. That is to say, the world is neither man, nor God, nor the cosmos in which heaven and earth, and kings and people, and gods, and so on, are indiscriminately embraced, but there is a structure of the world. You have a universal idea of the world that also is very slow in developing. You might say that the universal idea of the world has been fully developed only since the sixteenth century with the rise of modern science. [But] as a problem, it is already present in Aristotle and in the post-Aristotelian development of astrophysics in his own school.

These are the three principal ideas that arise: universal humanity, universal divinity, universal world. I shall briefly refer to them

as “the universals” which have arisen on that occasion. What I said for the triangle of consciousness, immanence, and transcendence [also holds true for them]: You get the three as a unit or you get nothing at all. If you surrender one or the other, that whole system, or this whole apparatus of ideas which is inherent in the exegesis of such an experience, will collapse. Such a collapse (we have to deal with that in the third lecture) is one of the characteristics of the modern period. On the whole, at least in the West, people are in agreement that we have a universal world, but not that we have universal man and universal God. Thus, you see that divinity is not universal but will be appropriated to certain parts of the world content, for instance to the proletariat, or to a nation, or to a race, and so on. When you make the divinity world-immanent, put it into the world, and select a fragment of world content and endow it with the quality of universal divinity, you have destroyed the tension in which these universals must remain. [Thus, this must be avoided], unless you want to work horrible havoc and become completely irrational—sometimes with the consequence of mental disease, if the triangle collapses. The collapse of the triangle, of these three ideas, is one of the characteristics of modern history.

These are the general characteristics. We can now go into some special problems. I have talked about the experiences of participation and of the immediacy under God and the content of such experiences. That sounds all very abstract, and I believe that if you go into a little detail with materials, it will be very much easier to understand what the problem is.

I want to give you some examples of such experiences of participation, and I [will] use the simplest possible. I take one from an Upanishad, from a Hindu context. There you have the situation of a wise man by the name of Yajnavalkya questioned by an interested person, in this case a girl, about reality and the ground of reality. The questions and answers are the content of the Upanishad. That is a typical case; there are dozens of such in the Upanishads. I take a brief one so that one can see the structure. The girl's name is Gargi, and the critical point at which we have to deal with the matter starts with the following lines [*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* III.6]:

Then Gargi asked,
“Yajnavalkya,” she said, “Everything here is woven,

like warp and woof, in water. What then is that in which water is woven, like warp and woof?"

Here we are still in the cosmological sphere. The elements of water, fire, earth, and so on. The basic element is water, everything is woven in water. But in what is water woven? What is the ground of it?

"In air, O Gargi," he replied.

"In what then is air woven like warp and woof?"

"In the worlds of the sky, O Gargi," he replied.

And that goes on then through the sky, the sky is woven in the world of the Gandharvas; the Gandharvas in the worlds of Aditya (the sun), of Chandra (the moon), of the Nakshatras (the stars), of the Devas (the gods), of Indra (the higher gods), of Prajapati (still higher gods), and finally the worlds of Brahman. The questioning concludes in the following manner, after Yajnavalkya has explained all is woven in the worlds of Brahman.

"In what then are the worlds of Brahman woven, like warp and woof?" (That girl is persistent!)

Yajnavalkya said, "O Gargi, do not ask too much, lest thy head should fall off. Thou askest too much about a deity about which we are not to ask too much. Do not ask too much, O Gargi."

After that Gargi Vachaknavi held her peace.

Here you have it in a very simple fashion. You can question through the whole hierarchy of being. It needn't be in the cosmological terminology. You can question, as, say, Augustine does, through the inorganic world, the organic world, the vegetative, the animal, the psychological, until you come into the sphere of that transcendent point—of the *anima animae* toward God; you can do it in that way in a later description of the hierarchy of being. But the problem is always pressing the question, What is the ground, and what is the ground of that which you have ascertained? until you come to [. . .] the ground that has no ground itself, the [. . .] groundless ground of all being. That is what is called God, or, in this case, Brahman. If you want a definition of God, you might say that, in such a process of questioning, it would be the point where you have exhausted all known types of reality and still don't know

what the ground is; that's what the ground is, that is God. That would be the definition of God on the basis of such questioning, after the exhaustion of all known types; the nontypical, what is Beyond. That is the Indian case.

Now, let me give you another example, one which is much more elaborate and much more beautiful, called the Abraham Apocalypse. The *Apocalypse of Abraham* is an Essene document, somewhere around the period of Christ—just a little before, just a little after, one doesn't know exactly. There the young Abraham relates his pneumatic type of experience. I like it particularly because I found it by accident when reading Thomas Mann's *Joseph* novel. The creed is that described by Thomas Mann. When I read Thomas Mann, I always wondered where he got his peculiar conception of Abraham's creed and faith, because it's not in the Old Testament. And when I read the *Apocalypse of Abraham* [chaps. 7–8] I found that's where he had taken it from, almost literally.

It is not a dialogue but a monologue. He speaks to himself:

More venerable than all things is fire
 for many things subject to no one will fall to it . . .
 More venerable even is water,
 for it overcomes fire . . .
 Still I do not call it God
 For it is subject to earth . . .
 Earth do I call more venerable
 for it overcomes the nature of water.
 Still I do not call it God
 as it is dried up by the sun;
 More venerable than the earth I shall call the sun;
 the universe he makes light by his rays
 Even him I do not call God,
 as his course is obscured by light and clouds.
 Yet the moon and the stars I do not call God
 Because they in their time dim their light by night. . . .
 Hear this, Terah my Father,
 that I announce to you the God, the Creator of all,
 not those that we deem gods!

Obviously the situation is one of a very considerable polytheistic environment. All these enumerated items can be considered gods, are [found] in one or another of the polytheistic formulations, and none of them is God. Now comes the question of where is He? You

see the technique is the same as in the Upanishads, the exhaustion of all the elemental possibilities, of all types of content of heaven and earth! Then comes the great question:

But where is He?
And what is He?
who reddens the sky,
who goldens the sun,
and makes light the moon and the stars?
who dries up the earth in the midst of many waters,
who put yourself in the world?
who sought me out in the confusion of my mind.

Now comes the question of consciousness. He awakens him to the questioning:

May God reveal Himself through Himself! (he goes on)
When thus I spoke to Terah, my father,
in the court of my house,
The voice of a mighty one fell from heaven
in a cloudburst of fire and called,
Abraham! Abraham!
I said: Here am I!
And He said:
You seek the God of gods,
the Creator,
in the mind of your heart.
I am He!⁴

There you have the transition from a more primitive conception of a creator God into a God that is to be found "in the mind of your heart." That is an Aramaic phrase for the innermost part of your consciousness: "of your heart." It is very similar to the *anima animae* of Augustine, which may be connected with it. After you have a negative way of exhausting the hierarchy of being within the world comes the question of the cause: who created us, who reddens the sky, who goldens the sun, and so on. [But] you do not find it anywhere; God has to reveal Himself through Himself. And the revelation takes the form of a call: "Abraham! Abraham!"—he feels himself called. Then he [responds] to the call, "Here am I." And He says, "I am He." That is similar in the

4. See *The Ecumenic Age*, 388–404, vol. 17, *CW*.

verbal symbolization to the Thornbush Episode in the revelation of Moses. Obviously there is a tradition.

That is a very carefully constructed account of such an experience. The problem itself becomes perfectly clear. It also [illustrates] the point at which I hinted yesterday: When such experiences occur, they are important events in the life of the respective person and therefore become the object of a narrative, of an autobiography. You might say, on the occasion of such experience, [that] it's more or less an autobiographical account, how all that happened, even as early a phenomenon as the Thornbush Episode in the book of Exodus. The appearance of God in the thornbush to Moses is a minute type of autobiography that can expand into more complicated types of autobiography. When something of importance happens to change the state of consciousness from one type of self-understanding to another, you have subject matter worth recording. That's how it all starts, recording a phenomenon of consciousness.⁵

These two examples should be sufficient for [our purpose], that is, for understanding, so that we know what we are talking about. Now we have to go back into the technical details. There are all sorts of transitions. Let me refer to some of them. Even in the cosmological environment you can speculate on the ground. While the problem of the ground as a ground [. . .] only appears as a technical term in philosophy, *the ground*, the search for the ground always goes on in the cosmological sphere [as well]. Therefore you always find speculative constructions there of the type: Who is responsible for the world and its phenomenon? You can ascribe the origin of the world or the creation of the world to one god or another. The favorite gods in Egypt, for instance, are always the elemental gods, the sun god, the wind god, the earth god, and so on, various elements, water gods, the Nile—speculation on the ground still in the polytheistic form. Such various explanations, you might say, are pluralistically coexistent as explanations of how the world came to be what it is, and how you are, and so on.

When you approach the problem of consciousness historically, you become aware that the gods in the intracosmic sense cannot

5. See *CW*, vol. 14, *Israel and Revelation*, vol. I of *Order and History*, ed. Michael P. Hogan (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001), 453–66.

be the cause, because when consciousness awakens, the polytheistic gods disappear. But this form of speculation, that one of the gods is at the origin, is still present in the early Ionian speculation, in the early phase of pre-Socratic speculation. There the gods are now replaced by elements: Water is the origin of all being, fire is the origin of all being, earth is the origin of all being, and so on. Instead of the polytheistic gods, as in Egypt, you find in the early Ionian speculation, in the seventh century, the elements named, again a whole group of elements. Heraclitus preferred fire, Thales water, and so on. Elements are used and replace the gods. But once the process starts you get into the problem that, if not a single polytheistic god can be used as the originator of all being, what *is* the origin of all being? On that occasion—again one has to be aware of these things—the term *being* is introduced.

In the creation story, in the mythological environment, the cosmological environment proper, you will always find that a god creates the heavens, or a god creates the earth, or a god creates man, always concretely speaking. But now we have to get into the question that all these various realities, which are concretely named, have to receive a universal name; they are something generic, they are all beings, and the term *being* is introduced for all these realities. Then the question of which god creates this or that is transformed into the question, What is the ground of being of all the being-things that we see there, which also must be of some thing-being? *Being* becomes a generic term for all types of reality that are still concrete names in the cosmological sense. Thus the concrete names are replaced by the generic term *being*, and in that connection, the question arises, What is the ground of all being, the *arche*, the origin of it all?

When you have developed your vocabulary that far, a number of problems of construction arise, because you are now faced with all the being-things within the world, and with another sort of being [as well] that is the cause, or the originating ground of all the being-things that we experience in the world. And now, in acute experiences of transcendence, say of the Parmenides type, we can arrive at the idea that real being is the transcendent being which is the ground of all other being. Only that is real being; everything else has a secondary character of being, an illusionary character. Therefore, Parmenides distinguishes [between] real

being as *aletheia*, being in truth, true reality, and secondary being as *doxa*, illusory reality, or reality of opinion, secondary reality.

Once this dissociation has occurred we get into the problem of derailment, [for] you can turn the matter around. The original experience was: There is one real being, the eminent being that is divine being in the Beyond. But you can say: I only have experience of things within the world. These existing things—that is reality, that is being; and everything else that you want to tell me is simply nonsense, it is not there, there is no such thing. Now if you take that position and simply say: There is no ground of being, the matter has come to an end, because you have used such terms which are based on the experience of transcendence, of a participation in a ground of being, and which are valid only when the triangle, of which I spoke earlier, is preserved. You have taken one part of [the triangle] and decapitated the rest. But then, what you talk about, the part you wish to preserve, is nonsense, because there is no immanent being without transcendent being, to which it is in correlation, the basis of experience.

But one can also say quite legitimately: I want to [reserve the term] *being* for all the being-things that are existent, and I call existent what exists, for instance, in time and space, including man. Then one would have to go on and say that this ground of being is something like a nonexistent reality. It is real but it is nonexistent. Divinity does not have the mode of existence in time and space; one can say that. If you then want to talk about it and recognize that it does not exist in time and space, you cannot simply attribute to it the older mythological attributes. You have to develop a specific logic, the analogy of being, in order to speak of that transcendent reality which is not in time and space.

This problem of the analogy of being was already a problem in 500 B.C. but received its name and was fully developed in the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas. Here you again have a long process of about seventeen hundred years or more, until the question arises of how to speak of a nonexistent reality (that is, a reality that does not exist in time and space) and in what terminology. By applying terms to it analogically, [terms] which I take from my inner-worldly experience, I can say God lasts through all time, He is omnipresent, He is all just, He is all Good, and so on. But these terms only have meaning in our human relations

within the world, and when they are [used as] an answer to [questions concerning] God, they can only be used analogically and not univocally or equivocally. That is a technical development in philosophy which, in its way, cannot be surpassed. You can renounce speaking of attributes of God in general, but if you use them, you are in the analogy of being. Those are some of the technical difficulties connected with it.

When you have that consciousness, you get into the problem of how to reconstruct the whole world you have dissociated by your experience of consciousness, because the world goes on even now that consciousness is discovered. Now that you have discovered that there is a world-transcendent God in the world, you have to reconstruct it by saying that the things in the world, as for instance in the Platonic conception, become things if they participate in the world-transcendent ideas. That is one way of construing it. Or you have to construct the peculiar [meaning of] consciousness—What does it mean? It means that you are—think of the Abraham Apocalypse—in search of a ground of being and you are called or moved by that ground of being. There is a dynamic experienced, and there is a vocabulary for that dynamic. We have definite terms such as *faith*, *hope*, and *charity*, already developed by Heraclitus. And we have terms developed by Aristotle to describe the searching part, the *zetesis*; that is, searching and being moved toward the search, the *kinesis* coming from the other side, the divine side (something very similar to what in Christianity is called grace). A whole vocabulary now arises to describe the inner operation of that consciousness, the whole language of spiritual and intellectual description and self-expression.

Finally, when consciousness is a site in which the transcendent and immanent meet, then that consciousness, or [that] man with regard to his consciousness, neither quite belongs to the one nor the other but is in that sphere of the “in-between,” in-between the timeless or eternal and the time of immanent time. [Thus the vocabulary for the in-between develops]. Plato has been very [thorough] in the development of this vocabulary; he called it the *metaxy*, the “in-between.” We live in the in-between. You remember last evening I explained that “flow of presence” which is neither time nor the timeless, but the flow in which time and the timeless meet. That is the time in which we exist. In this flow

of presence, in-between, that is where all the [concerns] of man are transacted.

I have to be a bit selective now, but some problems are very important [because they reveal] where the later problems originate. This consciousness is called by Plato, and especially by Aristotle, the *nous*. Now there are various possible translations in various contexts. I simply use the translation “reason” because under that name, in Latin all through the Middle Ages and the Enlightenment and so on, in Western languages, we are dealing with that problem. We now have to become clear about the problem of reason, because the revolt of man is a revolt against reason. We have to know just what *reason* in the classical sense means. Here we run into a technical difficulty, into difficulties that are on the confusing side. The difficulty is that in classic philosophy *reason* is used in at least ten different meanings, [none] of them haphazard [or] accidental, [and all of them] systematically interconnected to describe the whole complex of what we call reason. Let me just enumerate them:

1. Reason is, in the first place, (always translating the *nous* of Aristotle and Plato) the consciousness of existing from a ground of existence. So reason has a content that is extremely important, because as soon as you empty reason of content, the consciousness of having a ground, reason becomes empty and an instrument for handling world-immanent things. And since man still is man (I shall deal with that on Thursday), the question of substitution [arises], because you have to fill the missing substance with some other substance. There is a whole series of possibilities of substituting other contents for this content. That is why the modern period, especially since the eighteenth century, is so profoundly irrational, as you already know. So reason is consciousness of existing from a ground.
2. You go to the poles of that consciousness and say: Reason means the transcendence of human existence toward its ground, the movement toward it, the dynamics, the *zetesis*.
3. Or you can say: Reason, as the creative ground of existence, attracts man: That is the *kinesis* of Aristotle. For Aristotle, *nous* means the faculty of man to understand the problem of

the ground and the fact that man is attracted by something which he calls *nous*, the divine. So we already have three [meanings]: consciousness as a whole; and as the poles, the immanent pole of human reason; and the divine pole of reason.

4. Reason as man's faculty for understanding himself as existing from a ground. That is the question of the *sensorium*, and so the origin of these various universal ideas. He understands himself as existing from a ground.
5. Reason as man's faculty, intimately therewith connected, to articulate this understanding through the formation of ideas. Awareness, and the ideas themselves—reason means all of that.
6. Reason as a perseverance in concern about the relation to the ground. You get a sort of existential virtue—which sometimes receives a special name. Both Plato and Aristotle called the existential virtue of persevering in the search of a ground through a lifetime *phronesis*, the virtue of wisdom, of persevering in the search.
7. Reason as the effort to order existence by the insight gained. That becomes a major intellectual operation once you have understood yourself, [understood] your true nature as [a being] consciously existing out of a ground. That has consequences for the formation of habits in your daily conduct in relation to other people, in order then to form your life in accordance with that understood nature of yourself. For example, the whole system of ethics is an elaboration of such problems.
8. Reason as the persuasive effort to induce other men's participation in reason. Plato has given special importance to that, to persuasion, the *peitho*. Once reason is discovered, it is attended by, you might say, the obligation to communicate and to persuade other people of the peculiar kind of reality you have discovered and to enter into the community of this reality. This persuasive effort is also reason.
9. Reason as a constituent of man through his participation in the reason of the ground. Man is constituted by reason as a form. [This is] a very special problem in Aristotle as well as in Scholasticism. So reason as the form of man.

10. And finally, reason as a constituent of society through every man's participation in the common ground, in the sense of the Aristotelian *homonoia*. That is a very important fundamental category in all social science. Classical political science rests on the assumption that there is one common *nous* for all men, and through participation in that one common *nous*, every man is ordered in orientation toward that *nous*. That order in [the] relation between men constitutes the order of society. So the common *nous*, the common reason, is the substance that makes society as ordered as possible. If you agree on the order in your existence, and your relation to others by reason, you have society. That society substance is called the likeness of reason, the *homonoia*; all have the likeness of reason. That term, which was coined by Aristotle, has been taken over by Alexander in the creation of his empire religion: The *homonoia* should unite all the various nations of his conquest into one brotherhood. And it survived Alexander. It was taken over by Saint Paul to designate the common *nous* in all the Mystical Body of Christ, with Christ functioning as the common *nous*. In that capacity it has gone through Christian history into the present and acquired secular form. For instance, if you take the old secular sociologists like Giddings at the turn of the century, he speaks of a consciousness of kind which [keeps] all men together in society. "Consciousness of kind" is one translation of *homonoia*. Or Dewey, who is even more Puritan in his secularism than Giddings, speaks of like-mindedness: that is the King James version of *homonoia*! Thus, right into contemporary sociology in the secularized form, we still have the *homonoia* of Aristotle as the common reason present in all men. With that substance of reason common in all men one can have society. If one doesn't have that, if the love within the community is not based on the divinity of reason in the other man, you do not have the *philia politike*. For Aristotle, the love in society, holding it together in common reason, is the fundamental virtue of any political community. *Philia*, the love among men from one to the other because they are all the same in divine reason, is the basis of all political theory.

Nietzsche saw that very well, because if you surrender that classical basis of the common reason there is no particular reason to love anybody. You observe quite well empirically: I see no reason why I should love anybody, just looking at these [faces], unless I consider them to be the same in the divine spirit. The divinity of the spirit that is present in all others [is what] constitutes man and the dignity of man and the obligation to have respect for other men. This common divinity is formulated here for the first time. As you see in the Christian vocabulary, the philosophical vocabulary has been taken over; *homonoia*, like-mindedness, and so on, that is the Christian vocabulary: [It] has been taken over from Heraclitus's "faith, hope and charity"; and here, [from] the Aristotelian vocabulary.

These are the meanings of reason, and when this whole complex is broken and you pick out this or that and omit something else, you again get into the imbalanced constructions, which constitute the characteristic of the revolt. What I want to bring out here today especially, is that, with the Epiphany of Man, a very complicated system of symbols has arisen, which [must be] kept in proper balance, [and this can only] be done through institutions and the transmission of teaching about such matters. You cannot discover everything for yourself. One has to cultivate [the symbols and keep them in balance; this] has to be taught and transmitted in some educational processes and some teaching processes and so on. If that balance is destroyed through the breakdown of institutions in the sense that these [matters] are no longer taught—by churches, by schools, or by universities—then a society cannot properly function. That doesn't mean that the society will immediately break asunder, because there is after all the family and there are traditions of custom and habit that you learn from parents and so on, and the society goes on coasting for a while. But if systematically, over, say a century, the teaching in such matters is interrupted, then by and by the knowledge of the problem [of symbols] will atrophy, and you get that peculiar problem of illiteracy to which I referred yesterday. You simply no longer know what you are talking about. So you see why that method is so dangerous. You have a really complicated rational construction, a body of symbols to be kept in balance, just as important [for keeping] society in balance as, for instance, the continuation

and tradition and teaching of rite and cult through an organized priesthood is in a cosmological society. All these things also have to be transmitted in order to keep society in order. What we have to do is to keep that intellectual structure in order. If a whole body, like philosophy, is thrown out or distorted, inevitably, the misconstructions creep in.

Well, I think I should perhaps conclude with that today, because anything else would lead into very complicated problems. Let me just [mention] one [matter] that I have to deal with more extensively tomorrow. That is, that this search for the ground, as I said, becomes thematic and is elaborated on the occasion of the appearance of consciousness, in the self-reflective sense, in philosophy. But the search [for] the ground and the construction of symbolisms that include the ground and insist on the ground take place before philosophy. I shall have to deal with one of [these] symbolisms next time, with the symbolism of historiogenesis; that is, the unilinear construction of history [which runs continually from] the third millennium B.C. into the most recent ideological constructions. It is one of the great symbolisms reaching from cosmological origins into the present. One has to [understand] why it runs through [to the present] and why we are still worried by exactly the same problems in construing history as were the Sumerians and Babylonians in 2000 B.C. I [will] leave that to the next time.

IV. The Revolt of Man

Let me briefly [sum up] the course of the argument of the first two lectures, so that we can continue with it. In the first lecture I developed the position of man in the cosmos. Man in the cosmos has a certain kind of self-understanding; this kind of self-understanding is what I call humanity. When this cosmos dissociates under the impact of awakening consciousness, the cosmic self-understanding of man is replaced by a new self-understanding in the light of the consciousness of man's participation in the divine. We then have a new type of humanity, a new type of man understanding himself.

[In the last lecture], I had to go through the consequences of this breakthrough toward a new self-understanding. The conse-

quence is that the structure of consciousness becomes clear as a tension of man toward the ground of his existence; that is the content of consciousness. At the same time, that is what [classical philosophers] called reason: to be aware of the ground of oneself and of all things. All reasoning from a ground has its origin in the structure of a mind that has a ground and is conscious of a ground. Unless you were conscious of a ground and had problems of a ground, there would be no question of a ground, and you would have no logic and no scientific argument at all—there are no criteria [for them]. In this context, the term *reason* acquired a number of meanings, because, in classical philosophy, reason is, on the one hand, the human reason by which man understands himself as [being] in tension toward the ground of existence; [on the other] reason also had the meaning of the ground itself. Then the tension itself is called reason, and so on—into reason as the constituent of man and reason as the constituent of society. Moreover, when this dissociation of the cosmos into world and world-transcendent divinity has taken place, all world content must be reconstructed under this new aspect, and we have the problems of the Platonic Idea and of the question that a thing has form through participation in the transcendent form and so on. All things that [. . .] appear in the context of a primary experience of the cosmos are what they are without any further necessity of construction. The new factor that appears when consciousness becomes differentiated is, on the one hand, the necessity of constructing, on the other hand, the possibility of constructing. Given the necessity of constructing and at the same time the appearance of the possibility of constructing, you can easily imagine that one can indulge in a lot of misconstruction. [Indeed], one of the consequences of this appearance of the possibilities of construction is, in fact, quite a number of misconstructions. A good deal, a certain type, of such misconstruction is peculiar to the modern period, with which I want to deal now under the title of "The Revolt of Man."

Let me briefly explain what I mean by that. In the last hour, I explained that you have the differentiation of consciousness in the sense of an awareness that man has a ground of existence and lives existentially in tension toward it. Let's symbolize that by a line with two poles: of man, and of the divine, or God. With it are given, since I have reflective consciousness, a number of

universal ideas, as I explained, a universal idea of man who is characterized by this tension. He is the one who has consciousness—other things in the world do not have consciousness in this sense. So the universal idea of humanity appears, man and mankind. Then at the pole of transcendence there now appears the idea of a universal divinity under which all men live, becoming man by their presence under universal divinity. Then the rest of the world, now with the exception of man and divinity, is a world common to all—we have a universal idea of the world in that sense. These three universal ideas must be kept in balance. You cannot isolate one against the other because as soon as you isolate the one or the other, the other two become senseless. Only the three together are an adequate description of the reality that formerly was experienced in the primary form of cosmic experience, and now, on the level of consciousness, splits into these three universals, which cover all of reality. On the level of consciousness, the intactness of the tension, the balance of the tension, you might say, is the condition of [keeping] all reality in proper balance.

But obviously, the balance can get lost. I want first to define the question of the revolt in terms of the peculiar type of loss of balance that is connected with the revolt of man—of course there are other such losses of balance possible—but I want to characterize the modern one. These three ideas, as I have said, are ideas and refer to reality, and they refer to exactly the same reality that you also had before there was a consciousness differentiated, and before there were any ideas. Nothing has changed in reality, but ideas have now come. When you hypostasize such an idea and erect it into an absolute, as for instance the universal idea of the world, and take it as an absolute exhaustive reality, [these three ideas are deformed and] you get a loss of balance. What happens in the modern period is the erection of the idea of the world into an absolute, as if the world existed in itself, which it does not. That is perhaps a problem difficult to grasp because we are so accustomed to speaking of the “world in which we live,” or the “world of physics,” or “the universe of physics,” and so on. We take it for granted that there is such a thing.

It is absolutely essential for understanding the problems of the natural sciences, as well as the problems with which we are concerned here, that such a universe or world does not exist. What

exist are the single things in the spatio-temporal existence that surround us. The objects that surround us, the building that surrounds us, these are existent things in time and space. But the world is not an existent thing in time and space. Beyond the things that exist in time and space, there is not, in addition, a world that exists in a further time and space. The world, the expression "world," is an idea. The world does not exist. If you pretend that the world is an existent in any sense, you have the starting point for a whole set of new constructions, differing from the original constructions, when the cosmos had dissociated into the world and transcendent divinity under the impact of a differentiating consciousness. As I said yesterday, [with] a differentiated consciousness, you have the concept of an idea of consciousness as [constituting] the nature of man. You have an idea of a world-immanent world and a world-transcendent God, and so far it is in balance. If you erect the world into an absolute, an entirely different set of constructions sets in. You may formulate it in this manner: If you have the world as an absolute, instead of the former realities, man becomes a function of the world, and God becomes a function of man.

If, instead of the original reality, one part of reality is erected into an absolute, all other parts must be construed as a function of the one absolute reality, which [in actual fact] is only a part of reality. Because reality, of course, goes on to exist just as it did before. If you insist that one part of that reality is "the" reality, the absolute, you must do something about the rest of reality that you no longer credit with being reality; you have to construe it as dependent. For this construction as a dependent I use the term *a function*. There are certain favorite constructions for expressing such a functional characteristic.

When we say man is a function of the world, we may think specifically of the role that the theory of evolution has [played in making] man into a function of the world. Because a theory of evolution[. . .]—not as a scientific [theory] but in the broader ideological sense, in which we usually speak of evolution—reduces man to the hitherto last outgrowth of a natural evolution, beginning from some beginnings and, through the chain of organic being, ultimately culminating in man. Man is a function of that nature which is in evolution, the last product of it.

Now why should it not be [like that]? One cannot use this construction for the following reason—let me explain that right away. In the eighteenth century, almost a century before the theory of evolution was formulated in the Darwinian form, people were already talking about the problem of evolution. It was much discussed shortly before 1750. In his *Critique of Judgment* [1790] Kant has given the reason why a theory of evolution cannot serve to make man a function of nature and of this world, the use to which it was already intended at that time. If you put man as the last item in a chain of evolution, you can diagrammatically trace back, in some way, [. . .] to life in its most simple forms, [to] organic, or animal matter. You can then demonstrate that this organic life may have its origin in a chain of vegetative life still going further [back in time]. You may then say that vegetative life has its origin in a chain of various forms of inorganic [matter], until you come to the last element of atomic physics, or something like that. That is, you do not have a beginning of man. You cannot explain man by arbitrarily putting a beginning somewhere within that chain. But if you take evolution seriously, you always have to go back further into the vegetative, into the inorganic part, and so on [until] you come to the question of the matrix of a matter which potentially contains all evolution.

But still you are faced with the question, Where does that matter come from, [who] devised it, and endowed it with the kind of evolution that led it, in the end, to culminate in man? No tracing back to an imaginary beginning will get us around the question that there is no beginning in time. The beginning is always a mythical or metaphysical problem. We are still faced with the famous questions of Leibniz: Why is there something? Why not nothing? and Why is that something as it is? That is at the beginning. Without any prejudice to the empirical content of all scientific observation concerning evolution—they are perfectly all right—a theory of evolution does not furnish an explanation of man, it only shoves it back to an imaginary beginning. That is one possibility, and this possibility already contains a serious structural problem of modern thought (to which we will have to come back later). Explanations, like the explanation of man as a function of nature on the basis of a theory of evolution, always rest

on the assumption that there is nobody present in the audience who will ask such unpleasant questions as Kant did, [those that] push back and analyze [evolution] to its beginnings, raising the problem of the beginning and origin of everything. Only when the premises are not questioned can the argument of evolution work.

Here we come back to a problem which I [touched upon] in the first of these lectures, the question of illiteracy, specifically in the philosophical field. When there is a certain degree of illiteracy rampant in society, you can develop all sorts of theories, like a theory of evolution with that [ideological] intention, and nobody will question it, because nobody knows enough about philosophy to ask unpleasant questions. That is enough for that question: man as a function of the world.

The next point is that God is a function of man. That point [became acute] in the nineteenth century with Feuerbach's "psychology of projection." All religious ideas, especially the idea of God, were conceived by Feuerbach as a projection of contents of the human mind into a beyond. Today, the psychology of projection is practically an accepted part of the science of psychology, especially in its psychoanalytic form. There it has been developed into a psychology of religion as an illusion. But it started with the breakdown of the German idealistic systems after Hegel, when, very [urgently], the question had to be asked, If one cannot explain these ideas in the specific gnostic form of an Hegelian system that has been rejected, where do they come from? The psychology of the projection of religious ideas has its critical beginning here. Of course its prehistory goes back into the seventeenth century, but I don't want to go into that. The psychological explanation of religious ideas is the vehicle by which God and the religious ideas are transformed into functions of the human psyche. Here you have the first spectrum of constructions that are used when the world is erected into an absolute entity. That is, the idea of the world is made into an entity, what Whitehead has called "the fallacy of misplaced concreteness."

If you attribute to an idea [the] concreteness [of] an entity, . . .] if you have such a conception of the world as if "the world" were real, you can let these other constructions follow. Man is a function of this world, and God is a function of man; and on

that depends a whole wealth of further problems. Since I have just mentioned Feuerbach, let me also mention Marx. Feuerbach still left the matter at the level of the psychology of projections, while Marx more consistently said, "Why should we project? Let us pull these projections back into ourselves where they started!" That means: Let us pull divinity back into our humanity and thereby become gods, or if not gods at least supermen. The expression "superman" was used by Marx to designate the man who has pulled the projection of God back into himself. The same term was then used by Nietzsche for practically the same purpose. So that would be the end of it: when these functions are understood as functions and one pulls them back into the originating reality of man. Therewith, the revolt of man becomes visible as a revolt against God. God is pulled back into man, and divinized man becomes the center of all [reality] as he did in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

This is the first chain of such constructions we have to follow. I shall give two further main constructions in this hour, and they will [pursue] the problem I touched upon in the first of these lectures, the question of time. I have explained that if you can imagine time as a line, you would have to define the point of presence as the intersection of time with the dimension of the timeless: Where these two intersect, would be the point of presence. [Voegelin points to a diagram.] You always have speculative constructions, penetrating to either the one or the other of these time directions, to the origin either in the beginning (in time) here, or to the origin in the transcendent beginning (in the timeless), here. These two problems of origin are in accord with the two dimensions of time.

I shall now describe some modern constructions that exemplify this revolt: first, by going through what happens in the vertical dimension, in relation to the transcendent, and then [by going through] what happens in the horizontal, the beginning of time in mythical form.

The vertical problem, as you can imagine after what I have just said with regard to the first overall construction, will be very peculiar. If you have first constructed the world as the absolute, then man as a function of the world, then God as a function of man, then obviously the structure of consciousness as a tension toward

the divine ground is destroyed. You no longer have reason in its original form but have decapitated God, and what is left is the human pole of reason. When only the human pole of reason is left, the content of reason, which is precisely the tension toward the ground, the consciousness of the ground, is destroyed. Since man cannot live, or does not live, without accounting for himself in terms of a ground, God, the transcendent ground, must be replaced by substitute grounds of being. Let me enumerate some of the instances.

It begins in the eighteenth century with the replacement of a divinely conceived order of man and society by the idea of order in society through the balance of economic forces, and the rationale of an optimum of production of goods. The conception of the eighteenth-century economy is that when all men strive for the utmost satisfaction of their desires and work as best they can in competition with one another for an increase in the production of goods, the result will be an order of society balanced by economic competition.

Just like "reason" and "immanent reason," economic competition was one of the substitutes for the reason that has disappeared. Instead of being oriented toward God, the purpose of action [was replaced] by economic rationality and world-immanent types of rationality.

Or, also in the eighteenth century, the idea appears that society, internally as well as in international relations, can be held in balance through the balance of powers. The peace of Utrecht in 1713 already envisaged a world order (at that time a European order) on the basis of a balance of the great powers. Instead of orienting one's life toward God, the rationale of power, just like the rationale of economic action, [was to] provide the purposes for which to strive.

Or the ground of being can be placed strictly in the general sense, not in individual striving for profit, but in the social conditions of work. Marx did this in his conception of the *Produktionsverhältnisse*. Then the class struggle becomes an unsatisfactory situation. And when the class struggle is overcome by the victory of another class over the now dominant one, there will again be order. If the social order would be adapted to the

economic order of the *Produktionsverhältnisse*, there would be order. This is to be achieved through revolution.

Or instead of a divinely oriented order one could have evolution. The theory of evolution, which I have just mentioned, was, in its original Darwinian form, very largely based on the English utilitarian type of argument of bourgeois society. In the competitive society, the fittest would survive; again the survival of the fittest [was to] provide for some sort of order. From there you would have to take measures: If you defeat the other man in competition, political competition or international competition, and so on, that would prove that you are the fittest. I don't see what else it could prove, but [. . .] that something could be conceived [of] as [an] order [to replace] an ethical order.

Or one could say that the basis of all order in the world, of all intelligible order, [is in] the races and the struggle between races. We also find this in the nineteenth century with Klemm and Gobineau.

Or one could say that the order of human existence is determined by some sort of balance in the instincts or natural urges. That goes further back to the psychology of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, to the idea of the *libido dominandi*, of the *amour propre* as the ordering principle in one's life. It permits calculability in man's actions: One calculates that he will do what will satisfy his passions. If that is used as a rule, one can govern man by appealing to the passions, [. . .] by conditioning them properly. [That is the] conception of instinct as a balancing factor, an ordering factor.

And so on—one can develop complicated philosophies of history about which I will have more to say later. You see, one can go through the whole hierarchy of being, from the general utilitarian rational argument [that] you operate for profit through the biological levels of race, or [. . .] into the psychological level, like the older psychologies or modern psychoanalysis, and always find, on some level, [a substitute ground of being for] the ground of being that has been lost. If you put that in a diagram, you might say: If that is the figure of a man, and here is the vertical relationship toward his transcendent divinity, you can cut the psychological, the physiological, the organic, the inorganic, the vegetative, [the] animal—anything—out of the hierarchy of being and use it as a

ground instead of the [real] ground. Going through the various types of substitute grounds is of a certain importance because, as you see, man participates on all levels of the hierarchy of being—[he] is also part of inorganic matter, part of organic life, of vegetative life, of animal life, [and] of psychological life. If you go through all these levels they can, [and] will, be exhausted sooner or later, because there is a limited supply of such levels. As a matter of fact, during the last two hundred years, [speculation has exhausted] all the levels. That [fact] has a certain consequence: You can now almost predict, in the history of ideas, [that] when they are all exhausted, they will hardly be repeated, because one does not fall for the same swindle twice[. . .]!

As a matter of fact, no great ideologies have appeared in the twentieth century. All the great ideologies, like Marxism or positivism, belong to the nineteenth century and are now practically exhausted. We have only the epigonal forms of the latecomers who, in bureaucratic or other institutional fashion, exploit ideologies that were created in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. That doesn't mean that the ideologies will die all of a sudden. Once an ideology is institutionalized in the form of a regime, its life does not depend on its intellectual exhaustion—it is already intellectually exhausted—but on the lifetime of a bureaucracy, and that lasts much longer than an idea! From the fact that, say, Marxism was criticized to pieces already in the first decade of our century, for instance, by the analysis of Max Weber, it did not follow that a communist revolution could not occur in Russia in 1918. Nor does it follow that this communist regime, now established, will not last for another couple of hundred years in spite of the fact that the Marxist ideology as such has been criticized to death and that there is nothing left of it.

That goes for every such ideology once it is institutionalized, either in the form of a regime or a socially dominant group in a society—it cannot simply be overthrown. Its exhaustion on the intellectual level does not mean that it is exhausted as a social force. One must take into account that these misconstructions are known to be misconstructions. And of course, also under totalitarian regimes, like the communist regime, the men are not communists but human beings and know it. I was in Yugoslavia last fall, in Zagreb, and I found in the faculty of political science

(there were six people in it [. . .]), that all insisted they were not “Communists” but “Marxists,” as they called it. When you then inquire what is the difference between communism and Marxism, it turns out that Marxism is the ideas of the early Marx, especially of the philosophic-economic manuscript of 1844. (These [people] are very close to twentieth-century existentialism, and they are very closely acquainted with French existentialism.) Anyway, it is not communism. Communism is for bureaucrats and other stupid people. Here is an internal social stratification which is of importance and which, as far as I know, exists in one form or another in all communist societies. You cannot tell how this internal resistance will come out in the long run, but no early changes are to be expected.

That is the third of these great misconstructions in the direction of the transcendent—which cannot really be in the direction of the transcendent because that is cut off—that expresses itself in the intervention of substitute grounds instead of the ground of being. That is one of these bodies of construction with which we have to deal, “man in revolt.” Of course, incidentally, that means that all of the ideologies, be they of the one or the other variety, are theoretically, or as science, all wrong—in that regard] we don’t have to worry about them. We can forget them.

The other direction toward the beginning is the horizontal; these are the two possibilities. Again, beginning with the late seventeenth century, and then in the eighteenth, [we have the] philosophy of history; it is sometimes forgotten that this is peculiar to the modern period. Philosophy of history is also a modern form of symbolizing the problems of history—we do not always have a philosophy of history. We may have the substance of the problem, but the term *philosophy of history* is modern. It begins in the eighteenth century, practically with Voltaire. In these modern philosophies of history, [. . .] the socially dominant ones [express] the situation of man in revolt. All of them are unilinear constructions of history. That is to say, they construe history as something that begins somewhere at a beginning, many thousands of years ago, sometimes hundreds of thousands of years ago, and leads up to the present in one straight line of meaning. The unilinear construction is the problem, and on that hangs a somewhat longer story.

Let me explain this briefly. Already in the first of these lectures I explained that, with regard to the cosmological civilizations and to the general problems of cosmic experience, we still have the very widely spread misconception that in early civilizations there is always a conception of cyclical time. I mentioned that in early civilizations there is never a conception of cyclical time; it occurs nowhere. But there is another conception of time besides rhythmical time, and that is linear time. Let me explain a bit how linear time works and how these constructions operate. Constructions of history on the linear pattern appear for the first time approximately in the twenty-second century before Christ, in the Sumerian and Egyptian civilizations, and [continue into the present]. Characteristically they appear in periods of crisis. That is an important point because our [conceptions] also appear in a period of crisis. They appear in a period of crisis when an empire is in danger, or a regime has been overthrown—or after a period of disorder, [when a regime] has been reconstructed, or during a period of disorder, or danger, and so on. Somehow the danger to an empire of being overthrown or [an empire] having been overthrown is always involved. That is the situation in which such constructions appear.

I shall now give you the pattern of the Sumerian construction of history because that is the pattern which is continued right into the contemporary constructions. The Sumerian King List is done in the following manner (the analysis has been made by Thor-kild Jacobsen, formerly of the Chicago Oriental Institute, now at Harvard Divinity School). There were a number of Sumerian city states with parallel histories—we will take the most important ones. Let me put them like that [Voegelin makes a sketch]; there are more than two parallel histories of Sumerian city states. At one point all of the city states were unified by one of these city states into one Sumerian empire, and the historians, or perhaps one should say in this case, the theologians, the court theologians of that Sumerian empire, [construed] a Sumerian history. That history assumed the following form. In the first place there is the part of the Sumerian King List histories that has run on, this part here, parallel to this one. And then they start extrapolating—by taking one of these city histories after the other and pretending

that they are on one line preceding the Sumerian empire, [and] following one another, not running [side by side].

[But] that was not enough, since there was still a big section of the people who were fairly close to the histories of the city states. So they cut them up into pieces. They do not take the whole of that first part in every period but take one part from here, one part from there, add them and make a patchwork of three or four such subsections of this history, pushing it further and further back until the history of the Sumerian city states, on the basis of the records, is exhausted. And then they are still not happy. But when they have very properly pushed [the time line] back toward the outer limits—extrapolating to the beginning of the world and the creation of the world by the gods with a mythical prehistory—the historical record begins, arranged in this peculiar patchwork fashion, until it comes down to the history of the Sumerian empire. In that way you make out of a pluralistic type of parallel history a one-line history coming right down to the present that explains why the present Sumerian empire is the one legitimate order of the world, created from the beginning by the gods.

That is how it started. The exact same technique is followed by all other philosophies of history and especially the modern ones. Let me give you an example, for instance, the philosophy of history of Hegel. I don't want to get into the smaller ones; there you get into other things. I have once seen, unfortunately I have forgotten the author, but it was an American, who made a unilinear history of the world divided into three phases. The first phase was from the beginning of the world to 1798. The second phase was from 1798 to the Anti-Catholic Legislation. And the third phase [was] the decline of mankind, beginning with the Anti-Catholic Legislation! So you can do all sorts of things and get the funniest things if you go into the nooks and crannies. But let's stick to the great ones, Hegel. What does he do? Under the pretense of a cosmological sequence, he has a sequence of empires. There are first the Asiatic empires, the Chinese, Indian, and Persian; then we get into the Roman and into the Greco-Roman world, and ultimately into the modern Germanic and Christian world.

Let's stick to the ancient one. Above all, the interesting thing is the Persian empire. Because if you look at the chronology (and

the chronology was already very well known in Hegel's time), you would think that the philosopher of history would start his materials with the oldest known civilizations. And they would be the Near Eastern, the Egyptian, the Sumerian, and the Babylonian. That would be the natural thing to do. Instead he starts with the Chinese, which is later. And now the Persian has a very peculiar function. Under the Persian empire, he understands (and he explains why he does it this way) the empire that comes at the end for a whole civilization, in this case even a multicivilizational area. With the Persian empire he only means all the single kingdom states, or whatever you wish to call them, that had gradually been absorbed or conquered by the Persian empire. That means under the Persian empire there appear Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Egyptians, Jews, and Syrians—everything: the whole Near East, which at one time was the Persian empire and was indeed unified in the Persian empire.

Here you have the same technique as in the Sumerian case. There are a number of parallel histories; there is Egyptian, Sumerian, Babylonian, Assyrian, and Jewish history, the kingdoms of Syria and Lydia, and God knows what. All that doesn't interest him. All are pulled together into the one last branch of the Persian empire in order to get a nice line, because if he didn't make the construction that way, he could never work out a single line of history. He would get parallel histories. [If he had used his] materials properly, he would get, say, the oldest line starting from the ancient Near Eastern empires like Egypt, Sumer, and Babylon and going down to, say, the Roman empire or something like that. And you would have a Chinese history running parallel and an Indian history running parallel, but you would never arrive at a line because there are several parallel histories.

So he must do the [same] hacking and botching job that a Sumerian city historian and empire historian had done in order to produce a single line of history, which culminates in its full meaning in Hegel's present. If he didn't do that, Hegel's present would become somewhat doubtful. That is very important. A more objective historian, like Voltaire in the eighteenth century, had already seen that and spoofed the Christian one-line history of Bossuet on that ground. What does it mean, this wonderful history going back to the beginning of the world on the basis of the Old Testament,

then going up through Christianity and the Roman empire and the Western empire, right into the present? There are parallels that are much more important than anything Western: the Islamic empires, the Chinese empires, there are other whole continents, and so on. And where is that one-line history? There is no one-line history. So Voltaire had that conception, but it was no longer in the ideological construction of Hegel. There you have the one line of history; and this one-line obsession, if you wish to call it a sort of obsessive construction—history must be one line—is followed by all the ideological constructions. You have the same one-line construction in the Marx-Engels construction of a primitive communism, then the period of the state and the class war, and then ultimate communism. Again, one straight line running through all mankind.

This peculiar problem and its meaning becomes visible for the first time, and has perhaps been best formulated—consciously or semi-consciously—because if the arrogance of it had been quite conscious, it would not have been done by Turgot in the eighteenth century. Turgot made such a one-line construction, essentially already the one-line construction we then find in Comte and other such examples of three phases. He said he was aware that obviously mankind does not quite fit into such a pattern. While there are a lot of people who [assume] that they have now arrived at a period of positivist science and enlightenment, the vast majority of mankind do not know that they are living in such a period of enlightenment, because the age of Enlightenment is confined to a very small enclave of mankind in Western Europe or, in special cases, to Parisian intellectuals. Nevertheless, in order to justify the construction, Turgot then makes the assumption that mankind is a *masse totale*, a total mass.

You can make judgments with regard to all of mankind by referring to its representative part, which presumes that you who make the judgments are the representative part. All French intellectuals in the eighteenth century were willing to say that they were the representative part of mankind. Turgot did, then Condorcet, and then, of course, it became the general custom of all intellectuals to be the representative part of mankind and to judge all mankind under the assumption that they themselves are representative of mankind. This assumption of the *masse totale* [and of

its being] represented by the respective speculator of history is the presupposition of the modern unilinear constructions of history, whether it be that of Condorcet, or Comte, or Hegel, or Marx, or of any [one else]. Every single one of them is only possible and only makes sense under the assumption that there is indeed just one line of history, that it is a line of increasing meaning, that its meaning comes to its highest development in the person of the respective thinker, that what is represented by this thinker is representative of all mankind, and [that] the construction is therefore valid for all mankind; [just] like the Sumerian construction, the history of mankind is represented by the Sumerian empire, and [that's that].

That is extremely important in practical politics because on this assumption—that this respective intellectual's creed is representative of all mankind—rests, of course, the aggressiveness of all ideological, intellectual, [and] totalitarian movements. That is to say, all ideological, intellectual movements are inherently totalitarian because man is made a function of history and [the ideologies] claim to be valid for everyone. If anybody is benighted enough not to know that he belongs to that particular age of mankind represented by the respective intellectuals, that's just too bad for him. If he resists, he must either be killed or put into a concentration camp or something like that. [In any case,] he has to submit.

So we have here a whole set of constructions that are the basis of the modern totalitarian regimes and their effectiveness. That is the assumption that there is a unilinear history, that history has a series of ages, that its ages are in an ascending line, and that the last one, which is always the present, is the highest in it, not to be superseded by any further one. It is the highest and the last one. On this double quality of the highest and the last rests the claim of its representatives, that everybody living has to submit to it. Part of the effectiveness of such an idea rests on the fact that most of the people who are immediately concerned have at best a variant of such an absolute claim and are therefore already existentially deformed enough to accept the claim of the other man, if he proves to be powerful. But the general conception that we are living in an "age" is an ideological conception. The [notion that] we are living in an "age" and have to behave appropriately in order to be

members of that “age” has its origins in these constructions of history and is the basis of the totalitarian, terroristic imposition on other people. Here you have the problem of the horizontal, and that goes back to its earliest form, to the Sumerian and Egyptian beginnings of a historiogenetic construction of history. One such historiogenetic construction of history, the most important one of course, is that in the Old Testament from the creation of the world down to Israel.

These are two such speculative types. I don’t want to go further into them; they are very complicated. But let us go a bit into the consequences. What is built up in such constructions—in the direction of a substitute for the ground, in the vertical direction, or in historical constructions in the horizontal time direction—are what is today frequently called a second reality. The reality in which we live is replaced by a second reality of human construction. The imposition of second realities is the danger moment in our contemporary civilization, because these second realities have become so socially dominant, and the first reality has so strongly atrophied (at least on the public level of debate), that one easily submits to second realities. So if somebody proposes something to you in terms of science, say, “science says this or that,” you are already floored because you believe science has something to say. You aren’t aware that “science” is an allegorical figure and “science” doesn’t say anything, but some specific person says something that may be entirely wrong. You might say that these second realities already have a prestige value. Now these prestige values can only be maintained, of course, if no questions are asked with regard to the evidence brought for such constructions of second realities. (I have already touched upon this problem.) Even in the case of a philosophical system—be it Hegelian or Marxian—you do not ask unpleasant questions with regard to the validity of its premises. If you admit the premises, everything follows nicely because these men think more or less logically. But if you ask questions with regard to the premises, the whole system breaks down. So not asking questions is very important. Or in the empirical sphere, in detail with the case of Hegel, which I [presented], it looks wonderful if you just read that philosophy of history and [do not] ask questions. But what, for instance, has become of the Egyptian empire in this whole

matter? If empirical evidence is called for, if you ask questions, these things break down. An interesting phenomenon of our time is that, in the first place, the people who make such constructions are not deterred by evidence from making them; second, [and] interestingly enough, those who are the supposed victims of such constructions usually don't ask questions [either] but believe what they are told.

That is a peculiar phenomenon. We are living indeed in an atmosphere of second realities, because the constructors of the second realities don't ask themselves questions with regard to the systems and those who are the victims don't ask questions either. How is that phenomenon, if not to be explained, at least to be described?

I want to give you the description of the phenomenon, with a few comments, which Sartre has given in his *Being and Nothingness*. It is the chapter on bad faith. We are in the sphere of bad faith if constructions obviously in conflict with evidence are made and if questions with regard to evidence must not be asked and indeed are not asked. Why not if, in spite of the question, everybody knows something is not in the best order? Let me read that page from Sartre with a few comments.⁶

Bad faith [he says] does not hold the norms and criteria of truth as they are accepted by critical thought in good faith.

General definition.

What it decides first, in fact, is the nature of truth.

It is bad faith that decides on the nature of truth.

With bad faith a truth appears, a method of thinking, a type of being which is like that of objects; the ontological characteristic of the world of bad faith with which the subject suddenly surrounds himself is this: that here being is what it is not, and is not what it is.

There is a new definition of truth contained in all constructions of bad faith. And that new definition of truth, is that what is real is not true and what is not real, is true. Everybody who has ever seen a totalitarian regime in action knows how that works.

6. [Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel Barnes (London: Methuen, 1972), 68-70.]

Consequently, a peculiar type of evidence appears: *non-persuasive* evidence.

By *non-persuasive* is meant “evidence which is not real but which is accepted as evidence even if it is not.” You see! The whole process has been very well analyzed by Koestler in his *Darkness at Noon*, the non-persuasive evidence.

Bad faith apprehends evidence, but it is resigned in advance to not being fulfilled by this evidence. . . .

The modern description of that faith.

It makes itself humble and modest; it is not ignorant, it says, that faith is decision and that after each intuition, it must decide and *will what it is*. Thus bad faith in its primitive project and in its coming into the world decides on the exact nature of its requirements.

You immediately see what it means. . . . [T]ruth is only intra-systemic—say in the interpretation of the Hegelian system, as taught by a Hegelian. First you must accept the premises, then discuss its content. Of course, then you are sunk because the mistake is in the premise and not in the details. Special conditions for argument are set. One of these is: Never permit questioning of the premises. How is that done?

Bad faith stands forth in the firm resolution *not to demand too much*, to count itself satisfied when it is barely persuaded, to force itself in decisions to adhere to uncertain truths.

Now what is here discreetly formulated means that you are willing to be persuaded on insufficient evidence if you want to believe something and you simply don't look at the rest of the evidence. To give you a concrete example: I could observe it, for instance—you can observe it in any totalitarian situation—in the 1930s in Vienna, when the National Socialist regime was already in action in Germany. In Vienna, one could get all the newspapers, not just National Socialist ones, but all the French, Swiss, German newspapers, and so on. But a good National Socialist simply would not read the better newspapers, say the Swiss newspapers, because there he would find out things about National Socialism which he would not want to know. Of course, he could only do that—refuse to read them—because he already knew what he would

find in them. Otherwise, before reading them, he could not know that there were things in them which he didn't want to read. So you see, always the complicated structure of bad faith. It isn't simply ignorance; you have to know that certain things are true in order not to want to know that they are true. It is a many-storied complication. So, it is not to demand too much.

This original project of bad faith is a decision in bad faith on the nature of faith.

To believe on insufficient evidence is a decision; it's an immoral act to believe with insufficient evidence.

Let us understand clearly that there is no question of a reflective voluntary decision, but of a spontaneous determination of our being.

Here we now come to the crucial point, the determination of our being. It is not so that this man says, I know that is so and I don't want to know it because I am simply saying the opposite, or something like that. He is not a liar. It is a complicated psychological process in which one knows at the same time as one doesn't know. For instance, Sartre very excellently gives as an example of such problems in pathological cases, a concept of Freud's psychology, the censor. The censor of the psyche is that function of the psyche so termed by Freud, by which a certain content of the subconscious is prevented from coming to the surface. Which of course the censor can only do if he knows what's there and therefore prevents it from coming to the surface. If he didn't know what was there and why it shouldn't come to the surface, it couldn't be prevented from coming to the surface. So the unconscious isn't unconscious at all but is a conscious repression of what one knows. That gives us a very interesting problem. The concept of the unconscious in itself is untenable, because unless the unconscious were kept down by a censorship, which presupposes that the consciousness knows what is in the unconscious, you would not have a problem at all. Here in pathological cases, you have a good example for it. He goes on:

One *puts oneself* in bad faith as one goes to sleep and one is in bad faith as one dreams.

So the comparison to a state of sleeping or dreaming; these are the comparisons which he draws. It's not a voluntary action, not

a straight lie. A straight liar is an honest person compared with such.

Once this mode of being has been realized, it is as difficult to get out of it as it is to wake oneself up. . . .

So I am giving a vivid description: I think it's a good description; people cannot snap out of it.

[B]ad faith is a type of being in the world, like waking or dreaming, which by itself tends to perpetuate itself, although its structure is [highly imbalanced.]

He calls it a "metastable" type; that means, of a precarious balance.

[B]ad faith is conscious of its structure, and it has taken precautions by deciding that the metastable [unbalanced] structure is the structure of being and that non-persuasion is the structure of all conviction.

So if you get into a discussion with such a man and press him on the point, he will say, "All faith is bad faith," or "All opinion is just opinion," or whatever one thinks is an ideology, and "Nothing is really true," and so on. That is the end of it—we don't ask it. Or, the argument goes on:

Every belief is a belief that falls short; one never wholly believes what one believes.

Otherwise one would know for certain.

Consequently, the primitive project of bad faith is only the utilization of this self-destruction of the fact of consciousness.

That all belief contains an element of not quite belief.

If every belief in good faith is an impossible belief, then there is a place for every impossible belief.

That would be the internal structure of bad faith. And he goes on to explain:

[It] is very true that bad faith does not succeed in believing what it wishes to believe. But it is precisely the acceptance of not believing what it believes that is bad faith. Good faith wishes to flee the "not-believing-what-one-believes" by finding refuge in being.

Now here comes the solution of the problem. One can get out of bad faith at any time by the refuge in being, by appealing to reality, by having respect for evidence. If one doesn't have that he has to doubt all belief in advance, but:

Bad faith flees being by taking refuge in "not-believing-what-one-believes."

So erecting bad faith into the general nature of mankind. All opinions are opinions, and one opinion is as good or as bad as any other, and therefore, and so on. What Sartre is perfectly aware of is the possibility of breaking out of bad faith by finding contact with reality and accepting evidence. He is perfectly clear about it. Now that is his description.

It is a very good description, but this whole passage has another very interesting function, because Sartre developed this page on the basis of certain psychological experiences in the private sphere, in relation to a friend, to a mistress, to a waiter in a café, and so on. He never exemplifies that problem in the case of an ideology, a political creed, be it a communist one or another one. And if he would apply his description of bad faith to his own attitude toward communism, for instance, his attitude toward communism would not be possible. If you apply it to him, you have in Sartre himself the best object lesson of a man who can even analyze the problem of bad faith and still live in bad faith[. . .] So this passage has a double importance, not only as a description but as an object lesson in itself.

Let me conclude with a more amusing point (it doesn't bear any relation but I would like to bring it to your attention). This question of second realities, its causes and forms of appearance and so on, has attracted attention all through the nineteenth century, and I recently found in Baudelaire's *Paradis artificiels* a very amusing description of the matter. The *Paradis artificiels* are dreams induced by hashish or marijuana—hallucinogenic drugs. That was a great problem at the time of Baudelaire. Baudelaire himself had taken hashish and others before him, English intellectuals like Coleridge, De Quincey, and so on. Baudelaire was actually very much interested in De Quincey's study on the subject, and he makes the following comments on that problem. He says that by the use of such drugs one can induce certain types of dreams,

and he distinguishes for this purpose between dreams of passion and dreams of a hierophanic nature, as he calls it, concerned with relations toward the divine. He thinks that hashish dreams are chiefly concerned with the dream of passion. Then he gives a survey of the characteristics of men who would take marijuana for the purpose of having such visions. He says they would be ethically very sensitive people, very humanitarian people, people who would be touched by their own good intentions and would therefore have a very good opinion of themselves, compared with others who have no such good intentions, even if they have better actions; or people who are very sensitive to the course of history, and the burden of the problems imposed by history, and so on. Then he goes one step further and says, "Here I am giving a brief picture of Jean Jacques Rousseau. There you have the man who can have such ideas without taking drugs!"

Now that opens certain perspectives. This problem of drugs as an inducement to certain types of dreams which, by the time of Baudelaire, were already identified as dreams [of the kind] that intellectuals of the type of Jean Jacques Rousseau indulged in, gives you an approximate idea of where these problems lie. There is a serious mental deformation that has become virulent since the eighteenth century, [namely,] the collapse of the three universals—the logical structure that I explained—and the reduction of the universals to the universal idea of the world. This appeals to a certain type of people we call intellectuals, or to related types. When the dreams in this form cannot be actively fulfilled in the awake life of construction by a man like Comte or Marx, they can also be fulfilled and lead to the same satisfaction with dreams of personal expansion and aggrandizement, and so on, by taking drugs. You get a very curious sequence, which is sometimes formulated as: Marx considered religion to be opium for the people, then later, in the formulation of Raymond Aron, Marxism is opium for the intellectual, and now, the people take opium straight!

The problems, I think, have to be taken at that level. There is a serious relationship between this type of thinking in the mode of the revolt and the pathological deformation that also can be supplied by the taking of drugs. I have very much the impression that in our time these two lines converge in contemporary movements

of drug-taking and so on, which have the purpose of producing on the individual level precisely such experiences of expansion and aggrandizement as on the intellectual level a man, say for instance, Comte, could experience without taking drugs and, as the *fondateur* of the new religion of humanity, expand himself into the substitute Christ. That can also be done by means of LSD or something like that.

With that I now want to close, not forever, not in the sense that we have arrived at the last word. We can analyze these problems today because, with approximately two hundred years, if not more, [of] this specific modern revolt, the [forms] have run their course and have become intelligible. And not just today; already a hundred years ago, as you see in such cases as Baudelaire's *Paradis artificiels*, one knew what the trouble was with people of that sort. But today we know it very much better; and we have what one did not have a hundred years ago, the intellectual instruments for analyzing such states as I have tried to explain here. If one were to formulate the problem, perhaps one would have to [speak of]—what I explained in the first lecture—the full reality, as it is present in the primary experience of the cosmos.

Whenever a differentiation occurs, like the differentiation of consciousness, there is a danger that parts of the reality that are not so much in the focus of interest as the newly differentiated reality of consciousness [is] will somehow recede into a background and not remain in the total field of consciousness. When realities are neglected they become dangerous because, out of existence, they will then emerge in some unconscious form or into deformations on the conscious level. When, on the level of consciousness, the most important part, the ground, is obscured through the type of constructions that I have explained today, practically all of relevant reality is moved out of the conscious horizon of symbolization, and you [get] all sorts of mental disturbances, which I cannot go into at this time. In part, they express themselves in such illnesses as have been analyzed, for instance, by Jung in his version of psychoanalysis. (Jung's lectures on religion, "The Yale Lectures," or any other works of Jung give you interesting examples of the kind of disturbances due to the obscuring of sectors of reality under modern conditions.)

All these problems are fairly well known today. All have to do with the structure of reality. And the problem that faces us in science today is the recovery of the structure of reality in order to know what pieces of reality are missing in our contemporary picture of reality and how to reintroduce them in order to get out of this peculiar mental deformation which, in some instances, can assume the same form as dreams through intoxication or drug taking.

Thank you very much.



Conversations with Eric Voegelin at the Thomas More Institute for Adult Education in Montreal

I. Theology Confronting World Religions?

We had a conference at supper on what this lecture should be about. The course announcement says we should deal with confrontations of theology with world religions. That is a topic of considerable interest, and it is widely discussed today. We even have institutes for that purpose; for instance, there is a new Institute for the Study of World Religions at Harvard. In Europe, on a permanent basis, there are the dialogues of the Paulus-Gesellschaft between Catholics and Communists (especially Eastern Europeans). But while this is a great topic, very little is done to come to grips with real problems. It is a fact that it is easy to decide to dialogue. "Let's get together—a couple of Catholics, a couple of Communists—and let everybody talk and have a dialogue with each other." But what exactly should the outcome be of such a dialogue, when everyone repeats his orthodoxy and isn't willing

Lecture and discussion at the Thomas More Institute in Montreal, October 16, 1967, originally published in *Conversations with Eric Voegelin*, ed. R. Eric O'Connor, Thomas More Institute Papers vol. 76 (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1980), 37–74. Transcripts of four lectures and discussions at Montreal in 1965, 1967, 1970, 1976.

Editorial remark from O'Connor: Given as the second session in the Thomas More Institute discussion-course "Participation/ Transformation/ Life: Theology Confronting World Religions." In his introduction O'Connor gives acknowledgments to the following people involved in the transcription enterprise: Cathleen Going, Roberta Machnik, Mary McAsey, Dorothe Loggie, Carol Tansey, Paul Caringella, Danielle Dugas, Madeleine Dugas.

to give an inch of it (and quite rightly so)? I do not know. The possibility of effective dialogue depends on the existence of a common medium of experience and of language in which to talk. If there is no common experience and no common language, one does not get very far. Sometimes, too, what looks like a common language isn't one at all. It actually hides the differences.

There are many people today, especially in Europe, who work on the recipe "Marx talks about 'being', St. Thomas talks about 'being', Heidegger talks about 'being'; now why shouldn't we all get together and be merry ontologists?" But it doesn't work that way. Every one of these three thinkers (we could add Parmenides, Plotinus, and others) means something different by *being*, and you don't get agreement on anything by putting three or four people together in a room who mean different things by the same word. Not much will come of it, and it can go on for years before people get tired. So I'm not going to engage in that sort of dialogue with any world religions or with ideologies. What I want to do is first to formulate what the problem is, and then show how to go about it, show what has to be done in such matters in a practical way.

This is not the first time for dialogue (here called a confrontation) between theology and world religions to occur. In the thirteenth century there was dialogue between Christian theologians and Moslems where the latter were much better equipped philosophically than the Christians. One of the works of Thomas Aquinas, his *Contra Gentiles*, was written for the purpose of furnishing Dominican missionaries with the intellectual apparatus that would bring them to the level on which they could meet Islamic scholars.

Up to then they couldn't do it because they didn't know enough about philosophy; the Moslems knew much more.

And so in the *Contra Gentiles* (which is, you might say, the handbook for the dialoguers of that time) Thomas formulated some of the problems that attach to a dialogue. For instance, with Christian heretics, he said, we can have a dialogue because there is one thing in common: The heretics and the orthodox both believe in the New Testament; so by referring to the New Testament as the authoritative source, decisive in matters of disagreement, one has a basis on which one can conduct a dialogue. He knew, of course, that heretics and orthodox gave different interpretations to

the same New Testament (the Old Testament was of less interest in that immediate connection), but still they could talk. Then he went on to say: One also can talk with Jews, if one is a Christian theologian, because there is at least one thing in common: We both accept the Old Testament. With the Old Testament as the common basis to which we both refer when we talk, we *can* talk.

But what do we do—now comes his main question—with the pagans (that is, the Moslems), who do not believe in the Old Testament or in the New Testament? When we want to talk with them, on what basis do we talk? Do we have any basis at all? And he assumes—and that's why he writes the *Contra Gentiles*—that we do have a common basis. He calls it *intellectus*, a common metaphysics based on the classic metaphysics of Plato and Aristotle.

Thus a dialogue with Moslems cannot be conducted on the basis of the Koran, which we do not accept, or on the basis of the Old and New Testaments, which they don't accept, but on the basis of something we both accept. That is classic philosophy—or what he understood classic philosophy to be (we'll come to that point right away).

Today, however, we are in a very peculiar situation. If we want to talk with our Western ideologists—of the communist, or positive, or liberal, or any other persuasion—or if we want to talk with representatives of what are called, somewhat loosely, world religions—say, a Moslem or a Buddhist—we all have one thing in common: Most of us don't know too much about classic philosophy. A rational dialogue becomes difficult. You just indulge in ideological monologues, you deliver apologies for your opinions, and that's the end of the dialogue. There is no longer a common rational culture.

The question is, What do we do now? We cannot proceed like Thomas; we cannot wave the *Contra Paganos* in our hands and start a debate, because nobody believes in the classic formulations, including most of our Western university personnel in philosophy. So if there is no common basis of intellect, how *do* we talk? The only thing one can do now is to go back of the rational formulations of classic and medieval philosophy, abandon also (for the dialogic purpose) the Old and New Testaments because these are not sources of common belief, and go back of the formulated

positions to the experiences that engender symbols. This procedure, however, encounters a considerable number of obstacles today.

Let me first explain why Thomas's method (that is, the method of using intellect and metaphysics as the common basis) no longer works.

It is sometimes not sufficiently realized that there is no such thing as classical metaphysics. Neither Aristotle nor Plato were metaphysicians. The term *metaphysics* appears for the first time in the thirteenth century of our era. It was in the Arabic context and was then taken over by Thomas from the Arabs and introduced into Western language in the *prooemium* to his commentary on the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle.

Ever since then, the term *metaphysics* has been in use in the West.

This does not mean that what Thomas meant by metaphysics did not exist before. He meant a science of propositions concerning what he called "first principles and substances." He gave as examples the concept of being, and the concept of God. This type of metaphysics, though it received its name only in the thirteenth century, actually began in the generation immediately after Aristotle, with the dogmatization of philosophy by the Stoics. The Stoics transformed the original language formulations of philosophy, which are language symbols expressing steps in a meditative process of experience, into propositions concerning the realities symbolized. Examples would be propositions concerning God, concerning intellect, concerning the soul. That is a transformation that begins only after Plato and Aristotle.

One of our difficulties today is that classic philosophy in the nondogmatic sense—the pre-metaphysical sense—is practically unknown to a wider public. When we deal with philosophy, that is, with classic philosophy, we usually approach it under the name of "metaphysics," while metaphysics—as I said—comes into its fully crystallized form only after the thirteenth century. We have also to contend with the taboo on metaphysics that began in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, especially since Auguste Comte maintained that there is a theological age that belongs to the past, a metaphysical that belongs to the past, and the age of positive science in which we now are.

That the theological age, in the sense in which Comte understood it, as well as the metaphysical age belong to the past, I quite agree. The dogmatic deformations of philosophy and Christianity belong indeed to a past that it would be difficult to revive. What Comte (and the later positivists) had in mind was never an attack on Christian faith or philosophy, for the excellent reason that Comte had no precise historical knowledge of what these terms meant. In that stratum of society to which Comte belonged, the Western world was fairly ignorant of classic philosophy as well as of Christian faith. It saw both metaphysics and theology only through degenerative doctrinal forms of some conventional professorial literature. One must have that in mind, as a background, to see how much has to be restored. We have no clear conception of philosophy even today, and substitute for it in our minds a corruption of philosophy that is called metaphysics.

Then we have a further problem, not so much a problem of corruption, but a serious problem concerning the meaning of *theology*. I have just said that Plato and Aristotle were no metaphysicians. Now what were they if they were not? After all, Aristotle wrote a book, or there was made a collection of his *logoi* on a subject, which received the title *ta meta ta physica*, later translated as *Metaphysics*. What is in that book, after all, if it isn't metaphysics? Well, if you ever read it, you will find that the word *metaphysics* occurs nowhere in the text. That is true of several other works of Aristotle: In the famous Aristotelian logical work, the *Organon*, for instance, the word *logic* never occurs. As a matter of fact, there was no term for *logic* in Greek. At the time Aristotle wrote, the noun *logike* meant "a concubine." I don't know what that has to do with *logic*; but certainly there was no term for *logic* until later.

As the *Organon* of Aristotle isn't simply *logic*, so the *Metaphysics* does not contain metaphysics in the later sense. Its subject matter is alternatively called the *proté philosophia* (the first philosophy) or *theologia*. These are the terms referring to the content of the book *Metaphysics*. The term *theology* was coined by Plato—in him it appears for the first time—and with both Plato and Aristotle it has two meanings. (Let's say it is used in context in two meanings, because neither gives formal definitions.) The two meanings are: (1) the older polytheistic theology; they speak of the older thinkers like Homer and Hesiod as theological thinkers, to

distinguish them from themselves, whom they call philosophers; (2) they speak of their own philosophy as *theology*—a new theology in opposition to the polytheistic theology. So in their self-understanding they are theologians.

In Christian theology, then, we have a very peculiar problem. It doesn't develop with the Christians; the first theologian of the later Christian type was Philo Hebraeus, who submitted the Old Testament to treatment in categories of the current dogmatic metaphysics. That is, he applied metaphysical propositions and concepts to symbols of revelation—in his case to the Old Testament, the Jewish revelation. This method was then taken over (toward the end of the first century) by Christian thinkers and applied to Christian revelatory symbols, that is, to the symbols of the early church and the New Testament. And this application of dogmatic metaphysics to revelatory symbols is what is called theology in the current conventional sense—sometimes with good results, sometimes with not so good results. The best results approximately are in Thomas, where theology was freshened up through an original reading of Aristotle and was no longer so simply dogmatic as it was in some periods before Thomas.

When we speak of theology confronting the world religions we must know what we are talking about. If we mean by it the conventional textbook theology—be it a Protestant or a Catholic theology—confronting world religions, I can only advise not to try it, because a big mess will result. Christianity in the conventional dogmatic sense will not emerge too well from such a confrontation. If the confrontation is conducted in the manner of, say, the *Contra Gentiles* of Thomas, that's already better but not sufficient. If it is conducted by the method of an original reading of the theology of Plato and Aristotle, that would be best. Then one would not have to struggle with the application of secondary metaphysical dogma to revelatory symbols, which produces that mixed product of Christian theology but could at least use the philosophical theology in its unaltered, original form, unmixed with Christian revelatory symbols, which are not the symbolism of Buddhism or Hinduism or Islam. One would not get into the mess of having first to dissolve the Christian, then the Islamic theology, then to find out what they possibly have in common, and only then, when the something they have in common turns

out to be their intellectual structure, to return to the original analysis of intellectual structure in classic philosophy. It is better to start right from the beginning, from the experiences that engendered philosophical symbols before they became deformed into metaphysical dogmas.

I shall speak of *noetic theology*, using *noetic* as an adjective derived from *nous*, which means "reason" or "intellect." *Nous* is a term (rendered in Latin as *intellectus* and used by Thomas in this sense) for intellect or reason as Aristotle and Plato meant it; *nous* as the Divine ground of existence, the Divine intellect, is the subject matter of this theology. Let's call it "noetic theology" to make clear that we are not talking now about Christian or Islamic or any other dogma that has absorbed a secondary metaphysics but [that we] are trying to get at the original experiences in the noetic, rational sense, to see what one can do with that as a basis for opening a dialogue.

I shall give you some of the concepts that are used in the noetic theology, attaching myself as closely as possible to the classic texts. The first concept one would have to use is the concept of existential tension. Here we run into a philological problem because the term *tasis* (tension) does not occur in classic philosophy but only with the Stoics. It is a general problem when dealing with classics that language symbols concerning concrete nuances are always formulated first; abstract concepts are developed later. *Tasis* does not appear before the death of Aristotle but in the first generation after him. But the concrete nuances of such tension, with which we are perfectly familiar because they have penetrated down and have been absorbed into Christianity also, are *love*, *hope*, and *faith*. Characterizing the existential tension of man toward the Divine ground (he called it the *logos*, not the *nous*, so *logos* is closer, you might say, to the Christian *logos*), Heraclitus developed for the first time a vocabulary, sometimes even with the negatives: the love is his *philia*; the hope, *elpis*; and the faith, *pistis*; lack of faith, lack of existential tension, the state of an existentially deficient person, is described by *apistia*.

The three nuances are there, in 500 B.C. They were resumed into Hellenistic religion, into Christianity, and became in medieval theology the three theological virtues. They are existential virtues in the technical sense—going back to the noetic tension—so we

can operate with Christian concepts to a very considerable extent, as you see, *because* they are classical.

It is another very important discovery that when you are in such an existential tension you are going beyond your specific humanity in a mundane sense. You are somewhere in between your mundane humanity and something transmundane. And there was developed for the man in tension, for this tension of consciousness, the term *the in-between*. Man is neither quite man nor quite god but in-between, placed in the consciousness of tension that is Plato's *metaxy* (which means "in-between"). So existential tension is in-between: It is not quite human, it is not quite divine, but the tension between the two. And a man who is in such tension is not quite, in the old Homeric vocabulary, the "mortal man," nor is he quite a god who is immortal, but he is, again, a man of a type in-between. We need a new vocabulary for that kind of man. (As I said, the classics did not yet have the term *tension*.) Plato calls him the *daimonios aner*. The *daimonios* is an entity between god and man, a *demi*-god, you see—a "spiritual man," one could translate it.

Now such a spiritual man appears; he communicates, tries to form a community of adherents, and so on. You then get the typical structure for a field of history. Up to this time all entities are either mortals or immortals. Now you get something that is neither mortal nor immortal but a creature in-between. That is quite an event in the development of consciousness.

Then there is the difficulty that most people stay where they are, just never hear of the event, just believe in the mortal and the immortal gods, like the good Homeric peasantry and citizenry. And these people remain the *thnetoi*, the "mortals" of the old type (in the language of Plato).

But there are also sophisticated city-slickers like the Sophists, who are not at all primitives who believe in the mortals and the immortals of Homer but will deny agnostically all reality to a Divine ground, and for them Plato has made a special term: They are the mindless, the *amathes*, persons who lack spiritual sensitiveness and who offer social resistance. It is the Sophists, after all, who bring it about that Socrates is killed by a sort of judicial murder.

Hence there are three types—the old type, the new type, and

the resistance type—on all occasions of spiritual eruptions. (You have the same problem with Confucius in China or in the India of Buddha.) Every time an eruption happens you get such a tripartite structure of the field of history, with a corresponding vocabulary.

Now *existential tension* is the first of the fundamental terms that appear on the occasion of such consciousness of tension, when language is worked out to characterize the new experience and its consequences.

A second term would be the term for an experience of *participation*. That experience is in itself nothing new—as primary cosmic experience, man is part of a cosmos in which all substances are interchangeable. Men can become gods, gods can appear in the form of man, animals are gods, gods can appear in the form of animals, man can appear in the form of animals, plants can start talking, everything can change into everything else. This is the interchangeability of substance that at the University of Chicago, by Oriental-school people like Frankfort, has been called consubstantiality in the cosmological civilizations. It is a fundamental background of experience. Against this fundamental background there is now differentiated a specific consubstantiality between man and the gods in that existential tension. A specific area of consciousness becomes differentiated: the area of *existence* (we have to talk about that term presently). In this area the participation is consciously experienced and receives language names. You no longer get stories about specific animals starting to talk or specific gods appearing in human form. *Participation* becomes a general term. With Plato the word is *methexis*, with Aristotle it is *metalepsis*, and then in Latin with Thomas it becomes *participatio*: the participation of the human in the divine and vice versa.

There are further terms developed then, indicating the mutuality of participation. From the side of man, there is the *seeking* for the ground, the *zetesis*. Aristotle's *Metaphysics* begins with the sentence "By nature all men desire to know," and that desire is the desire for asking questions about the ground. From the other side, the *attraction*, or being moved toward asking such questions, is called by Aristotle *kinesis* from the Divine side. The result is a questioning that can never be translated into propositions. In the eighteenth century, Leibniz has given perhaps a perfect formula-

tion of these questions. He says there are two chief philosophical questions. The first is, Why is there something, why not nothing? and the second question is, Why is there something as it is and not different from what it is? The first concerns existence, and the second one concerns essence. And these two questions are the fundamental questions of every philosopher—especially the existence-questions concerning the ground, “Why is there something? Why not nothing?”—the answer to which would be from the Divine ground, that is, the answer would be the seeking or searching for such a ground. It is in terms of these seeking and moving elements—the seeking from the human side and the being moved (passively experienced), attracted, by the Divine side—that existential tension and the participation of the human and the Divine are described.

Now what does *participation* mean? What it actually means you can experience, of course, only in meditative experience. One would have to go through, reading with care, Plato’s *Symposium*, for instance, or the great meditation that ends in the transcendence point, the *anima animi* in Augustine’s *Confessions* Book X. But one can give at least a diagrammatic clarity to the matter by making something like a mathematical formula.

If you introduce into a diagram man and God, you can say: In *participation* there is first a relation of identity because they must have something in common, a sort of area of overlapping; the same relation also does *not* hold true because they are *not* identical; when you get these relations and nonrelations of identity you can call the whole thing together: *participation*.

It’s very good to have a formula because then you see immediately that when you omit, for instance, the second part of it, the non-identity, then the distance between man and God disappears, and you get highly interesting speculative results about the man who can become God. It is very important in sectarian movements that the person, through certain meditative or illuminative acts, can be transformed, if not into God directly, at least into Christ. There was a movement in the seventeenth century directed by Henry Nicholas, who assumed that the initials of his name were initials of the Latin formula *Homo Novus*, meaning the “new man,” or the “new Christ.” You get practically the same situation in Hegel’s speculative system: Hegel is explicit on the point that

through his conceptual speculation one achieves a salvation that has not been delivered through Christ, or has been delivered only in an imperfect form and now will be delivered in perfect form by Hegel. When you go through his meditative exercise you are in the state of salvation and beyond being mere man. The superman is, for the early Marx, the person who has absorbed back into himself the Divine he has projected out of himself by influence of the evil churches. When he relaxes that psychological projection of the Divine out of himself and pulls it back into himself, then he becomes divine in nature and a superman. The same pulling back of a projected psyche is done by Nietzsche in his conception of the superman. The psychology of projections, which starts with Feuerbach (in his *Essence of Christianity* in 1843), is still the basis of contemporary psychology in certain areas. For instance, Freud's and Jung's conceptions of projected symbols go back to Feuerbach's projective psychology. In Marx and Nietzsche the projection is taken back and you become identical—which leaves out of the formula the non-identity.

On the other hand, if you leave out identity completely, then you get the radical difference between God and man that expresses itself in, for instance, Rudolf Otto's analysis of the Divine as a *tremendum* beyond, totally different from, man—a situation quite close to that of a deist like Voltaire for whom God is reduced to a concept, functionless in human existence, and who is then horrified when the first generation of his pupils suddenly becomes atheist. That is what happens when you take only the second of the two equations and forget about the first one, and forget that only the two together make *participation*. Having such a diagram, you can map out the possible mistakes, and when they occur you know that they are mistakes and why. This helps to get the intellectual structure of such a concept as participation.

I have already frequently used the term *existence*. Let's clarify that. Everybody talks about existence, and we have many existentialist movements and different existentialist philosophers. I'm not going to enter into a great debate about existentialism. I will simply point to three principal meanings of the word *existence* as it has been used in the history of philosophy up to this day. Since each meaning has a certain usefulness, *existence* is a term that must be understood in different meanings according to context.

Existence means, first, a mode of being that we ascribe to objects in the spatio-temporal sense. Thus a table or a chair is an object that “exists.” In that case one could say the term *existence* takes as its model an object in the world of time-space sense perception; that object “exists.” It would seem more consistent if we could restrict ourselves to this one meaning; but the term *existence* is used for different problems in different historical situations. I do not see how one can dispense with other meanings of it.

A second meaning of *existence* emerges in classical philosophy and is in use today. A difficulty attaches to it, since we have no single term from classic philosophy to fall back upon for it. (I have already made the same remark about “tension,” *tasis*). We can express this second meaning as *conscious existence* or *noetic consciousness*. The clarity of consciousness of a tension toward the Divine ground is the content of consciousness. If you are conscious in clarity, you are conscious of your existence in relation, in tension, to a ground that is not yourself or any other object in the external world. For that there are makeshift terms (Aristotle sometimes uses the term *aesthesia* for such a consciousness), but it has no really consistent language symbol.

The language symbol now developed in modern philosophy as the term *existence* is sometimes very bewildering. If you read certain sections in Heidegger, for instance, a small lecture on metaphysics where he talks about existence (and especially when he spells it *Existenz*, or uses the term *Dasein*, which also, since the eighteenth century, has meant existence), you will find that suddenly there are three or four sentences in succession which are absolutely intelligible and coherent (properly with subject and predicate, and you can understand). He is then using the term *Dasein* in the sense in which noetic existence is described by Aristotle and Plato—the consciousness of existential tension. So the second meaning of *existence* would be: man’s consciousness of his existential tension toward a ground.

As a third meaning of *existence*, I think we cannot get around its meaning in Thomistic usage. If you read Étienne Gilson’s work on Thomism, you will find that the great achievement in philosophy of Saint Thomas was to have discovered (not quite, because Avicenna and Al-Farabi did it before him; he wrote on the Arabs) that all existence of everything except God himself is contingent

existence. Only God has absolute existence. Hence we have *existence* in the contingent sense, a peculiar development, you might say, of the meaning of the word—in addition to the meaning of an existence of an object in time and space—which has happened in all monotheistic religions. In such religions you have to operate with the symbolism of a world created by God, and then the God is not identical with the type of things he has created. If he is *being* in an absolute or preeminent sense, then everything else must be *being* in a dependent sense, which is called *contingent existence*. We can't get around that term in any Christian theological context. Hence there are three meanings of *existence* which I think will survive.

You are faced now with something that perhaps will horrify you: If you have the term *existence* in these three senses—if there is existence of an object in time and space, if there is existence in the sense of a consciousness of human existence in tension toward the Divine ground, and if there is the contingent existence of things in relation to God (you might say, a sort of extension of conscious existence to everything that is contingent), what about God and the Divine ground himself? I cannot do anything but say that the Divine ground is then a sort of non-existent reality, a *reality* but not in the mode of being of existence of an object in the spatio-temporal world (which nobody would insist on anyway). That has a considerable advantage in noetic theology, because certain developments in Christian, Judaic and Islamic theology are connected with the problem of the revelatory symbols and do not appear in a noetic theology.

If you insist that God is an existent just as an object in space and time exists, if you apply the category of existence on that model—undifferentiated and undistinguished—then you run into such difficulties as: Since, after all, God isn't an existent object to which you can point, then you have to prove his existence. If you *don't* insist in the first place that he is an existent like other objects in time and space, then you don't have to prove his existence because you never said he existed. You have him in consciousness already present, already there, and you do not have to transfer the concept of existence of an object in time and space to God and afterward prove his existence. Getting out of the questions of proofs of existence is a great help because a whole

body of problems thereby disappears without interfering in any way with the existential problem of a tension in existence toward the Divine ground.

Simply cutting out the category of existence has also another advantage, as you will presently see in theory. But before I go to that other advantage I have to elaborate a bit more that problem of the tension of existence and its consequences. With the noetic tension of existence toward the Divine ground, the new philosophy (in the classic sense) obviously opposes itself to a polytheistic conception of the cosmos. The cosmos dissociates or explodes (or whatever metaphor you wish to use) because now you no longer have any whole cosmos with gods living in it ("full of gods"). You have a universe or world of objects in time and space, and one piece of reality—the former gods—which is *not* an object in time and space but the cause or origin or ground of all of the visible world. Therewith appears for the first time vocabulary that has to characterize a god as *beyond* anything that is world content. In Plato the term appears for the first time; it is *epekeina*. That becomes later the vocabulary of "immanent" and "transcendent": What is in the world is immanent, what transcends the world—that is, God—is transcendent or *epekeina*. Here again there are certain formal rules. If you take such terms as *immanent* and *transcendent*, which are the language symbols expressing an experience of existential tension of consciousness—and the consequence is that God is then realized to be *the* God who is the Divine ground of everything (as against the world with its spatio-temporal contents)—then you have two terms that are correlative to one another. There is no world without the god, and no god without the world. There is an immanent world only in relation to a transcendent ground. So immanence and transcendence cannot be used as absolute adjectives to anything, but only as correlatives designating two poles of the existential tension when experienced in classic philosophy or in prophetic experiences and on occasions like that. Only then have these terms meaning; using them loosely ("modern man is immanentist") results in nonsense. There is no such thing as an "immanent man." That language is even less justifiable than, say, the Homeric language of "mortals" and "immortals." One should be clear about that.

Now a last problem connected with the existential tension—a

very important one. I just said that when you run into the problem of the proofs for the existence of God, back of the desire to prove the existence of God is a transfer of the term *existence* from the model of an object in time and space to a reality which is *not* an object in time and space. These difficulties go back to the post-Aristotelian development of dogmatic metaphysics. What in Aristotle's philosophy is still in suspense and does not lead yet in his works to any kind of metaphysics, becomes such immediately after him.

In the various Stoic and Epicurean schools, in the second Academy, and so on, the model of the object in time and space is considered the absolute model of existence for a thing. And the categories in which an object in time and space had been described by Aristotle were "form" and "matter." He used such examples as this: A craftsman who produces a statue or vase gives it a form, then pours metal into that form; what he pours into the form is the "matter," and the form is the "form"—and the same goes for organisms where there also is a form, and matter which goes in and out through metabolism. These models of the artifact and the organism are used for certain parts of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* but not for the part describing consciousness. Now the peculiarity of metaphysics (which from dogmatic metaphysics, still pre-Christian, has been taken over into Christianity and is one of the chief causes of intellectual miscarriage at various points) is in applying the absolute model of the object in time and space, or of the artifact and the organism, to God and the angels and man and the soul. Plato and Aristotle were never crazy enough to do such a thing. It was done by dogmatists of the schools and taken over—already in a stage of reduced cultural, intellectual achievement after the Hellenistic period—by the Christian theologians and has thus become part of theology. That has the oddest consequences.

When you look at a British analyst, for example A. J. Ayer (you probably know his work *Language, Truth, and Logic*), you will find that he uses an object in the external world as a model of things that exist, then assumes that all linguistic expressions in science must have the form of propositions that are applicable to such objects. If you have propositions that are *not* applicable to such objects—all propositions concerning man and God and the soul and consciousness—then they are not science. Out with

them. When you are just ready to think, “These people are terribly illiterate. How can one say such nonsense!” you go back to Saint Thomas’s *De Ente et Essentia* and find that he was a British analyst. He held that the model of things in existence is an object of the external world with forms and matter, and he goes on to explain God and the angels and man in this terminology. God is then an object without matter, or man is an object with the soul as the form and the rest of his existence as matter—the kind of proposition that a British analyst will with justice call nonsense.

How do we get out of that mess? The British analysts are right in their critical attitude. But they are not right in being unable intellectually to cope with the problem. I would like to offer you a solution.

One must recognize that the model of concepts with which one operates in modern logic, in the wake of Aristotle (or the misunderstood Aristotle) and the whole of scholastic logic—there’s no break in that continuity—is what in Russell and Whitehead’s *Principia Mathematica* are called “classes of things”: General concepts are referred to classes of things. Now you can have classes of things only if the things are objects in time and space and have common characteristics by which they form a class. Man—let’s forget for the moment about angels and the Divine Ground—does not belong to this type of reality.

When you now come back to the *existential tension* and to *immanent* and *transcendent* as correlatives, you have to say that, not as general concepts, as universals in the conventional sense, referring to classes of objects, but in a quite different sense as language symbols expressing poles in an existential tension and the existential tension as a whole, you can develop an idea of God, an idea of man in the existential tension, and an idea of consciousness as the participation between the two in the existential tension. None of these language symbols refers to a class. That is very important. All are developed by concrete persons on the concrete occasions of experiences under their observation—either in their own person or in some other person. When Plato writes about such problems, he can observe himself or he has the model of Socrates. When Aristotle writes about such problems, he writes about himself or he writes about Plato and Socrates. The symbols always refer to concrete cases of consciousness and give

an analysis of something that is concrete. They are not general concepts but language symbols attaching to a concrete experience. That is a problem of *universals* in a sense quite different from universal concepts of "classes of things."

There arises however a problem of classes, because whenever such a concrete experience occurs and is expressed in language by a prophet or by a philosopher, he always assumes it is obligatory for everybody. Now why? He cannot make an empirical study of all human beings. If you take the famous first sentence of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, which I quoted—"All men by nature desire to know"—and make an empirical study, you will perhaps arrive at the result that by no means all men by nature desire to know! Generalization of the experience as a class concept would be wrong. The background of the general element, what makes it universal and makes the language of "universal" legitimate, is the fact that behind all revelatory language, behind all philosophical language, behind all noetic theology or any other theology, there lies, of course, the common experience of all men in the cosmos in which they live. We all know that all men are men even if we don't know what a man is, or what differentiated consciousness is, or anything like that. Hence we always have a pre-philosophical, pre-theological, pre-revelatory, knowledge of the cosmos with all of its contents—gods, men, the world, and so on—and on this is grafted a body of differentiated consciousness and symbolisms. But the general background of the cosmic primary experience is always there. Without it, we wouldn't know what a philosopher or theologian means when he talks about God; or the primary experience would be present in very few people, or would have to be evoked in a very complicated meditative or educational way.

We all know already what we are talking about before we get into the technical part as we are doing here. There has been, in given historical situations, in revelatory and philosophical contexts, the development of three distinctive universal ideas: the idea of a universal divinity, the idea of a humanity in existential tension, which is applicable to every man, and the idea of a world that is not identical with universal divinity and has its autonomous structure, which is universal to everybody. (That gets its expression today in such a conception as the intersubjectivity of sense experience or world experience.) With this I should like to

close and only remind you of what I have been talking about: I've been giving you some pointers as to where an analysis has to start before one can get into talking with anybody who belongs to a different system of language or experience—in world religions, in Islam, in Buddhism, in Hinduism, in the primitive environment—and how that can be done by divesting ourselves of the compact symbolisms in our theology and differentiating them in the manner which I have tried to indicate.

Question Period¹

H. LEMONTAIS: Are “conscious existence” and “existential tension” approximately the same?

E. VOEGELIN: I always find it very difficult to explain to my students that consciousness isn't just consciousness of anything (you can, of course, have consciousness of this or that). Consciousness has a specific content. The original consciousness—for, once it *is* differentiated, you know that it is the original consciousness—is always consciousness of the ground, and *reason* means to know about the ground of one's own existence. That is the content of reason.

L. PURCELL: Am I right in saying that you do not think that, in “confronting world religions,” we *can* divest ourselves of our compact symbolisms; and yet that we should go back to the experiences that engender symbols, that is, we should try to plead common symbols with people of other religions?

E. VOEGELIN: We have a difficulty here. What must be answered runs counter to internationalist movements and friendly neighborliness and all that sort of thing. The great differentiation of consciousness, with the development of philosophy, has happened in

1. Participants in the discussion were (in order of their first appearance): Harold LeMontais, Eric Voegelin, Leo Purcell, Stanislaus Machnik, Charlotte Tansey, Margaret Jennings, Patricia Coonan, George Tutsch, Francis Greaney, Dominic Salman, Roberta Machnik, Martin O'Hara, Stephan Machnik, Gert Morgenstern, Eric O'Connor, Thérèse Mason, and Patrick O'Doherty. “Q” designates an unidentified questioner.

the West. It hasn't happened in China, it hasn't happened in India, it hasn't happened in Africa, but only in the West. And it means not only that *we* must go back to our own classic philosophy but that Hindus (for example) also—if they want to talk rationally and not just repeat a complex of compact symbols—must go back at least to classic philosophy and know what it is all about. One has to make this very clear. Becoming rational can't be done by being proud of what we have.

S. MACHNIK: How can one distinguish the earlier literature from philosophy?

E. VOEGELIN: I don't think we can do it sharply because a good deal of this rational differentiation of consciousness is not the work of philosophers in a technical sense: You would find much of it done in very complicated symbolisms by Homer or by Aeschylus. The important "literary figures" (that's a modern categorization, of course) have contributed to such problems. The same is true of prophets. One can hardly deal with existential problems competently in a larger context without going back to the existentialism of a Jeremiah, or to the Thornbush Episode of Moses (whoever contrived that literary form).

STANISLAUS MACHNIK: Do you find more penetration into these problems in literary criticism?

E. VOEGELIN: Absolutely. Today, if anybody is philosophically gifted, he will go into comparative religion or literary criticism. That is sometimes quite astonishing. Hillis Miller, professor of English literature at Johns Hopkins University, has written a book, *The Disappearance of God*. It has a number of essays on De Quincy, Matthew Arnold, the Brontës, Hopkins, and Browning. A masterpiece of a competent, mature philosopher! I wish there were in some philosophy departments I know one man who knows as much about philosophy as Mr. Hillis Miller the literary critic. That's where the best people are. The same goes in Europe for a man like Brandon at Manchester—a first-rate philosopher. But it's difficult to find first-rate philosophers in a philosophy department.

C. TANSEY: Could you make a statement or a definition of *symbol*? You don't mean a picture, you mean a constellation—

E. VOEGELIN: Not necessarily. That is a special problem. Going to the philosophy of language: As you have already seen, all important language symbols (what do we call them? "symbols") arise on occasion of certain experiences of concrete persons at a given time. The term *theology*, for instance, is coined by Plato in the second book of the *Politeia* in dealing with certain Sophist perversions of theology that required having a handle for the perversion and for the nonperversion. So he invented the term *theology*, you see. Symbolisms pertaining to nonexistent reality and the existential tensions are called symbols because we have no other word, because it has become conventional. (Think of Cassirer's *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*; think of the symbolist movement.) Symbols are not concepts concerning classes.

M. JENNINGS: If the constant in theology is shared experiences pointing to the transcendental experiences that you mentioned, am I right in saying that the variant would be the language symbols that are given to them?

E. VOEGELIN: I didn't get what you mean by "variant."

M. JENNINGS: —as opposed to constant.

E. VOEGELIN: What is the constant, then?

M. JENNINGS: It could be the experience—

E. VOEGELIN: Ah well, you see, experience isn't so constant either. Now we get into the problem of history. It is one of the mysteries of history that such experiences are not given to everybody at the beginning of known history but appear all of a sudden—say, in the thirteenth century before Christ in the case of Moses, in the seventh century before Christ in the case of Jeremiah, in the case of Heraclitus around 500 B.C., in the case of Buddha about 500 B.C., and so on. So experience is not a constant. But you get a

complex of experience, you might say, which historically differentiates and shows its structure. There is a historical development of experience—differentiating it, making its structure clearer—and on every such occasion developing language for the new discovery. This is one of the most important sources of new language.

P. COONAN: Could you also develop the consciousness? Would the differentiation that occurs in history itself differentiate or develop? Would man's consciousness? And I'm wondering about consciousness as something that occurs in space and time: Is it a "thing"?

E. VOEGELIN: You hit on all the real problems! You always have the problem that if you use *consciousness* in this sense (and it is practically the sense in which Aristotle in certain cases uses the term *aesthesis*), then in that consciousness obviously the meeting of the Divine Ground and man occurs; so one meaning of the term consciousness is "the site of participation." That is the difference between the "man" in the Platonic sense and the "mortal" in the Homeric sense who according to the Greek tradition shouldn't think about the gods because that is not a matter for men. Now in the existential tension the Divine becomes a matter of discussion for man because he discovers himself participating with the gods. At the same time he still is man. That means, in the body here, and this consciousness disappears with his death. So at the same time consciousness is the sensorium of itself as the site of participation and that sensorium is in the body. It's not so extraordinary. In his diary notes, Kafka calls that which he recognizes in himself as sensorium, the "indestructible element in conscience." The formulas are always simple.

P. COONAN: —which occurs both in time and space and which can be reflected on?

E. VOEGELIN: If you think of consciousness with the tension between God and man and if, as is usually done (even by Plato and Aristotle), you call one pole the "timeless pole" and call the other a "pole of time," then you get a peculiar problem. Existence in tension which is consciousness moves in two dimensions at the

same time; it is eternal *and* mundanely timebound. So you can express this existence only by the term (*I* usually use it) *the flow of presence*, meaning thereby the intersection of time and the timeless. That is called *the presence*.

If you use any other symbolism you get into difficulties. Say you use a simple line for mundane time: Every present point in the flow of presence can be directed, because man has a body, to an event in time-space. That can be done. But if space-time is substituted for that, you get into difficulties. You are induced to speculate about what happens in that time; for instance, you arrive at an absolute end. Then you get into the famous Kantian problems of progress, infinite perfection in time, progress in time toward a perfect realm of reason. To do a famous stunt: You can say that there is such a perfect realm in an indefinite time or infinite time in the future. You then take any limited time and ask yourself how much progress there is in that time. You get zero. When you operate with the mundane time-dimension you obviously get into difficulties of all kinds, and progress is zero.

L. PURCELL: Would this be the idea of in-betweenness that you explained?

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, Plato's in-between. But one has to develop a conception of time that is not a floating dimension, empty, but, as in modern physics, a parameter of something that exists. But it is consciousness that exists, and consciousness has a peculiar parameter that is called the timeless in time.

P. COONAN: They both exist?

E. VOEGELIN: Ah well! If man exists. If you objectify them, you get into problems you can no longer discuss rationally.

G. TUTSCH: Could you define the expression "existential tension" by equating it with the desire to know?

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, you can equate it with terms like *the desire to know* or *the attraction*; these are the concrete nuances of language for something which in an abstract way you can call tension.

G. TUTSCH: But you mention the tension as being a more or less universal phenomenon, whereas you doubted the universality of the desire to know.

E. VOEGELIN: Exactly. You can make sense of such a term as *zetesis* only as a universal—the seeking as peculiar to man—and you *have* such a structure of consciousness only on the basis of concrete experience. Now once these concrete experiences are made by somebody and given language formulas, the *symbols*, and you insist that they are peculiar only to that person, you fracture mankind into species, some of whom have such a consciousness and some not. And then you get into highly interesting things such as the pre-Civil War theology in the South: Every man has a soul, even a Negro; but men have souls of different sizes, and the Negroes have very small ones.

F. GREANEY: If the differentiation of consciousness is a Western phenomenon—

E. VOEGELIN: —in this degree.

F. GREANEY: —and begins with Plato and Aristotle, then I fail to see how a return to Plato and Aristotle and the engendering experiences is going to help facilitate dialogue with those cultures that have not gone through a similar differentiation of consciousness.

E. VOEGELIN: It *isn't* going to facilitate it unless the others also are willing to accept reason, based on such experiences, as the common language. We must always realize that that is the language of reason, the optimum of differentiation. If you relax that standard, you get into complex symbols in which you cannot communicate with anybody who belongs to a different type of complex symbolism. You can understand the analysis that he is talking about, but he can never understand what you are talking about because you have the more differentiated case. That is the problem some historians express in this way: "There is not a plurality of civilizations (as Toynbee, for instance, maintained); there is only one civilization—the Western—and a lot of other societies

which gradually become civilized, that is, Westernized." Perhaps that's true.

Q: Could a dialogue commence in Vietnam between a classically schooled Vietnamese Roman Catholic and a Vietnamese Buddhist who has acquired some French education but substantially predicates his experience on Buddhist teaching—both of them being rooted in the particular consciousness of Vietnamese classical thought and experience? Can you perceive the possibility of a dialogue there?

E. VOEGELIN: Perhaps that is not quite a fair question. It doesn't help to clarify a problem by taking a case that introduces so many new problems—all of which one would have to discuss: What is Buddhism? What is a Catholic Buddhist? What is a Vietnamese? We have quite enough problems here in the West: How can you talk with a French Marxist of a very cultivated type, like Garaudy, if you are not a Communist? It is next to impossible because he refuses to step out of his complex formulation. He speaks in the language of Hegelian Marxian dialectic—no compromise on that point—so you can't talk with him. We don't have to go to complicated cases like Catholics and Buddhists in Vietnam. We have the problem right at our doorstep.

C. TANSEY: Are you saying that there is a certain vulgarization in taking any two situations today? That somehow it simplifies things if you accept the common symbol of Plato or Aristotle because this is the most lucid common experience?

E. VOEGELIN: You might say so. The language of the classics has become the general language of Western civilization, especially the Anglo-Saxon (that is, English, American, and everywhere that influence has spread). In the eighteenth century—that was the great good luck—before the ideologies really got developed and under way, you had the commonsense philosophers of Scotland: Reid, Stewart, and so on. Commonsense philosophy is the real, fundamental, common language in which, thank God, we still speak in Anglo-Saxon civilizations. Here is an optimum situation for rationalization, because these Scottish philosophers

absorbed Plato and Aristotle if not directly at least in Ciceroian form, which was not too bad a deformation. You might say that a Scottish commonsense philosophy is an Aristotelian ethics and politics minus the metaphysics. (The metaphysics might be for the technicians but the ordinary people in regard to ethics and politics are on the commonsense level.) In his description of the practical behavior pattern, the Scottish philosopher is a straight Aristotelian. The whole classic pattern of rationality is preserved to an enormous extent (and more so than on the European continent) in England and America. That is a great cultural advantage.

C. TANSEY: But at one other stage in the lecture you said something about building up new symbols with the aid of modern science. Do you think that is more promising as a direction if the classical mentality is disappearing?

E. VOEGELIN: The classic mentality isn't disappearing. You might say only that it can be obscured or obfuscated by illiteracy. That of course is the great danger. And nothing is done by scientists, as far as I know, except the absorption of much irrational ideological vocabulary—which becomes general usage and contributes to the illiteracy. One must never forget that all classic philosophy is built on commonsense, while no ideology is built on commonsense—not the positivism of Comte or Marx, not Hegelianism. Realizing that is the great breakthrough.

D. SALMAN: What would you say if somebody told you that you seem, from outside, very culture bound, proclaiming that your tradition is *the* tradition, the good one, the only one, the more general, and that others are outcasts.

E. VOEGELIN: I would not be impressed in the least, because the term *culture bound* is an ideological term which assumes that there are cultures as absolutes. There is no such thing.

D. SALMAN: Yes, but they would say the same thing of you. They would not be moved by your claims, you aren't moved by theirs, and we remain side by side—

E. VOEGELIN: Of course you cannot discuss with an ideologist.

D. SALMAN: Isn't yours also an ideology?

E. VOEGELIN: No. What Mannheim has called the general ideological suspicion is an ideologist's assuming that everybody else is an ideologist, then marshalling his arguments accordingly, forgetting that thereby his ideology becomes a refuted opinion.

D. SALMAN: You mentioned faith, hope, and charity as fundamental notions. A Buddhist would say to you that charity, by which you might be concerned with some other person, is impurity; it is bad. If you want to purify yourself and get to Nirvana you must forget all about this and first be uninvolved. Now this is a fundamental opinion—I don't say I share it—and therefore this notion of love is not common. Or take hope. Moslem theologians (who do have in common with us the Old Testament) wouldn't accept hope in God because they say this is making a claim on God; He's obliged to respond to my hope. If our Maker is absolute Master, I shouldn't have a claim on Him. They would consider *this* fundamental and universal.

E. VOEGELIN: But in your formulations you have already substituted propositional dogma for language symbols referring to experience. If you take hope in the sense in which it is the core of Christian theology—"the substance of things hoped for, the proof of things unseen"—it doesn't lay a claim on anybody. It simply is an exact description of an experience of tending toward the Divine Ground—about which we have said precisely nothing except that its substance consists in your hope and your faith, with no propositions and no claims.

I think also that the Buddhist case cannot be introduced in this manner. You can always say, of course, that you have an option and that there is no appeal against a decision. But there is always the question of who takes the revolver or throws the bomb first, if you take the position that there are only decisions and no rational argument. I'm not a pessimist in these matters. One *can* analyze the reasons why, for instance, the Buddhist position is inferior in rational quality to the Christian—

D. SALMAN: Aren't you saying, "You must be a convert to my system and then we can talk"?

E. VOEGELIN: With *system* you've introduced an ideological term that did not become current before Descartes.

D. SALMAN: The formulation and the content of what you gave seems to you essential, and I must accept that if there is to be a conversation.

E. VOEGELIN: You see, ideological terms are beyond rational argument—beyond the field of experience. If you use that vocabulary, of course no discussion is possible.

D. SALMAN: The vocabulary is there before we start. I mean the language is there; Chinese is there.

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, but no such term as you have used occurs anywhere in Chinese.

D. SALMAN: I'm speaking of a man existing there, and he hasn't used any of your terms either. To establish a contact between me and you, do we speak commonsense Scottish philosophy?

E. VOEGELIN: The question of the basis is a very difficult problem. We sometimes have, in our institute in Munich, Korean students, from whom we could expect to learn something about Confucius. But we discovered, to our grief, that we know very much more about Confucius than any student twenty-five years of age who comes out of Korea. The internal illiteracy is fantastic; they just don't know their own classic culture. It is so difficult because we have not even *that* point in common.

R. MACHNIK: I want to ask if in the East there is this basis in commonsense that the Eastern man can go back to.

E. VOEGELIN: Unfortunately not; that is the problem. That is why political events in Far Eastern or African societies are always surprising to our politicians.

D. SALMAN: But I would say that they have their own common-sense rooted in their culture and conditioned by it, just as ours is conditioned by ours.

E. VOEGELIN: Culture is not an absolute. That is bad methodology. When you go back to Plato—

D. SALMAN: But they *don't* go back to Plato—

E. VOEGELIN: But you have to. If you refuse, there is no basis for anything, and we are again at the point of: Who pulls the gun first?

D. SALMAN: Do you believe in Plato?

E. VOEGELIN: No, I don't. This objection—that I believe in Plato—is a demagogic insinuation that I am an ideologist like everybody else. But I am not.

We talk in signs about reality. You are free *not* to talk about existential tension. But *if* you talk about it, you must talk about it in the language developed by the persons who have discovered existential tension; there is no other.

STANISLAUS MACHNIK: In your second volume you speak of the theological notions Homer uses about the gods in the *Iliad* and other expectations about the divine in the *Odyssey*. I'm curious to know why you would not attribute to Homer a sense of existential tension.

E. VOEGELIN: But I do.

STANISLAUS MACHNIK: But you placed it in the seventeenth century—

E. VOEGELIN: The great linguistic developments for it are then. But fairly clear consciousness, still in the language of the myth, is already present in Homer. In my recent "Immortality" lecture, I have given as an example from the third millennium B.C., a particular case where the whole problem is developed, but without that language.

C. TANSEY: Do you think it might help if the word *understanding* were used? The words *dialectic* or *dialogue* may set up the questions as meaning something antagonistic.

E. VOEGELIN: A dialogue or a conversation must always have as its substance a background of common experience of something, and a common language. When Plato talks with certain young men of the Athenian aristocracy who in his opinion are misled by Sophists, he belongs to the same social group as the young men do; he speaks the same language at the commonsense level. He can then purify language by discussing with them terms they use every day in a corrupted form, and he can point out what the terms formerly meant or what they could mean. A dialogue is always a pedagogical or (in a Platonic sense) a therapeutic enterprise.

But in the great source books Columbia University has published on "Indian philosophy," there are not even ten or twenty pages of a philosophical treatise on anything. If you take an Aristotelian or Thomistic treatise, or an essay by William James, as a model of what you do when you talk philosophy, there simply is no case of a Hindu or Buddhist literature of that kind. But there is *something*. The question yet to be explored is: What *is* it? That very good question cannot be glossed over by calling "philosophy" what isn't philosophy.

M. O'HARA: Can one think of a body of experience formulated somehow imaginatively, as making possible a *mores*, a complete way of life for a whole continent?

E. VOEGELIN: There you come to very interesting questions of ethics: How high is the cultural level of a group that lets its own children be eaten by rats or starve rather than kill cows or rats?

G. TUTSCH: To come back to the question at the beginning of your lecture—how to establish a meaningful dialogue if rational language is possible only on the basis of an understanding of the Platonic definitions: Would it not be up to the West to understand the East and learn to speak the language of the East, instead of expecting the East to understand the language of the West? We have the tools, as you say, whereas they don't.

E. VOEGELIN: That of course has been done. We have considerable knowledge of Eastern (Indian and Chinese) literary and intellectual production of the past. One sometimes forgets that India, for instance, would have no intellectual history of the Vedas and the Upanishads unless Westerners had recorded them in writing. Or that the Turks have a wonderful Hittite past in archeology because Westerners discovered the Hittites. Most of what we call the tradition of Hindus or of Chinese is a product of Western exploration—and not yet known to all Chinese or Hindus. A very important problem. In our exploration of politics, we who are certainly no Confucian scholars know more than Koreans about Confucian traditions. Hindus learned philosophy in certain variants of positivism (say, British analysis) with Hindu mysticism and feel they are on top of the world—but they have never understood any problem of philosophy. We can understand them, but it doesn't help.

STEPHEN MACHNIK: I think we have a very basic symbol—God—that seems paradoxical in itself. I was wondering: If we come upon such a ground and if all we can agree upon is that its symbols are paradoxical, and Eastern religions have come to the same paradox—then we have nothing really to talk about; all we can do is work up a myth.

E. VOEGELIN: But what are you referring to with your term *paradox*?

STEPHEN MACHNIK: I'm talking of a very basic symbol. The tension—

E. VOEGELIN: Why do you call it a paradox? Paradox is a matter of propositions.

G. MORGENSTERN: "Participation" is the paradox concerning God.

E. O'CONNOR: I think he might mean that when people in the East start to put into propositions their experience of God, they get into paradoxes.

E. VOEGELIN: Oh, yes. You get into paradoxes in the West also.

E. O'CONNOR: But somehow the one thing in common is that when we start talking about God we start talking in paradoxes.

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, for the excellent reason that our propositional language refers to objects in time and space. If you use propositions when you talk about God, these have to be paradoxical propositions—e.g., “He is and at the same time He is not”—because He is not in the manner of a thing in the external world.

STEPHEN MACHNIK: I was wondering if it is better, then, for us to help them with their agriculture.

E. VOEGELIN: If they would let us, but they don't.

T. MASON: It seems to me that in your description of the East you're saying that they can't objectify; they experience things but can't analyze them. I was thinking that there might be more hope in counting upon the scientific method to awaken them to being able to analyze things outside themselves.

E. VOEGELIN: They can do that, of course, but most of the people are resistant to it. Think of such phenomena, still not extinct, as Chinese geomantics—which means that the landscape itself is occupied by demons, gods, and spirits of all sorts. If you want to run a railroad through a hill, a whole countryside will rise in rebellion expecting horrible consequences when the daimon in possession of the hill is disturbed. You cannot use Western engineers in designing a railroad.

P. O'DOHERTY: Is that going on in China now?

E. VOEGELIN: I don't know. The Communists might kill the whole population of the countryside rather than give up. Probably something can be done in enclaves. But if you create enclaves, they are always a minority, and you either manage to exclude them from the political process or they will kill you; or you will in time have to kill them off. The politics of enclaves is very dangerous.

E. O'CONNOR: May I ask this very simple question. When you

were saying you wanted to get down to how one can actually work at this kind of dialogue, I presume you were *not* saying how individuals in a Peace Corps can start dealing with persons of another race or background; you were talking of how we can analyze to see what is the basic thing that ultimately has to be aimed at, though we don't even know how to get started communicating and working in sympathy with other persons. You are saying that any way that does not see as its ultimate communication a recognition of the basic rational background of thought is not in the right direction?

E. VOEGELIN: I've talked about these points only because of the formulation "theology confronting world religions." I think what is done at meetings of intellectuals from the left and the right, or from Catholics and Communists in Eastern Europe, has no practical importance at all. The practical difficulties are elsewhere. For instance, an Israeli friend, a cultural engineer, who does a lot of Israeli development in East Africa, finds that on the one hand the whole English apparatus of administration has broken down and, on the other, that an African is basically an individualist—he wants to sit on his plot of land, work on it, live on the results of it (for himself and his family) on a very modest level. Now in order to get any advance at all one must persuade people to group together in purchase of agricultural machinery, in the cooperatives for marketing, and so on. On the basis of their *kibbutzim* experience, the Israelis have a certain advantage psychologically in bringing people to this; such immediate cooperative communist experience nobody else in the West has. They have some results, at least, on which perhaps something can be built. What really has to be done is on such a level. Practically, dialogue simply does not occur. You can't put a Hindu, a Confucian, a Western ideologue of the communist persuasion, and one of the liberal persuasion together into one room and have anything result from their talking at one another. It's no dialogue.

E. O'CONNOR: Thank you for the way in which you've met the arguments and clarified what you meant—and also for your criticism of the title of our course.

II. Questions Up²

E. VOEGELIN: What I have to do now is get all the analysis of concrete empirical material—which is horribly voluminous—into that fourth volume so that I have the basis for talking about these matters theoretically in the next volume.

E. O'CONNOR: So the fourth volume will contain a good deal of the empirical matter—

E. VOEGELIN: —and bring it to a close and make selections for the ecumenic empires, for Christianity, and for modernity.

E. O'CONNOR: Then your search for when a symbol shows itself in history isn't vitiated but modified? What *is* the modification? (It is extremely interesting to determine *when* something appears.)

E. VOEGELIN: I can give you examples of what I've been doing on my present trip.

I started in Rome with Mario Praz, the best man on symbolism. (He is bringing out a new volume this year.) The Italians during the last four or five years have done most of the work on the development of Neoplatonism, Hermeticism, alchemy—because that was mostly an Italian phenomenon. What turned out is that the following sequence: mannerism (sixteenth century), romanticism (end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries), symbolism (around 1900), surrealism (since the 1920s), is *one* sequence in continuity with medieval alchemy. The special program I was working on was a study of Hegel showing that speculative systems are a form of sorcery and alchemy. That can be shown only on the basis of comparative material (i.e., with mannerism

2. A discussion at Thomas More Institute on November 9, 1970, originally published in *Conversations with Eric Voegelin*, ed. R. Eric O'Connor, Thomas More Institute Papers vol. 76 (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1980), 75–111. Transcripts of four lectures and discussions at Montreal in 1965, 1967, 1970, 1976.

Editorial remark from O'Connor: The conversation began with questions to Eric Voegelin on the unfinished state of his *Order and History*. Participants in the conversation were: Eric Voegelin, Eric O'Connor, Charlotte Tansey, Cathleen Going.

and so on). The alchemist Hermetic symbolism of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is now well worked through by historians of literature and art, to show the continuity. So Hegel and Marx are magicians now.

E. O'CONNOR: That won't be very welcome.

E. VOEGELIN: Another development in the last ten years only: With the East African discoveries by Leakey of early man, it is now absolutely clear that man is not a natural species, a biological species.

E. O'CONNOR: Meaning what?

E. VOEGELIN: The biological species *homo sapiens* begins about thirty thousand years back; man as a tool-making, tool-using creature begins about three million years back. The history of humanity, if you make *homo faber* the criterion of "what is man?" begins long before we have the present biological species of man.

E. O'CONNOR: You mean archeologically—?

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, it can be shown by paleontological science that people who used tools did not at all belong to the species *homo sapiens* but to animal species (if you want to classify animals as a species). The whole study of man is independent now of the biological question.

E. O'CONNOR: Has Leakey himself done that?

E. VOEGELIN: Leakey made the discoveries in the 1960s, and Portman is the only man I have found who has drawn the consequences, developing a biological field theory as a substitute for the theory of species. We have a theory of evolution but not of species. And no longer a theory of mutations. Mutations pertain only to the laboratory species and experiments that have been coming to the fore since 1905, when Thomas Hunt Morgan started his studies in New York.

E. O'CONNOR: The laboratory species that gave the grounds for notions of mutations—

E. VOEGELIN: —do not apply to paleontological species. There probably aren't any of that kind. The whole theory has to be revised. That is the biological side. After seeing Portman in Basel, I went to Saarbrücken to see Marie König, the best archeologist for prehistoric matters. She gave me all the symbolism of cave engravings, and so on, back to the Paleolithic Age.

E. O'CONNOR: In paleontology is there any notion of what kind of creatures those were, *except* by their works? Have they identified them with the skeletons in any way?

E. VOEGELIN: Oh yes, you can identify the skeletons with the artifacts which accompany them. It's all there. And there is no doubt that they do not belong to the species *homo sapiens*.

E. O'CONNOR: That's a shift. Of course it's been only three hundred years since the "species" notion, since the first struggles of John Ray about species in the logical and in the biological senses.

E. VOEGELIN: Portman is of the opinion that the whole species concept is still in continuity with Linnaean description—something which approximately you called a species; whether it is one you really don't know. For the great families of animals—reptiles and birds and mammals—it doesn't work at all because they are not species. But the families are there.

E. O'CONNOR: I see—so there has to be another grouping.

E. VOEGELIN: An entirely different grouping as far as the species problem is concerned.

E. O'CONNOR: And have you any glimmer in talking to them of what the definition will be of grouping that took hold with modern science?

E. VOEGELIN: They don't know yet. Probably we can do nothing but show that certain "plans of development"—say, a human type—emerge at some time.

E. O'CONNOR: That is a larger notion and not easy to handle in a laboratory—

E. VOEGELIN: But nobody knows the answer to that famous old question—whether the monkey is a side issue of man or man is a side issue of monkey. That's a matter of speculative construction.

E. O'CONNOR: I see you're having some fun.

E. VOEGELIN: These are the things that are now the great problems.

E. O'CONNOR: In the material coming out in your volume four, will these questions be visible?

E. VOEGELIN: They will become visible on the basis of the materials that I bring into this book, but the theoretical discussion comes in volume five.

E. O'CONNOR: May I go back to my first question: What you were so interested in—how symbols emerge, and at what points of history—certainly hasn't got the same significance now, but it nevertheless is important.

E. VOEGELIN: Oh yes. Whenever symbols emerge—of which we know the meaning because in continuity they go into the high civilizations—there are then commentaries on that meaning, in the form of myth, and they are written down, you know what they mean. Presumably when they appear without commentary they have the same meaning and express the same experience, which later is expressed in the myth.

E. O'CONNOR: Except that the feedback of language is very strong once there is a story.

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, there are accretions, and it is complicated. But there is no reason whatsoever to assume that, say, a symbol of cosmic unity, which is identical in a cave painting in Europe and in Egypt, would have entirely different meanings at the moment when a myth is written around it.

E. O'CONNOR: No reason for saying they would be *entirely* different—but there is the feedback on the group.

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, and of course you don't know what else they talk of—because it's not preserved. Or how far it goes back beyond paleolithic engravings. And also we don't know because sometimes they used materials that have vanished. If instead of stone engravings, which require a certain development of tools, there were (for instance) wooden symbols, they would all be gone. In China the young capital of the Chou empire was a city of at least the splendor of Rome, and nothing is preserved because it was all built in wood.

E. O'CONNOR: You're almost back to the notion that perhaps there were whole massive civilizations that we don't know anything about.

E. VOEGELIN: Well, that is another matter. There may be others we don't know about, but those we do know about are, I think, sufficient data. I'm satisfied to go back to about fifty thousand—I don't want more!

E. O'CONNOR: But it opens up the possibility—before, time was limited—for much to have happened.

E. VOEGELIN: Of course we do not know yet what future excavations may bring. For instance, for the moment it looks as if all the oldest cave engravings are European (Isle de France, southern Alps, up to Norway—when the Ice Ages recede and so on). Perhaps we'll find something in Asia if there are enough excavations.

I have been doing other things also. In "Gospel and Culture"

I worked on certain deformations of existence; for instance, the present revolutionary deformations—

E. O'CONNOR: I'm not sure what you mean by "the present revolutionary deformations."

E. VOEGELIN: In classic philosophy and Christianity, the solution to the sorrows of man—death and life and so on—are answered through turning toward God, the *periagoge* in the Platonic sense, the turning around. Deformations occur if you refuse to turn around and persist in a state of alienation. Explicit persistence in the state of alienation (characteristic of gnosis) is possible only after Christianity has differentiated the problem of existence—a relation of man to the unknown God who is not intra-cosmic (as the polytheistic type is) but extra-cosmic. Then only—when that has differentiated—can there arise the conception of an extra-cosmic existence of man in revolt.

E. O'CONNOR: And by the revolutionary—you mean explanation of a force going on apart from God?

E. VOEGELIN: Yes. That helps very much to show that certain advances in the differentiation of man's understanding of his relation to God—as in the Gospel—constitute a new cultural field in which new types of deformation can occur. That is an accompaniment of Christianity, not to be found the same in China or India.

E. O'CONNOR: There would be deformations of existence?

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, but they would be of a different type. You can always have revolts against God—for instance: in Greece in the name of Promethean man, but not of a gnostic man. You can have a Prometheus revolt, which is recognized as a revolt against the gods—but the revolt receives a positive interpretation in gnosis. In Aeschylus it is negative. With the Gnostics of the second and the third centuries, to be Promethean becomes a positive quality. That is possible only after Christianity.

C. TANSEY: We were discussing in a course tonight Erich Neumann's *Mystic Man*. It seems to me that he offers a new way of thinking about man developing.

E. VOEGELIN: I don't know him yet. One has to dissolve the question of the nature of man. The factor neglected, though it is always present in the texts, is that the nature of man is a historical discovery. That does not mean there is not a nature of man but that the nature of man itself arises into consciousness in a historical process at a certain point—just as, let us say, in Jesus the differentiation of the eminent presence of God in man rises to a certain degree of differentiation of consciousness, though it was present also before. So the historical indices of what later becomes simply a dogmatism—that is what has to be worked out.

E. O'CONNOR: So that is where you look again for those specific moments—

E. VOEGELIN: That's where the problems of differentiation in history come in. You can see it best, perhaps, if you consider the question of the eminent presence of God: Where is He immediately to be experienced? *Having* the knowledge of the unknown God just as much as Jesus does not lead Plato to a differentiation of God in man. He says: If there is that presence of such an unknown God, he is a God about whom we can say nothing; we know only that there is one. The known gods, the son of God, the *monogenes theos*, the First-born, remains the cosmos, in Plato. The same words appear in the Gospel of Saint John to designate Christ; but the great difference is that a man is the *monogenes theos* and not the cosmos.

E. O'CONNOR: So the drama will be the differentiation as it occurs—

E. VOEGELIN: The concentration into consciousness. It's all somehow compactly present, even before, so in the *preparatio evangelica* and the history of revelation one has to go as far back as the sources go. But the full differentiation comes only through Jesus, not through Plato.

C. GOING: And so what you were working on in the early volumes of *Order and History*—the differentiation of consciousness—remains the theoretical interest.

E. VOEGELIN: The first three volumes stopped short of Christianity because I didn't know how to handle it yet. I had to work through the sources. That I've done now.

The question of Jesus I always shunned because I saw one couldn't do it on the basis of theology. Theology is two thousand years' accretion on top of the Gospel and deforms the symbolism of the Gospel in a certain direction through the introduction of Hellenistic philosophy. One has to go back of theology and work directly on the sources of the time.³

The experiences of being drawn by God are described in the Platonic myth (in the *Laws*) of the god who plays with men as with puppets and pulls them by the string. That's *helkein* (to draw). The term recurs in the Gospel of John. So the experience of being drawn by God remains identical.

E. O'CONNOR: "No man can come to me unless the Father draw him."

E. VOEGELIN: Exactly. The same words occur in the Platonic version. But Plato does not draw the consequences—the God who pulls man by the string is not the God who becomes man to die.

Working out these parallels and differences is what I've done now.

E. O'CONNOR: When did you realize that the shift had to come? Not just when you gave up the six-volume plan?

E. VOEGELIN: I have written out the whole thing; the manuscript is standing there. But it makes no sense because, though I have digested materials to amount to some six more volumes, the essence is missing: The problem "What is the decisive difference that appears with Christianity?" is needed for explaining also the revolutionary deformations that are our present concern. The type

3. [A paper on Japanese Buddhism was suggested to Voegelin as interesting in the context of this conversation.—O'Connor]

of revolution that appears after Christianity is not present in the cultural environment of Plato and Aristotle.

E. O'CONNOR: The kind of revolution that just wants to destroy?

E. VOEGELIN: Oh, revolutions would always destroy, but giving revolution the foundation of an existential theory—that man in his alienation is the ultimate entity—*that* is new.

E. O'CONNOR: If one says “the” ultimate entity or “an” ultimate entity—does it make a significant difference?

E. VOEGELIN: Oh yes—because “the” ultimate entity means that man in the deformation replaces God.

And one can now give precise definitions of a Hegelian system of deformation: If you speculate on the basis of your state of alienation and seek salvation—while *remaining* in the state of alienation—that is the Hegelian trick. That is what is called dialectics.

All metaphysics (that is, the philosophy that has become dogmatized into concepts, beginning with the Stoics and reaching, say, to Spinoza) always includes as a premise of thinking that one turns around toward God. That turning around is given up in the eighteenth century.

C. TANSEY: Jonah in the Old Testament certainly didn't turn around.

E. O'CONNOR: He didn't make a theory of it.

E. VOEGELIN: But you can make a theory of it. There's an excellent study by Orwell, *Inside the Whale*: a description of the contemporary intellectual.

E. O'CONNOR: And he clarifies what one would mean by making a theory?

E. VOEGELIN: He is the one English intellectual who breaks out

and understands these things—just as Camus is the one French intellectual to do so (and at the same time).⁴

[. . .] The drawings of Jung's patients are simply mythical manifestations of an experience of wholeness of the cosmos, which can appear at any time.

E. O'CONNOR: I see. He didn't take it to the meaning, he took it to the image. Then obviously one found certain similarities—

E. VOEGELIN: One has to go at it historically and see that what he calls the *mandala* type (squares in circles, Tibetan symbolization of the whole of the cosmos) you find everywhere. That's how the cosmos is symbolized. You're back in the Paleolithic Age, and it doesn't help you to call it an archetype. It's a type that always will reappear as symbolization of the whole of the cosmos. You can't do anything *but* symbolize that either as the circle or the sphere or as four points.

The most primitive symbols are always simple strokes. You can symbolize by four lines (these are the four directions of the cosmos) [here and below Voegelin draws a diagram on the board] or you can make this figure [a cross in the circle, dividing it into four equal parts]—

E. O'CONNOR: Now you make it closed in a way the other wasn't.

E. VOEGELIN: Or you can make a square combining the four points and inscribing in that another one; and then other ones, getting a sort of raster, a network.

All of these do appear on the paleolithic level. That raster, for instance, has become the symbol of cosmic power. And when you come to the Mesopotamian civilization you find a ruler seated on such a thing as his throne—it becomes a symbol of power. Or you find it in a cone: the cosmic omphalos, covered by that network—the omphalos of Delphi. There are coins of the Seleucid period where the king is sitting on that sort of throne. So the symbol becomes the power symbol of world empire.

Then you can get all sorts of combinations. For instance, a moon is always *symbolized* by the three phases—some sort of triangle.

4. [The conversation shifted to the "archetypes" of C. G. Jung.—O'Connor]

And you can combine them; that's why the tooth of a mammal or boar becomes a moon symbol also.

E. O'CONNOR: You say "that's why." You're not tracing a psychic process?

E. VOEGELIN: The psychic process is always the fundamental experience of a cosmos symbolized by its ordering constellations (the sun—the moon).

C. TANSEY: Does the abstract thing come first?

E. VOEGELIN: First you get abstractions; then the combinations (of a bison, say, in the cave paintings); then the iconoclastic reversals—still in the paleolithic period—where there is reduction to four lines or four or five points again, on small pebbles.

E. O'CONNOR: So, there's nothing against five?

E. VOEGELIN: Nothing. You can get more: By putting a stick in the middle of such an engraving you get a sun dial and a sixth point—a below and an above point.

And there are combinations: a representation of the world as a square and on top of it the heaven—then you can put the axis of the world through heaven and earth into the underworld—and an underworld beneath it; it's a sort of building—or a square topped by the heaven as a circle—the beginning, you might say, of cathedral architecture. All these things are possible.

E. O'CONNOR: And related to a fundamental meaning—

E. VOEGELIN: —the fundamental meaning of the four points as the sun symbol and the three points as the moon symbol. When you arrange properly a triangle and four lines you get something like a hand (you *can* interpret it naturalistically); after simple geometrical designs, you can add a thumb. The hand symbols appear as symbols of the world consisting of the sun and the moon.

E. O'CONNOR: But when the marks are simple, they could be accidental marks.

E. VOEGELIN: Such arrangements did not appear simply like that—they appear in groups. They are dotted by all sorts of points, produced probably by some sort of instrument with which you hit in a ritual gesture of knocking to the god to make him aware of your presence. The points due to ritual hammering show that these are ritual symbols.

E. O'CONNOR: Quite shocking.

C. TANSEY: No, I like it better that the abstraction is first.

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, the abstraction is always first. The naturalist interpretations come later: "that is a hand." The symbol for the cosmos appears on late Byzantine coins as the decoration of an imperial mantle: That's the world ruler. On Byzantine coins in the ninth and tenth centuries you see the emperor with the Christ symbol on his mantle instead. But that is not enough for a world symbol, so four dots and three dots are left and right of the emperor to show that he's the world ruler.

The imaginative elaborations are infinite.

E. O'CONNOR: In materials you have worked with, is there any evidence as to where speech began?

E. VOEGELIN: That is really a problem now in biology, because speech in the sense of human language requires a certain construction of the larynx and of the palate. It is a question, for instance, whether the construction of the palate in Neanderthal man is capable of producing speech—

E. O'CONNOR: —if it is any way differentiated beyond just noises—

E. VOEGELIN: Because animals can produce something like a bellow, but not articulate speech. These questions have been badly neglected because for early paleontological periods there are only skulls; the soft spots are gone.

C. GOING: What about imitative birds?

E. VOEGELIN: They are imitative, but they do not articulate quite the way a man does.

E. O'CONNOR: One can ask history when there is clear writing—but when you ask where speech begins, it's like dropping a stone down a well.

E. VOEGELIN: Well, no—biologists are working on that.

E. O'CONNOR: Then there's some hope of coming up with something.

E. VOEGELIN: Yes. The Neanderthal man gets you back at least 35,000 years.

C. TANSEY: There is a theory that the innovations in speech happen through children; the creative thing *didn't* happen once the pattern was formed.

E. VOEGELIN: So the world is full of movements!

C. TANSEY: You don't think there are any new spatial experiences?

E. VOEGELIN: You have the problem that if one tries to construct a "physical universe" out of the experience of physics, that doesn't work. One *cannot* construct a physical universe. I've made a study of that problem in modern physics and I have shown, in the manner of the Kantian aporias, that any attempt to construct the universe on the basis either of Newtonian or of Einsteinian conceptions of time and space runs into logical aporias.

E. O'CONNOR: Basically why?

E. VOEGELIN: One would have to go through the whole system of the conception of, say, indefinite space, indefinite time, a homogenous medium as in Newtonian physics. When you make assumptions with regard to infinite velocity of movement in that universe you must cover it somehow by a movement faster than light; you have to construct a model of how can it be experienced,

and if it can be experienced by such a model, you get into the aporias. Of course, we *don't* experience that, in fact. There can't be any verified model of experience of the universe.

E. O'CONNOR: You can certainly get a lot of theories. Those are the so-called verified models, but Charlotte is talking about new experiences—

C. TANSEY: —which might make a different pattern for symbols.

E. VOEGELIN: What kind of experience would that be?

C. TANSEY: Going to the moon.

E. VOEGELIN: No—we've always had the model of going to the moon. You don't have to go there in fact.

C. TANSEY: I mean the experience of the human size being somehow dwarfed in a new way.

E. VOEGELIN: Human size isn't dwarfed in any significant way as compared with the cosmos conceptions of ancient civilization and of the Greeks. Since they had a fairly good idea how far away the sun is from the earth, they were as "dwarfed" as we are.

E. O'CONNOR: I wonder if I have an example of a new experience. I was waiting for a bit of music on the radio to stop in order to be sure of something, and turn it off. Because I was waiting, I wasn't relaxed in the time of the music, and I suddenly realized the strain of the waiting. This was a new experience of two times for me.

E. VOEGELIN: But this is just a question of two orders of time.

E. O'CONNOR: But still that may be the kind of thing—

C. TANSEY: Yes. I meant, not the intellectual understanding, but the sheer feel of one's shoulder in the presence of something that is in a different scale.

E. VOEGELIN: But that hasn't changed significantly in historical times. Perhaps you get a change when and if the indefinite expansion of space and time is hypostatized into a burden. But that is a mere question of hypostatizing it. It doesn't make any difference—for a man—whether the universe is ten or ten million light years in dimension. The one is as infinite as the other.

E. O'CONNOR: Or if it's infinite or finite—

E. VOEGELIN: —it doesn't make any difference—

E. O'CONNOR: —as far as the experience is concerned. It's so massive. But the infinite universe, in place of the universe bounded by the spheres, must have made a terrible shock.

E. VOEGELIN: That would be between Copernicus and Galileo. That was perhaps a shock.

C. GOING: The only new experiences are differentiations of consciousness?

E. VOEGELIN: Yes. All that is involved in the famous Copernican affair was already discovered by Aristotle; he knew it.

E. O'CONNOR: As far as possibilities were concerned?

E. VOEGELIN: He was clear that one can construct the universe geometrically—either by making the earth the center of the sun, or vice versa. If you make the earth the center it is on the basis of the empirical observations of his time, and for no other reason. A century later Aristarchus made the sun the center, again for empirical reasons. If that didn't become historically influential, it was due exclusively to Stoic resistance; there you get a religious dogmatic opposition to making the sun the center because it would destroy the sacrality of the earth. The Stoics were the obstacle, not the Christians. Aristotle formulated quite clearly what the problem is (as did Parmenides or Nicholas of Cusa): The center of the universe is where its dynamic organizing force sits. That, for Aristotle, is the periphery. His was a periphero-centric conception,

not a geocentric or heliocentric one. And the periphery is far away; it's not reachable.

E. O'CONNOR: What you're saying is there has been no basic change in symbols.

E. VOEGELIN: No basic change, because experience is always the same: experience of participation in the cosmos.

C. TANSEY: Isn't there any way out of that? *Is* experience always the same?

E. VOEGELIN: That's what we just talked about. When you start constructing a universe on the basis of physical observation you run into the aporias. Of course there is no infinite universe; the infinite is not the given. You don't experience it; it is a definite construction. If you hypostatize that construction and make it a sort of nightmare, then you can have a nightmare experience. But if you don't make it a nightmare, then it is no matter of interest how many billion light years there are.

C. TANSEY: Negatively, though, if you don't look at the organic natural symbols (people know they can make water in the laboratory; they don't see water as something wonderful), wouldn't that shift your imagination?

E. VOEGELIN: If you permit your imagination to shift, you can get into all sorts of nightmares and psychotic states.

C. TANSEY: Why wouldn't it be a step to a new symbolization?

E. VOEGELIN: It *is*, but to symbolizations of nightmare, or psychotic deformations.

E. O'CONNOR: Why would you say the withdrawal of the natural symbols would be a nightmare?

E. VOEGELIN: A plant is a plant. You see it. You don't see its

physical-chemical processes, and nothing about the plant changes if you know that physical-chemical processes are going on inside. How these processes will result in what you experience immediately as a plant (a rose or an oak tree), you don't know anyway. So if you know these substructures in the lower levels of the ontic hierarchy (beyond the plant which is organism) and go into the physical, chemical, molecular, and atomic structures, ever further down, the greater becomes the miracle how all that thing is a plant. Nothing is explained. If you try to explain it in terms of some mechanism, you have committed the fallacy of reduction.

If you deform your experience by trying to explain what you experience by the things that you don't experience but that you know only by science, you get a perverted imagination of reality—if you see a rose as a physical or atomic process.

C. TANSEY: But suppose in our experience we become anthropocentric, in which one's center of consciousness has shifted and one doesn't look at a rose.

E. VOEGELIN: You get a perverted view of reality. You can always interpret going with a saw through wood as the inexplicable fact that sawing through a piece of wood you cut through atomic structures, you cut the atom. Then *that* is the structure of reality.

C. TANSEY: But suppose I was sophisticated and saw proportion rather than—

E. O'CONNOR: —saw proportion instead of seeing the concrete—

C. TANSEY: —saw relationship, saw everything relatively instead of head-on.

E. VOEGELIN: I'm not quite sure I understand what you mean. As far as I can understand, it is the problem that Kant has treated. You can assume a theory of world evolution—that the species develop. You *can* make such an assumption. Then you can go on further and in the scale of evolution, down to the simple cells, try to explain the simple cells in terms of the molecular structure out of which life develops, and the molecular structure in terms of the

atomic structures—and you only push back the question, What is the origin? What is the beginning?

C. TANSEY: I'm thinking simply on the level of description, not on the level of the explanation. Just what I react to as "the cosmos must be this way."

E. VOEGELIN: All the things that are described by a physicist are not experienced by anybody. Nobody has seen an atom.

C. TANSEY: But if the notion of the classical is somehow pattern, regularity, wouldn't the randomness, the off-centeredness, be a shift in my assumptions (which are somehow my quick descriptions of how reality is)?

E. O'CONNOR: If one sees reality as the summation, the realization of probabilities that were unknowable—

E. VOEGELIN: —as in nuclear physics—

E. O'CONNOR: Yes, you may in some sense cease to see a human being as a *gestalt*.

C. GOING:⁵ I wonder if the formulators of dogma are not really stating that which we would understand if we understood.

E. VOEGELIN: No, they are quite clear about the solution of a philosophical problem, but the philosophical problem itself is fallaciously constructed. *I* don't have that philosophical problem, therefore the answer is of comparatively little interest except as a historical phenomenon. If you have two natures you have to get them together in one person. But if you don't make assumptions about two natures it's no problem.

C. GOING: But also if you have God and man—and the man is *monogenes theos*—and if you're going to say one more thing and not just repeat that, what *are* you going to say?

5. [The conversation turned to the development of doctrines and dogma.—O'Connor]

E. VOEGELIN: Nothing. Anything more you say is fallacious mis-construction.

E. O'CONNOR: Well, you mean it *will* be when it's passed to someone else? Or do you mean your thinking about that is fallacious? I'm just trying to see what you're saying, because you obviously have thought about it and come to a conclusion.

E. VOEGELIN: No. The Father-and-Son symbolism is an old Egyptian symbolism. Every pharaoh is the son of God. You can trace historically that only the cultic representative of social order is the son of God—only the pharaoh, nobody else. Then you get, in the Exodus story, the transfer of the son of God from the pharaoh to the Chosen People: "my son, my first-born" is Israel. In the Gospel you get the further transfer: "This is my son, my first-born in whom I have my pleasure" (in the John the Baptist scene).

So you can trace that, and what it amounts to is the realization that the existential presence of God is experienced in existence in consciousness. And if you go beyond *that*, well, then you do one of these misconstructions. Of course when there is a social environment of misconstruction, you have to do something about it. That is the origin of dogma.

E. O'CONNOR: I follow what you are saying.

E. VOEGELIN: You see, the dogma has a very important social function: to avoid certain misconstructions and show, *if* the misconstructions are socially dominant, how at least to handle them so as to avoid the worst consequences. But if you don't live in the particular environment of, say, the fourth century, and therefore do not think in Hellenistic categories of these natures—

C. GOING: But what do you say to Madame Guyon? If you are not completely imbedded in the cultural context of Madame Guyon, what do you say to her?

E. VOEGELIN: What Knox would say. Look at the chapter on Madame Guyon or the chapter on Wesley in Knox's *Enthusiasm*. You

will see what you have to say. I think he is right in his criticism of that kind of mysticism.

C. GOING: In others words, there *is* a tradition against which you check.

E. VOEGELIN: Oh, yes. The tradition is always the structure of consciousness. That is reality. And in many respects, it is better worked out in the classic philosophy than anywhere in Christianity. The Platonic analyses are frequently better. One doesn't see these things in context because they have become so compartmentalized. When you look, say, at the parable of the cave in the *Politeia*—where the man is turned toward the wall and then is *forced* to turn around and walk up toward the light in order to see the light—that is obviously a description of an experience of overcoming a resistance to turn around, being overcome by that pull of new force (by Divine Grace, or intervention, or whatever you wish to call it). Now what is the difference between this force compelling you to turn around, in Plato, and the vision of Saint Paul on the road to Damascus? I don't know what the difference is.

C. GOING: And what about the subsequent attempts to say how the being-turned-around relates to the turning-around—the whole history of relating grace and freedom?

E. VOEGELIN: The existential experience is that there is an element of human searching (the *zetesis*, in the classical sense) and an element of being drawn by God (the *helkein*). These are the two experiences you have. There's a dynamics in your existence. The tension is that of being drawn not only by a force of which you have never heard anything but by a force which you are seeking that is God. This is the mutuality in the searching and the being-drawn. If you make out of that a question of Pelagianism (only man's will is of importance) or anti-Pelagianism (only grace is important) then you have already hypostatized the real experience, the mutuality of the tension, into two entities called free human will and divine will.

C. GOING: So the inability of imagination to work at the coalescence of divine and human action has to be corrected by some theoretical effort—

E. VOEGELIN: —always coming back to the structure of experience as analyzed by those few select individuals who knew what they were talking about, like Plato or Socrates or Jesus. That's where you get some analysis.

E. O'CONNOR: I'm seeing another example of what you're saying. Gilkey, in his book *Creator of Heaven and Earth*, stresses that "creation out of nothing" meant creation out of nothing (there was only God) and not "everything I do is somehow God so it doesn't matter." The problem wouldn't have arisen if I hadn't said "created out of nothing." On the other hand, one said it to get away from the notion—

E. VOEGELIN: —that there is a material existing before God.

E. O'CONNOR: You're really saying that these are ploys of human thought and should be kept alive as ploys.

On the other hand, *you're* talking within a very firm Christian consciousness, though one that has done a lot of exploring that not everybody has done. As persons get older, their approach to God gets simpler—I think there is just no question of that—*but* I don't know whether I could help people if I hadn't gone through very many of the ploys one gets within a tradition. One has the safeties, at least, of the best judgment there is in a tradition; on the ordinary levels there's a common sense handed through.

E. VOEGELIN: What one has to fall back on is always the structure of the experience itself, and you find that only the people who have the experience have analyzed that.

C. GOING: I'm trying to make sure that there's room for "analysis" as an important step—for trying to reflect upon the experience and say something about it, rather than just repeating "I have had the experience."

E. VOEGELIN: Experience alone doesn't get you anywhere. But you have to describe it anyway when you talk about it, and the vocabulary has been developed; it's there, though one usually doesn't take cognizance of that fact.

C. GOING: And not only the descriptive vocabulary is valuable but the attempt to give an explanatory, a theoretical account?

E. VOEGELIN: I cannot quite imagine what theoretical account beyond the analysis of experience is needed. You might say that when you have an existential experience like Plato's (which you just hinted at) you will, then, having that experience, break with the cosmological myth of the intra-cosmic gods and find a new symbolism for explaining the structure of the world: It's not the polytheistic gods who determine the structure of the world and the underworld; it is the *idea*. You might call *idea* a theoretical development out of a mystical experience which explains that the cosmos has form. There you have a theoretical extrapolation from a mystical position.

E. O'CONNOR: You're not saying that history was wrong—history is fact—but that the role of theology is to keep this point clarified somehow?

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, it's very important. But that is also the reason why a certain amount of dogma cannot be understood by the average man today. He hasn't the problems that forced the dogma to come into existence.

C. TANSEY: The problems he does have not been identified enough that any talking back has happened.

E. VOEGELIN: He is really talking about his existential problems. The dogma has already moved one step away from the existential problem.

C. GOING: Might dogma help with recurrence? There seem to be recurrent traps or problems for imagination.

E. VOEGELIN: Oh, yes—for instance, the question of Pelagianism: concentrating all the dynamics of existence into man alone, without the Divine.

C. GOING: Then there will be *recurrent* need of correctives to imagination, which is not adequate to the reality but insists on handling it in some kind of picture. So correctives will recur.

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, but, after all, there *is* history, as you just said. We know now a lot about dogma that one didn't know two hundred years ago, in the Enlightenment period. Because one can understand dogma as an extrapolation in order to preserve intact the real existential problem of man's relation to God, one can now speak directly of man's relation to God.

E. O'CONNOR: Perhaps another formulation of what you are saying is B. Lonergan's suggestion: "If you want to see what a person means, try to find out what question he's answering."

E. VOEGELIN: Yes. Take the case of Sartre's existentialism. He speaks of *la facticité de l'existence*. To analyze Sartre, I would start from that point: Whether in classic philosophy or in Christianity, existence is *not* a fact but always a tension in the openness toward something that is *more* than the fact of existence. Reality is always something else than the reality that is a fact. So with "Existence is a fact" we have made a fundamentally fallacious interpretation of existence.

To know what existence means in classic philosophy or in the Gospel, you have to go back to the sources and see how existence is described. It's a questioning, tending toward an answer—the "saving answer" in the Platonic sense. If you eliminate that answer (and because of the question-and-answer relation) you get into the problem: Here is a fact that has no meaning (facts have no meaning). If it has to *get* a meaning, where does Sartre get it? By producing an imaginative meaning out of his *moi* (he realizes that, of course); e.g., "condemned to be free" finds meaning that existence doesn't have. Then he tries to get arrested for being the editor of a Maoist journal. It's grotesque. You can make this analysis only if you are clear that existence is not a fact but a

process. Once that is clear, the criticism of Sartre is very simple; it's practically all one has to say.

E. O'CONNOR: I understand why you are talking mostly about religious doctrine; that is what many people take over without having lived through the experience of the question. They don't know what the dogma is answering, but because it's religious it has a lot of importance to them. But on every level of understanding there are doctrines that are just accepted statements.

E. VOEGELIN: The first page of the Dutch Catholic Catechism quite sensibly tackles the problem: The questions are missing so the dogma is senseless. That is the best analysis.

C TANSEY: What is the role of raising the question? It's not theological; it's not poetry—

E. VOEGELIN: It is because *reason* started. The tension of existence toward the Divine *nous*—that's the definition of *nous* or *geist* or *spirit* or *reason*.

E. O'CONNOR: By *definition* you mean Plato's definition?

E. VOEGELIN: In the sense that he has created the vocabulary for a human activity of searching for God. He calls it "philosophy." And the type of consciousness which on that occasion is analyzed—that is what he calls *nous* (and Aristotle too). If you relax the tension, or make it disappear, or pretend there is no such tension—well, then, you're out of it; you're sunk.

E. O'CONNOR: And suppose, just taking a simple stand, a person says, "I don't think that's a tension at all. I've never felt any tension in that direction. When I'm well fed I don't feel a tension"—?

E. VOEGELIN: You realize, of course, that that isn't so. You can always point to his worrying about it. He knows quite well what he's talking about when he says he has not experienced the tension.

E. O'CONNOR: You are saying that more conceptualization has happened in the theology than ideas behind it.

C. TANSEY: So the only important thing into the future is to sniff out the question?

E. VOEGELIN: Always go back to the question. That one can do today because we have a historical knowledge of the problem that even fifty years ago we did not have. One should *use* that historical knowledge!

C. TANSEY: In a course this week we were attempting to write *haiku*. One can't ask a question in *haiku* because doing that is too unsubtle. One must suggest the area of concern, not ask the question.

E. O'CONNOR: There are difficulties with asking questions. During the Lonergan conference this spring, I realized that there can be an attitude of suspicion toward what questions imply. One professor said he insists that his students make a statement to which he can then respond, not ask him a question.

C. TANSEY: Is the function of ritual to obliterate any question one might have?

E. VOEGELIN: That is the inheritance of Christian dogma. Dogma separated from questioning is the style of ideologizing statements. If you look at those completely ridiculous attacks by Voltaire and Diderot on Christianity, you see that they always criticize statements; they are never aware that behind a statement there is a question to be answered by it. And so they replace one statement by another statement. That style of degenerative doctrinism in Christianity of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is continued today.

C. TANSEY: I don't quite see how to ask a question that doesn't come out of an overstatement.

E. VOEGELIN: The questioning we are talking about now is a statement, not the fundamental openness of existence that can result in such metaphysical questions as the fundamental ones formulated by Leibniz: Why is there something and not nothing? Why is there something as it is and not different? There is a questioning that is inherent in existence. These are the fundamental questions of experience to which there *is* no answer.

C. GOING: To which there are answers?

E. VOEGELIN: You can imagine answers, but there are no answers in the sense of verifiable statements. You can say, "God created the world; that's why it exists"; "He made it as it is; that's why it is thus." There you are.

E. O'CONNOR: I see from your running all over the world to get a little further data that you're not satisfied with saying "that question has no answer; there's nothing more."

E. VOEGELIN: There *is* something more. That is not a present problem as it was in the eighteenth century. We have a knowledge that these questions gradually become clarified in consciousness in the history of mankind; and *that* is history.

E. O'CONNOR: They become clarified in the history of mankind because mankind tries many silly ways of going off and trying to answer a whole lot of questions?

E. VOEGELIN: Well, no, they don't go off in all directions. There is a very strict development of asking one question after another. There is an order in history.

E. O'CONNOR: In mathematics, before the kids can ask a question that is in any way up to the level of the time, there's a lot of experience they have to go through; and I've got to lure them through it. Isn't that true about theology too?

E. VOEGELIN: Absolutely. But that is a question which was clear in early Christianity and is today. There is no revelation lying

around somewhere. Revelation is a process in history. Thomas has the fundamental formulation in the *Summa Theologiae* part III: Christ is the head of all mankind from the beginning of the world to its end. It sounds simple—but now explain how Christ is the head of the Mystical Body in, say the Mesopotamian empire.

E. O'CONNOR: It gets complicated.

E. VOEGELIN: Then it gets complicated. These are the things I'm after.

C. GOING: No more complicated than saying, as in Colossians, that "in Christ all things hold together." It's not clear how that was so in Mesopotamia either.

E. VOEGELIN: These are the real problems. How is revelation revealing itself in history?

C. TANSEY: You want an answer that comes from the past. You trust people to keep making further endeavors on their own.

E. VOEGELIN: There are quite concrete problems. In Christian theology (since you ask about theology) there is the encrusted conception that revelation is revelation and that classic philosophy is the natural reason of mankind unaided by revelation. That is simply not true, empirically. Plato was perfectly clear that what he is doing in the form of a myth is a revelation. He does not invent it by natural reason; the God speaks. (You can find that even earlier—in Hesiod.) The God speaks, just as in the prophet or in Jesus. So the whole conception which is still prevalent today—not only in theological thinking but penetrating our civilization: "on the one hand we have natural reason and on the other hand revelation"—is empirically nonsense. It just isn't so. It is a considerable change in the cultural environment, you might say, if that is an error. One has to explain, for instance, why for a young radical of the first and second centuries—like Justin the Martyr—Christianity was not a revelation but a philosophy that answered philosophical questions better than any of the current schools—Platonic or Peripatetic or Stoic. Why did it give a better rational answer to a philosopher's question?

C. TANSEY: I would say because some gifted individual such as Paul was able to combine the symbols of two or three different cultures.

E. VOEGELIN: Paul is perhaps not the best case because he was so completely Jewish that he threw out all the paganism as idolatry. Now that was new.

C. TANSEY: Perhaps it wasn't his statement but the way he said it that somehow hit the culture at the right moment and made it pass through.

E. VOEGELIN: Paul would not have saved Christianity. As a matter of fact, historically, Paul had very little influence on early Christianity. You find little relation to Paul in the Gospels. What made Christianity more than one obscure sect, destined to disappear like others (the Judeo-Christian sect *really* disappeared; it had no future), was the entrance of young pagans who brought the cultural content of philosophy into Christianity. That is what saved Christianity culturally and historically. That is a factor rarely realized.

Some of the early Christian thinkers like Origen have still the real cultural syncretism of mystical theology and the beginnings of doctrinal theology. That has been abandoned by Church theology. Mystical theology is no longer practiced in combination with doctrinal theology. Origen was a high point that has hardly ever been surpassed.

C. TANSEY: Was he effective in his generation?

E. VOEGELIN: Very much so. And he was condemned only by Justinian, a lawyer (in 534, I believe). Up to that time, Christianity was very much alive as a combination of mystical and doctrinal theology through the introduction of Hellenistic philosophy. Otherwise nothing would have come of it. Today we have the historical problem of a revelatory process that goes back far before Christ, perhaps to the Paleolithic Age.

C. TANSEY: Would you say that you are helping the development of Hellenistic philosophy into the future by cleaning up the understanding of these matters?

E. VOEGELIN: No. Hellenistic philosophy has to be thrown out, of course. It produced all the fallacies of theology. You have the problem that "common concepts" (the *koinai ennoiai*) of theology and metaphysics were introduced by the Stoics.

C. TANSEY: But you wouldn't want to throw out philosophy.

E. VOEGELIN: No, the classic philosophy is the great existential analysis. In the so-called modern theology, say, Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, on the first page, paragraph one, he criticizes the *koinai ennoiai* of the Stoics; they and we have to go back to experience. That is the modern problem. Locke didn't get at the experiences, nor did Hegel, though he was looking for them. That we learn from Hegel's introductions to his various works.

C. TANSEY: Who identifies the experience today? Who should?

E. O'CONNOR: Who says "This experience is significant" and brings up the questions about experience?

E. VOEGELIN: Every philosopher does. Bergson does. William James does it in the phase of his radical empiricism (about 1905, starting with his essay "What Is Consciousness?" "Is there Consciousness?"). Whitehead does, going back to Plato. The various revivers of Plato do, especially people like Friedlaender. So do all the historians of art and of comparative literature who deal with the experiences. Science is flourishing today—except in the universities.

E. O'CONNOR: So one of the *main* problems with doctrine everywhere is having to teach people who are not yet curious.

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, we're indoctrinating. Or you might formulate it briefly: The practice of meditation has disappeared as a cultural

factor. I can quite definitely see that I got the practice of meditation by reading the Upanishads, by reading the *Symposium* of Plato, by reading the *Confessions* of Saint Augustine. These are the classics of meditation to which one has to return—not Madame Guyon. One of the imaginary obstacles (to give a time-problem again) is that one believes much has happened in history. Not much has happened. Two thousand years of doctrinization is a very short period—and we are at the end of it now.

E. O'CONNOR: The end of it in what sense? It won't go that way again?

E. VOEGELIN: It has run to its death in practice. Everybody knows today that doctrines are wrong. Every leftist student is as much against the communist establishment as against our establishment. They are against doctrine. Their solutions are wrong, but their revolution is right.

The forms are of course atrocious. If you go into the details, say, "community," and ask "What is it? What are those Beatles? That Woodstock?"—it is a perversion (don't be shocked) of the *perichoresis* of the Trinity. You get an immediacy of reality on the community level but without the dimension of divinity. You are God yourself on that community level. Community desire in the form it assumes today is on the one hand a positive desire to get community and, at the same time, in its defect, a transfer of the divine community into a human community. *Homonoia* in the classical and Christian sense is out because that is a community constituted through openness toward God. To produce a community by relating—that is a fallacy.

E. O'CONNOR: Yes, it's a fallacy—but a child somehow has to satisfy its exploring tendencies before it can grow up in some ways.

E. VOEGELIN: There you have said the deciding thing: a child—but not a grown-up person. Let's assume that when you are twenty-one you have sufficiently grown up to understand at least the point that you can't produce community by relating.

E. O'CONNOR: By *merely* relating.

E. VOEGELIN: You can when you are four or five years old, but not when you are twenty-one. That kind of relating is not so new. It was a postulate of Rousseau. And relating to one another in a community without God is a transfer of the theological category of *perichoresis* to human relations.

E. O'CONNOR: Of course if one passes *that* insight on to someone, it's a doctrine. I mean: It won't be understood until it has been learned.

E. VOEGELIN: And there are social processes that have to run their course; there's nothing you can do about it. You can try, of course, to impress individuals—

E. O'CONNOR: You can try to shorten their experience—they don't have to repeat it for ten years.

E. VOEGELIN: But you can't do more; you can't influence the social process as a whole; that probably has to go through all the misery of revolutions and world wars until even the most stupid person understands that he doesn't get anywhere that way. It is our critical situation today that these revolutionary communal experiences that started in the eighteenth century have run to their death now.

E. O'CONNOR: The revolutionary experiences?

E. VOEGELIN: The revolutionary communes, which are an attempt to solve the problem of social life through communal experiences *without* the personal experience of existence. That this has run to its death you can see very well in a man like Paul Ricoeur. In his essay on "Angoisse," in *Histoire et Vérité*, he asks the question, "What will become of us if we can no longer believe in French sociology and Hegel?" Why is that such a problem to him? Because he really believes that reality can be interpreted from the level of community experiences and not from the level of personal experience of the tension of existence toward God.

Or one can advert to the deculturation period when meditative practice disappears.

E. O'CONNOR: Of course one can't predict whether the community experience may, by boredom, work people into meditative practice.

E. VOEGELIN: Oh, as a prediction: Nothing lasts forever! We'll get a religious revival, it will come.

E. O'CONNOR: There is, on the one hand, your saying that nothing really can be done about it, and, on the other, your great effort to clarify things not only for yourself but also in books for others. You haven't given up hope in education.

E. VOEGELIN: Oh, no. That was always the problem: Plato was perfectly clear when he wrote his *Dialogues* that Athens was doomed. As a matter of fact, ten years after his death it was conquered by the Macedonians.

E. O'CONNOR: You're not saying that about our civilization yet, are you?

C. TANSEY: A lot of things have run to their end.

E. VOEGELIN: A lot of things have. I knew ten years ago that our universities, not only in America but in Europe, were completely rotten: brothels of opinion, no science, nothing. But I could not have predicted that five years later, in 1965, we would already have an open outbreak which recognizes that the universities are dead. I cannot predict today that within ten years new forms of institutions will have arisen in the Western world in which science will again be possible. But there was a similar situation in the eighteenth century: The universities were just as dead then, and science revived through the Royal Academies. That was a new beginning of science. To begin with, the Royal Academies were also historical and paleontological and philosophical academies.

I would very well imagine our getting new organizational forms, outside the organization of the universities, in which science is

conducted. These may develop and after some fifty years influence the structure of universities again. As a matter of fact, if I look over what I am doing: I never go to professional associations (one can ignore them)—but springing up everywhere are private organizations of scholars—all sorts of people—like the Pittsburgh theological center (somebody gets an idea and starts such a complex), or the International Society for the Study of Time, or the Eranos group, or the Instituto Accademico di Roma—free associations outside the universities.

It's 12:30 in the morning!

III. Myth as Environment⁶

E. O'CONNOR: I found that after I had read *The Ecumenic Age* several times, the introduction talked at me in a whole new way. I want to ask if Professor Voegelin can give us a sense of how the questions of the book arose and got formulated in his mind—because questions are the hardest things to catch hold of, for the person reading it for the first time. How *did* the questions formulate themselves for you?

E. VOEGELIN: Well, not in one day. The problem is that we have in Western culture (including the European, not only American and Canadian) a domination of public consciousness by images of history that go back to the eighteenth century. These images are mostly of a one-line history, starting from somewhere in a remote antiquity beyond exact knowledge and then advancing toward the great present. It is the same picture whether you take a progressivist image of history, or a positivist image, like August Comte's, or a Hegelian image of the unfolding of consciousness,

6. A discussion at Thomas More Institute on March 12, 1976, originally published in, *Conversations with Eric Voegelin*, ed R. Eric O'Connor, Thomas More Institute Papers vol. 76 (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1980), 113–54. Transcripts of four lectures and discussions at Montreal in 1965, 1967, 1970, 1976.

Editorial remark from O'Connor: A discussion at Thomas More Institute with those who had been reading and discussing for eight weeks Voegelin's *Ecumenic Age* within the 1975–1976 TMI course "Myth as an Environment: Further Preoccupations of Voegelin, Lonergan, and Frye." Participants in the seminar discussion were (in order of first intervention): Eric O'Connor, Eric Voegelin, Stanislaus Machnik, Charlotte Tansey, Michel Despland (guest), Cathleen Going, Patricia Coonan, John Belair, Colette Potvin, Sam Mattar, Peter Huish, Roberta Machnik, Maria Andary, and Barbara Guard.

or a Marxian image of the unfolding of consciousness in dialectical materialism, and so on. All these conceptions that dominate public debate and are the political forces today in the forms of communism, positivism, progressivism, internationalism, are eighteenth-century one-line histories. Now these one-line histories (this is the real problem) are no longer compatible with any empirical knowledge we have of history. That problem started already in the eighteenth century, so let me give you some of the principal phases of the development of the empirical picture in which all these one-line histories failed.

Voltaire and his friends observed that there was no longer a one-line history, developed on the pattern of: the creation of the world, and then the history of it in Genesis, and then the Exodus, right up to the empire and to the Christian Western civilization (a pattern still developed by Bossuet at the end of the eighteenth century), but that there were parallel histories. There was, for instance, Islam, which didn't fit into that picture; there was Russia; there was China; there was India. And the whole story of a one-line development culminating in the Western present was seen, on the basis of empirical knowledge, to be simply false. However, that first great break did not immediately take over; the one-line picture stemming from Christianity was reassumed by the various ideologies, above all by Hegel. The next great break that overthrew for good all these one-line histories came in the course of the nineteenth century and was absorbed for the first time into great historiography by the Berlin professor Eduard Meyer, in his *History of Antiquity*. In the nineteenth century, the great archeological excavations had started. There was discovered, all of a sudden, Babylon in the Mesopotamian civilization. This Babylonian civilization and surrounding civilizational developments just did not fit into any history seen as transmitted from a classic antiquity, through Middle Ages, into a modern period. It was quite outside all of that. And Meyer took the radical step of saying that there are other civilizations that have internal development: growth, acme, decline, and fall. The categories we use for Western civilization—antiquity, middle age, and modern period (with such divisions as Renaissance and so on)—apply to *all* these single civilizations. Therefore, in his *History of Antiquity*, which still retained in its title the old pattern, Meyer abolished that classification and spoke

for the first time of a Greek antiquity, a Greek middle age, a Greek modernity, a Greek Renaissance, and so on.

Now that caught on. The civilizations became the problem and were popularized (that was a great breakthrough) by Spengler. We should realize the importance of Spengler's conception when he wrote (between 1900 and 1910; after World War I he became popular), in the wake of Eduard Meyer's *History of Antiquity*, that the civilization is the unit of history and one has to study the unit for its patterns. That is the new science of historiography: It develops a pattern within the civilizations and compares them.

Now that great breakthrough still did not cover all the empirical knowledge that had accumulated. Toynbee, therefore, while using the Spengler pattern of civilizations, found many more civilizations: twenty-two. (I don't know how many Spengler found—five or six only.) That was also very good because all sorts of patterns can be found in these civilizations, and sometimes they are parallel. But it still wasn't good enough empirically. As you found out when you applied these patterns to the civilizations in Toynbee's first six volumes, there remained something left over that did not fit the pattern of "civilizations." So the first six volumes have the classification of human society as either "tribal societies" or "civilizations." Then he discovered that there is a third type of society—the ones he calls "the universal religions." They simply did not fit into the pattern of "civilizations" or "tribal societies." That was certainly a good idea, but it still didn't cover everything. Besides universal religions, civilizations and tribal societies, it had been observed since the beginning of the nineteenth century that there are certain crosscut patterns. For instance, in the year 500 B.C., there lived at the same time such people as Confucius in China, the Buddha in India, Heraclitus in Greece. There were some who tried to explain the crosscut by cultural diffusion (e.g., the French Indologists and Asiatic specialists of the 1820s, like Abel Remusat). The discovery by Remusat of the *parallel* went through various intermediate historians up to Jaspers in his *Philosophy of History* (which appeared after the Second World War). He called that parallelism the "axis-time of mankind": For reasons unknown (because it is not cultural diffusion) there is that *outbreak*, independently, in the various civilizations that constitute humanity.

Parallel with this theory there was also an increase in the knowledge of pragmatic history, of political events. For instance you have, also in the 1930s, the French historian René Grousset. In his excellent work *L'Age des Empires* he describes a parallelism that was not on the basis of the "outbreaks" that interested Jaspers. In the period about 500 B.C. there was beginning a formation of a new type of society called empire, which covered the whole known ecumene from the Atlantic to the Pacific: the Roman empire, the Alexandrian empire, the Persian empire, the Hindu empires, the Chinese empires, and so on. So you have now two items of parallelism: the spiritual parallels that I mentioned first, and then the parallelism of the empires, *les grands empires*.

That theory also proved to be empirically untenable, however, and for the same reason that the whole Toynbee conception of civilization proved untenable. It was not simply a question of empires; it was that these empires were *multicivilizational*.

That is: When an ecumenic empire expands (like the Roman empire, or the Persian), you get a destruction of all previously existent civilizations, including all the tribal civilizations in that area, plus *all* the cosmological empires like Babylon or Egypt. They are cashiered, and now you get a new type of society.

So in the twenty years between the publishing of the first volume of *Order and History* and the later ones, I had to add to the societies Toynbee started with (tribal societies, civilizations, and universal religions): the multicivilizational empires, and the *destruction* process of cosmological empires, which also are a separate class (they are not ecumenic empires like the later ones because the cosmological are ethnic cultures imperialized, and not yet multicivilizational empires), and everything that *comes out of* these multicivilizational empires, because when they split up (none remained stable), they split up along lines of previous ethnic civilizations, Egyptian, Hellenic, Persian, and so on. And what emerges from this bout of the ecumenic empires (in the West at least) is a *new* type of civilization, which in that form didn't exist previously: the Byzantine Eastern Orthodox empire, the Western Latin empire, the Islamic empire, and so on. There are three sets of empires in succession: the cosmological empires, the old ones of Egypt and Mesopotamia; then the ecumenic empires like the Persian, the Hellenistic, and the Roman; and the

orthodox empires like the Islamic, the Greek orthodox, and the Western orthodox. These crack up in the present and are replaced by a further new type, the ideological empires. None of them is the original ecumenical type or the original cosmological or tribal type. Entirely new types of societies are appearing.

You see, the *multiplication* of the types of society is the first great problem one has to face. The comparatively simple conception of Toynbee ("we deal with these twenty-two civilizations") does not work. There are many more empirical types of society than those twenty-two of Toynbee, and one has to deal with them if one uses the historical material.

And then there comes the next problem. These various societies and their problems can under no circumstances be lined up empirically on a time line. There just is no time of history in which all that happens. It happens in crosscut sections, subsections, and so on—and it would be entirely artificial to try to press this wealth of empirical material into being events in the history of mankind on a timeline. They just don't lie on a timeline. So the timeline had to go overboard; one cannot construct timelines at all. The meaningful lines lie elsewhere—in the crosscuts I mentioned, or in the entirely new types of society as they emerge—cosmological empires, ecumenic empires, orthodox empires, ideological empires—but in various areas in different ways, *not* in a history of mankind. There is not *one* mankind that experiences all these things. But in the eighteenth century it was assumed that "it" did.

So, the time problem had to be thrown out, or, rather, to be thought through in a new manner. The result is that one has to start from the empirical knowledge of the problem and follow the patterns of meaning, which obviously appeared all through the parallel societies. There are also some that lie on a timeline as differentiations; Christianity, for example, appears as a successor to certain other mystery religions; there is a distinct advance, you see, but an advance that does not go very far to the East and requires therefore—to be absorbed in the East—a new religion like Manichaeism. We have not touched at all on China in antiquity, but there is quite a different development there. The whole thing doesn't work as a history with a meaning from the beginning to an end in the present. For empirical reasons, strictly empirical reasons, it doesn't work.

Then something else happened. In 1966, there occurred the recalibration of the radiocarbon dates. It was discovered that the radiocarbon content of the air is not at all times the same and that therefore many early dates, beginning with a certain millennium B.C., have to be moved further back—sometimes by eight hundred or a thousand years. We now have, therefore, preceding the Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilizations (still considered the oldest at the time I wrote the first volume of *Order and History*), a whole set of other civilizations—Neolithic civilizations—with enormous monuments to be dated in the third or fourth millennium B.C. and independent of Egyptian and Mesopotamian development. So that whole lovely pattern—ancient Near East, and then Greek antiquity, and then Middle Ages, and then modernity—just doesn't work. A rich field of new civilizations has become visible and can now be dated with comparative exactness. That would be the first problem I had to deal with. Does that meet your question?

E. O'CONNOR: Yes, it does. You mentioned that in looking for some pattern you asked for meaningful events. That is why the noetic and the pneumatic differentiations of consciousness were the points you picked?

E. VOEGELIN: Yes. That would bring in now the question about meaning. We use the term *meaning* just as if there were a meaning lying around somewhere; of course there isn't.

The problem of meaning occurs wherever there occurs, actually, an advance in the differentiation of consciousness such as is understood to be an advance by the man who experiences it. For instance, the discovery of philosophy by Plato and Aristotle was understood by them to be an advance beyond the culture that is based on myth. And on *that* occasion there arises a consciousness of history. When we speak of meaning in the sense of a consciousness of meaning, we have to go back to the original sources and find out who had such a consciousness. That has been a completely neglected field. For instance, there is no book in existence, as far as I know, where anybody says anything about the philosophy of history of Aristotle and his consciousness that, *with* the discovery of philosophy, the old phase in history (which in the *Metaphysics* he called the theological phase) is over and now there is a new

phase. Or: in the *Symposium* of Plato there is a very characteristic development of new types: The person who is living in the old type of the myth is a mortal, a *thnetos*. The conception of man in the Homeric epic is: Men are mortal, and the gods are immortal. The *spiritual man* is also a term introduced by Plato. If you are a spiritual man you are aware that in your spiritual search you are engaged in the process of immortalizing yourself. Man becomes immortal, as an action (*athanatizein*). When you are not up to that understanding of what is now happening through philosophy as an action of immortalizing, then you are a fool, an *amathes*. There are now three social types: the old type, who doesn't catch up; the new type—the spiritual man—(the *spoudaios* of Aristotle, for instance); and the people who resist.

It is a structure in society that recurrently there can be new spiritual advances, in the sense of differentiations that are understood as such by the people who have experienced them, *and* not only people who do not catch up but *also* others who actively resist for one reason or another (Sophistic types, for example). These types of consciousness of history must be present, or there is no history and no meaning of history. We don't have a meaning just in the abstract, with nobody there who sees any meaning.

I call this volume *The Ecumenic Age* because already with Herodotus (who analyzed the problem of the Persian empire and the conflict between Persia and Greece) there was introduced the term *ecumene* to describe the policy of the Persian foreign office. To conquer the ecumene, that is, the whole known mankind in the cultural sense, was the policy of the Persian kings and their political personnel; theirs was a conscious effort to unify the ecumene. To write the Persian Wars from the Persian position one would have to see the attempt to organize into an empire the whole ecumene—a not quite perfect attempt, but more or less successful because the actual failure of conquering the Greeks physically was amply compensated for by the fact that they could be controlled through diplomatic influences and bribery; practically, they were a part of the Persian ecumene. Herodotus had seen this and used for it the term *ecumene*.

When the Roman expansion begins in the time of the Scipios—before the fall of Carthage—Polybius writes his history of Rome. He deals with that Roman expansion of empire and calls it—

with the meaning now of the attempt to organize into one political unit—the ecumene. It is there in the text. And he is already worrying because any purely pragmatic organization in history is, of course, exposed to the possibility of later being conquered by somebody else. There is a famous scene after the conquest of Carthage, when Polybius stands with Scipio the general up on a hill overlooking Carthage. All of a sudden Polybius sees tears running down Scipio's face. He asks, "What's the matter? Just now you have conquered Carthage: There it is burning, and the Roman empire is secured." Scipio replies, "I was thinking that the same thing will happen to Rome." This you should see as a state of culture: These people were still cultivated enough to see that such a problem exists, while if you listen to a party congress in Moscow, or something like that, you will not find any thought of such a possibility. Or closer to home.

S. MACHNIK: Can I ask you again about meaning and about the one who knows he is breaking new ground: Are "noetic experience" and "meaning" equal references?

E. VOEGELIN: I gave the noetic experience as an example. There are, of course, other cases; for instance, Herodotus. Not a noetic problem but what I call the "concupiscential exodus" is already analyzed by him. He gives the wonderful story of the first Cyrus, who, after the conquest of the Medes, is pestered by his Persian noblemen—now we can conquer Babylon and the rest!—but who resists such expansion because, he says, you cannot conquer somebody else without leaving the state in which you are now. He was very much aware that it is the end of what we are now. If we Persians, who are victorious in our country and have conquered neighboring tribes, conquer *more* different people, then we get into the entirely new situation of an empire, and we must destroy what we are.

E. O'CONNOR: You mean he recognizes this new epoch, but it is not noetic?

E. VOEGELIN: It is not noetic; it is a general problem that you cannot expand or be successful without giving up what you have.

S. MACHNIK: A pragmatic sort of breakthrough—

E. VOEGELIN: It's a pragmatic breakthrough that introduces a new quality: Empire is not the tribal society that is successful within its own area. We have to leave the ethnic compound, you might say; and by incorporating other people, other ethnic units, create something new—an empire.

S. MACHNIK: I was trying to identify what you would say is the grounding experience for history, and I thought from what you said that it is the recognition of personal insight.

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, but there are *several* types.

S. MACHNIK: I see. Could you delineate a little more sharply the noetic differentiation? I get very clearly the pragmatic one.

E. VOEGELIN: There are different types: one which you can call the concupiscential exodus; then there is the noetic consciousness in Plato and Aristotle, for instance, who know that something has now happened that constitutes a meaning in history—their discovery of the mind, the *nous*. Or in the Israelite case there is the discovery of the *ruach*, the *pneuma*, the spirit—which is not the *nous* but something entirely different again. Or in earlier cases, like the foundation of the Egyptian empire, there is the discovery that founding an empire on a tribal base, i.e., unifying several tribes of the same ethnic culture, *is* an advance in the understanding of humanity. Formerly it was the tribal unit that defined what is a man in the tribal sense. Now you get suddenly a new type of man—which is a move into the position of a general case (the tribal becomes the specific case) of the man who is a member of the empire. That is a new consciousness. So imperial expansion increases the understanding of a more general humanity than the tribal humanity.

S. MACHNIK: And that is the basic undercurrent of “ecumenic age.”

E. VOEGELIN: All of them. Not one; several.

S. MACHNIK: In sharp contrasts.

E. VOEGELIN: Oh yes.

S. MACHNIK: Would you say that what you call “historiogenesis” is a readiness—or already an involvement—in ideological presumptions?

E. VOEGELIN: No, one would have to be careful with such use of language. We always say “ideology”—and I do it, too—because it is a term in use today, but it wasn’t in use before Napoleon and for a good reason: There was no ideological problem before Napoleon. There was an entirely different problem. There is no sense in using the word *ideology* in any of those contexts because there is a language fully developed by all those people. We have, for instance, the idea of the Academy as a noetic community, a *koinonia*; we have the conception of the community of mankind through the *homonoia*, the common possession of the *nous*, the noetic community. So there is no reason—except ignorance—why one should call people who know what they are doing and call themselves a noetic community, an ideological community. There is no reason to do it, but it is generally done; one of the handicaps in understanding the real spiritual movements is that. (I’m speaking about what’s going on in the academic world—people just don’t read the sources.)

S. MACHNIK: But I had thought that a fundamental characteristic of “historiogenesis,” as you’re introducing the language, was a linear expectation about history.

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, that is something new, but it still is not necessarily an ideology. It is an expansion of the myth—what I call mytho-speculation. We have no other appropriate term except *genesis* (for instance, the book of Genesis in the Hebraic context; or the cosmogonic categories of the creation of the world by the god and his word, in the Egyptian context). We have developed from the Greeks *theogony*, *cosmogony*, and *anthropogony* (all these terms weren’t developed by the Egyptians), but we have no Greek term for this particular historical speculation of connecting

a present imperial situation with the origin of the cosmos—the reason probably being that in the world of the Greek *polis* and philosophy there was no empire that required such a construction! There is a specific *imperial* construction in this mytho-speculation.

E. O'CONNOR: Did you say that Napoleon didn't need the term *ideology*?

E. VOEGELIN: In the time of Napoleon *idéologues* was used for the first time—for people; and since the French *philosophes* spoke of the movement of ideas in consciousness and the *exploration* of this movement, that is what is called *idéologie*.

S. MACHNIK: When you wrote of the Stoics as having introduced that game—

E. VOEGELIN: —propositional metaphysics—

S. MACHNIK: —I had taken it that you were setting up the “founding” situations in which ideologies emerge.

E. VOEGELIN: Well, I can see where the difficulties lie. There are simply *dozens* of the types, and it wouldn't make sense to pick out one of them (mytho-speculation, for instance, or the Stoic *ennoiai koinai*) and suddenly identify it with something that happened in the time of Napoleon. There is not one type that can be called ideology. The rise of doctrinalism is a type of problem in itself and one that arose in the time of Plato. It does not lead to ideologies of the mytho-speculative type (like historiogenesis) but to quite different problems.

E. O'CONNOR: You mentioned that with so much empirical knowledge coming to us about history—and making no sense—one of your questions was how to formulate concepts into which all this could be “placed” so as to be even noticeable.

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, that's a problem. You develop categories—e.g., in the problem of doctrinalization just mentioned.

As you know, the term *theology* was invented by Plato. There was no theology before him; it's a new term. (Every term was new at some time.) Think of how it arose and on what occasion—as we might have it today with our students. These young people are corrupted by all sorts of sophistic nonsense in the environment. You have to explain things to them and you hit on the following problem. The ideas of all of these young people with whom we talk (in the *Republic*; later, in the *Laws*, the ideas of their elders) can be summarized in a triad of propositions advanced by Sophists—a very comprehensive triad: 1. The gods don't exist; 2. If they exist they do not care what men are doing; 3. If they care what men are doing you can bribe them by sacrifice. (Go ahead—make a few sacrifices out of the profits from your crimes.) Plato gives these three negative propositions about the gods without mentioning his source. But we have one Sophistic source: a speech once made by Gorgias of which an abstract is preserved. He gives that triad of propositions in its general form—concerning more than gods: 1. Nothing exists; 2. If it exists, it is unknowable; 3. If it is knowable, it is incommunicable. (In this way you get rid of the whole of being!) It is obviously a Sophistic school-technique to formulate such triads which are comprehensively negative. And now Plato formulated the positive triad: The gods do exist; they do care about man; you cannot make them accomplices in your crimes by pacifying them with offerings out of your profits. On that occasion Plato uses the term *theology* and calls these two types of triads “the types of theology.” Both, please, not only the positive type; the negative gives the *occasion* to formulate a positive doctrinal sentence in the first place. The man who formulates the negative propositions (cf. especially book II of the *Republic*)—“The gods don't exist” etc.—is the man plagued with *anoia*—with what in the Hebrew and Christian contexts is called foolishness (as in Psalm 13: “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no god.’”) The term *fool* in Hebrew is equal to the Greek *anoia* or *amathes*.

That brings in a very important matter, which I found recently in Plato and which I think has never been treated properly in philosophy. We have a *tension* in human existence: the possibility of positively searching for the ground of one's existence, accepting the Divine ground, understanding it—with the accompanying joy,

the *eudaimonia*—while if we reject it we fall into the state of anxiety.

It is very characteristic of the classic philosophy of Plato and Aristotle that there is no Greek word for anxiety. “Anxiety” is introduced after Alexander’s conquest (when it becomes a mass phenomenon!) and then by the Stoics: the *agnoia ptoiodes*—instead of the positive formulation. “Scary ignorance” is what *anxiety* would have been called.

This introduces a very important problem. Man can be a fool or not be a fool. And you can then formulate such propositions as: “The existence of God is in doubt because there is no doubt about the existence of the fool”; that is the only reason why the existence of God is in doubt. Foolishness as a human potentiality—in which one shouldn’t indulge—is the source of these problems. One has always to be aware (Plato clarified *both* types of theology—the negative, the denial, as the first) that the positive propositions are not at all the original propositions but counterpropositions to erroneous ones. One cannot understand a dogma or doctrinal form concerning the gods or God at all if one does not recognize a share of the foolishness. The positive formulations try to ward off the destructiveness of a fool; if there is no fool you have to ward off, you don’t have to engage in the positive dogma at all. And Plato *doesn’t* except on occasions when he has to deal with the Sophistic fool. For what he has to say that is analogous to positive experience, the “infrastructure” as I call it (the search for the ground, and so on), is that you don’t need any dogma about God or the gods or anything like that. The problem of *foolishness* as one human potentiality is, I believe, an insufficiently discussed problem, because with Plato and Aristotle the non-fool, the philosopher, carried the day. Therefore we speak of philosophy and include in it all the positive doctrinal propositions that are not meant to be philosophy; they are the opposition to the fool. We don’t recognize that the problem of the fool is what you might call the positive problem in the whole: Because there are fools, we negate their negations and get positive doctrines that otherwise would not be necessary—if we were not living in a society in which a lot of people can be fools. The term *fool* is not used, in the critical sense, as name-calling but as naming a human potentiality: Men can be fools.

S. MACHNIK: We have in the past heard much about the achievement of the Middle Ages in separating the sacred and the secular, and in your writing you make a very strong case about the difficulties we've been led into—not just by distinction but by separation into two domains. Could you speak a bit about how you see a *resolution* of the destructive tensions that arise from this?

E. VOEGELIN: You cannot resolve these tensions. They are apparently the unsolvable mystery. There is no expectation or reason to expect, in any visible future or at any time in history we know of for the future, that there will be human beings of whom a considerable percentage will not be fools. That will be a constant problem in every society and in every social order. You can't get rid of it.

S. MACHNIK: But you do make a case for presenting understanding so that there is not a forgetting of the ground of experience.

E. VOEGELIN: Exactly, yes, but we have historically the problem that what, since the eighteenth century, we call ideologies, all have the form of doctrinal assertions—"all workers are exploited by capitalists"—*because* by the eighteenth century the Christianity of the Church had degenerated into the empty repetition of dogma, which doesn't make sense unless you can show what is the positive experience, the infrastructure, that justifies the development of a dogma against foolishness. The whole development of mysticism, which was very strong in the fourteenth century all over the Western world, had been very successfully killed off by the eighteenth century and is still suppressed by the church. Most of the leading organizers, Protestant and Catholic, are against mysticism because mysticism is always capable of deformations and pathological development. (If you look at Knox's book *Enthusiasm*, you see why they are against mysticism; they identify it with the excesses of the eighteenth century.)

S. MACHNIK: Is dogmatism a specifically Western phenomenon?

E. VOEGELIN: No, you can't say that. It arises always when one set of symbols—say, a more primitive set of myths—disintegrates.

Then the next response is the foolish response: You throw out with the symbol the Divine Reality that is symbolized. Then you have to find a new symbolism. That same problem occurs everywhere the myth itself is questioned. It occurs in Confucianism or Taoism just as much as in Hinduism or in Chinese Buddhism.

E. O'CONNOR: So that is why one of the categories you want to establish is that the God-of-the-Beginning has to be mythic, has to be expressed mythically. You really establish that, but this is one of your reasons for wanting to do so.

E. VOEGELIN: You can't get away from myth as the proper expression of certain experiences, as of the presence of Divine reality in the cosmos. You cannot prove it scientifically or make a positive dogma on evidence. Expression of that experience can be done only by a myth, and if you don't believe the myth, you've lost the whole show.

E. O'CONNOR: I remarked to you yesterday that I had found your use of *apeiron* a bit ambiguous; it meant "limitless" in a good sense at some times and not at others. Will you clarify that?

E. VOEGELIN: The meaning of the *apeiron* was developed by Anaximander, then used by Plato and everybody in the East. We all have to return into the something out of which we have come; it is the *apeiron* out of which we have come. So death is the consequence of birth, you might say, and in Anaximander's formulation, everybody has to pay the penalty of death for the guilt of his existence. The guilt of existence and the punishment one suffers for this through death is the basis of the Anaximandrian problem. Even if you get the problem of guilt out of it or try to explain it with Christian terminology—as revolt against God or disobedience to the divine command—you can't get away from the problem of death. There is no substitute for that in any invention.

There is, then, a particular problem in modernity. You may know of the psychologist Lifton at Yale? (He posed as an expert in the Patty Hearst trial.) In his book on revolutionary immortality, he analyses very carefully, from the Maoist sources, that one of the reasons why a man is an ideologist—an imperial ideologist,

or a Maoist—is because he is in search of immortality. That is perfectly right, but for reasons other than Lifton believes (because he knows only Maoist affairs). Already in the fall of 1789, Schiller, the German poet, in the first of his lectures on universal history, explained that he is giving a construction of history leading up to the progressive fulfillment of the revolution in his time *because* participation in that process as constructed historically is a substitute for the immortality in which he no longer believes. Here you have, at root, the problem: The search for immortality is the reason why a man becomes an ideologist. (When he's intelligent he quickly ceases to be one and sees the tragic problems again.) That goes on right into the present.

We have in Eastern European Communist literature people like Adam Schaff who have seen the problem that when you get old enough to be faced with death, being a Communist doesn't help you in any way to understand the problem of your life and death. One finds the same in recent books on old age by Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre. The problem of death is the problem on which apparently solid Marxist revolutionaries crack when they get older. It doesn't make sense to be a revolutionary if you have to die anyway. The problem of *meaning*, which cannot be solved by any construction, is one of the great contemporary problems.

Ricoeur, in the article "Angoisse" (in *Histoire et Vérité*), goes into the question, What would happen if all these intellectuals—Hegelians and Marxists—who now believe in the meaning of history, and in themselves as top carriers in the present, would suddenly no longer believe because the meaning of the Hegelian system has been destroyed? That would be an outbreak of anxiety! What they *lived* by was believing that sort of nonsense. But such destruction does happen—for instance in the case of Adorno, the German Marxist in Frankfurt (who died last year). His last book is the most thorough self-dissolution of Hegelianism that we possess. You might say that within German Hegelianism Adorno's *Negative Dialektik* is the period; it is the end of it. One *can't* believe it, and he himself doesn't. He sees no alternative, but the self-destruction is there. So these are the great problems you can observe everywhere.

C. TANSEY: You make the statement (on page 303 of the *Ecumenic*

Age) that “the truth of order emerges in history nevertheless.” Why “nevertheless”? Would you call that a statement of your belief?

E. VOEGELIN: The consciousness of some sort of order advancing in spite of all this disorder—that is the “nevertheless.”

C. TANSEY: Yes, but why? Isn't that somewhat Hegelian?

E. VOEGELIN: No, it is not Hegelian. It is simply a statement of the mystery: The world is in bad disorder, and nevertheless there are elements of order in it, much to everybody's surprise.

M. DESPLAND: I have a question related to that. When a historic differentiation of consciousness occurs, you say that it is an advance. I can understand that to the people who experienced it, it was. Now in some sense it is also an advance for us: We who study it, we who understand it, can experience it *as* an advance—so the advance that occurred then is not lost forever, in spite of all the disorder.

E. VOEGELIN: It can be reactivated.

M. DESPLAND: But if it is an advance for us, I'm hopelessly entangled; I inevitably connect this sense of advance with the linear time that you denounce. The very metaphor of advance to me seems to mean advance toward something. And I—who am not at the end of history but at the point of history which I have reached—can then start telling a story of it all. All the things that you denounce about Hegel seem to be there in bud, or I'm already yielding to the sense of linear time.

E. VOEGELIN: I have heard the argument before, but it's not as simple as that. The ordinary “advance” metaphor that creeps in is always the *homo faber* picture, but the advances I mean consist in a better understanding of the direction of man toward the Beyond, to the eschatological—the advance of the eschatological time. It is not an advance that everybody makes; most people *don't*. If we are living—as today, for instance—in a very disordered society

because of the level of public debate, such problems are simply not there.

I always call a state like the present a state of public unconsciousness (with no possibility of public debate). The young people are caught up in it because our educational institutions are conducted in this state of unconsciousness. That's very bad. There were similar problems in the time of Plato, and you cannot simply say that we are in a better state today. We may be in a much worse state in spite of the fact that single individuals called mystics have seen the problem. Or, if you take it out of the twentieth century, with single individuals such as the philosopher Bergson, and look for any serious academic treatment of him—well, there isn't any.

M. DESPLAND: So it's not an advance for me as representative of my age, but it is an advance for me as a philosopher—

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, we are always living in that problem of advancing or regressing from possibilities that have already been realized. But how that works out socially can be a quite different matter. It may work out as the atom bomb.

I may have told you that I was invited, two years ago in Vienna, to attend one of the famous dialogues between representatives of the Soviet government and Catholic theologians there (I was only an observer). In the course of one evening—three or four hours—I jotted down the conditions that the Soviet representatives made for conducting such a dialogue with the Westerners. Certain premises must stay beyond discussion, must be accepted as true by everybody, including the Catholic theologians. First: Karl Marx's surplus theory of value; then: all workers are exploited by capitalists; philosophy is abolished and replaced by dialectical materialism; religion is out—everybody has to be an atheist; and, in case of war, the Soviet Union has the exclusive right to use the atom bomb because it represents the truth of history.

E. O'CONNOR: That's true?! Did the argument proceed?

C. GOING: They talked for three hours?

E. VOEGELIN: Though I don't want to insult anybody, I would say

that the Catholic theologians were not flabbergasted but rather helpless.

C. GOING: I was *afraid* they were going to turn out to be the ignorant, the “fools,” of the conversation!

C. TANSEY: Would you say that differentiation for you is a process rather than result?

E. VOEGELIN: It's a process that results in the collected works of Plato, for instance. So if you want to call these the “result” of the process in which they were reaped—but of course, the re-reading, the re-activation, is required, as your colleague has said. If you don't read them, there is no result. The result is there only when you continue to work on it. We can call *The Cloud of Unknowing* the result of mystical process; but if nobody reads it, there is no result in the text—in spite of its being published by Penguin!

S. MACHNIK: You make a great deal of the failure of the Christian churches to elaborate the implications of the Thomistic handling of Christ's statement “Before Abraham was, I am”—and you say how in fact that can be an opening into an accommodation of the theophanic events elsewhere. Could you elaborate on that?

E. VOEGELIN: That is a large order. Let me briefly state what the problem is.

We are beset in all philosophical and theological discussions, everywhere in the Western world today, with the unfortunate distinction Thomas made between philosophy as the result of natural reason, and theology as the result of supernatural revelation. Empirically this just doesn't hold water. Many Greek poets and philosophers have given their *revelation experiences*. (They are conserving the structure of reality while Thomas is dealing with the salvational problem in reality: salvation out of the structure.) Until these conceptions of “philosophy and supernatural theology” are dissolved, not much of a rational solution can be expected to problems we have constantly. For instance, in all universities now in the Western world—especially in America—there is an increasing number of departments of religion which have the oddest

structure: They can deal with Hinduism, Zen Buddhism, and everything you want under the sun. But they have to omit Christianity in a state university because they might get into trouble with the separation of Church and State. (The Church is Christianity—so all religions are permitted except Christianity.) Everywhere in such departments of religion you run into somebody who is bright enough to ask himself occasionally whether it is just a question of the Buddha having a conception of something, and Confucius having another one, and so on—or whether perhaps they have all experienced the same Divine reality and there is only the one God who manifests Himself, reveals Himself, in a highly diversified manner all over the globe for all these millennia of history that we know. The mere fact that we now have in history a global empirical knowledge extending into the archeological millennia all over the earth requires a theology that is a bit less confined to Islam or to Christianity. It must explain why a God who is the God of some witch doctor in Africa is the same God who appeared to Moses as “I am” or to Plato in a Promethean fire. And that theology is unfortunately not yet in existence.

P. COONAN: But wouldn't you have to use philosophy in order to try to understand the evidence and the formulation?

E. VOEGELIN: Absolutely.

P. COONAN: But it is a distinct job; you're not yet doing theology?

E. VOEGELIN: It is a distinct job to develop a theology in the Platonic sense—to know all these various types of theologies, the various types of faith, and to analyze their structures—always with an eye to the problem that even the most exotic ones, ones that may appear primitive to us, are *revelations* that have to be respected.

P. COONAN: You would study *any* one, expecting that it is an honest revelation; you wouldn't bother if you thought it was a fool's. So you wouldn't expect to be able to understand. But the way one tries to find out “What did the Buddha say? Where did

he live? What was the context? What do his symbols mean?"—wouldn't that be a philosophical inquiry?

E. VOEGELIN: That's what it always is.

P. COONAN: Yes, but once you find out for sure just what he said, then you get into theology—

E. VOEGELIN: Then you have to understand the structure of what he's saying, yes. And then comes the question of which of these theologies is possibly truer than another.

P. COONAN: There you're in theology.

E. VOEGELIN: It's not a question of theology today, you see. It's a question rather of the historical philosophy that is still developing. We don't have it yet. For instance, when you speak with an abbot in a Zen Buddhist monastery in Kyoto, you get an idea of what he is after: a presence of Divine reality in nature. It surrounds him there in gardens, which are kept in a certain shape to represent the Divine Reality in nature as a form. And that is a development which is useful and exists in Western Christianity only in certain instances—Saint Francis, for example, or Dutch landscape-painting, which is distinctly a nature-mystic cult. It is not generally a part of our civilization.

P. COONAN: But in your book you do try to uncover the original experience that has been encrusted—

E. VOEGELIN: And one can uncover it by going back to the texts, you see. That is why in my work there are long gaps—twenty years or so—because I have to learn the language in each text.

P. COONAN: But isn't it "natural reason" you're using?

E. VOEGELIN: It is not natural reason because the reason itself is a discovery by Greek philosophers—

P. COONAN: But you're using your brain—

E. VOEGELIN: Reason itself is a consciousness of that tension—which is a revelation: that one exists in the consciousness of tension.

P. COONAN: But which one seeks to understand somehow, to be able at least to figure out when we've got a real revelation and when it's just fantasy or illusion?

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, but fantasy is a great problem: How do we distinguish between tenable revelations and elaborate fantasies or absolute swindles? In that respect I like Thomas Mann very much. Toward the end of *Felix Krull: The Confidence Man* (unfortunately only the first volume was finished), he has that long talk between the confidence man and the director of the natural history museum. He interprets the whole history of the evolution as imaginative expression of God, of His fantasy, and His imagination, which produced the rich unfolding of nature, continues in the man with imagination as a confidence man—so the confidence game itself is a continuation of the divine imagination of the world. That's an important insight because it brings in the question, Where are we just engaged in the confidence game (for instance, Melville analyses the confidence game in his novels, and most ideologies are such confidence games), and where are we still in a legitimate, imaginative analysis of reality? There are some criteria: completeness, fulfilling the perspectives, not omitting this or that—empirical criteria.

P. COONAN: It wouldn't be natural reason?

E. VOEGELIN: Reason itself isn't natural; even Thomas admitted that. The "natural reason" is due to God's grace.

P. COONAN: Oh. But so is life—

J. BELAIR: Wouldn't you rather say the correct use of "reason" is "grace"?

E. VOEGELIN: That would be a secondary proposition. But first: What *is* the reason after all? *Reason* did not exist in language in the history of mankind until it was formulated in the Greek fifth century as a word denoting the tension between man as a human being and the Divine ground of his existence of which he is in search. The consciousness of being caused by the Divine ground and being in search of the Divine ground—that is reason. Period. That is the meaning of the word *reason*. That is why I always insist on speaking of “noetic” and use the term *nous*: in order not to get into the problems of the ideological concept of reason of the eighteenth century.

The word *nous* is applied by Plato and Aristotle to the consciousness of being in search of the ground of one’s existence, of the meaning of one’s existence—the search, the *zetesis*. One is in the state of ignorance, of *agnoia*; one asks questions, the *aporein*; and the answer is that the Divine *nous* is the cause that moves me into the search. Not the mere fact that somebody is searching is reason, but the movement by the Divine ground that pushes me in that direction—or pulls me in that direction. That is why, in the *Laws*, Plato uses the mythological symbolism of the god who pulls man by various cords: the golden cord of reason and other cord; then (preserving human freedom) he *can* follow the golden cord of reason, but he can also follow the other cord and be a fool. But it is a divine pull that pulls you. It is not a natural movement.

P. COONAN: The question is the Divine.

E. VOEGELIN: Yes. So the divinity of reason is the beginning of the word *reason*. That’s how it all starts.

S. MACHNIK: Would you say that there’s a close correlation between the fool you’re speaking of and the experience of alienation?

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, that’s a very close relation. Actually these two things go together in the term *psychopathology*. You find them well analyzed in Cicero’s *Tusculan Disputations*. Just as today, the philosopher has all sorts of disordered and unhappy people coming

to him for help. Cicero gives a long list of the symptoms of alienation: being excessively greedy for money, being a businessman twenty-four hours a day, or being in search of social acceptance or role, or womanizing, or wine tipping. And it goes on. All the same symptoms we have today—as a way of *divertissement*, Pascal would call it—when we are in a state of alienation or intoxication. That realization is already present in Stoic psychopathology, and we have it still in the better minds of the nineteenth century. Baudelaire, in *Les Paradis artificiels*, gives a long analysis of the influence of hashish and a wonderful description of what today we call “mind expansion” through the use of hashish; and then he goes on: “but you can achieve, of course, the same effect by reading Jean-Jacques Rousseau.” Baudelaire was also a music critic and wrote excellent reviews of the early Wagner operas in Paris: Mind expansion can also be gotten by reading through a Wagner opera. There are all sorts of diversions that in the state of alienation can assuage you for a time. The analysis and collection of these symptoms is also a sign of alienation and was overcultivated by the Stoics.

S. MACHNIK: Would you say, as Bernard Lonergan does, that the ideological bent is often an attempt at self-justification?

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, a *divertissement* in Pascal’s sense—as a substitute for immortality.

C. POTVIN: I was wondering about how to get a grasp of the luminous event as a kind of process, and how to cut across to a notion of order. On the historian’s part, it’s a looking back. But the people living at any time—how can they experience this notion of order?

E. VOEGELIN: That is simple. Students always ask that question. “Where do you get this Divine revelation? Where is the Divine presence?”

You are sitting here and asking questions. Why? Because you have that divine *kinesis* in you that moves you to be interested.

C. POTVIN: Can’t I just call it “interest”?

E. VOEGELIN: You can call it interest, but it is the revelatory presence, of course, that pushes you or pulls you. It's there. We are talking.

C. POTVIN: Would you say that in the process of the whole, and with the questions coming up, the main crisis today is religious, in the sense of a person's interiorizing things? Or political, in the sense of grasping structure?

E. VOEGELIN: No, in the sense of these diversions that I just mentioned. People want to make money, they want to get a social position, they want to fly, or they want to have a speedboat—all of which divert them from other things. The most ordinary diversion of course in modern society is TV watching—for intoxication.

S. MATTAR: But aren't you in danger of making intellectual pursuits a diversion as well?

E. VOEGELIN: Very many of them are. Consider in the academic world all the specialization. I call it occupational therapy. Scientific value is almost nil, but some poor fellow is occupied for his lifetime in a less dangerous manner than throwing bombs, so it's all right. It's very important now to specialize. You don't like that!

S. MATTAR: My problem is that having read the book I still could not formulate criteria for the deformations. How do we know that there are deformations in history? Is it this experience of God that makes us realize the deformations?

E. VOEGELIN: Not necessarily. People who deform are usually very conscious of doing it: When Marx explains quite clearly (he was educated in a philosophical faculty), "I'm not going to answer that question of the ground or pay any attention to it, I demand of you as a reader to be a socialist man and not to ask that question," I don't need any particularly profound research in order to read in half a page what Marx does. He says it himself. Or when in the introduction to his *Logik* (1812) Hegel explains: "This *Logik* is written from the position of the Divine mind before the creation of the world and human intellect," what is he doing? He is the

Logos of the Gospel of John—only bigger and better. I don't have to make any profound research; these people say it themselves. Even Hobbes in the introduction to the *Leviathan* says: The *summum bonum* is out. (No God.) But then of course we have to keep order among human beings. How? By the *summum malum*, the fear of death. *He* says it. It is the same problem as in the positive differentiations: The better minds in the history of mankind know quite well what they are doing and saying; they are developing the language. But all these things have fallen into public unconsciousness because nobody reads books these days.

P. HUISS: The chapter on the Chinese ecumene was surprising in the book. I think the intention probably was to reinforce what you described earlier about the diversity and multiplicity of ecumenic events. But I was wondering if the popular interest in Eastern religion currently is a form of the diversion you've described, or whether it's another form of the sort of interest you have mentioned on your own part in making more comprehensive the question of *mankind*.

E. VOEGELIN: What I have done in that chapter is a fairly original analysis of the problem of the ecumene, of the *t'ien h'sia*, in Chinese literature. It was not done all alone. I quoted some Sinologists who were my assistants in Munich; they helped me to find out about the sources. Now that is one answer to your question.

You can see best what you call today's craze for Eastern mysticism if you go to any college bookstore. I don't know how you are equipped locally in that respect, or generally in Canada, but at Stanford when I went there five years ago and frequented the bookstore, there were two huge sections excellently organized: Eastern mysticism and pornography. Most of my knowledge of pornography I have acquired browsing in those sections at Stanford University. One has to know these things because the students read them. It is on the same level of diversion. And *this* diversion has been formulated for the first time, I believe, by the Marquis de Sade in *Philosophie du Boudoir*—one of the most pornographic books ever issued. It contains the political manifesto that begins "Encore un effort français" (always quoted under that name): The problem is that the deposition and beheading of

the king has not done much yet for the freedom of mankind. Only the Establishment has been decapitated; but what is behind the Establishment is, of course, the morality of social and political order. To get rid of that substance, which is represented by the political establishment, you have to let the murder of the king be followed by the murder of God. (It is the earliest case of that phrase as far as I know.) And why? Because only when the morality institutionally represented by the kingship is also abolished can man express himself in his nudity to the extent of murder and pornographic activities. So these sequels (later worked out and typified by Camus also) of regicide, deicide, homicide, for the purpose of the pornographic existence—that is the danger. That is a very important element. I'm always very suspicious of anybody who is suddenly out for Eastern mysticism.

P. HUIISH: In view of the fact that throughout *The Ecumenic Age* (which is the only full work of yours that I've read) you establish *tension* as being one of the primary experiences of our tradition, I'm wondering if the associated and still-present cosmological sense of Eastern thought is one of the attractions in it—for an escape from tension.

E. VOEGELIN: It could be. I'm skeptical, because none of my students who suddenly go out for Eastern mysticism does any serious work. They talked about it. But when I say: "How about reading about the relations, the parallels, of Eastern and Western mysticism, e.g., Rudolf Otto's *Mysticism East and West*?"—that is the last you hear of them. They would have to work when they read a book, and they don't do it. That's why I'm skeptical. There may be one or two somewhere who are seriously interested.

P. HUIISH: I wasn't trying to justify it. I was just wondering if escape from tension toward something more compact is a motivating force—

E. VOEGELIN: You can escape from the tension just as well if you read *The Cloud of Unknowing*—so there's something fishy about it. Or by reading one of the Upanishads; but they don't like *that* because it's too intellectual, too rational. They want the *I Ching*,

which is difficult to understand and perhaps not intelligible at all in certain sections. The prevalence of the *I Ching* in the fantasies of these persons makes me very suspicious. And when you say, “Perhaps you should read Marcel Granet, the greatest authority on the early Chinese culture,” not one of them is willing.

C. GOING: Perhaps it would be related to ask not about the contemporary craze but about the authors of the Upanishads. Do I have it correctly that the Upanishadic differentiation is incomplete both noetically and pneumatically because there isn’t a good enough story about that toward which the tension is experienced?

E. VOEGELIN: There is encounter with the divine reality at the top. It’s never completely worked out symbolically. In *The Ecumenic Age* I’ve given this in an analysis of the “Abraham Apocalypse.” There you get both factors.

C. POTVIN: How do you see symbols developing? You speak of the “dead point” at which symbols depart from their exigence of truth into propositional knowledge, but how do you see symbols really developing?

E. VOEGELIN: Symbols don’t just develop. Every word that we use in our language, that is now part of our language, was not lying around somewhere but was created by somebody—even terms like *quantity* and *quality*. We ask: Who invented *quantity* and *quality*? Cicero. There wasn’t any *quantity* or *quality* before him. Every such instrument of thought—even such elementary things—has been created, as far as the intellectual and spiritual origin is concerned, by certain people on certain occasions of experiences; and we usually are in possession of the early document. As I said, the term *theology* begins in the *Republic* of Plato—that is an early example. The term *metaphysics* was introduced by Thomas for the first time in his proemium to the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle. You can trace it back: *metaphysics* is an Arabic deformation of the Greek letters *meta ta physica* (which mean nothing of that sort) and was taken over as a convenient term. In the seventeenth century *metaphysics* was replaced by the term *ontology*, and that has become fashionable to a certain extent.

(Heidegger, for example, has a *Fundamentalontologie*.) For every term you can say who, how, when, and why that piece of language was produced. One has always to go back to that. So symbols don't just happen. The earliest written case we have of any symbolism is the famous theology of Memphis—the divine drama among the gods that ended in the creation of the empire of Egypt (probably to be dated about 3000 B.C.). In the discussion of the drama are inserted passages (which today you would call footnotes) in which the priestly authors of the documents explain why they prefer the myth of that drama to another possible alternative that was also in use at the time—a creation of the world by the word of the god to a creation by sexual procedures of the gods. It is a conscious creation of the myth, not just a naïve thing that happens somewhere. In this case we do not know the creators by name, but they were a priestly group among the Egyptians. Unlike contemporary talkers about myth, they were cultivated people. They knew that a myth is a myth and they didn't take it fundamentalistically.

C. TANSEY: You said that at the ecumenic time, everything splintered off and it was impossible to have myths that permeated throughout. Do you think that that might be possible now because of the kind of communication we have? Do you think ours might be a period where symbols could become generalized?

E. VOEGELIN: Since we just talked about Eastern mysticism, there are obviously symptoms indicating that people are in search of some sort of myth. Even if I am skeptical about the effectiveness of some things they are doing, it's there. But that does not indicate more than that the problem of the myth has been badly neglected for two hundred years—and people still do not understand what a myth is.

R. MACHNIK: So you mean that the important thing is to say the myth, not to have it universal.

E. VOEGELIN: Oh, these myths *are* all universal. If you look at collections of cosmogonic myths, some creation of the world is expressed wherever there is any report of any society at all, as far back as it is possible to go—20,000 B.C. Such myths were the

only form in which one expressed the problems of the beginning or the creation of the world. You get some funny situations. In California now there is a fight between literalists, or providentialists, and biological theorists. And you get in the textbooks both Genesis and Darwinian evolutionism as two “theories” of evolution. You see what that really means? The fundamentalist theologians in California (fundamentalism was well established there at the beginning of the century) don’t know what a myth is. They believe it is a theory. They’re in ignorance. And the biological theorists don’t know that Kant has analyzed why one cannot have an immanentist theory of evolution. One can have an empirical observation but no general theory of evolution because the sequence of forms is a mystery; it just is there and you cannot explain it by any theory. The world cannot be explained. It is a mythical problem, so you have a strong element of myth in the theory of evolution. So both the theoretical evolutionists and the fundamentalist theologians are illiterate. That level of illiteracy is taught in the textbooks as “two theories”—neither one of which is a theory.

S. MATTAR: What do you see to be the new myths, then? You said myths are constructed now, such as: If I believe in science as being objective—

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, we do have the problem of sorting out from our language a whole terminology which has not mythical but ideological character. In my seminars, when I’m dealing with *Kulturtheorie*, one of the first rules is that no one is permitted to use the term *value*—because it is meaningless. Each must say what he means when he wants to use *value*. Within three weeks the seminar gains a degree of realism that is almost incredible—just by skipping that one nonsense word. Nobody is permitted to use the terms *subject* or *object*, *subjective* or *objective*. One has to say what he means—and that clarifies the atmosphere. One has to realize that there is practically a science today for which no name exists as yet: I would call it “ismology.” Most of the “isms” we throw around as if we knew what we are talking about. Optimism, pessimism, nihilism, egotism, and so on, are all eighteenth-century new language. The social “isms”—

liberalism, conservatism, capitalism, communism—all appeared between 1810 and 1850. If you eliminate also all the “isms” from the discussion in your seminars—say what you are talking about, which experiences, which part of reality—suddenly people become sane; they are not permitted to talk nonsense.

M. DESPLAND: Returning to the point you made about not being able to get rid of the fool: It seems to me that there has been the claim, the notion, the dream, the hope, in Christianity that this isn't quite true anymore. And one of the things so attractive about Plato is his gentleness with the fools; he never puts a knife on their throats and says, “Become a philosopher or die!” Christianity has the symbols of the heavenly Jerusalem, where there are no fools anymore, and it takes great pride in baptizing everybody and taking into the Church those whom the world considers foolish and humble. The Church sees itself as potentially encompassing everybody. Now part of my experience is very much attuned to Plato's patient bearing with fools, but I'm also responding to what seem to me the different Christian symbols about fools not being a permanent component of the human equation. Can you reconcile that?

E. VOEGELIN: I would take exception to some of your statements. Plato was not quite as tolerant of fools—

M. DESPLAND: —if they become dangerous; that's right.

E. VOEGELIN: He kicks them out. And he didn't admit everyone as students in the Academy. Even though you have sample discussions (e.g., with Protagoras in the dialogue of the same name), Socrates at a critical point says: Either you stop using this technique of making speeches for the purpose of preventing a discussion, or I go. There is no tolerance, if the dirty tricks begin.

And with regard to Christianity: There is certainly the conception of saints and sinners composing the Church, but there is also a limit. For example, if you pretend that National Socialist murderers are to be persuaded to be nice church boys, you make yourself an accomplice in murder, Christianity or not; there are a few problems in your relations with your fellow citizens. I would

say that after the experience of Hitler and Stalin, anybody who today is still an ideologist makes himself a silent accomplice in every atrocity committed in Auschwitz or in the Gulag Archipelago. Nobody has any business being an ideologist today after we know what it means.

C. TANSEY: Why do you bypass heretics?

E. VOEGELIN: Because the question of heresy is a very complicated affair. It was horribly mixed up in the Middle Ages because the pope who started the Inquisition—Pope Innocent III, I believe—was a lawyer. In the older constitutions of the Justinian empire, heresy was classified, because the empire was officially Christian, as high treason. That is how heresy got into the high-treason category and people were killed. Several times lawyers have caused such unfortunate consequences! Heresy is a highly dubious category, except where it becomes violent. One can also say, of course, that a Communist is a Christian heretic; but if he starts putting people into concentration camps by the millions, I don't care whether he is a heretic or not; I shoot back.

M. ANDARY: Do you group the Gnostics with the ideologists?

E. VOEGELIN: No; there you get into the "isms" again. I paid perhaps undue attention to gnosticism in the first book I published in English, *The New Science of Politics*. That was the time when the historic explosion of knowledge started with which we are living today. I happened to run into the problem of gnosticism in my reading of von Balthasar. But in the meantime we have found that the apocalyptic tradition is of equal importance, and the Neoplatonic tradition, and hermeticism, and magic, and so on. If you read Frances Yates's book on Giordano Bruno, you will find that the gnostic mysticism of Ficino is a constant ever since the end of the fifteenth century, going on to the ideologies of the nineteenth century. So there are five or six such items—not only gnosticism—with which we have to deal. If all new types have to be brought in, the simple doctrine is no longer very useful.

And something new may be found out tomorrow. Thorndike, an excellent historian at Columbia University, published, between

the 1920s and 1950s, eight fat volumes on the history of magic. I have not yet been able to digest these materials and use them as they should be used for the understanding of the genesis of modern magic thought. Most of what we usually call "ideologies" are magic operations in the same sense that Malinowski uses *magic* of the Trobriand Islanders.

E. O'CONNOR: In what sense are you using *magic* there?

E. VOEGELIN: *Magic* means the attempt to realize a desired end that cannot be realized if one takes into account the structure of reality. You cannot by magic operations jump out the window and fly up—even if you so desire. If you try such things—for instance, producing a change in the nature of man by the dictatorship of the proletariat—you are engaged in a magical operation.

C. GOING: I meant to go back to the earlier volumes of *Order and History* to check, but may I ask whether for you the Prometheus story is *not* a "good" story—or whether it is an excellent story of a magical operation?

E. VOEGELIN: That is a complicated affair because there is no Prometheus story.

C. GOING: There are many stories.

E. VOEGELIN: The Prometheus story to which one usually refers is that of Aeschylus. There one gets immediately the problem of deformation. The critical passage is the scene where Prometheus is being fettered to the rock. Hermes, the messenger of Zeus, is standing down there on the beach looking up, and Prometheus speaks the line "In one word, I hate all the gods." That is the line quoted by Marx in his doctoral thesis. *But* the scene goes on. After Prometheus has pronounced that line, Hermes, down on the beach, says, "I think that is no small kind of madness"—it is like a disease. That second line was omitted by Marx. There you have the problem of disease and the magic. Berthollet in his *History of Chemistry* and then Festugière in the *Hermes Trés mégiste* have presented very well the transformation of Prometheus into the

light-bringer to mankind—the sense that Marx wants us to take. That is a gnostic transformation, and there are several such transformations of the Prometheus myth: from the revolt against the gods into human independence of the gods; or the story of the Fall transformed into that of the envious god against whom mankind will now, at last, sin and be perfectly happy. (What was prevented by God now can be produced by Marx.) These gnostic transformations have been historically effective. It depends always which kind of Prometheus you take as an example. In the *Philebus* of Plato you find the light-bringer who brings philosophical wisdom to some select people who then transmit the wisdom. It's another Prometheus.

B. GUARD: Professor Voegelin, in your answer to Professor Altizer⁷ you say that the development of the nominalist and fideist conceptions of Christianity is a cultural disaster. Could you explain what you mean by that, please?

E. VOEGELIN: It is the point at which dogma separates radically from the experiences that justify it. Then you get the split between mysticism and fideism which occurs in the earlier decades of the fourteenth century, a generation after Thomas (on the nominalist side people like Ockham, and on the mystical side people like Meister Eckhart). When that split occurs, then of course the spiritual unity of the creed is destroyed.

B. GUARD: What do you mean by “fideist”?

E. VOEGELIN: I mean accepting the verbal formulation—“I believe in God the creator”—without asking any questions: “What do you mean by that?” Fideistic acceptance is very frequent, among fundamentalists especially.

S. MACHNIK: Could I ask you about *metaxy* and *flux*? Is Heraclitus's account of the experience of flux an example of the state that you call *metaxy*?

7. Eric Voegelin, “Response to Professor Altizer's ‘A New History and a New but Ancient God?’” in *CW*, vol. 12, *Published Essays, 1966–1985*, ed. with intro. by Ellis Sandoz (1990; available Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 292–303.

E. VOEGELIN: It is certainly one. I don't remember the use of the word *metaxy* for describing it, in Heraclitus—

S. MACHNIK: I didn't mean that it was. I was wondering—when you were giving the etymological background of some symbols—what the etymological origins of the notion of flux might have been. It seems very rich. (The word *becoming* had become so important.)

E. VOEGELIN: I'm afraid I originated *flux of presence*. I had to get a term that is neutral toward fideistic separation of God from the world. *Flux of presence* is a very good term.

P. COONAN: When you talk about anxiety in the turn from existence to nonexistence, I'm wondering what the nonexistence is?

E. VOEGELIN: Here you are getting into tensional experiences—about which one can say nothing except that they are real. A man who is (for example) in the state of atheistic engagement or revolt, at the same time feels that he is falling into nonexistence. You are *in* existence if you are attuned to reality, which is God's reality, and you fall out of it if you are in revolt against it. A state of alienation, if it has reached the proper intellectual consciousness, will always be accompanied by some sort of uneasiness. This need not be completely conscious but can express itself in all sorts of diversions.

P. COONAN: Would *meaninglessness* be the same kind of word as *nonexistence*?

E. VOEGELIN: Yes, exactly. *Nonexistence* simply means falling out of the experience of positive relatedness to the reality which is divine—

P. COONAN: —which is not in flux.

E. VOEGELIN: If you fall out of that flux and try to become an independent entity, then you fall into nonexistence. One cannot explain more about it because it *is*, only in that tension.

P. COONAN: In cases of mystery your fideist says, "I'm not going to question; I'm just going to take it."

E. VOEGELIN: That can have unpleasant consequences. As I mentioned with regard to the "isms," there are many terms that have arisen since the eighteenth century. One of these is *identity* (much used by the psychologist Erik Erikson of Harvard). "Men are in search of their identity." But if there is no identity, there are very unpleasant consequences: Identity must be artificially produced. Camus gave the example of Brutus, who had either to kill other people or to kill himself. If you can't kill an adversary and thereby assert yourself, the only means of self-assertion, of gaining an identity, is suicide.

C. POTVIN: What about the agnostic, the one who doesn't revolt and who doesn't admit to the existence of tension?

E. VOEGELIN: That is a very frequent case, which fortunately is comparatively harmless. A lot of people are dull enough to be unworried about such things, thank God!

C. POTVIN: What do you tell your students when they ask you about the mystery of the process? What kind of pursuit should they have, to clarify or see the luminous event?

E. VOEGELIN: It's not a question of seeing luminous events. There are actually students who will not settle for less than a vision like Saint Paul's; they are not willing to believe. One needs to get them out of their idiocy somehow and persuade them that the daily tasks are the things one has to do—to live, to have a useful vocation or occupation, found a family, take care of a wife and children, and so on. That all has to be done; that is life and the meaning of life. Beyond that, if they have time enough to go into intellectual and spiritual exploits, there is enough literature for them to train on. We are always trained on something. *I* got into problems of religious understanding through the fact that in Vienna, where I grew up, there was an adult-education institute

where one winter they had Deussen, the philosopher who translated the Upanishads. There he was, and for a winter, every week, I was at a lecture by Deussen on the Upanishads. That is how I found out about them. So take it where you get it!

E. O'CONNOR: We're very grateful for this session.⁸

8. The 1965 lecture entitled "In Search of the Ground" and subsequent discussion are included in "Conversations with Eric Voegelin," vol. 11, *CW*, 224-51.



Notes on "Civilization and Foreign Affairs"

I.

The program to be initiated by the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy is motivated by practical considerations. The conduct of foreign affairs in the present world-situation requires a knowledge of foreign civilizations, as well as of our own Western civilization, that is not readily available to practitioners and teachers of international relations through the channel of the conventional political science departments. The subject matters whose knowledge is necessary for the intelligent shaping of policies have wandered off from political science to such fields as comparative literature, comparative religion, prehistory, archeology, the ancient Near East, classical philology, art history, the history of Christianity, and so forth. The knowledge required, thus, is in existence in the various fields of the so-called humanities; but these fields have their autonomous lives; they rarely orient their results toward the questions that become acute in the conduct of foreign policy. The new program, as I understand it, has the purpose of drawing on the available knowledge in the humanities and selectively bringing it into focus for the purposes of inter-civilizational relations.

There is no doubt that the program can be realized. In its execution, however, it is beset with two dangers of derailment, which must be stated clearly in order to be avoided. The first danger arises from the fact that the civilizational materials are unbounded in quantity. Unless clear principles of selection are

Paper presented at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, September 5, 1972. Typescript in Voegelin Papers, box 77, folder 9, Hoover Institution Archives.

used, the courses and seminars can drown in a sea of information, fascinating for various reasons but not relevant to the issues of political action in a multicivilizational world. The second danger arises from the nature of political issues that touch on what may be called packages of civilizational problems. One cannot improvise civilizational background knowledge on the spur of the moment when political events bring Russian, or African, or Chinese problems into the focus of interest. The enterprise would degenerate into bull sessions with cultural chic. In order to avoid such possible derailments, I suggest the following guidelines:

(1) The program should concentrate on the knowledge that is essential for the understanding of civilizations as a type of society in history, i.e., on their genesis, their internal dynamics, the mode of their receptiveness to outside influences, the constants in their structure, their self-interpretation, the problems of change they face today, and the probabilities of their response to the new problems. As far as possible, clear lines should be drawn between the generic character of civilizations and variations of the moment, so that false generalizations can be avoided.

(2) Our knowledge of civilizations is in flux. Within the last fifty years, the historical sciences have advanced our understanding of civilizations, both foreign and Western, considerably. Especially, the lines that have to be drawn between the generic and the specific, the great constants and the variations, are still shifting. In order to avoid obsolete opining, especially of the ideological variety, one should keep up with the most recent developments in the various historical and philosophical sciences that have a bearing on the issues under consideration. If the two rules (1) of concentration on the essentials and (2) of proper regard for the present state of science are observed, it should prove possible to develop critical standards for the program. I am dwelling on this point, because the text of the project envisages the creation of a model for the treatment of the issues that possibly could be emulated by other institutions.

One or two concrete examples will illustrate the purport of these general remarks:

(1) All of the major contemporary "civilizations" have emerged as a distinct type of society from the turmoil of the ecumenic age, roughly from 800 B.C. to 800 A.D. In this period, the older types

of civilizational order—tribal societies, ritual confederations of tribes, the Hellenic world of the polis, the Near Eastern cosmological civilizations—fell to the onslaught of the new type of empire, which understood itself as “ecumenic”—the Persian empire, the Alexander conquest, the Roman empire in the West, the Maurya and Gupta empires in India, the Ch’in and Han empires in China. The new civilizations that emerged—the Byzantine, the Latin-Christian, the Islamic, Hinduist India, Confucian China—all bore the imprint of their imperial past and inherited the ecumenic claim as a constant in their structure.

(2) Not all of the civilizational areas, however, have gone through the imperial mill. The tribal societies of black Africa, for instance, have a development of their own and were drawn into the imperial-ecumenic conception of “civilization” partly through the expansion of Islam, and more thoroughly through their victimization as colonies in the age of Western imperialism. Obviously, the civilizational structures of contemporary African societies differ widely from the Chinese, or Indian, or Islamic.

(3) Although all of the major civilizations bear the mark of their imperial-ecumenic genesis to this day, their ecumenisms differ widely. Only Western civilization has experienced the outburst of Renaissance and Reformation, of Enlightenment and Romanticism, of Science and Industrial Revolution. A field of ecumenic societies, coexisting in their respective areas, has been transformed into a global power field in which the Western standards of science and technology are generally accepted, at least for the time being, as “civilizational” standards. The causes of the Western outburst are to be sought in the heritage of Greek philosophy and Judaeo-Christian revelation. The Buddhist, Hinduist, and Confucian ecumenisms did not lend themselves to the same development. A study of the contemporary civilizational scene must include, therefore, an analysis of the differences inherited from ancient ecumenism and consider the effects of the modern Western impact on civilizations with a different ecumenic tradition.

(4) In all of the historical situations touched upon, whether they be ritual federations of tribes, relations between cosmological empires, periods of ecumenic-imperial expansions, relations between ecumenic empires, between the empires and satellite states, between the national states in Western civilization, between West-

ern and non-Western civilizations, certain types of conduct were considered permitted or obligatory. The study of these various types of conduct will have to be a massive part in any program on "Civilization and Foreign Affairs."

(5) During the last fifty years, one of the most important advances in science concerns the understanding of Western civilization itself. I mention only two major areas of such studies. In the first place, we have now a fairly clear picture of the continuity of apocalypse, gnosis, and Neoplatonism from antiquity to the present. In the contemporary Western unrest, characterized by revolutionary salvationism, millennialism, utopianism, and immanentist perfection, the traditions indicated are in open rivalry with the other traditions that conventionally are summarized as Reason and Revelation. In the second place, the continuity of alchemy from antiquity through the Middle Ages into the modern period is now well established. The older type of alchemy continues, in mannerism, in the conception of the work of art as the opus of salvation; in Enlightenment and Romanticism, in the conception of the speculative system as the opus; and finally in the magic of revolutionary violence as the work of salvation. The manner in which these various utopianisms, chiliasms, and alchemistic salvationisms affect the conduct of intra- and inter-civilizational affairs should certainly be included as an important topic in the program.

(6) In contemporary Western civilization, the "state of science" is in conflict with the "climate of opinion." The term *climate of opinion* was introduced by A. N. Whitehead to signify the publicly dominant mode of opining that represents, as we can now say more exactly than Whitehead could do in the 1920s, the tradition of the aforementioned apocalyptic, gnostic, and alchemistic movements, while "science" moves in the tradition of "Reason" in the Greek sense. At the present juncture of Western civilization, the science of human affairs is on the point of reemerging from the period of its repression by the "climate of opinion." The history of this conflict in Western civilization, and the critical stage at which it has arrived in our time, should be an important topic in the program, especially since on the awareness of this conflict the very quality of the program depends.

At the present state of science, the topics and issues adum-

brated in the preceding six points should form the hard core of the program intended by the Fletcher School. How far one can move from this core into details, how far special problems in art, literature, religion, and philosophy can be accommodated, how the subject matters are best distributed over courses and seminars, I leave open, as it depends on such variables as time, the interests of staff and students, the availability of outside lecturers, and so forth. Certainly, the curriculum as set forth in Appendix E of the project should prove wide enough to meet all demands that can be legitimately made on a program of this kind.

II.

Since the principles that inform the program on “Civilization and Foreign Affairs” resemble closely the principles on which I have organized the Institute of Political Science in Munich, in 1958, a few remarks on the Munich enterprise, its success and its difficulties, may be helpful.

The foundation of a new institute offered the opportunity to establish political science, from the outset, on the level of contemporary science. One could avoid the conventional ballast of descriptive institutionalism, historical positivism, as well as of the various leftist and rightist ideological opinions. With the help of assistants, who came at the Ph.D. level from the fields of history, law, philosophy, sinology, Islamism, and theology, it was possible to build a curriculum that had at its center the courses and seminars in classical politics and Anglo-American politics (with the stresses on Locke and the *Federalist Papers*). Beyond this center we could go into the areas of German government, comparative government, Chinese and Near Eastern politics. I myself was in charge of the courses in history of political ideas (ancient Orient and Israel, classical politics, medieval, and modern) and philosophy of history. Once or twice I also gave the courses in modern revolution and general theory of revolution.

An important factor in the integration of the institute was the necessity of building up the library from scratch. The program for acquisitions was discussed in monthly meetings in which all of the assistants participated, so that every member of the staff knew what the others were doing. Besides, I had a seminar for the

assistants once a month at my home, the evenings lasting five to six hours.

The organization of the library reflected the program of making the contemporary advances in the science of civilizations available to the students as well as for research. Particular care was given to the sections on classic philosophy and Greco-Roman culture, the ancient Near East and Israel, Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, the Byzantine empire, India, China, and Japan; to the new developments in art history, mannerism, Romanticism, symbolism, and surrealism; and to gnosticism, medieval and Renaissance sectarianism, and modern revolutionary movements.

The results have surpassed the expectations. We are publishing a series of monographs, called the *Schriftenreihe zur Politik und Geschichte*, of which up to now nine volumes have been published. Moreover, the younger members of the institute have organized a *Geschichte des politischen Denkens*, with an international group of contributors. The series is planned to have sixty-four paperback volumes; up to now twelve volumes have come out. I enclose the publisher's leaflet, which, however, is two years old; the newest publications are not yet contained in it.

In the beginning, the institute encountered considerable distrust, resentment, and outright hostility on the part of the political science profession in Germany. The grievances voiced were the following: (a) the introduction of classic politics as the required basic course, as it replaced the discussion of politics in terms of Hegelian, Marxist, and positivist ideologies; (b) the insistence on a thorough knowledge of Western civilization in depth, instead of concentrating on the political issues of the day; (c) the concern with foreign civilizations, considered irrelevant for a "German" political science; (d) the insistence on a basic training in English and American political theory, considered irrelevant, if not hostile, to German political interests; (e) the providing of fellowships for the assistants to study political science in America for a year or two because, in the German opinion, American political science does not live up to the qualities of German scholarship.

An effect not planned, or even expected, is the survival of the institute in Munich and its expansion to a strong establishment in Bochum, as against the breakdown of the political science enterprise in West Berlin and Frankfurt. While especially West Berlin

has become the victim of student riots and communist infiltration, the Munich group has escaped major rioting and ideological infiltration because the student body is so well-trained in political matters that the inevitable activists can be held at bay, and the scientific standards for the staff are so high that ideologists have hardly a chance to get in.



Structures of Consciousness

[Introductory]

Ladies and Gentlemen: As the topic for tonight's lecture, I have chosen the title "Structures of Consciousness." That could be related to the general title of this meeting, "Structuralism and Hermeneuticism." But I am not talking about the "isms"—not because I am at variance or in disagreement with them, but because the mere ending *ism* adds a stratum of meaning about which I have hesitations and misgivings—because "isms" are positional conceptions that have arisen since the eighteenth century and represent something like a *stasis*, in the Aristotelian sense, in thinking. Not that the thought is necessarily wrong. You will see that, to a large extent, what I have to say is in accordance with what people who prefer to style themselves structuralists or hermeneuticists are doing. But the "ism" itself is an additional problem. Let me briefly explain. We have in the eighteenth century the beginning of "positional" formulations, by a personality, of his "position" in a matter, formulating the truth of reality as if it were found and now is the truth, to be available in the linguistic formulation achieved at the time. Let me give you a few examples of such "isms." For instance, such "isms" as we use every day

Transcribed and edited by Zdravko Planinc, this text was originally published in *Voegelin Research News* 2, no. 3 (September 1996). It contains a lecture by Voegelin at "Hermeneutics and Structuralism: Merging Horizons," a conference held at York University, Toronto, November 22, 1978, the question period following this lecture, and Voegelin's remarks from two panels, November 23, 24, 1978, at the same conference. In his introduction in *Voegelin Research News* Planinc gives acknowledgment to the following people involved in the transcription enterprise: Maben Walter Poirier, Alan Cogan, Oona Ajzenstat, and Gerald Day.

nowadays—like *monism*, or *pluralism*, or *dualism* and so on—have arisen in the eighteenth century, have there been formulated for the first time as philosophical “positions.” [. . .]

We have, furthermore, in the eighteenth century the beginning of certain “isms” expressing new sentiments of existence, such as *optimism*, *pessimism*, *nihilism*: all new things. There was no optimism or pessimism in Greece or in ancient Israel. [. . .] And this genesis of the “isms” goes together with an entrance into the linguistic sphere of all sorts of words connected with the “ego.” The ego itself—you will perhaps be surprised—does not appear in English language before 1824. Before 1824, apparently, Englishmen had no ego. (I don’t know how that works out.) And you get then derivations of ego: Somewhat earlier already, *egoism* precedes *ego* in time; and then there is soon afterward, in 1825, the *egomania*; then against the egoism you find the counterformulation of *altruism* in the nineteenth century. And indicating apparently one stratum in the *psyche* that is connected with such positional assertions of truth, in 1890 you get the term, for the first time, of *megalomania*. So these are, you might say, existential positional formulations in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

In the nineteenth century itself, you have a further batch of “isms” connected with social problems. Again such terms as we use every day—*liberalism*, *conservatism*, *socialism*, *communism*, *positivism*, *capitalism*, *humanism*, and so on—are all terms that appeared in the language between 1810 and 1850. And this set of “isms” is then followed in the twentieth century by a new set [. . .] beginning with the term *existentialism*: [terms] like *utopianism*, *structuralism*, *hermeneuticism*, or (not an “ism” directly, but related to “isms”) *linguistics*, and so on.

We [thus have] characteristic complexes of “isms” since the eighteenth century; [and] that is a process that has now been going on for almost three hundred years. And it is a problem that is connected with a new entrance of “self”-related compounds in our language. Such terms as we use every day nowadays as *self-assertion*, *self-reliance*, *self-culture*, [. . .] *self-realization*, *self-repression*, and so on, are all nineteenth-century or even twentieth-century terms. Apparently in earlier periods these “self” compounds simply were not used because these moods of an ego

asserting itself in his sentiments and in his positions of understanding the truth of reality were not yet a custom.

For this custom represented by "isms," I want to use the term *egophanic* symbolisms. [. . .] Now, that does not mean that everything that is an "ism" today is an egophanic case. But the "ism" itself is a stratum in philosophizing that indicates the subjective position of a truth to be found authoritatively, so that, you might say, you get the formulation of an "ism" as a new language prison that endangers [or enfolds] you and prevents your contact with reality. So this conception of an "ism" as an ultimate insight concerning truth is a modern development, and it represents what I call a "structure in consciousness."

I have given you a practical example to begin with, before I go into the details of the theoretical problems [. . .] of what a "structure in consciousness" is. There is, beginning in the eighteenth century, an egophanic movement that expresses itself in distinctly distinguishable new language, language expressing a state of consciousness or a structure of consciousness—whatever you wish to call it—as a possibility, not always of saying something wrong, but of saying something that is a fragment of reality. And by its linguistic fixation [this language] threatens to become a distortion of reality, because it might pretend that that is all we know about reality, or have to know about reality. So such fragmentizing linguistic elements as we find here, that is what I call a *stasis* as a structure in consciousness. [. . .]

Let me now go into the problems of the structures of consciousness from which such possibilities [emerge]. In this case, it would be a possibility of deformation, not affecting the truth in detail that may be contained in any of these positions. Let me reflect on the structure of consciousness that makes possible such peculiar structures.

[I. Reality-Consciousness-Language]

[I. *Intentionality*]

We have in consciousness, first of all, always the problem that consciousness is a consciousness of something. And now I have to be clear about terminology. I shall call *consciousness* the something that is conscious of something; and the something of which

it is conscious I shall call *reality*. And this relation between consciousness and reality to which it refers, that I shall call, following Husserl's terminology, *intentionality* of consciousness. So in relation to a consciousness of man, the concrete human being, reality moves into [the] position of an object, intended subjectively from the cognitive subject. But the cognitive subject, or the consciousness as such, must again be protected against "ismic" fragmentations and hardening, because the consciousness is something that man has, and man concretely, man in his bodily existence. That excludes from consideration, as again a special type of deformation, all conceptions of consciousness that cannot be located in a definite human being as experience, for instance, a Hegelian conception of consciousness or similar experiential expressions. The man in his concrete bodily existence is the carrier of such a consciousness, which intends reality as its object. That is intentionality.

[2. *Consciousness: Event in the Process of Reality*]

However, consciousness is not simply intentional. It is also, at the same time, an "event" in reality, an event more correctly in the "process" of reality. And that means quite a deal. Because man—as a concrete human being, living in his body, [with] a bodily existence [. . .] in which consciousness is founded—is an object, [or] an event in the process of reality that has behind it, for instance, the whole history of biological evolution. And the whole history of biological evolution has back of it, as we now know better with new developments of physics since the 1920s, the history of evolution of matter. So we have a sequence of matter, biological evolution, and what we more briefly call historical evolution, as a process in which man with his consciousness is appearing lately.

Now let me again warn of a possible deformation: A theory [of this process], as if the process itself and the consciousness that appears in it in the human being were a given object, is impermissible, because the man with his consciousness is a part of the reality that he intends. And Kant brought that problem already to attention against the biological theory of evolution in the eighteenth century in the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (in paragraph 80) where he explains: If we go back in the series of species and

assume that one species develops out of another, and then we go further back and explain perhaps the origin of the first living being out of matter and an evolution of matter, and so on—we simply put back the question [of] what the thing “is,” because the fact that reality has such a structure, [such] that the evolution of forms (of biological forms as well as material forms) occurs in it, is an ultimate behind which we cannot go back. [Thus] the question that [only] leads back of it—Where does it come from?—leads then to the famous question[s] formulated by Leibniz: Why is there something? Why not nothing? and Why is the something as it is and no different from what it is? The answer is ultimately, then, a theological answer: God is back of the reality which has that form which it has.

That has very practical consequences. In biology, for instance, as Kant has explained, there is no such thing as a theory of evolution, because the world-immanent processes presuppose always that if one species indeed should develop from one species into another species, that there must be something in species number one which, under certain circumstances, can develop into species number two; and where does that peculiarity of number one come from? and so on. And we get back into the regress into a beginning that is ultimately a divine beginning. The theory can only refer to immanent, proximate causations, but not to the ultimate causation, which determines the structure of reality as a whole. And this Kantian argument holds good for biological evolution as [well as] for material evolution as well as for the problems of history of consciousness, with which we have to deal here.

So we have now the peculiar problem that consciousness, besides being the consciousness of a human being intending reality as its object. . . . There is a reality in which consciousness occurs; reality, the object of intentional consciousness, is now becoming the subject, of which consciousness, as one of its events, has to be predicated. So, reality as a subject: Can we say that that reality is conscious? or that reality knows? or is the subject of knowledge? I don't think so. We need a different term. I am using the term that is most closely related to the similar treatment of such problems by medieval thinkers; I'm using the term *luminosity*. Reality becomes luminous in consciousness, and consciousness then intends the reality for which the reality has become luminous in

consciousness. A very complicated structure; because the reality in which man is constituted as an event in its process becomes an object for that consciousness that has arisen in it.

And one has to be clear about this double structure of consciousness, and not gloss it over [with] terms that tend to become “isms”—like *dialectics*, the Hegelian solution for the problem, for instance. The word *dialectics* doesn’t mean anything if used to cover this problem, especially because Plato has already used the term *dialectic* at the beginning of philosophy to designate a very specific structure of consciousness: the exploration of the “in-between,” the *metaxy*, of which I have to talk presently. In Platonic language, any attempt to skip that peculiar problem would be a drawing in of certain other questions, which Plato then calls “eristic” constructions. So in a Platonic language, one would have to speak of Hegel’s system as an eristic fantasy, not as a dialectical speculation by a philosopher—something quite different. I’m not criticizing [. . .] or wanting to depreciate anything. I’m just showing you what the structures are and what language exists, [language] which should not be violated by arbitrary new inventions.

[3. *Process and Event—as Reality Intended*]

So this double structure: We have consciousness, first, in its intentionality and then as an event of luminosity in reality. And about all these things we would not know anything unless there were this consciousness [with] the peculiar gift of expressing itself in language. If all these experiences, which we may call intentionality and luminosity, were mute, we wouldn’t know anything about [them]; there would be nothing to be communicated. So language must be introduced as a further structural element into this complex, as the method by which the communication between human beings and various consciousness[es]—in itself a problem of consciousness—[is] constituted.

We have again for language a double problem, as [with] the intentionality and the luminosity. All language “breaks forth” in the process of consciousness, in the sense of consciousness being a luminosity in reality. When reality becomes luminous, it becomes luminous by letting that man who has consciousness find language-terms to designate what he experiences. That is the

breaking forth of language. But when it breaks forth, and once it has broken forth, it—in its intentionality function—signifies the reality that is intended. So both elements are again there: the breaking forth of language—language is not a given that has a structure, but language arises in historical process (and we will see examples)—and intentionality. Both breaking forth and intentionality, signifying reality as an object, belong to language.

We have therefore in language and consciousness a peculiar problem of truth. "Truth" is, first of all, reality becoming luminous for its structure. I am using the term[s] *reality* and *truth* in the Greek sense of the *aletheia*, the term that has both meanings of "truth" and "reality." So reality becoming luminous for its structure through a process in which man participates—that is the first conception of truth. And then this reality that becomes luminous is—insofar as it becomes luminous in the consciousness of man in the relation of intentionality—a "knowledge" of that reality. So truth does not refer only to a reality outside of man and confronting man, but also to the process of reality in which man himself becomes an event, the event of the carrier of consciousness.

[4. *Languages (in the Plural)*]

Now for that reason, that we have here again a double structure, language is practically only possible in the plural. We don't have language simply, but we have languages—the languages which, in each case, express the state of luminosity and the state of intentionality possible under personal, social, and historical conditions in the course of history. And there is a series of such languages, as you will see, because there is a series of such states of consciousness of increasing luminosity and increasing knowledge of reality as an object. So *language* is to be used in the plural. We do not have one language that has a structure. There are structural elements in all languages, which are properly explored, for instance, by linguistics. But—better linguists like Noam Chomsky are very clear about it—a linguistic analysis is not a philosophy of language. That's something different.

So we have a plurality of languages. Now let me refer to a number of such "languages," so that you see we are not dealing with

a very simple problem. I have made a list of languages that have received names in history since antiquity, and I shall enumerate them now. Each of these names refers to a state of consciousness in its dimensions of luminosity and intentionality and the language that is used to express that particular state.

Such languages are: [i] the ancient Oriental myths, developed in cosmological empires. Observe the restriction “cosmological empires,” because we have myths also preceding imperial situations in tribal connections where the myth looks somewhat different. So imperial myths of cosmological empires [are] preceded by [i.a] tribal myth problems.

[ii] Then you have another such development in antiquity, the Greek development, where the myth develops as the language of a state of consciousness that is not involved in imperial constructions, in imperial self-interpretation, but in opposition, if at all with regard to empire (be it the Persian empire or any other imperial construction).

So already two types of myths. I do not believe one can use the term *myth* simply as if [one] knew what myths were. You will later see how the terminology of the myth arises at all as such a language for a state of consciousness. But there are lots of different languages of myth, like the ancient Oriental, the Hellenic, or other types of myth like the ones explored by Levi-Strauss in his *Pensee Sauvage*, where he [is] very careful [to explain] that that is not the language of savages but language *à l'état sauvage*, at a primitive state. [. . .]

[iii] Then a further language arises in the case of Israel, which has received the name of “revelation” and goes on as the language of revelation into the Christian revelation. So revelation is a further state of consciousness and language expressing such consciousness.

[iv] Then out of the Hellenic myths we find the development of philosophy in the Platonic-Aristotelian sense; again, “philosophy” as a specific structure in consciousness with its language.

[v] Now the specific structure in consciousness that we call “philosophy” can harden: We have a similar problem, already in antiquity and going into the Middle Ages, [to] the *stasis* of the “isms.” One can transform the symbols that arise in the mythical language or in Plato’s or Aristotle’s philosophical language into

entities that become the subjects of propositions. I speak therefore of “propositional” or “doctrinal” formulations concerning reality, derivative from the original symbolisms in revelation and philosophy. This type of derivative propositional language has received in the Middle Ages, through Thomas in his commentary on Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, the name “metaphysics”: doctrinal, propositional knowledge that is based on mythical and philosophical and revelatory symbols, which are treated as if they were independent, autonomous realities that can become the subject of propositions about them, with predications.

[vi] *Metaphysics*, by the way, is not the last phase in this propositional doctrinization. In the seventeenth century it proved insufficient [for getting] at the peculiar problem of doctrinalizing philosophical problems proper (in opposition to theological problems), and we find therefore since the seventeenth century a new term replacing *metaphysics*, which for that very reason I always hesitate to use. It is the term *ontology*. So one should be very clear about it, that Plato and Aristotle definitely were neither metaphysicians nor ontologists and would have shaken with horror at the idea of doing such things. They were philosophers, and they knew what they were.

[vii] Now, a combination of philosophical and revelatory symbols, already vitiated by the problem of the transformation of philosophy into metaphysics, is the so-called philosophical language (usually erroneously called a Hellenic philosophical language), which is used in the formulation of medieval “theology.” I would say “theology” is derived from both revelation and philosophy, but via doctrinization in the form that Thomas has called metaphysics: a very complicated new language, which is not identical with what Plato or Aristotle called theology—that was something entirely different.

[viii] Then, within the Israelite-Judaic history, and by the side of the revelatory and philosophical development, we have special developments that go under the name—for instance, from the second century before Christ to the second century after Christ, and ever since have retained that name—[of] “apocalyptic” imagery and speculation. We have *apocalyptic* as a state of consciousness in expectation of a realization, for instance, of a realm of God in historical reality. And these apocalyptic visions are a state of

consciousness and have developed an apocalyptic language. Even in our time we speak of *apocalyptic* as a peculiarity of certain student movements in the 1960s. [. . .]

[ix] We have a further radicalization of the apocalyptic into the conception that not only [is] this reality bad and will have to be replaced by a better reality, [which] will happen in history apocalyptically, but it will not happen at all and must therefore be shelved to another realm, [another realm that] is accessible to human intervention. The apocalyptic proper expects a change in reality from a divine intervention. A Gnostic does not rely on a divine intervention but on a knowledge [of] how to achieve such a change in reality: by either joining the absolute, perfect reality of the *pneuma*, of the spirit, in the beyond, leaving this reality, which is imperfect, behind; or by pulling the perfect reality into this world and thereby making it perfect—that is the modern type of gnosticism. So we have here types of “gnosticism”; again, states of consciousness with regard to reality, with their own languages.

[x] Then, a special development out of Platonic philosophy: Under the impression of apocalyptic and gnostic movements in the Hellenistic and Roman empires, [there] extends the specific development of the Neoplatonic systems. “Neoplatonic systems” and their language are a further language we have to deal with into modernity, because the Neoplatonic systems have especially been revived (after having a somewhat subdued existence during the Middle Ages) at the end of the fifteenth century in Florentine Platonism, [where] we have a strong Neoplatonic state of mind ([or] consciousness) and of Neoplatonic language for the expression of problems of reality—of which, for instance, Frances Yates of the Warburg Institute, in her “Giordano Bruno” volume, has given at least the earlier part. But this Neoplatonic tradition goes on. And you find it is usually disregarded or at least not too well known. For instance, [in] the *Encyclopedie francaise* there is an article organized by Diderot on *eclectisme*—not eclecticism—in which he explains that the conception of the *Encyclopedie*, and the whole state of consciousness inspiring the *Encyclopedie*, is derived from the Neoplatonic systems. And once you realize that the *Encyclopedie* is a language symbol belonging to Neoplatonism in its modern form[. . .], you will also understand certain points in the Hegelian *Encyclopaedie* better, because he

is also strongly influenced by the Neoplatonists, especially by Proclus, and wants a similar kind of system corresponding in its consciousness-structure to certain elements especially in Neoplatonic language.

[xi] Then, a further such state of consciousness is "mysticism." I do not want to go further into the details, just [to] refer to it.

[xii] Further deformations in the modern period we call "ideologies."

Now I have given you, I believe, about a dozen such cases. And there are many more. Because you have again different states of consciousness with different languages, for instance, in India, in Hinduism and Buddhism, and further back in the Rig-Veda. And we have other languages with other states of consciousness in Taoism and Confucianism; and in Chinese Buddhism and Zen Buddhism, and so on. So we have probably dozens of different languages that all deal with the same matter.

[5. The Complex: The meditative complex]

This problem, this complex which I have explained, is what I would call the "meditative complex." It occurs wherever man thinks and where we have records of such a meditative complex. And all the elements I have enumerated here must not be isolated, taken and torn one from the other, so that one can have, say, a theory of intentionality, or a theory of luminosity, or a theory of language (language in the one sense or in the other sense), and so on. But they all belong together and must not be torn asunder, because then that structure in consciousness (which has to do with intentionality, luminosity, and language) would be fragmentized and deformed in its meaning. That is the first problem I wanted to discuss. The problem of the complex will return, as you will see presently. One must not fragmentize the complex and pretend that a structural element in that complex can be isolated and made [an] object of independent study, because then this complicated structure of intentionality and luminosity is gone.

[II. *Metaxy*]

Now, let me go into a few more such structural elements. I select them more or less at random, because here is an infinity of

problems. I [will] pick on a few that are particularly important and [always] recur centrally in all sorts of situations.

One of these structural elements in consciousness is what Plato has called the *metaxy*, which simply means “in-between.” Man has experiences of reality, and the center of these experiences is always the consciousness that we want to know something (intentionally, the object) and we know that we don’t know it; but in order to know that we don’t know it, we must know something about it. We are in a state of ignorance, which is conscious to us as a state of ignorance, as a state of poverty of knowledge; and [. . .] our consciousness is in action toward acquiring more knowledge. That is, we have a horizon, and we know that there is something beyond the horizon—the beyond-the-horizon is an essential element in consciousness—because we wouldn’t look for anything in the world if we would believe that what we know at present were all that is to be known. So we know that it isn’t all [there is] to be known and that we have to go beyond it.

This structure is very carefully analyzed in various contexts in the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy, and I speak of it as the “tension” of the *metaxy*. I say, “I speak of it,” because the term *tension* does not occur in the classic philosophical complex. There we have only the concrete tensions: the “love” of the divine, the “hope,” the “faith,” the “justice,” the *eros*, the *philia* in Aristotle. The term *tension*, the *tasis*, appears only a generation later in Stoic philosophy. But I am using the term *tension* to signify that existential tension of the ignorance that is in search—the Platonic *zetesis*—of something and, in order to be in search of the something, must be moved already by some sort of knowledge of that something into searching for it. Because if there were no movement, no pull (what Aristotle calls the *kinesis*, the pull toward searching for something), nobody would search for anything. So the *zetesis* and the *kinesis* are the movements really experienced by human beings in their quest: [the] Aristotelian *aporein*, questing for something that is not known, but known to be there somewhere, and somehow to be expressed and to be found language for.

Now this whole process of searching for the “ground” of one’s existence—the ignorance of the ground, then the awareness that one is searching for it, that one is moved in the search by the

ground itself (in the *kinesis*)—that is what Plato and Aristotle have ultimately called the *nous*. So when we speak of *nous* as “reason” we should be aware that reason is not a world-immanent operation or faculty but always the consciousness of the in-between, of ignorance with a horizon that always has to be transgressed in order to find more beyond.

This consciousness of the *metaxy* constitutes an area of reality in which we can speak of that reality of the tension in consciousness as a reality. And what that reality reveals is that it is a tension between the man who has the consciousness and something that moves him to be conscious and to be conscious of more. The luminosity of a movement toward something which is not yet known but should be known, and the intentionality directed toward it, has again that double structure of the luminosity and intentionality I talked about. And this tension is, as I would call it, a “polarity”; and the poles in that tension are the poles of that tension, but nothing more than the poles of that tension. Let me use here a simple diagram: The tension goes toward the “ground,” in Plato and Aristotle; and at the other end of the tension is “man”; and there is a movement and countermovement. And, we might say, the area of that movement [and countermovement], that is what Plato and Aristotle would call the *psyche*.

So the tension reveals [itself] therefore as a tension between these two poles, and the poles are not known as givens independent from the tension in which they are experienced as poles. We are again here coming into the problem of the complex. The tension (as a polar tension) [and] the poles (the ground pole and the human pole) belong together. One cannot, therefore, hypostatize [. . .] the ground, as the divinity, into a god about whom we know something, short of that tension; and [one] cannot hypostatize man into an immanent entity, short of that tension in which man experiences himself as man in the tension—that is, his existential reality. So anthropologists and theologians have their good reason, as long as they become aware of this tension as a tension in process. When the linguistic terms used for describing that tension are hypostatized into entities that can be explored independent of the tension, the luminous reality of the psyche is lost and one gets into empty speculation and theoretization. [. . .]

Now [. . .] this finding of the tension by Plato and Aristotle,

that is what they call “philosophy”: to live in that tension and explore that tension. And the exploration of reality in the light of that tension, that is what Plato calls “dialectics” and Aristotle more frequently “analytics.” Now this tension is exposed to deformation. Let me explain one principle deformation, because it has an enormous importance in modern philosophizing, especially since Romanticism. [Referring to the diagram previously drawn: . . .] The consciousness of “man” is [. . .] the illumined consciousness; it is constituted by its relation to the “ground” in becoming luminous for its existence in tension. But this tension at the same time is becoming an object. We are now talking about it as if it were some thing. We use the term *tension* for this *metaxy* tension. And when we do [this,] we must admit that—besides man’s being constituted in this tension as man and understanding his existence in the in-between, in the tension toward the ground—[man] can reflect on this attitude. So when we separate [out] the reflective factor of consciousness, [. . .] the reflective consciousness pertains, not to an immanent consciousness of “man,” but precisely to the *metaxy* consciousness.

We have no term technically for it. I call this relationship the “reflective distance.” If you lose that reflective distance—[. . .] not remaining aware that the reflective consciousness can[not] refer [to] a consciousness which can be split between immanent consciousness plus a ground plus a tension, and so on, but has to refer to the whole of the complex—then you identify that reflective consciousness with human consciousness understood as immanent, hypostatized as immanent consciousness. Then you get the problems of “identity.” Identity philosophy and contemporary identity psychology reflect a peculiar deformation in which the reflective distance of consciousness to its own tensional *metaxy* got lost somehow. So “identity” is one of the deformation possibilities of the tension of consciousness.

That is perhaps in conflict with psychological conceptions about identity. People are in search of identity, mostly, today. I would say, for heaven’s sake, if they [find] their identity, then they are really dead. That’s the one thing they must not find. They must remain open, knowing that they have no identity except in that tension.

[III. Historical Structure]

Now let me refer to perhaps one more of these structures. [. . .] The discovery of this tensional structure in consciousness is [an] event in classic philosophy and, even preceding, in pre-Socratic philosophy. And it is a historical event. But what does that mean, "historical event"? We simply use such language as if we knew what we were talking about, but we don't know it at all.

It means something very concrete; because [for] a thinker like Plato, who goes through that experience of illumination [. . .], philosophy is not natural reason but the discovery of that structure is a supernatural event—a revelation, of course. Now the man who goes through that illuminative, revelatory process knows that it has happened and that he now has a different type of consciousness and understanding of reality from people who have not gone through that process. You find therefore in the *Symposium* of Plato a new classification of man, socially and historically. The man who preceded that discovery of illumination remains under the title of the Homeric language for man, the "mortals," the *thnetoi*. The man who goes through that [experience] and [is] conscious of it, he calls the *daimonios aner*, the "spiritual man," who lives in that consciousness and is aware of it. And then there are of course the people who don't like that at all but insist on identifying themselves with their human part without such tension—for instance, in pragmatic politics in Machiavellian attitudes, and so on. And then he calls the "unwise" or "fools," the *amathes*. We have three new language terms. Please observe that language doesn't lie around somewhere, but is created on these occasions.

Three new language terms: the mortal, who has no longer the Homeric meaning of *mortal* but now is historically and socially the man who has not gone through that process [. . .]; and then the man [who] goes through it and is aware of it and lives in it from now on; and then the man who resists it, the *amathes*. And the state of mind in which such an *amathes* lives is called by Plato the lack of *nous*, the *anoia*. Especially in the *Laws* he analyzes the *anoia*. And [thus] there appears the Greek term that corresponds in other contexts—for instance, in revelatory contexts like the Israelite or the Christian—[to] the "fool." The *fool* becomes the

technical term, since the eighth century [B.C.], for the man who is not open in his relation to the divinity: the *nabal* of Isaiah (and *nabala*, the “foolishness”). In the Christian context that is translated in Latin as the *insipiens*; and the King James Version translates the *insipiens* as the “fool.” So the *fool* is the technical term for what Plato has called the *amathes* already as a technical term: [one] who does not understand the openness in that relationship. It’s not simply a name-calling question, but there is a technical term since the eighth century B.C. for this kind of people.

Now, that is one such instance of consciousness of the historical situation. Let me give only one more. [. . .] Aristotle, in the *Metaphysics* (in Book A), reflects on the problem that what he is doing in philosophy—that openness of the knowledge of the noetic relation to the ground which is at the same time an illumination—[. . .] is not different in its structure, on principle, and in the search (in the quest in which he engages), [from], for instance, [what is done by] cosmogonic myth poets like Hesiod. When they speak of the origin (in Platonic language, the *aition*) of the world, in heaven and earth, and from [there] construct then the whole history of reality in the form of a cosmogonic myth or a theogonic myth, they do exactly the same [as] he does. They are in search of the relation to the ground and try to find the formula for that ground. Only that, in the philosophical case, that structure of consciousness has become more differentiated, more clearly articulated than it was in theogonic or cosmogonic speculations. Now, we have no term for this relationship; and I have called it the equivalence of symbols under various conditions of consciousness. So we can have the same quest, which expresses itself philosophically or (I am stressing the illuminative element) in revelation, also in the mythical symbolization of mytho-speculations like the theogonic, anthropogonic, [and] cosmogonic speculations. They are equivalences on the scale from compactness to differentiation.

[IV. Indelible Presence]

How do we recognize, however, that it is always the same? Here comes in a very important concept, which I will take from Plato. It is the same because there is a structural element in all of these

experiences and linguistic expressions of consciousness: They all have to do with the presence of the divine as the moving factor. This presence of the divine as the moving factor in the soul and in the world at large is called by Plato the *parousia*: in the *Republic*, for instance, when he develops the concept of the *epekeina*. This presence identifies the various events that are equivalent and makes them recognizable to each other. We understand the comparatively primitive, compact symbolization, because we recognize in it the quest for the same presence (in experience of divine presence) that [we] find in the more differentiated experiences. One can, therefore, not say that past events of consciousness and experience belong to the past, or that future events will belong exclusively to the future, because what makes them events as events of consciousness is what I would call the “indelible presence” of the divine, which identifies the tension in relation between man and the divine ground. So all past events are present in the sense of the indelible presence and therefore belong to the same structural problem and the same reality in historical process of compactness and differentiation. And therefore do we have a history—and, you see, a history that is intelligible. What makes the history intelligible is the *parousia* in all cases.

And you see now [. . .] what it would mean to discard these findings in the structures of consciousness. Because then you lose, not the past, which can be thrown overboard, but you lose your present, because your present has no meaning unless it is related to the more compact events of the past, which are also present. You can't get away from the indelible present in history; and if you try to do it, you become a savage of the moment with no relations to your own reality and the structures of your own consciousness.

[V. *Periagoge*]

[. . .] I want to point to some more such problems: for instance, in the *Republic*. Plato concludes the *Republic* with the admonition, put in the mouth of Socrates, that this story that just has been told of the last judgment is a story that had to be saved from forgetfulness through the man who brought it back from there. And we are saved in our mortality, and on the way to the immortality in the consciousness of that tension, if that tale—in this case, the

story (the *mythos*) of the last judgment and of the descent into Hades—[. . .] is saved from the dead (referring to the death of Socrates). If that is the result—if on such an occasion as the death of Socrates one recognizes that he died living in that tension and refusing to surrender it—then the story of that death saved will make Socrates a *soter* (as it is formulated in that passage), a savior for those who follow him in his discovery of that openness and tension.

So the “saving tale,” as Plato calls his story, must be saved from death. And I mention this understanding of the saving tale that is to be saved from death, because we have on the Christian side—in Christian symbolism and revelation, in the history of dogma—always the terrible problem of the historicity of Jesus, of the reality of the things told there, and so on. And it would be of considerable help in understanding a Christian story, in this case a Gospel, if one would apply to it, first of all, the term developed by Plato on the occasion of his gospel on the occasion of Socrates’s [death], that it is a saving tale, saved from the death of a [man] optimally illuminated by divine presence. So not an ordinary myth, but a saving tale saved from death.

Well, let me conclude on this; and we shall have questions, I understand.

Question Period

FIRST QUESTIONER (JOHN O’NEILL): When the structures of consciousness that you’ve analyzed there are homologized to the social system, as in Plato’s *Republic*, is there any saving story then with respect to society in the way there would be a saving story with respect to the life of Socrates? It seems to me that . . .

VOEGELIN: . . . The *Republic* is no system. It is an analysis of order in society based on the insight concerning the *epekeina*, the divine reality in the beyond. And it is then to be supplemented, of course. As you know, the *Timaeus* is a continuation of the *Republic*, a formal continuation with analysis of cosmological structure.

O’NEILL: I think many of us tend, however, to read the *Republic* as a construct that trades on the notion that stages in the

philosophical life come to the same thing as classes of persons who choose different forms of life—they choose money making, or they choose warlike activities, or they choose philosophical activities—and it seems to me that those structures of consciousness are not simply analytic stages within the philosophical life, but they're thought also to be the topological strata for the . . .

VOEGELIN: . . . They are all compactly present also in people who are not philosophers. You see, that is one of the important elements in Anglo-Saxon culture, especially the English-American culture, since the eighteenth century: We have the commonsense philosophy of Thomas Reid and his successors, who explained that "common sense" is knowledge of reality in inarticulate form and the behavior in accordance with that knowledge by people who are not articulate philosophers. And what philosophers articulate is the common sense that is compactly present in the other people.

O'NEILL: I wanted to drive toward something like that, because on the basis of your model, the common sense would not be a form of unknowing, and if the *Republic* were an analogous structure, then those at the bottom of the society would not have laid upon them the matter of getting to the top of the society. Now there are many such societies that nevertheless project that for themselves as a goal. That is to say, modern society could be looked at as trying to move common sense into science; it can be thought of as trying to move its lower classes, through what we speak of as social mobility. . . . Well, I'm thinking that if one were taking seriously these philosophical notions, it would provide a kind of Platonist critique of the sort of social structures I'm speaking of . . .

VOEGELIN: . . . [don't] hypostatize the formation of the symbolisms developed here. The Platonic *epekeina* is not a philosophical notion. It is the expression of an experience of tension in relation to a beyond of *ta onta*, of the things in the cosmos.

O'NEILL: I understand that. I don't mean to say that it's a notion of a technical sort. It's presumably an experience within the structure of consciousness.

VOEGELIN: . . . [You are using] immanentist doctrinal language now, which is in opposition to what Plato is doing. He was, on the contrary, very explicit on various occasions that anybody who would transform what he has to say in the dialogical manner of analysis into a doctrine of anything has misunderstood him. . . . Plato has no doctrine. . . . Look, this doctrine problem is also one of the modern problems in the structure of consciousness. Since I have been a graduate student in the 1920s, Plato has been—already since, say, roughly 1870—a socialist, a communist, a utopian, a constitutionalist, and he has ultimately become a fascist in the Stalinist period.

[O'NEILL:] I can agree with you on that, but it seems to me . . .

[VOEGELIN:] He isn't any of these things. But you get here a structure of consciousness, which is specifically modern, of doctrinization according to trendy problems.

O'NEILL: I can agree with you, but I think it's a desperate solution to save him from even philosophy. [. . .]

SECOND QUESTIONER: Professor Voegelin, in your article entitled "Reason: The Classic Experience," you offer to your students a grid that is to help them in sorting out the mass of undigested material that comes at them every day. Now could I ask you, using this grid, where would you place, or how would you deal with, structuralism and hermeneutics?

VOEGELIN: That grid to which you refer is a grid concerning the fundamental items to be included in any interpretation of reality, but it does not deal with everything. For instance, the problem of doctrinization is simply not in that grid at all.

And hermeneuticism, as far I understand it, is a development lying in a German line of philosophizing from Hegel and Schleiermacher via Dilthey to the contemporary hermeneuticists via Heidegger. It is a very German problem, which sometimes assumes odd forms. For instance, [. . .] a man like the great theologian Pannenberg [is a hermeneuticist] who believes that there only are three great theologians—Schleiermacher, Dilthey, and Pannen-

berg—within a German development. So ethnic developments of that kind in ethnic cultures have their peculiar problems.

You might also say about structuralism, for instance—which assumes sometimes odd forms—that the death of God is now to be followed by the death of the author; that here you have a specific French problem that became acute on the line from Baudelaire to Mallarme. And as an English historian of literature—[Wakeman], I believe it was—[recently] explained, here you have a trend to make the French language unintelligible after it has been superbly intelligible in the Cartesian French. Now what the purpose is of making [French unintelligible]—a typical case like Sartre or Derrida, and such people—I don't know. But it is a problem that is not covered by this grid.

THIRD QUESTIONER (HANS-GEORG GADAMER): I wanted just to ask you, Dr. Voegelin, concerning your description of the distantiation and the consideration of the tension between man and the ground. I mean, especially in your application to Platonic work, one asks himself—and I think it would be helpful [if] you could say something about that—that this distantiation includes the danger of sophistic. I mean, that by this reflective layer, which is opened in the middle position of man [in the diagram], we have not only the alternative of meaninglessness (*anoia*) and [the] wise man, but we have also the semblant, we have the sophist. And that is what I would like to know: how you take this point in [the] tension.

VOEGLIN: If I have understood the question correctly—it was a bit complicated, the question—we have the problem that I have explained here [in the diagram]: a reflective distance of consciousness, which refers, however, not to a hypostatized immanentized consciousness, but precisely to that tension. If you—not necessarily in sophistic form—hypostatize, you get the oddest problems, with which Plato had to deal.

For instance, the dialogue *Parmenides*—let me reflect on that, perhaps—where you have the tension between two language symbols that had arisen out of the Parmenidean philosophizing, the language symbols of the “one” and the “many.” Sometimes this Platonic dialogue *Parmenides* is interpreted as a dialogue that has no conclusion, somehow. I think it has a conclusion. The

conclusion is made explicit in the last sentences of the dialogue. The problem in the dialogue is: Can one predicate of the “one,” that it “is” (existence), or that it “is not” (nonexistence)? And Plato says you can do the one or the other; and either way you do it, you get into aporetic problems, which are explained in the dialogue. Now my impression of the dialogue is—now I have to say something subjective about it—that in the school (and the Academy is a school), Plato was frequently pestered by young people, by students, with the question, Does that *epekeina*, that being, exist? Does that “one” exist, or does it not exist? And once, when he got very much fed up with such silly questions, he wrote a dialogue, exhausting to the point of becoming boring, all the possibilities of nonsense resulting from that question. I think it is a didactic masterpiece of explaining why terms like *being* or *existence* cannot be predicated of the “one,” of the *aition*.

And that, I think, is a problem he has dealt with explicitly in the myth of the *Phaedrus*. Because there he gets into the question that there is a something beyond all existing things, beyond *ta onta* (and the *ta onta* for Plato always includes the gods, the Olympian gods). And if we apply the category of existing things, of *ousiai*, to the *ta onta*, including the gods, then what is that something that is beyond all the *ta onta*, which is experienced here in that illuminative myth? And there he says: It is not one of the being things; but it would also [not] be proper to say that it is not real or not being; so it must be a sort of preeminent kind of being, beyond all the other things.

He gets into difficulties, which I think also are difficulties still of Heidegger when he deals with his philosophy of being as a fundamental ontology: that the being about which Heidegger talks is a being, not beyond this world (the *ta onta* of immanent things), but beyond the *ta onta*, in the Platonic sense, including the gods; and that *epekeina* in this Platonic sense is not a possible subject for predications, except by analogy, even for being. So one cannot simply speak of the *epekeina* as being.

I would say the same problem arises also in Christianity in certain contexts: for instance, the letter to the Colossians, which is of dubious origin but is certainly Pauline. There is explained what is meant by “incarnation.” And by incarnation is meant (according to the letter to the Colossians, chapter 2) the presence

of the *theotes*, the divine reality. And if you read only Colossians and not [any other text], you would assume that Christ is to be defined [. . .] as the optimal presence—the *pleroma* of *parousia*—of the divine in a human being, while all other human beings have lesser presences of the divine, and are only aware that there is one person, the Christ, in whom there is the *pleroma* of presence. And the *theotes* is not identified as a personal god, but as—you might say, in the Platonic sense—the presence of divine reality experienced in reality by the people who stand around and hear the Christ talk.

I don't know whether this is an answer to your question.

[Voegelin's remarks on Plato from the panel on "Reading the *Republic*" (November 23, 1978), relevant to various sections of the "Structures of Consciousness" lecture.—Planinc]

In the few minutes that are assigned to me, I shall confine myself to a few marginal notes on the topics presented by Dr. Bloom and by Professor Gadamer. One of the topics that came up in Dr. Bloom's report is, What kind of dialogue or work of art is such a dialogue as the *Republic*?

I'd like to stress that, linguistically, quite a number of the Platonic dialogues are most carefully constructed, beginning from the first word. One of these dialogues is the *Republic*. It begins with the word *kateben*—"I went down"—to be understood in various meanings: the going down from essence; [the going] down to the Piraeus and that night festival; or the going down from Marathon to the present sea-power and harbor of the Piraeus; or the going down from an existentially satisfactory order to an existentially not-so-satisfactory order, in contemporary essence of the sophists [. . .]; and ultimately the going down into death. And what does death mean? Is it an end to mortality, or is it a way to immortality, and [if so, how]? And the whole *Republic* is constructed, first of all, around this initial language formulation.

The "I went down" culminates in the parable of the cave, going down into that cave, but with the intention to rise from it. And the question is, Where to? And the going down [is] then repeated in the great myth of the underworld, [the] myth of the judgment in the end of the *Republic*, from which one then comes up with the

tale of that judgment, the saving tale that must be saved from that underworld. So there is a relation, existentially, between insight concerning the light and the willingness to be open to the light, and first having been down there somewhere and having experienced the nonreality of that “down,” of that “going down.” So the *Republic* does not simply present a way of life, or a philosophy; but the whole construction of the drama is based on that existentially “going down” and then coming up again.

But with what? With the tale of which I had the occasion to talk already last evening, the saving tale that must be saved from the death of Socrates. That is the existential core of the *Republic*, I should say. But beyond that existential core now extend certain political problems, some of which have been already analyzed just now by Professor Gadamer: the probably ironic or satirical elements in the *Republic*, like the community of women and so on, which remind one very much of similar constructions in Aristophanic comedies. [. . .] And the question is, For what political purpose?

Now, I would oppose any formulation of the Platonic construction of such a city—which he himself calls the *ariste polis* (the “best city”) or the *kallipolis* (the “beautiful city,” the “most best”)—as ideal. Because the ideal carries the connotation of perfect. And if there is anything characteristic of the constitution developed by Plato in the *Republic*, it is that it is not perfect in the sense of being durable, but as Professor Gadamer has already stressed, there will be made mistakes even in the so-called best city and it will go down through [the] varieties of deformation described in the second part of the *Republic*, down to the dream world of tyranny. So, the best polis should be understood realistically, as also the best polis is understood by Aristotle: The best is still miserable enough to go to pieces. So one should not mix up a construction of a best polis with what today is called utopianism. That is not the question in Plato and Aristotle; they are superb realists and know that even if you get the best construction, it will go to pieces sometime, sooner or later.

But then why engage in such a construction at all? Here comes in an interesting political problem. In the *Laws* (in book 3), Plato explains very carefully that one can have a Hellenic unity that could resist the imperial attack from Persia only if the city-states

in Hellas had a sort of constitution that will not get them into permanent conflict. The fratricidal wars: They are a political fact that must not be forgotten as the background of the *Republic*. And that, for instance—in the *Republic*, I believe it is—Plato suggests as a great improvement in the international law of war [. . .], that when one city is conquered by another, one shouldn't perhaps kill more than one-half of the population. So if you will be killing off [less] than one-half, then you are already a very progressive liberal, [one] would say, in the Platonic environment. So this peculiar fratricidal situation in the background; and the fact that, according to various estimates, 40 or 50 percent of all Greeks living in the third century, shortly before Alexander, were political refugees; and that these political refugees were a considerable recruitment store for the armies with which Alexander could operate in Anatolia. So a very messy political situation, very atrocious, is as the background, and the conception of Plato seems to be: If one could get a sort of constitution under these existential conditions, the Greek cities would stop making war on each other [. . .] and unite into an imperial strength that could hold its strength against [Persia]—in the *Laws* he calls it Assyria. So this imperial concept is back of Plato, and you should say that on the level of a Platonic philosophy, that is the equivalent to the conceptions of empire that we later find in, say, Polybius in the Roman context. So Plato is not a philosopher only of the city-state, as it is sometimes presented, but one should have regard for the awareness of a political background and of the imperial conditions of politics in the situation in which he lived. He died ten years before the ascent of Macedonia, and Aristotle witnessed the Macedonian conquest. That was the end of Athens and Greek culture, as an independent culture.

Now if you'd like to go back for a moment to that problem of the existential order: In this existential order I think there is, in Plato as well as in Aristotle, a very curious lack of consistency, not because of any logical failure or lack of intellectual power in either Plato or Aristotle, but because new problems had to be formulated that had not been formulated before. I mean by these problems, where a certain internal contradictoriness shows: [for example,] the construction of the world by a demiurge, who operates with the "ideas." I have a feeling that the development of [this] religious

symbolism of the demiurge as a constructor of a universe, operating with a material that may offer obstacles to a perfect form to be imposed on it, is a typical case of a theological symbolism which then is transferred to man as the artificer. God makes the universe according to a plan; man makes all sorts of other things, artifacts, according to a plan, including perhaps the constitution of a polis. So, this artifact conception of the “idea,” the “idea” as a form to be imposed on matter, seems not to be transferred from the activity of man to a god who is a demiurge, but from this divine symbolism to man. And the “idea” constructions in Plato, I believe, reflect the demiurgical component, as they do later in Aristotle. But by the side of this demiurgical construction, and the “idea” as form—which later becomes a metaphysics of form, after the classic philosophers—there is that immediate experience of the soul in its openness toward a “beyond” of divine reality, which is definitely not a formation of the soul as an artifact, but that openness which is a characteristic problem of Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy.

Now this openness has certain implications that affect these problems of the gods and the poets who represent all the gods. Because the *epekeina* . . . and I believe—I may be completely wrong here (perhaps you will correct me immediately)—the *epekeina*, as the beyond-designation of the true divinity, was created by Plato. There was no “beyond” before Plato, as far as I know, linguistically. Maybe there was, but I have never seen the term *beyond* as a designation of a transcendent divinity before. . . . And this beyond-conception is not new in the time of Plato, but you find the mystical symbolizations that betray the necessity of getting toward a beyond, . . . already the earliest case I know is that of the Amon Hymns of the thirteenth century in Egypt, parallel with the appearance of Moses. In these Amon Hymns you have also a peculiar transformation of a god with a name (just like other gods, and later the Olympian gods), the god Amon, into the god who is the real god back of all the others and who was there before any of the others were created by him. And therefore nobody knows his real name, and nobody, even of the gods, knows him; but they all derive their immortality from the real immortality of the one god in the background.

There you have—already very early, as I said, in the thirteenth

century in Egypt—a very clear “mystical” symbolization of a mystically ascending soul toward a divinity that can no longer be identified with the divinities which later were called polytheistic but were not polytheistic at that time. So, this ascent is a very early discernible mystical problem, which in Plato becomes articulate to the point that he at last now has a god who is not a former Amon but who is “the beyond.” And that beyond is not only a form but that divinity whose *parousia* maintains the soul in order and the whole world in order.

And the love of that god—there are formulations in the *Gorgias* especially—the love of that god, and the love toward that god, is the formative principle of *cosmos*. And where that love is not present in reality, there you get the *akolasia* or the *akosmia*, disorder and dissolution. So, the Platonic philosophy, in the light of such a passage, for instance, is an articulate symbolization of the truly pre-philosophic experience of reality, and order in reality, as an order of love. And when the order of love is made explicit, it looks something like Platonic philosophy.

This existential problem is, as far as I’m concerned for my own [. . .] problems, the most interesting for me in Plato; and to follow [it] up through the various dialogues, and to find out where, earlier already, you find similar attempts at mystical ascent, as you find it in the Amon Hymns. You find it of course later, in the eighth century, but still preceding Plato: for instance, the same formulation in the *atman* and *brahma* in the Upanishads. There you find also such awareness that the real divinity is a divinity beyond the Olympian gods.

And in the *Phaedrus* myth there is a special formulation of that problem: After a banquet in Olympus, the gods ascend to the roof of Olympus, which you would think is the roof of the world; but no, they ascend to the roof of that banquet hall and from there they see the real *ouranos*, the divinity from which the Olympian gods derive their divinity. So the secondary divinity becomes now a great problem in all symbolizations of a divinity that is understood to be transcendent even to the Olympian divinities. And you get then the Olympian divinities—to which not only Plato sticks, but you find them still in Plotinus (in the argumentation against gnosticism they are retained). But they have to be retained, also in other constructions of divinity [such] as the Israelite or the Chris-

tian. We have, then, the in-between divinities—no longer called gods in the polytheistic sense, but [. . .] angels and so on (coming from Judaism, influenced by Babylonian angels [. . .]), and later the development of saints—as a whole army of the intermediate divinities, which derive their divinity from the true divinity and immortality of the really beyond. So the really beyond always produces, apparently, an in-between set of immortalities and divinities, which are not identical with the original immortality of the highest beyond. [. . .]

[A later remark by GADAMER]: Just one word to you, Dr. Voegelin. I would very much support your general remark about the “beyond,” but in a [. . .] broader sense. I think the whole ancient Greek tradition was full of [the] awareness that the “divine” is something much more relevant than the “gods,” as they were accepted. You know the Homeric men were not acquainted with the authentic names of the gods. That was their own feeling. When they addressed in a prayer to the gods, then they said: “O, how you would like, or prefer to be called.” Because the proper names of the gods, that was a human work. And [. . .] you know Wilamowitz made one day the fine remark that “divine” is a predicate, not a substantive. And in this sense I would enforce this special point of your remark.

VOEGELIN: Well, I am quite in agreement. The sense of that beyond is there. But I have never seen the term *epekeina* before that passage in the *Republic*.

GADAMER: Yes certainly. But it is certainly not a neologism.

VOEGELIN: No, no.

GADAMER: It is an ordinary word.

VOEGELIN: It is an ordinary word, but never used for the designation of a divinity beyond the Olympian gods.

GADAMER: That’s certainly true.

[Voegelin's remarks on *paranoia/pronoia* from the panel on "Literary Criticism" (November 24, 1978), representing section 6 of the "Structures of Consciousness" lecture.—Planinc]

I am not only a reader. I happen also to be a professor in a university, and I have to deal with students, not only with colleagues. And the students ask questions and want to know all sorts of things about what they are doing, why they are doing it, in what direction they should be going, and so on. And one of the instruments of informing them, is informing them about literature they should read. So in my reading I cannot quite separate, as an educator, the reading from the content of what is to be read. And the content of what is to be read has something to do—always in any book of any importance—with questions of man's existence, and the meaning: Where do we come from? (the classical question), Where do we go to? What should we do in between? and so on. And these questions now are questions that dominate the social and historical scene of the contemporary world.

I suggested I should say a few words about such "structures" in our contemporary world, into which we run every day and which can be illuminated and become intelligible, especially to students, through the reading of certain books. For instance, within the last year, I happened to hit on the novels of Thomas Pynchon. I read first the *V* novel, then *Gravity's Rainbow*, and here I was now made aware that there is one novel in between, *The Crying of Lot 49*, I believe. And I was struck by it, that here is—you might say—an almost classic examination of the pathological situations created by alienation and *paranoia*.

Now, alienation and *paranoia* are not simply individual problems, but they dominate the contemporary scene in the form of the various ideologues, who always want either to persecute somebody, or feel persecuted by somebody else, or mostly both at the same time. And on that occasion I hit on the problem of *paranoia* in a theoretical sense, which had not become clear to me earlier, because *paranoia* is usually dealt with [. . .] by psychopathologists. But that is not the problem, because if you have everybody being in a paranoiac state (practically), that is a bit more than the question of a patient for a psychopathologist. There is some fundamental structure involved.

And the fundamental structure involved [. . .]—and I was guided [. . .] by the observation that obviously Thomas Pynchon has taken his cue from Romain Gary in his [*Dance of*] *Genghis Cohn*—is connected with the general problem of ideologies as conceptions of order in history, which has a determinate nature into which you have to fit. Now, where do such ideas as an order of history—with a determinate course, going to a certain end—come from, except from certain Christian and philosophical contexts of a creator who creates a world and is in foreknowledge of what that world is doing? He has providence, he has the *pronoia*. (Usually I deal with that problem now under the title of *pronoia*, and the opposite is then the *paranoia*.) And if you have a *pronoia* conception, and this *pronoia* conception is perverted in the sense that it is imagined as a human foreknowing of things and not as a divine knowledge (as it has been analyzed by Boethius in the *Consolationis Philosophiae*, in the last book); then when you get [the] alienation of being immanentized, you believe still in the *pronoia*, in the providence, only you assume that the providence is supplied by human beings; and that if necessary, in order to defend yourself against the *pronoia* of human beings, you have to engage in a counterattack and provide your own *pronoia* in opposition to the *pronoia* of the people who are apparently [per]secuting you.

So I would say there is an intimate connection with the experiences of perverted providence and the conceptions of being persecuted by somebody, being whoever it is: the bourgeois for a Marxist; or a communist for the bourgeois; or the CIA or the oil companies for a leftist liberal; and so on—all these conceptions of persecution are perversions of the *pronoia* concept, then producing a paranoid reaction. And these paranoid reactions are, [. . .] in Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*, detailed in a massive casuistry. One might almost say there is nothing left out of it.

And it is an insight. It is not only an interpretation that I am giving of a novel by Pynchon, but he knows it himself: He speaks of those people who are in the state of *paranoia* as “the victims of the vacuum”—the vacuum being the spiritual and intellectual vacuum with the loss of tension toward the beyond. And this loss of tension, the vacuum . . . you can translate it also into German: the [vacuum] is the *Leere* which, for instance, was magnificently analyzed in its consequences for an intellectual already by Hegel

in *The Philosophy of [Right]*, where he deals (in paragraph 5, I believe it is) with the intellectual who is empty.

And the vacuum situation: Since one cannot live actually in a vacuum, the vacuum must be filled with some sort of reality; and if it isn't the real reality, you get second realities. Now the term *second reality* again is not an invention of mine, but it is developed by the great novelists of the twentieth century, by people like [. . .] Heimito von Doderer in his novel *The Demons*, [and] by Robert Musil's *The Man Without [Qualities]*. And the second reality is the substituted reality, which you imagine [. . .] if the real reality is lost in a state of alienation. Now what is back of this state of alienation, however? At the back of it is, of course, generally [. . .] a being thrown out of a context in which life makes sense.

You have these problems already appearing in the third century B.C. with the Stoics in the wake of Alexander's conquest with the destruction of ethnic cultures. We have the same problem appearing later, [. . .] in the seventeenth century in the modern Western world in the wake of the religious wars, and then later [following] the Industrial Revolution. So when established cultures, which are the house in which we live, with more or less stable conceptions, are destroyed by historical events, then an emptiness and alienation can happen; and then comes in the construction of second realities as a protective house in which you can live instead of in the house that has been lost.

And there comes in the question of who are the people who create these second realities? And why do they do it? What are the psychological motivations? And that again is known since antiquity as the [*aspernatio rationis*], the *libido dominandi*, the will to power. One wants, by one's own power, to supply a reality which has been lost and which is not one's own power, but the reality of the creation in which we normally live as adapted or accommodated or attuned human beings. So the power problem enters into the construction of second realities. And the constructors of such realities—say, for instance, Marx—are at the same time then power figures; or when it comes [to] the practical application, power figures in the literal sense like Hitler or Stalin—[they belong] together.

Now, this connection goes back to the fundamental possibility

of creating second realities at all, out of passion. And I always like to quote in that connection a sonnet by Shakespeare, I believe it is 129, which begins: "Th' expense of Spirit in a waste of shame / Is lust in action." So when you use the possibilities—the fantasizing [and] imaginative abilities—of the intellect and the spirit, and the languages of it, in the service of creating a second reality for the purpose of getting influence and power over somebody to satisfy your passion of domination, then you have that situation which results, in the course of a couple of centuries, as it has done, in the contemporary *paranoia* situation.

Of course that situation is not new. It has happened in similar critical situations of civilization. For instance, the magic of the word that can corrupt—as it does through ideologies, and produces a paranoiac state—is to be found also in Greek civilization. By accident, studying other problems, I found for instance that the term *magic*, in the sense of the magic of the word, appears for the first time in a production by Gorgias the sophist, in the fifth century, in the *Encomion Helenes*, where he speaks of the magic of the power of Paris in persuading Helen to come along with him. That's where the magic of the word appears. And he compares that magic of the word to the magic of addiction to drugs. So you have two main sources for getting drugged: either the magic of words or chemical drugs.

And that remains since antiquity a constant among philosophers who deal with the problem of addiction and intoxication and getting drugged. You find the same problem, for instance, in Plato in the *Laws*, where he also speaks of the crime of drugging somebody and subdivides the problem of drugging somebody [into] drugging by chemicals or drugging by words. Hitting at the sophists, you see? Or you find a similar problem in the nineteenth century, in modern civilization, in Baudelaire. In the *Paradis artificiels*, for instance, you have again two possibilities: You can drug either by hashish or by reading Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Both have the same effect of intoxicating you into a certain state. There you have then, when the ideologies come in as the drug purveyors, that Shakespearean conception of the expense of spirit in a waste of shame is lust in action, and so on.

And since I have quoted Shakespeare, let me perhaps conclude with another quotation from Shakespeare. We talk very much

today in popular language about “brainwashing.” Much to my surprise, I found that Shakespeare has already used the phrase of “brainwashing.” In *Antony and Cleopatra* (in the second act, the last scene), where the world rulers—Augustus, Mark Antony, Lepidus, Pompeus—are together at (what Shakespeare calls) [their] Alexandrian bacchanal, in the end, getting drunk, as the world rulers dividing the world into power among them, until they get so drunk that they hold hands and dance around. . . . A very good [image] of what a world ruler is: the drunken dance of power. . . . And in that context, the caesar, Augustus, is the only one who hesitates in getting as drunk as the others. And in that connection, in his resistance, he formulates: “monstrous labor, when I wash my brain, / And it [grows] fouler.” By the drink. . . . And then Mark Antony answers him: “Be a child of the time.” . . . Very much of the time. In the power game.

So all great literature—and when I mean great literature I refer also to the content and not only to its artistic value as a work of art (because very accomplished literary works of art may be very poor stuff because their content is poor stuff)—so the great works have to deal with such problems. And I wanted to bring out a bit this question that, over the analysis of a work of art as a work of art by literary criticism, one shouldn’t forget that works of art also have a content referring to man’s existence, and that they should be viewed under that aspect, and be valued under that aspect, and read under that aspect.



The Meditative Origin of the Philosophical Knowledge of Order

An investigation into the meditative origin of the philosophical knowledge of order must take its start from the situation in which we live and from which the problem of truth first becomes a problem. How does one know that what one has at hand is not the truth; and how does one reach this insight if one does not know what the truth is for which one must first search? Thus, from the very beginning, we find ourselves in a state of existential tension that consists in the fact that we observe phenomena of untruth, the problems of disorder in our surroundings, and that, because of such observations, we set out to find an order from which we know, from the outset, that such a thing exists, but that it must first be found. This tension of being moved, of seeking and finding, is a first example of such meditative tension. Accordingly, in the Greek origins of philosophical thought we find such concepts as *zetesis*, seeking, *kinesis*, being moved to seek, and *nous*, the medium of the soul in which this takes place. Thus, we begin, not with definitions of some kind, but with movements, spiritual tensions, in which a human being in a concrete society exists.

This essay is the transcription of a lecture given at a symposium in Tutzing, Germany, in 1981. It was published as "Der meditative Ursprung philosophischen Ordnungswissens," in *Zeitschrift für Politik* 28 (1981): 130–37. The text was subsequently published in Eric Voegelin, *Ordnung Bewußtsein, Geschichte: Späte Schriften—eine Auswahl*, ed. with intro. by Peter Opitz (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1988), 165–80. Text translated by William Petropulos, based on the English translation of Frederick G. Lawrence that appeared in *The Beginning and the Beyond: Papers from the Gadamer and Voegelin Conferences*, ed. Frederick G. Lawrence, supplementary issue of *Loneragan Workshop* (Boston College) 4 (1984): 43–53. Our thanks to Fred Lawrence for allowing us to use his translation as the basis of our own.

In every concrete society in which thought of this type takes place, more or less fundamentally, more or less successfully, such tensions are a given, although, in each individual case, given differently. But the fundamental tension that we call philosophy should always be understood in its original meaning as love of wisdom, and not in Hegel's sense, who, in the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, did away with the love of wisdom to replace it with wisdom itself. Here the following problem becomes clear: First, the tension is present that historically is indeed philosophical tension; second, we already have a misconstruction of this tension that I call egophanic. The misconstruction consists in wanting to eliminate the tension itself and to transform it into the completely resolved possession of wisdom. You see that we are not dealing here with Hegel's philosophizing. Indeed, the opposite is true: Because of his thesis of transforming the love of wisdom into wisdom itself, Hegel was not a philosophical thinker at all, but a magical constructor.

Let that suffice for the preliminary statement of the situation in which we live. In such situations, the task of meditative thought is to clear away the elements of disorder, in order to again arrive at the truth of reality. For that reason I have named the element of unreason that we find in Hegel. The same is true of Marx and Comte, both of whom formulated doctrines claiming ultimate validity. This sort of doctrine of ultimate validity belongs to the things that philosophy must clear away as sources of the contemporary situation of public disorder.

Now, you might say, it is a very ambitious program to think that one can simply sweep Hegelianism, positivism, and Marxism aside. Of course, this cannot be done. But nevertheless, in every society in which these phenomena of disorder are socially dominant, one can identify them as phenomena of disorder and, as long as there is no totalitarian control, argue against them.

That is the situation in which we find ourselves. Let me now undertake a little bit of the work of sweeping away.

One of the great historical constructions that has outlived its day, and which must be cleared away, is of a theological nature. It is the theological distinction between natural reason and revelation, which goes back to the Middle Ages. In my view there is neither natural reason nor revelation, neither the one nor the

other. *Rather we have here a theological misconstruction of certain real matters that was carried out in the interest of theological systematization.* These can be more precisely defined in the following manner: On the one side we have a so-called philosophical development that, disregarding the fact that it is philosophical, is also the development of a specific people, namely, an event that took place in Hellenic culture. It is precisely this fact, that it is an event in Hellenic-ethnic culture, that must be understood in its contexts, reasoned grounds, and results. On the other side we have the so-called revelatory culture that goes back to Israel and the movement of Judaism, which then culminated in Christ. Here we have an Israelite ethnic culture. Thus we are dealing here with the categories of two ethnic cultures, both of which are in pursuit of the truth but in very different forms. These differing forms were then transformed into the form of a natural seeking of truth and into the godly revelatory form, with the intention of letting the Jewish-Christian form predominate.

Historically, of course, the matter appears differently. Throughout the entire ethnic history of the Hellenes, from the time we have literary records—that is, since Hesiod—every Hellenic thinker was aware that what he had to say came, not from his natural reason, but from divine revelation. Further, he was aware that he lived in the tension of seeking and receiving, that is to say, in the dual movement of the godly and human type, in which a human *responsio* takes place in answer to a movement that originates in God. All of Hellenic culture, from Hesiod to Plato and Aristotle, is conscious of this revelatory moment and articulates it. The assertion that it was a matter of natural reason is a crude and inadmissible falsification of the historical documents.

On the other side we have the problem of the Israelite-Christian search for truth with its very different accentuation. If we want to identify the difference, then we find that in Greece the accent always falls on the search, on the *zetesis*. Once a truth is found, what was believed earlier—for example, a mythical, more compact, idea of the gods—is relegated to the category of the *pseudos*, of falsity or the lie. In the Israelite context the matter looks quite different. Predecessors are presented, not as liars or falsifiers, but as persons who had also seen a truth, which, however, must be interpreted anew. Thus, we have a scheme for reinterpretation, a

general phenomenon that can be observed outside Israelite culture as well. For example, in Indian culture we have a recourse to the Vedas; and as a consequence of this recourse, all later Hindu philosophy, to the extent that it has distanced itself from this original form, must be introduced as an interpretation of the Vedas. Here the interpretation contexts are established in which the old truth can be interpreted anew, even when the new truth does not have much to do with the old one. This [phenomenon] appears regularly in cultures in which the consciousness of being moved in one's search by God is especially accented.

It may safely be assumed that the grounds for this phenomenon are social. In Hellas we find the unique situation that the spiritual order of society was not represented by a national or imperial clerisy. The organization of the Hellenic priesthood was local and ritually established, but not organized doctrinally, imperially, nationally, or for the cultural community, as were the Egyptian and the Israelite priesthoods. The compact mythological presentations of the truth took place at the local level so that, in this regard, we cannot speak so much of a Hellenic ethnic culture but rather of local city cultures that manifest certain shared characteristics. When a movement of the type represented by philosophy is created at the level of local culture, it finds more space in which to move freely than it would were it to come into being in social contexts already organized, in which the truth had already been doctrinally determined by a national or imperial priesthood, with whom one would necessarily come into conflict when one attempted to establish a countertruth.

Thus that was not a problem in Hellas. Accordingly we even find in classical philosophy a concrete case, on which one would not normally think, in Aristotle, in his *Metaphysics*, book Delta, where word definitions are simply listed; for example, the word *arche*, followed by a list of the meanings of the word *aition*, which partially overlap. From this list of differing definitions, [Aristotle] slowly brings out, in a meditative sense, what such words as *origin*, or *reason*, and similar terms, could possibly mean in the spiritual movement of the search for wisdom. Thus, from the outset, [Aristotle] works with a type of scientific-philological premise.

The matter looks entirely different in the Israelite context. Here a prophet explicitly returns to forms of revelation of Babylonian

and Egyptian origin. When Jeremiah narrates his revelation experience, he relates it in the way an Egyptian pharaoh would to tell how he was pre-born of God for his office, and that he is therefore the son of God charged with articulating the truth. Thus, here we have an imperial context of order and not a scientific-philological investigation into the incorrect use of words that must now be corrected. In a revelatory context such as the one expressed by the Israelite-Christian culture, recourse is always made to the godly spirit, the *ruah*, from which the Greek translation, *pneuma*, was made. This spirit—I therefore call this accent on revelation “pneumatic”—is the ethnic determinant in the problem field of Christianity, which grew out of the Jewish-Israelite context. Naturally, the word *pneuma* is also found in the Greek context. Anaximenes had a theory of the *pneuma* that is very similar to that of the book of Genesis, but it is not a dominant theory. The noetic *zetesis*, the search, became the dominant theory [in Hellas].

Thus, we are dealing with two different types of the search for truth. Now when these two different ethnic cultures are brought into an imperial context, as occurred in the great ecumenic empires, reciprocal cultural influences take place. And from this the attempt arose to formulate a truth-form, which would somehow combine the various successful types of the search for truth that had taken place earlier. That was the problem out of which, first, a Jewish theology was created by Philo, and then a Christian theology, strongly dependent on the theology of Philo: a theology that combined the revelatory elements from the Israelite-Jewish context with the philosophical language drawn from the Hellenic context. Thus, out of great cultural historical events, such as we find in the creation of the ecumenic empires, arises a synthetic culture in which an attempt is made to balance ethnic differences in a systematic doctrine of natural reason and pneumatic revelation.

Today, such a systematic doctrine, which attempts to bring revelation and natural reason into a construct, belongs to the things that have to be cleared away. This has to take place, not out of an anti-theological or anti-Christian emotion, nor for pro- or anti-philosophical reasons, but simply because, today, it is no longer needed. Today our historical knowledge is much greater. We know

the histories of Israel and Hellas. We can draw historical parallels to India, Persia, and China, and we can precisely describe the problems involved. It would be senseless in the present ecumenic scientific situation to want to scientifically maintain this categorization. That does not mean that perhaps, in a larger theological context, it should not be maintained; after all, here we are dealing with a problem of a church organization that must deal with a large group of people. Here one must proceed circumspectly. In scientific contexts, however, one must be clear about how it has come to such things. Incidentally, such investigations in no way interfere with the problem of truth that is involved in such insights. Also, the noetic development in Greece is not disturbed by the fact that one understands what its intention is and knows the sources: it is concerned with the search for truth.

Therewith the problem of meditation moves into the center of our consideration. From the one side, namely, from the human, the search can be accentuated. I would call that the noetic posture. From the other side, the revelatory side, one can emphasize the motivational factor. I would call that the pneumatic position. Both are present in the problem of meditation. The tension exists between being moved from the godly side and the search from the human side. Thus the godly and the human sides are assumed in a process of seeking and being moved [to seek]. Such symbols as I have used here—a godly reality that moves, a concrete human being who seeks, a process of seeking and being moved—I call a complex.

Under a "complex" I understand the fact that this process of being moved and seeking, which is to be investigated here, should not be cut into pieces or fragmented such that, out of the concentration on the human side, an investigation into the human being, thus an anthropology, arises; or, out of confining [the investigation] to the godly side, a theology is formulated. Also impermissible is the isolation of the process in the form of a process philosophy that confines itself to an investigation of the process that exists between the two poles and that would, thus, lead to a psychology. All three forms, "anthropologies," "theologies," and "psychologies," are deformation types and have no place in a meditative investigation. They are all hypostatizations of one pole in a tension [between poles]. None of the elements in any such process

with which we are acquainted can be permitted to be fragmented and hypostasized. Thus, you see what great practical importance our considerations have. They rule out all fragmenting into “anthropologies,” “theologies,” and “psychologies.” One must concern oneself with the processes that actually take place, that is, with the meditative events. The analysis of the events cannot be permitted to degenerate into a fragmenting that deforms [the events]. On the contrary, [the meditative analysis of the events] again becomes the analysis of contemporary disorder; for in the light of the historical knowledge we have today, the methodologies and schools of thought [that reduce the analysis of events to fragments] are wanting and incompetent.

This problem of *event* is a fundamental category with which we must operate, just as the [problem of the] complex, which cannot be permitted to be split into fragments, was. Here, already, a word emerges from Plato’s vocabulary, the *In-between*, which I use in my own analysis. Reality is not the human reality, nor the godly reality, but rather what takes place “In-between” these two realities; it is not permissible that, in turn, this “In-between” itself be made into an independent fragment or hypostasized. We are concerned here, not merely with a psychology of the subject, nor with the activity of god alone, but always with a *responsio*, with movements and countermovements.

With this we have identified a problem that leads to further complexes. Up to now I have spoken of a central meditative complex, which was worked out by Plato and Aristotle; but this leads us to yet another problem. It is obvious that what since the seventeenth century has been called the subject-object relationship, [or tension between subject and object], is incompatible with this interpretation. Let me now draw your attention to several concepts that also belong to those which must be swept away. First, we have, “metaphysics.” Here we are dealing with an Arabic deformation of Aristotle’s title *meta ta physika*, which has entered the Western languages through Thomas’s *Commentary* to [Aristotle’s] *Metaphysics*. The metaphysics of the thirteenth century is based on a philological misunderstanding. Thus, what I am doing here is not “metaphysics” but something entirely different.

Another such word that must be cleared away, because it is constantly used without, however, having any meaning, is *ontol-*

ogy. It is a neologism of the seventeenth century. The word was used for the first time by Goclenius in 1636. It was propagated by the Cartesian Clauberg, who invented the synonym *ontosophie* in order to be able to speak of things philosophically while treating God as an object and not as a dynamic factor in the meditative movement.

A third term of the same type is *Erkenntnistheorie*, the theory of knowledge, or epistemology. In 1832 Reinhold spoke for the first time of a theory of knowledge. In English we find *epistemology* for the first time in 1856. Another such word is *value*. The term, taken from Lotze, was introduced into the language of science at the end of the nineteenth century by the southwest German school [of Neo-Kantianism]. It first appears in English in 1906, in a translation of Brentano's works, and achieved a certain currency in America in the period before and after the First World War. We see, therefore, that the entire current, modern vocabulary is a very late development. We are dealing here with incrustations of realities that have to be swept aside today in order to get back to the realities themselves.

Thus, this complex, which I have presented here first and which should not be hacked into pieces with regard to any specific pole or process itself, comes into conflict with the subject-object tension. When we construe the subject as the subject of knowledge, I believe we follow a language convention that is common in all Western languages. We have a consciousness of something, we speak about something, or we think or imagine something. In English it is always "something," and I therefore call this state of affairs a "reality in the mode of thing-reality" that corresponds to a consciousness of "something." I suspect that this "thing-reality," which is this "something" about which one thinks, of which one speaks, etc., is the result of the fact that human consciousness is located in a body and that, in relationship to our bodily localization, all that of which one has consciousness—this "something"—is co-experienced as being "outside" this bodily existence. Thus, an aura of externality clings to the object of consciousness. But now, when one identifies this reality with the object side, the problem arises that the subject, which knows or does not know the object, or which speaks about it, belongs to the same reality as the object does. Thus, the object character,

the thing-reality, is a mode of reality in relation to a posture of consciousness that intends a truth as object. I therefore call this characteristic of consciousness the “intentionality of consciousness.” In this intentionality there is a subject of consciousness, located in a physical, concrete human being, and an object, about which it speaks: whereby one can leave open whether the latter is [of the order of] external objects of noemata in a phenomenological sense. Thus, it is always things about which one speaks.

Now, however, we have the further problem that the subject belongs to the same reality that is to be known as its object—and this subject-object relation is a further type of this complex. It is an event in another reality. It is neither the subject nor the object reality in its thing-ness but a reality that encompasses both, a comprehensive reality. For this encompassing reality, as far as I know, we have no generally accepted philosophical term. Nietzsche dealt with it often and called it the “It,” and I will stick to that. In English, I speak of “It-reality,” in German, of the “ES-Realität.” Thus, in the structure of consciousness, we find reality in two modes: a thing-reality, which corresponds to the intentionality of consciousness, and an It-reality, which we must more closely define. This It-reality is an “It” for, within it, such a thing as consciousness occurs in the same sense in which such things as the genesis of atoms and molecules, species, races, and so forth occur. That is to say that this It-reality, when it is now brought into relationship with consciousness, becomes luminous. Corresponding to intentionality, I speak here of luminosity. The subject of this luminosity, in which this event, “consciousness,” occurs as a predicate, is not the human ego, but the It-reality. This becomes luminous. We are thus dealing with two structures in consciousness, an intentionality, of which we can say that the human being is the subject, and a luminosity, of which we must say that “It” is the subject and that consciousness is the predicative event in “It.” Therefore, when we speak of consciousness, we must always be aware that consciousness includes intentionality and luminosity; one must not separate the two. Thus there is not a luminosity as the object of a special investigation into the “It,” nor is there a psychology or phenomenology as a special investigation into the intentionality of the subject. Human consciousness always contains both structures.

[Ignoring this fact] in the larger context of the history of philosophy led to a confusion of concepts that has not been straightened out up until the present day. I would say the following: The intentionality component of consciousness corresponds to the idea that results from the concept of a concept. We formulate concepts of reality; thus, the concept is determined by intentionality, but when discussing the reflection of consciousness on luminosity, I prefer to speak of symbols. The expression "symbol" is always determined by the dominant component of consciousness, the luminosity of the "It." Everything that emerges in symbols of consciousness and in language symbols is the luminosity of the "It."

But with these two components—intentionality and luminosity—the complex of consciousness is not yet complete. What, for example, are we engaged in now, [in these reflections]? Are we engaged in an investigation into consciousness as intentionality, in which we form concepts of something, or do we speak in the categories of intentionality? I would say that we are doing neither the one nor the other; rather, we are reflecting on the complex of consciousness. We are dealing with a posture of reflection that emerges when it becomes necessary to discuss such matters. When Plato writes a dialogue he deals partly in the creation of analytic concepts, partly with a myth and its symbols, and the whole is a dialogue by Plato that was written by him but is presented neither entirely as analysis nor entirely as symbolical myth. What are we dealing with here when we speak of the result of reflection? I would like to speak of a further component in the structure of consciousness, which I call *reflective distance*.

In reflective distance the entire problem of luminosity and intentionality is now transposed into a language of reflection in which this problem is spoken of as though it were a reality independent of reflection. But, of course, we could not speak about it, were not the reflection already present as a component of consciousness; for only in this case is it possible to differentiate it. This leads to a further problem. In this consciousness-complex we can differentiate intentionality as the structural area in which participation in reality takes place. And, further, we can speak about it as though we were dealing with things about which one can formulate propositions. But then the problem of fragmentation comes up again. For if we assume that the reflective distance, and

the language in which one speaks of participation, is the same language in which the experience of luminosity and intentionality, as well as their concepts and symbols, are expressed, we come to an identification of this reflective-distance component in consciousness with the component of participation that we have found here in this complex. In this case we commit the error of identifying the human component in the complex of participation with the component of reflection directed to the entire complex. That, in turn, is the error in Hegel's system. Thus, the reflective ego in the mode of distance, which Plato always carefully distinguishes from the participatory self, is identified with the participatory self in such a way that the intentional or luminous element of consciousness is made one with the reflective. Then we get such notions as, for example, those we find in the wake of Hegel by Feuerbach and Marx, according to which all talk of the divine is a projection of human consciousness and full humanity only comes into being when this transcendent divine is again taken back into the human. I give such examples here so that it will become clear that a considerable work of enlightenment remains to be done before one can even discuss these matters.

We have here three components in consciousness, all present at the same time in various degrees of articulation, that should not be identified with one another. We are dealing with a very complex structure of consciousness, which should serve to underline what is meant here, in such a context, by the term *complex*. Here a relationship to Freud becomes clear, which I have only become conscious of in recent weeks. In his late work Freud made the very interesting observation on the id, the ego, and the super-ego: namely, that the super-ego is not set against the unconscious, but rather that unconscious elements are also present in the super-ego. He calls them id-elements. And this problem of an unconscious super-ego, of a super-ego that operates unconsciously, that is not completely under our supervision, is also present in a concept that I developed in a different context, in the concept of the "public unconscious." That is to say that every public situation is determined by the fact that the socially dominant forms of speech contain unconscious elements; or rather that, insofar as it is a matter of things that should be present but are not consciously articulated, they are not contained, and [their absence] leads to all

kinds of interruptions of disorder. Already Heraclitus confronted this problem. He therefore differentiated between the private and the public, in the sense that all views are "private" that indeed have a private, incomplete horizon, whereas full consciousness is a public consciousness and must contain only elements that in fact are shared by human beings and, for that reason, can constitute public reality. That is what Heraclitus calls the logos. Consequently, the logos of the philosopher, which the philosopher articulates, must [of necessity] contain the logos of reality. Thus, as early as Heraclitus we find the differentiation between luminosity, intentionality, and reflective distance. I believe that this public unconscious is another one of the categories we must try to make known today. It articulates the fact that our society is dominated by people who, to a very large degree, are characterized by what Heraclitus called private opinions. These private opinions create an illusory public that brings forth disorder. Against this disorder we must assert the true public of meditative reality.



The Beyond and Its Parousia

As the title for today's lecture in the context of "The Meaning of History," I have chosen "The Beyond and Its Parousia." You know, of course, where the terms come from: Plato's *Republic* (508–509). "Beyond"—the Greek term is *epekeina*—is Plato's general symbolism for the divine reality, that is, the one beyond all the reality of the gods of the cosmos. He says this of the divine reality, which he covers by the term *epekeina*, "beyond the others," that it is present in the reality of the world, including the reality of man. That is the *parousia*. And this *parousia* is present, is formative, in the direction of order and justice. So *parousia* is the general term for the presence of divine reality in all reality. Here already, as you see, there are complications with the term *reality*, because on the one hand there is a divine reality, on the other hand, the divine reality is the reality that is present in all reality. I will come presently to this problem.

This conception of the *epekeina* and its *parousia* in reality implies that there is something that has to be formed. There seems to be a counter-pole to the *epekeina* that resists formation or requires formation and, if formed, can still resist the formation and deform the formation into some deformed type of entity. So we have in the process of reality a very complicated series of events filled with the tension of formation, resistance to the formation, resistance to deformation of formation, and so on; so that is why I gave the general title to this essay.

Paper presented at the conference "The Meaning of History," University of Santa Clara, Calif., October 15, 1982. Typewritten transcript from taped presentation in Voegelin Papers, box 85, folder 10, Hoover Institution Archives.

But I do not want to indulge in Platonic problems. I want to talk about the problems that occupy us in philosophy today. This lecture is supposed to be part of a seminar on "The Meaning of History," so let me talk about the problem of history, and the presence of *epekeina* in the reality of history, and what the meaning of history is. What is the meaning of history? Of course [we cannot talk about the meaning of history]. Today, we are in a situation in which, parallel with the advances in the natural sciences, we have enormous advances in the historical sciences. However, these enormous advances in the historical sciences can sometimes be more confusing than enlightening. There is [such a] quantity of information and so little theoretical penetration of [it] that we are perhaps more disturbed by the flood of knowledge that we have than illuminated by [it]. So let me refer to the present state of the question.

The term *history*, as it is used, for instance, in the title of this seminar, "The Meaning of History," is not very old. It goes back to the eighteenth century. We have a survey of the problems about its origin in an essay by Reinhart Koselleck, "Die Herausbildung des modernen Geschichtsbegriffs" [The Development of the Modern Concept of History].¹ There he gives the sources where the "collective singular" (as he calls it) "history" appears for the first time. That is, up to the eighteenth century histories were always histories of something, but all of a sudden in the eighteenth century there appears the term *history* (in German, *Geschichte*) as a collective singular referring to the whole of history as if it were a something. This peculiar new formulation, "meaning of history," is the basis of all subsequent thought about the meaning of history. That is the whole matter—the reflective consciousness of history is not older than 250 years.

Now how [do we] deal with it? On the occasion of the appearance of that reflective consciousness of history, *history* as a collective singular (of which we don't yet know what it really means) arose, at the same time [and dealing with the same problems,] as the symbolism of "consciousness." This "consciousness" has a peculiar structure. Let me briefly explain what the present state

1. [Otto Brunner, ed., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1975).]

of that problem is. (I have dealt with it, for instance, in the essay "Wisdom and the Magic of the Extreme.")²

It is the problem that we have, on the one hand, [of] the consciousness located in our body of things [. . .] outside our body. We call that something that has the consciousness our "self," the "subject" of consciousness, and the other, the reality of which we are conscious, an "object." Graphically, one could draw on the blackboard a subject referring to an object in the external world. I call this the intentional structure of consciousness, in agreement with Husserl's use of the term *intentional consciousness*. [It designates] the subject directed to an object. In this connection, in this language of a subject referring to an object, the object is the reality, Reality #1,³ which we speak of as "reality," [as] that of which we are conscious.

But then, on the other hand, we have the further problem that the subject is also real. What then is the reality of the subject, what kind of reality does it have? We have to introduce a second concept of reality, which embraces the cognitive act of the intentionalist type as a further reality, one in which the subject-object relation is an event. [Thus], we have the following problem: Here, Reality #1, which is an object of a subject; and over here another reality, which is a subject of which, you might say, the event is [the] predicate—obviously inconsistent terminology.

Now my thesis is that this inconsistency on the linguistic level cannot be dissolved. I speak of this structure of reality in consciousness, which I have just outlined, [. . .] as the *thing-reality* (Reality #1) and the *It-reality*, the other reality comprising the whole event. (I call this latter an "it" because I became aware of it [for] the first time in the studies of Karl Kraus on the "it" in language. We have an "it" in ordinary language, to which we sometimes refer, [. . .] when we say, "It rains,"—an event surrounded by a reality of which the rain then is a predicate.)

So we have a structure in which "thing-reality" and "It-reality" cannot be separated as entities but are together in the one struc-

2. [Eric Voegelin, "Wisdom and the Magic of the Extreme" (1977), in Voegelin, *Published Essays, 1966–1985*, ed. with intro. by Ellis Sandoz (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1990), 315–76, vol. 12 of *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*.]

3. [Here, and elsewhere in the text, Voegelin is obviously pointing to a diagram that he has drawn on a chalk board.]

ture of consciousness, which structure I call the *paradox of consciousness*. This understanding of structure reaches from consciousness and reality into language itself and cannot be dissolved in language. [Thus] there is no point in getting excited about ambiguities and equivocations of language, because that is the structure of language, which is part of the same reality in which we have consciousness of reality.

But we [think] about all these things. That shows a further structure in consciousness: We can reflectively distance ourselves from the paradox in which we are involved and talk about it—and such talk is called *philosophy*. I call this structure of consciousness *reflective distance*. All philosophy is conducted in reflective distance within consciousness about consciousness.

We always have three levels of language, which are in conflict with [one another]: the thing-reality language, the It-reality language, and the reflective distance language. That is of course in flat contradiction to contemporary linguistic conceptions of language as a system of signs referring to things, because the structure of language is, as you see, very complicated and determined by the paradox and the reflective distance to the paradox.

Let me give you some examples of how that works in practice. If you analyze a Platonic dialogue like the *Timaeus* you will find that Plato speaks of a divine paradigm of reality, created by a demiurge, which is then applied to the world of becoming, the thing-reality. So you have an opposition, an experienced tension between two poles, the one called intelligible being and the other called the becoming, the *genesis*—that is, being: *to-on*, and becoming: *genesis*. But then when you analyze the matter in reflective distance as Plato does, when you talk about these things, you must admit that the *genesis*, which is not *being*, is, after all, *being* too. So we have to introduce a further terminology. Both are *genes* (kinds) of being: Plato calls them *ousias eidos*, two kinds of being. So you have here another conflict: the *being* that is never *genesis*, and *genesis* that is never real *being*—and both are “beings” nevertheless, kinds of being. So he has the further problem: He must somehow get these two kinds of being together in reality, not only in his thought. He therefore introduces a third kind of being, the *psyche*, which participates in both the *being* that is never *genesis* and the becoming, the *genesis* that is never

being and which can, therefore, transfer the order of *being* into the *becoming* by its position in between the two (in-between is the *en meso*). And that is now a third kind of being. But what is that third kind of being? In *Timaeus* Plato explains that it is a composite of Being, of the Same, of the Other. There you have again the term *being* appearing in a further reflective analysis.

I am not giving you these examples in order to show how contradictory Plato is in his language but in order to show that the language which is contradictory on a [. . .] level oriented to a logic of external things is not applicable to the analysis of the consciousness problems I am talking about here and to the reflective distance of consciousness. [The contradictions are] inherent in the language in which we speak at all times. This fact must therefore be realized in our analysis of historical facts, of historical concepts, of [questions such as] What is history? [or] What is the meaning [of history]? and so on.

I don't want to say more about that thorny problem now, because you will find more of it in the course of the examples that I have to give.

History is one of those terms of the eighteenth century that arises where an attempt is made to fuse all these various problems of the structure of reality—they all belong together—into one reality that is called history. Since you are internal to that problem of history you can talk about it on a further level, which the German Idealists called speculation. *Philosophy of speculation* is one of the terms that arises in the eighteenth century. Koselleck, in the article to which I have referred, brings attention to the fact that you have the same structure of the peculiar concentration of the whole problem of consciousness in other terms that appear at the same time, such as *revolution*. There were revolutions before, but *revolution* as a collective singular, which appears today in ideological language, is a new invention of the eighteenth century.

There were “freedoms” before: for instance, freedom from government interference, but the term *freedom* as an absolute about which one could talk—to make a revolution in the name of freedom—is a new invention of the eighteenth century. [At this time we get] a whole series of concepts that become a part of the daily political language, in which all structures of consciousness are

submerged into one type of word, these collective singulars. So that is a new event about which we have to talk.

History, in the sense we have just explained, as the merger of all these structures into one term, is a “thing” to be defined. We talk about “the meaning of history” as if it were a thing of which we can say what the meaning is. The meaning of a thing is its nature, which can, perhaps, be formulated in a definition if you know enough about it. But we have a difficulty here, because history is practically all of reality, all of the things that happened in the past, that happen now, and that will happen in the indefinite future. Now while we do not know very much about the past, in spite of all the things we do know about it, we know nothing at all about the future. Therefore the *thing* “history,” which extends into the future, is not an object of which we [can speak] as a thing at all [in the way that] we talk of a chair or anything like that. In a strict sense “history” has, as a famous Jesuit thinker, [Hans Urs von] Balthasar, once explained, no *eidōs*.⁴ In other words, it has no meaning, for the reason that history is not a thing about which we [can] know anything at all, because it is not a given, but is absorbed into all the structures that I have detailed here in a fragmentary manner.

So there *is* no meaning of history.

The problem is not new, of course. Let me give you a parallel problem of antiquity. You have the problem in Aristotle that he cannot define the form of a *polis*, of a state, because he tries to define the form of a state by its constitution. But, unfortunately, Athens at the time when he wrote changed its constitutions quite frequently in various revolutions, from democratic to oligarchic and back again, to tyrannies, and so on. Thus, every time the constitution, the *politeuma*, changed there would be a different entity [. . .], and thus the entity of the *polis*, Athens, would be lost in the various entities constituted by the sequence of constitutions. That may sound like an academic exercise, but it is a matter of practical importance even today, because governments that come to power by a revolution are inclined to interpret their form of government as a new entity not responsible for what went on

4. [Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theologie der Geschichte* (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1950).]

before; and what went on before are the debts incurred by the previous government which the new government now refuses to pay. Aristotle makes a special remark [to the effect] that the problem is not a consequence of a theory, though he doesn't know exactly why [it isn't]. Another practical example might be the problem of a communist government rejecting all the debts of the czarist government because the Soviet Union is not identical with anything that went before. We still have today, as far as I know, negotiations between former owners (mostly French) of czarist bonds and the Soviet government to get at least a partial repayment from that government which operates under the theory that it has a new form of reality and is not responsible for a previous entity with which it is not identical.

From this first exercise in analyzing history as if it were a thing, we arrive at the negative statement, which has to be put flatly: On the level of thing-reality (and there is no doubt about it) "history" has no meaning. It is not a thing that can have a meaning. It is not a given.

However, this first result of analysis is in conflict with the empirical fact that everybody talks about the meaning of history as if there were such a thing. So, empirically, where does this problem of meaning come from, about which everybody speaks, although everyone who has ever analyzed the problem knows that there is no meaning of history? That is a problem which Karl Löwith studied a few decades ago and about which he wrote a volume, *Meaning in History*,⁵ distinguishing between the meaning of history, about which, he also agreed, there isn't any, and meaningful events *within* history which have to be analyzed regarding their meaning. The theoretical advance in analysis by Löwith did not get very far, but Löwith has seen the problem: There *is* meaning in spite of the fact that there is *no* meaning. Now where does it come from?

Before I go into that—and that will be the last part of the lecture—let's see what one can do on the level of pretending that there *is* a meaning of history. There are possible solutions, possible answers. What constructions would permit us to talk about a

5. [Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949).]

meaning of history? I will give two types of solution, one indulged in by Marcus Aurelius, and the other, a modern one, culminating in Hegel. Then I shall turn to the Kantian criticism of these constructions.

The Marcus Aurelius conception is contained in his *Reflections*⁶ (Book XI, chapter 11). There he analyzes the problem that there is an intelligible structure of reality, which he calls the *logos*. The whole of the universe has a *logos*, which is intelligible and of which the *psyche-logike*, the logical soul of man, is a part; its conversion to participation is very similar to the *parousia* in Plato. So man knows, by his *psyche-logike*, what the meaning of reality and the order of neighborly love and justice is.

Now as an emperor Marcus Aurelius has to deal every day with all sorts of people who apparently are not always inspired by the *psyche-logike* but by other interests, such as greed, ambition, status seeking, revolt, and so on. The question is, To what extent can he realize the intended order of reality in a reality that contains resistant forces? That is the job of the emperor, sometimes difficult, sometimes impossible to the point of despair. But then comes the very interesting remark that there is always a way out if it really should become impossible; and that remark, influenced by the preceding analyses of his friend Epictetus, is *suicide*. We can commit suicide if it becomes impossible to realize the order understood by the *psyche-logike* in the reality that surrounds us.

So reality is fundamentally governed by the *logos*, but for reasons unknown to us, it also admits all sorts of things that apparently do not fit the *logos* that is intended. But Marcus Aurelius doesn't go very far in the analysis of these problems; he just states them. After all, the order of the cosmos is known to us, by walking around in space and time, in memory and expectations; we have a good knowledge of the structure intended in reality. We also have very good knowledge of our own *psyche-logike* through self-analysis, self-reflection, through memory, and through the consequences of our actions. The net result is that, as he says, a man of forty knows everything that has ever happened and ever will happen, because it is always the same as what happened in the forty years that he has been alive. He knows what the *psyche-*

6. [The usual English title is *Meditations*.]

logike is and what the resistances are to the penetration of the *psyche-logike* into reality.

So here is a conception of understanding the meaning of history as a constant available in knowledge of the psyche and in the knowledge of the resistance it will encounter within the lifetime of a man of forty. The meaning of history is a commonsense experience of a man of forty. And that is it.

The suicidal solution reminds me of other possibilities of violent reaction. If the thing doesn't work you can either enforce the reality, if you are the emperor, or you can force it by violent revolution, if you are not an emperor but on the receiving side of the affair. I want to stress that point because it was a general problem for any emperor. For instance, in Tacitus's life of his father-in-law Agricola, who was an imperial general, there is the story of his battles against some Germanic tribes he wanted to dislocate but who didn't like being dislocated. There are two great speeches, the one of the Roman general, who explains why the will of the Roman empire must prevail, and then the reply of the Germanic chieftain culminating in the sentence, "If we do not have a place in which we can live, we always have a place where we can die." So again, suicide as the ultimate resistance in a historical situation is fundamental. Obviously, these stories also apply to situations we have today. So that is Tacitus: That is one solution. We know it anyway through the commonsense experience of a man of forty.

The matter is of course much more complicated. Therefore we turn now to the second solution, as we find it in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, parallel with the genesis of the term *history* as a collective singular.

The problem is that we know in the course of history that we learn a lot from the past. All of a sudden we have histories of a Roman empire, of a Holy Roman Empire, of a Germanic type, of various national histories, histories of France, and of Germany, histories of the Italian city-states, especially since the sixteenth century but beginning in the fifteenth century. And there is an accumulation of knowledge, which became particularly impressive through the development of mathematics and physics in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries; and so we know so much more than was ever known in antiquity. The commonsense experience, even of an emperor like Marcus Aurelius, is not

everything, because a lot has happened since and we know more about the process of history and its reality than was ever known before.

That is the position of Comte and also of Hegel, who explicitly says that while history has a complicated structure, and while it is true that one cannot simply talk about history on the basis of limited knowledge because there is so much [we do not know], enough history [has taken place] by now [for us] to know its nature. Against the former argument, that the future is indefinite and history is not a thing, the idea is [that] due to the accumulated knowledge, it is now enough of a thing, that we can talk about the meaning of history in principle; that is what Comte does and what Hegel does on the same principle—we now know enough about historical events to talk about the nature of history.

Now before I go into more of the details of this problem let me remind you that, while newly formulated in this manner around 1800, it does not begin then but goes back to a resistance movement in the seventeenth century, known as *La Querelle des anciens et modernes*: The resistance of the contemporaries in the seventeenth century to the authority of a humanistic (in the Renaissance sense) authoritarianism which held that the authority of ancient authors would be the valid sort of knowledge against everything that would differ from it in the immediate experience of these contemporaries. The revolt against that attitude of domination by the authority of ancient authors over contemporary experience is formulated by Bacon in the *Novum Organum* (Aphorism 84) where he explains that knowledge has been accumulating since antiquity. You cannot rely on the author—meaning the authors of antiquity—as a source of knowledge, in the humanistic sense, because that would be to forget that these authors themselves were once in revolt against the authors that preceded them and about whom we know very little. We wouldn't know what to do, he goes on, if we did not follow the example of the authors of antiquity who revolted against their "authors of antiquity." So the revolt must go on. And if one insists on the authority of authors, then one forgets that *Tempus*, as Bacon calls it, that "Time" is the *auctor auctorum*, the author of authors. All are [involved in] the time-process of authoritative pronouncements following each other and of an accumulation of knowledge extending into the

present and going beyond the present. So that is the revolt in formulation.

But there are difficulties in this revolt. If you take the parallel formulations of Pascal, for instance, about twenty years later (the *Novum Organum* was written in 1620), you will find him explaining the same problem as Bacon in his *Préface pour le traité du vide* (1642). (The Treatise on the Void was never written, but the *Préface* is preserved as a fragment.) There is this accumulation of knowledge. But then he goes a bit further than Bacon in his symbolism and metaphor by saying that as far as this accumulation of knowledge is concerned, the ancients are the young ones, and we are in the “old age” of mankind: We have the experience of that old age now through history, and it is a superior knowledge to that of the inexperienced youthful knowledge peculiar to the so-called ancients. In this process, you might say, mankind as a whole is like a man gathering experience from youth to age. You think he will know a lot of things he didn’t know when he was a young man.⁷

In this context Pascal runs into difficulties because he is a good Christian. He must exempt the content of the Scripture from the improvement of knowledge concerning reality. Scripture is an exception. He says we do not know more [now] about the supra-rational reality than is given in the Scriptures. In this respect there is no accumulation of knowledge. The accumulation of knowledge is confined to the areas of physics, mathematics, and philosophy. He includes philosophy here but exempts Scripture.

There you had, of course, problems contemporary with Pascal, such as the fact that Scripture, in the dogmatic formulations resulting from it, was in conflict with certain empirical statements about the time of history and events in history, and so on. [These

7. [Voegelin’s marginal notes signified his intention to include the following passage as a footnote:] The one-man conception of mankind emerges here. Please be aware of that problem, the one-man conception of mankind, because that is a contributing factor in the eighteenth and nineteenth century in talking about mankind at all in spite of the fact that empirically such a thing as mankind does not exist. There is no such thing . . . not in any given time, achieved through “history.” You would have to go back from mankind into the biological evolution preceding mankind, and to the material evolution preceding the biological. There you have a concept of history now actually at work in science. We have a “history” of matter, a “history” of life, a “history” of man, and so on, in succession, and there is no “mankind,” but history becomes something entirely different: a name for the process of reality in time, which is not at its end but goes on still.

issues] still plagued Hegel. Hegel was already under pressure not to talk too much about China, which was very much older than had been assumed, because he would then run into the difficulty of [having to] contradict Bishop Usher's date of 4004 B.C. for the creation of the world. That was only one hundred and fifty years ago [that one still had to be careful that statements in one's published works did not conflict with Scripture].

So that was Pascal's position in this respect. But it indicates that there is a problem: While there is an increase in knowledge, there also seems to be some inconstancy of knowledge, represented, for instance, by the truth of Scripture [tape indecipherable here]. Pascal recognizes that there are areas which do not simply improve but which are constants in reality and the exploration [of reality].

Now, what do we make of this situation? First, a historical comment—which I should have added more appropriately at the end of the Marcus Aurelius remarks. When Marcus Aurelius said that a man of forty knows everything that has been and is and will be, he takes up a classic formulation that is a line from Homer and Hesiod, where reality is identified as the *ta eonta*, the being-things that are, that have been, and that will be. That is a classic formulation of reality comprehending everything, including the gods, which has remained a constant through the centuries and, for instance, was still used by Hegel. And this Whole is obviously something in progress, but also something that has constant [elements], as we have just seen in the exemption extended to Scripture by Pascal.

That was also a problem confronting Kant. Let me talk about the Kantian criticism of the situation. This is the problem of the eighteenth century. Eighteenth-century thinkers such as Kant and Schiller, his younger contemporary, had a much better understanding of the situation than the next generation and ourselves (we follow the next generation and not Kant and Schiller) because the deformation of thought to which I referred in the collective singulars and the misconstructions of the structure of consciousness have by now been established with public effectiveness, [whereas before 1800 they had not yet become so publicly effective,] and therefore were more open to discussion.

In his essay of 1784, *Ideen zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht* [*Ideas Concerning Universal History*

from a *Cosmopolitan Standpoint*], Kant makes the following remarks. History is conceived as progress toward a rational order—not very different in principle from the conception of Marcus Aurelius, only in the meantime, the understanding has grown that the meaning of rational order is better understood today than it was two thousand years ago, and there is an accumulation of knowledge concerning [the nature of] rational order. This rational order of Enlightenment is to be achieved in time, either right away through a revolution or in the not-too-distant future through non-revolutionary action that would change the structure of society and introduce an “Order of Reason.” What has entered here is that revolt against antiquity that we saw on the occasion of Bacon and Pascal: There is an accumulation of knowledge, and we now have a lot of knowledge about history. What then is the meaning of all those people in the past who for thousands of years contributed to our understanding of knowledge up to the point where we can now make a revolution in the name of reason but who themselves will never profit from the revolution and the order we are about to establish? This idea, concentrated in the symbolism of previous ages making contributions to the present, which is part of the idea of “Progress,” is now exposed by Kant in its immorality. Supposedly everybody has to make a contribution to a “State of Reason” to be established by certain middle-class intellectuals around 1800 . . . and all [previous] history is nothing but a contribution to this noble [end]. He immediately recognized in [this notion] the problem that these speculators want to make an end of this order—the permanent struggle of the *parousia* in the formation of reality through the Beyond—by getting a final formation of which they themselves are the carriers. He saw the libidinous problem in such a construction: I myself am the fulfiller of history—as you find, for instance, formulated in the introduction to the *Logic* of Hegel where he says: “This Logic contains the Reason of God, the process of divine dialectic, unveiled in perfection.” Hegel is now the Logos of God, no longer Christ, who was only a forerunner who didn’t know all about the Logos yet. The *Logic* of Hegel replaces the Gospel of John as the information about what the Logos of real divinity is.

Kant exposed this libidinous excess, which had already become visible in general literature at the time when he wrote, as the

attempt to become immortal in time, which leaves out the fact that after all man has to die and that the perfection of life is in death, not in life itself (the problem that worried Pascal when he exempted Scripture from the "advances").

If you dissolve all talk about reality into a mere contribution and accumulation of knowledge [in time], you suppress [the notion] of the perfection [that is found] in the transition from life to death; you never get beyond the existential reality that all men who are alive have to die. In this respect, we are still with Heraclitus in the oracular formulation:

Immortals mortals
 mortals immortals
 live the others' death
 the others' life die.

This problem of Life and Death is a constant that cannot be [dismissed by claiming] that the perfect life has now arrived within this world. That insight casts a very interesting light on the various problems in the meaning of history. If you identify the meaning of history with the Hegelian-Comtean sense [of the term] (criticized by Kant before it was even formulated) it means: When you expand your life to the point where it includes a fruition of reality that is only due after death, then you have killed your life. Your life is dead, if you assume that the eternal life can be [achieved] in this life, which ends in death. The "Meaning of History," therefore, reformulated in such terms, means the death of history. If everybody believes that perfection has come, history has come to its end and is dead. The search for the meaning of history under the category of an entity that has a meaning, [which] can be and is discovered actively in the present in order to realize the perfect order, means the death of man and society.

The life in tension is lost if the tension is abolished by the belief that the meaning of *history* is "now." That is a very important point, because when you get into the varieties of historical constructions realizing one or the other variety of the perfect understanding of history, every one of them has to fight every other [one] to the death because there can be only one true reality. If you have half a dozen "true realities," of which every one has to be realized at all costs, obviously they all have to kill each other. This is a

very different situation from that of antiquity, where polytheism was tolerant in the sense that the gods of the other nations were recognized as parts in the *parousia* of divine reality and therefore as [constituting] a difference that did not exclude each nation from humanity. One could be stronger than the others, but in principle they were all on the same level, while today the same level on principle is excluded by the assumption of the perfect knowledge of a meaning of history in the constructivist sense.

Now, how do we get out of that misery? We get out of that misery again through history. We have an enormous knowledge of history today, and we know how meanings in history emerge. I have given you just one example, that of the "meaning of history" of the eighteenth century which is now running itself into its death. But we can state empirically a number of cases where history emerges in definite forms.

One such definite form discernible in the material is the configuration of spiritual movements, imperial expansion, and historiography—not one or the other but only as a configuration of the three.

We have the following cases.

When you have the Mosaic spiritual outburst, the spiritual movement, reaching into the Solomonic-Davidic empires, and then the conflict between the necessities of an empire construction (with violence and so on) and the idea of an order under God, you get for the first time a historiographic work describing the genesis of empire and its problems, the David Memoir [2 Samuel 9:20-1, Kings 1-2]. It is the earliest historiographic tract.

The David Memoir is the first historiographic work in which the conflict between a spiritual insight preceding the imperial expansion, and the details and necessities of an imperial expansion are the reason why the facts in history become interesting. The conflict between spiritual order and imperial expansive movements is the subject matter that requires detailed description. The conflict, the tension, is the problem.

And of such cases, now, we have three: the one here in the David Memoir; another one later, in China, after the establishment of the Ch'in dynasty in the historiography of Ssu-ma Ch'ien (145-86 B.C.) and his father Ssu-ma T'an, where you get first, spiritual movements like Taoism and Confucianism, then the impe-

rial expansion, and then the conflict between the spiritual order of the Confucian type—the imperial details of the expansion in the middle Chou monarchy and preceding it, and then the result: a description of these events and the conflict between spiritual order and imperial expansion and the possibility of getting a harmonious end to it.

Then the third case: the origin of Greek history. Here you have again, first, spiritual movements that give you the criteria of order, like the Ionian and the Italian-Greek philosophy, then the expansion of the Persian empire, of which in this case Hellas is the victim, and then the historiography of the Persian War and its area in Asia and Europe, and the prehistory of the Persian War. Thus, again, there is the conflict between the spiritual movements (the criterion for description) and the imperial expansion, as the disorder that has to be overcome. (The disorder in the Athenian-Spartan case is formulated by Thucydides, two generations after Herodotus, as the *kinesis*, a feverish movement of disorder in a society.)

That is the subject matter. We have three cases of this configuration of spiritual criteria, imperial expansion, and the genesis of historiography as a description of the conflict in action.

Such constants in history can be discerned. We see where interesting historiography begins: in the conflict, the tension. That requires, then, new language, which appears, though exactly where is not always discernible. Let me take the case of Herodotus. Herodotus speaks of the *ecumene* as the problem that is the subject matter of historiography. The *ecumene* is a new word. It appears in the fifth century. But where does it come from? In the descriptions of Herodotus it looks as if the foreign office of the Persian empire had a political theory, that Persian rule had to be established over the *ecumene*, over all known mankind. There must have been such a Persian term meaning *ecumene* [translated by Herodotus with that word. In any case, the term] appears here for the first time as resistance to the foreign policy of an imperial expansion.

Herodotus is very sensitive to the meaning of imperial expansion, the beginning of the Persian empire, which is in back of the imperial expansion. He discerns, for instance, a Persian chieftain who wants to resist the expansion of his followers: He does not

want them to make attacks on neighbors that would expand then to the Medean and Babylonian empires, because, as he explains it to them, if you engage in an aggression and the aggression is successful you cease to be the community you were and become a new community of rulers over somebody else who has nothing to do with you.

The concupiscential expansion, as I call this phenomenon of aggression and of desire for rulership, is very well discerned by Herodotus as an Exodus from an existing order, not as the creation of a very questionable new order. Can a new order be created? Certainly an old order is destroyed if a limited tribe becomes the ruling group of an extended area with foreign populations.

Together, the *Concupiscential Exodus* in this sense, and the *Spiritual Exodus* that is dissatisfied with the disorder created by empire, produce the peculiar "Exodus from the Cosmos" that then requires the tension in the Alexandrian and the Roman empires. And later on, these are the motive forces in the existential experiences that tend to reestablish some sort of order while being prevented in the establishment of that order by expansions which create new social structures which, in turn, destroy old structures and leave people alienated in their [new] situation. If a leader is found, these alienated populations can then be the carriers of revolutionary movements directed against the established imperial situations, and so on.

So in history (again as a result of empirical observation) we have to distinguish a sequence of such imperial tensions caused by imperial expansion. There are: first, the old cosmological empires, which lead to constructions such as the Sumerian King List, very similar in its structure to the Hegelian speculation on history as I have described it. The cosmological empire is the source of one type of historical construction, characterized especially by the falsification of historical facts in order to create one-line history. The creation of a one-line history is a phenomenon in history that begins as early as the third millennium B.C.

Then you have a second level of empires, beyond the cosmological empires, when the *ecumene* (the conflict with Persia in Herodotus) comes into action, to cover the whole known world of man under one empire. I call this level the ecumenic empires which, when established in the form of a Persian empire, a Roman

empire, and so on, lead to this type of establishment becoming a model that can be followed, as, for instance, in the Byzantine empire and in the Islamic empire, which gives you a further level, which I call the Orthodox empires. The Orthodox empires include the Eastern Byzantine, the Islamic, and the Western Holy Roman empires.

Then, since there is an emperor and a lot of people supposedly in submission to him, the subject peoples have the idea that they could be emperors too. You find, therefore, at least as early as the eleventh and twelfth centuries in the West, the conception of the king in any peripheral community in that Western empire is an *imperator in regno suo*, the emperor in his own realm. This is the beginning of the national imperialism that culminates in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the establishment of a new French empire, a new Austrian empire, a new empire of England, and so on, until you get to other sub-emperors in other areas of reality. (I believe there is now even an emperor in one of the minor states of Africa.) These national empires and emperors are the result of the conversion of an ecumenic imperialism into an ecumenism for national aspirations.

Finally, we must note the disorders created by the ideological empires, especially of the Marxist type.

Thus, a series of such concupiscential expansions, always in conflict with a better understanding of spiritual and rational order, is the tension that keeps going on and on in history up to the present, and we see no end in sight, unless you say: that is the meaning of history, this tension between spiritual movements and concupiscential ones. [The last sentence is a conjecture made from clues on an unclear tape.]

But there is still a constant everywhere. And the constant—we have now come to the end—is the tension itself, formulated by the Platonic *epekeina* and its *parousia*. In the *Republic*, in the Parable of the Cave, the prisoner in the cave is forced to turn around, apparently by some resistance movement in his soul, toward the light that comes from the top of the cave. Then come the well-known steps until he advances to the light and sees what the problem is.

Now, this particular metaphor, this parable, is still found in Hegel. From Plato to Hegel a constant runs through the history of

ideas. In Hegel it again appears in the introduction to the *Logic*, where he explains that the *Logic* is directed against the metaphysical and ontological deformations of philosophy characteristic of the eighteenth century and attempts to recover the true order of history in opposition to the various ideological cover-ups and distortions. So he is still the Prisoner in the Cave of the opinions of his time that he considers to be insufficient. He is anti-metaphysical, he is anti-ontological, he is anti-philosophical and, in the *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, he wants to create a new type of speculation with a new type of solution. But how does one do that? Here the Platonic *periagoge* again enters as the metaphor; the Prisoner in the Cave of contemporary metaphysics, ontology, and theosophy, who wants to overcome it by his new type of *Logic*, must engage again in the *periagoge*; Hegel uses the same name, *periagoge*, "*Umkehrung*." One has to turn around, turn away from the assumption that current talk is talk about Reality in sense #1 (here—on the blackboard [i.e., thing-reality]). One has to be aware of the *Umkehrung* into the Reality #2 [i.e., It-reality]. What he tries to do is to find a new language, which he calls Dialectic, to express the *Umkehrung* in the sense that Reality comprises both Reality #1 and Reality #2. Of course he can't find that new language because one cannot simply invent a new language against the language that we have, but he has the *program* of inventing a new language, and the program is an indication that he has seen the problem that I discussed earlier in the difficulties of Plato in finding the three levels of language corresponding to the three levels in conscious explanation.

Thus, in the end, we come back for the "meaning of history," to the tensions, of which we do not know why they exist at all. In a purely doctrinal theological construction we will always be faced with the problem: Why did God create the world which is in such disorder that one has then to be saved from its disorder? That [problem] cannot be solved simply on the doctrinal level. One has to go back to the experiential problem. That problem Plato considers a mystery. He raises it in the *Laws*, where he asks the question, Is man a plaything of the gods or is this tension there for some ulterior, important purpose? And his answer as a philosopher is, "We just don't know."



Responses at the Panel Discussion of "The Beginning of the Beginning"

In response to a question about his use of the term symbol:

The term *symbol* is of course a term that has acquired a lot of meanings in the course of history. The question now is, Can it be used for the purposes for which I am using it, without getting into real misunderstandings? I try to give *symbol* the meaning of expressing the consciousness of the paradoxical It-reality and Thing-reality. From such symbolizations, I distinguish concepts as definitional formulations referring to objects that have existence in time and space. For instance, you cannot have a concept of history, because history is not really in time and space, for it involves the future and we have no knowledge of the future. There is no thing "history" about which one can talk at all as we can about this table existing in time and space. The question can then also be raised concerning the existence of finite symbols in mathematical form, which perhaps are more than that. . . . The mathematical form of the universe is a symbol. However, mathematics is a not sufficiently explored problem, and so I cannot give you a definite answer. One simply has to explore the matter historically, mathematically, and I am not going to do this.

Originally published as "Responses at the Panel Discussion of the 'Beginning of the Beginning,'" in *The Beginning and the Beyond: Papers from the Gadamer and Voegelin Conferences*, ed. Frederick G. Lawrence, supplementary issue of *Loneragan Workshop* (Boston College) 4 (1984): 97-110.

Editorial note from Lawrence: The following is a transcription of Voegelin's responses to questions raised at the panel discussion that was part of the March 1983 conference at Boston College. Both the questions posed by members of the panel and those that came from other participants in the conference have been condensed.

So *symbol* is to be understood in the sense I have mentioned. As far as one can see, a symbol like the beginning of the universe or the universe itself, and so on, is not a concept of anything but the symbolization of the tension of experience and existence: In time, we exist in relation to the Beyond and so on. As soon as we turn to the Thing-reality, we hit upon the problem that Thing-reality is ultimately not an entity at all but part of an entity which is a whole, and the whole can only be expressed in symbols. There's no use trying to impose any doctrines or dogmas; we can only work on the basis of what we know at present, making use of the empirical sciences.

On the problem of using symbols to discriminate normatively between true and false, good and bad:

If you ask this question in the face of a given symbolization such as the "big bang," you can say that taking into account the issues connected with symbols and symbolization yields the insight that the complex to be dealt with is superior to any unanalyzed formula such as the "big bang." There is an objective criterion in the question. When you can raise these questions that make sense, then we have improved the problem. When physicists, for example, look for a unified theory, we can raise reasonable doubts whether unified theories in that sense are possible, because the physicist is not dealing with a kind of object from which he is removed. Then we have improved the problem objectively. This is a response in terms of concrete cases; you may have other cases in mind that you may want to bring up.

In response to further questions along the same lines:

You can't get any new facts about the universe as a whole, because the whole is already a symbol, and you can't get a new fact about a symbol.

Take, for instance, the question of the beginning. The issue of the beginning of the beginning exists as far as we have any records. The reason why the records exist is that in time someone can always put the question. What came before this? What came before that? and so on until you run into the problem whether

the timeline running indefinitely into the past makes sense: one thing caused by another. Obviously, it is a question about sense or meaning. Where does such a line originate? And the question of origin is independent of the state of knowledge of time-events in the future.

The question concerning the beginning is always the same. Only if we insist on taking a particular state of knowledge—say, a Hebrew state of knowledge, a Greek state, or a modern or early modern state—and extrapolate that as an absolute, you get into a mess. This problem was formulated already by Augustine, who advised his fellow Christians, “Don’t talk about physics on the basis of the Old Testament, because there are pagans who are intelligent enough to know more about these things than you do. If you use the Old Testament as a source of knowledge about physics, you make yourselves ridiculous and breed contempt for Christianity.” Such tactics are not unknown today. If you go into doctrinization of particular events, then you are wrong; but if you ask the general question about the beginning, you are always right.

The problem as formulated by Augustine is interesting, because if you notice in today’s newspapers about the so-called creationist controversy between biologists and Christian fundamentalists, you can see it goes on just as if nothing had happened.

This raises another problem. It is a certain kind of limited intelligence that does such things—a constant in the history of mankind: what Plato and Aristotle called a *plethos*, the mass civilization problem, no matter what the age. This is just on the empirical side of the issues.

In response to the question about the relation of the prophetic and the philosophical:

There is no such thing as an absolutely prophetic event. The prophetic means a certain insight into reality which is both luminous and intentional and is given a very compact form by the prophets of Israel. The question whether, say, Hesiod is a prophet or not cannot be decided in the abstract but only very concretely, because he deals with the same sorts of problems as the prophets of Israel (ethical, and so on), but only in a more or less compact form. So there is no hard and fast distinction between prophetic

and noetic thinking, because we can also say that Plato was a prophet. In the *Laws* he explains that the divine reality is a matter of vision: *opsis*.

There is no simple noetic form, because the noetic form is the searching part of a tension in which we search for something to which we are moved to search from the other side—it would be the prophetic or pneumatic part. However, if you distinguish the poles, then you want to talk about the searching and the being moved to search (distinguishing the noetic and the pneumatic) and pretend that you search without being moved to search, or you are receiving information from the movement without searching. Then you get into one-sided prophetism or one-sided noeticism, which in fact does not exist anywhere.

On whether prophets seem not to be so much searching for as in possession of the truth:

One has to determine whether the prophet is more or less educated. We can say that people are prophetically moved but are also limited and restricted in their knowledge or horizon, and then they will talk nonsense, inspired nonsense; you can get that.

On whether common understandings are possible despite historical change:

That they are impossible is simply not true. Because all the categories that I have developed here—for instance, the title of my first chapter, “The Beginning of the Beginning”—have not been invented by me. It is the formula that Aristotle uses for his epistemology in the *Analytica Posteriora*, second part, last chapter. He was dealing with the continuum problem. If you have a *past* in a history that is past, then also a beginning of the Beginning. The same is true for the Beyond. There is not just talk about the Beyond. The *Beyond* was a technical term developed by Plato in the *Republic* and the *Phaedrus* as the Beyond of the being-things. Therefore, there is a section in my book about the being beyond being. That is also a problem in the history of mankind that is faced in the compact form of speculation and has been differentiated into different forms up to the present. So there are constants

that are historical constants and involve no relativism or anything like that.

Since every story starts in the middle, you must have a plurality of middles. If you have a plurality of myths, there are also the constants that arise out of the structure of consciousness, so that there is no relativism in talking about the beginning of the beginning.

Every analysis of this form (or every analysis simply!) can lead to misunderstanding if it falls into hands of people who aren't very bright. Absolutely, the non-brightness of the people who might read you is a fact you have to face.

We just have to put up with the fact that there are people who are not sufficiently literate to handle the problems with which we have to deal. I have always had to explain to the students at the beginning of my seminars all my life: There is no such thing as a right to be stupid; there is no such thing as a right to be illiterate; there is no such thing as a right to be incompetent. It is usually taken for granted you have a right to be all these things and will still be regarded as a wonderful person.

We always have to recognize this structure, as occurs in Plato and Aristotle's construct of the *plethos*, besides the *spoudaioi*. There are different terms in existence for this structure, which have been suppressed again in an incompetent environment of political scientists who don't read Aristotle, outside of the *Politics*.

On the relationship between philosophy and theology:

There is no simple breach. You might say that *philosophy* is a term that has been developed by Greek thinkers as a name for their activity of dialectical and analytical exploration of reality. In that connection it became clear that among the realities to be explained was the experience of the gods. The result of this exploration was called theology. You could get into discussions about whether one should reserve the term *theology* for more compact forms of philosophizing, like the myths of Hesiod. That is the meaning Aristotle tries to propagate. On this occasion, then, the problem of the myth arises. There is no such thing as myth in the abstract. Myth has become a problem because a compact

form of thinking was distinguished technically as “myth” from a more differentiated form of thinking called philosophy by Aristotle. That’s why we talk about the myths at all; otherwise, there is no talk about myths. The terminology develops as degrees of differentiation develop.

The divorce between philosophy and theology is a historical arrangement. You see, this arrangement was partly to deformation. Take, for instance, the problem of religion. For Cicero, for example, *religion* meant philosophy; and the opposite of *religion* was superstition in the sense of a primitive fundamentalist mythology. *Superstition* is compact mythology, and *religion* is the differentiated philosophy: Cicero’s definitions in *De natura deorum*. And I cannot improve on that by going into the great question whether *religion* is derived from the word *religare* or the word *religio*—which doesn’t mean anything one way or the other. *Religio* meant what Cicero meant in the context of his sentences. And he meant it to mean: identical with philosophy, in the context of his sentences. More than that we will not say.

If you were to speak of *theology* in the Christian sense, we would get into problems, because there is no theology in the Christian sense which is not at the same time philosophy, also. And then you might go on to speak concretely, taking as an example the definition of Chalcedon. You can say, “Yes, I believe it because I know the truth intention in it.” Or you can say, “My God! You have a dogma of that importance formulated with that second-rate type of philosophy that was in use in the fifth century, as compared to what we know about the matters.” It is deplorable, but there is nothing we can do about it, since the dogma was formulated in the fifth century. They use such terms as the *nature of man* and the *nature of God*, which I wouldn’t use today. Thus, they solve a problem, which is an entirely ridiculous problem in theology, on the basis of the *depositum fidei*.

On the truth of the beginning in relation to doctrinal truth:

You cannot simply say “experiences of the beginning.” There is one experience of the Beyond that led to the term *Beyond*, because and when the Beyond of the being-things is differentiated. Then

you can consider, for instance, the Amon Hymns of the twelfth century B.C. (at the same time as Moses), which try to confer on the god Amon the qualities of the God beyond the gods—to do so on a less differentiated form of the Beyond. But before you can speak intelligibly about these things, you must have the Platonic concept of Beyond. Otherwise you simply have recourse to the oddity that in the mythology of Egypt you suddenly have Amon becoming superior to all others, the beginning of all the others, and so on.

A similar problem comes up in the *Timaeus* of Plato, where the Demiurge produces the other gods: a reconstruction that perhaps runs parallel and would be taught by Plato. He insists that the Demiurge produces the other gods and that the other gods are therefore legitimate. But he always distinguishes between the star gods and the gods of tradition, who are the Olympian gods—second-rate gods as compared to the star gods.

Plotinus several centuries later has the same problem: that the traditional gods are still preserved, though one really doesn't want them. But for historical reasons, they are still there, and one has to accept them. The gods die, but there is no reason why they first came alive.

On whether the gods serve a useful function:

The gods have no uses. The gods aren't prophets. There you get into the very profound problem of why God created the world in the first place instead of keeping quiet. This was also a problem known by Catholic philosophy since Empedocles, who was therefore of the opinion that creation was a disturbance of a quiet state in which one is happy; and when the final conflagration at the end of things comes, then at last there is the perfectly ordered hierarchy. Then we are happy.

The problem recurs in the Gnostics of the second century in dealing with the question of the different solutions for the different types of people. The pneumatics, spiritually inspired, will go to the real beyond of the God of the Beyond. Psychics go into paradise; and the somatics will live as they do now, only without the tensions that cause their anxieties. With tensions you cannot be happy.

On whether propositional truth necessarily kills the tension:

It's one way of killing the tension, but it's also one way—since language is still language in all Thing-language—of preserving things. Only we should understand that there are no-things; otherwise you get into difficulties. If you construe the beginning of the world and the beginning of time by saying the world began in 4004 B.C., and such nonsense, then you get into difficulties. But that doesn't mean the problem of the beginning of the world is nonsense.

On phronesis in Gadamer:

I'm not sure to what point in Gadamer you are referring. I myself have written on *phronesis* in *Anamnesis*. What I understood—here I am not too sure what Gadamer has to say about it—is that Aristotle is clear about the fact that you arrive at concrete decisions on the basis of insights that are not concrete. The result of insight cannot be deduced. It is an analytical account of the ability to arrive at practical solutions in the concrete case. I don't know whether this is the same way Gadamer handles it.

On whether this phronesis tradition may have been lost or deformed:

Perhaps it is not differentiated enough to be generally understood. It would be an everyday problem, the question of having to make a decision on something that is unanalyzed into something that becomes an analyzed decision with an end mediated by explanations or, perhaps I should say, opinions. It is not always a masterpiece of analysis. One tries to explain how one gets from the nondoctrinal law to the concrete decision.

On Voegelin's technical term reflective distance:

Let's start from a concrete situation: the Platonic tension of existence between God and man, between perfection and imperfection, between action and insight, and so on. It is *metaxy*. Now we are living in the tension, just as we were saying about the

situation of *phronesis*. After you have analyzed the situation of *phronesis*, you know just as much about it as you did before. You have to come from beyond into the concrete situation which is the exact way that we exist. But the difference is, you know that this is the problem and you have a language for it. Now when you find a language for it and you analyze it in a chapter called "*Phronesis*," then you are speaking about it in a reflective distance from the actual act of phronetic decision that you have to make on your own. And arrival at a dialectical analysis can prevent you from making mistakes about the process in understanding the process, but it doesn't solve the problem. You still have to make the judgment.

On whether Hegel makes the distinction between truth and ideology impossible:

It is worse than that. It is the desire to pretend that Hegel's analysis is a final decision, to come back to *phronesis*; that when he has analyzed consciousness, then the conflicts of consciousness are resolved. Hence, the works of Hegel, especially the *Logik*, will replace, for instance, all the Old and New Testaments as a sacred scripture. So there is a libidinous background in which one tries to become a second Christ, which was common at the time. There are Fourier, Saint-Simon, and Comte—everyone wants to be the new Christ; and Hegel was one of them.

On whether what is ultimately wrong with Hegel is his scientizing reductionism of what he presumed to be mythological material:

Yes, you can say that. But then you get into difficulty with mythology, because a myth is not necessarily a misconstruction. What I have tried to bring out is that all the fundamental symbolisms of Plato appear in Hegel, but transformed in such a manner that what comes out is no longer a revelation of a search but a manipulative finding of the truth—what we would call today "informational communication," which in its easiness and clearness distracts from the understanding of reality, the reduction of reality to informative material.

On the attributes Romantic and Enlightenment as they come up in an analysis of Hegel:

This distinction between Enlightenment and Romanticism is probably invalid. You might call Enlightenment a period of Romanticism; and you might as well call Romanticism a period of enlightened knowledge. The *Enzyklopaedie* of Hegel is an encyclopedia because there is already an *Encyclopedie française* that gives it legitimacy.

On whether Hegel's or all subsequent German thought—Heidegger's as trying to get behind the Enlightenment, for instance—can be placed in the same stream of thought:

Any attempt to get behind something is an attempt to falsify facts. We cannot overlook that certain facts are always real. That was a general problem which also came up in the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. We might also include the conception that there are secondary realities and primary realities, or the Lockean conception—all are enlightened attempts to destroy reality. This does not mean that if you try to resist them you are always right. In Goethe, for instance, you have the *Farbenlehre* in opposition to the Lockean and Newtonian doctrines. It is perfectly correct in seeing the problem, but the assumption that the Newtonian theory of optics is wrong is of course untenable; Goethe's right-minded resistance does not make the positive teaching of his *Farbenlehre* right. But he did resist the destruction of reality.

On whether, within the mythopoesis of the "It" with its formative parousia and pneumatic response in which people respond in part by expressing, any historical and social explication can avoid being magical:

It is spelled out, for instance, in the conceptions of history. You frequently find it said today that our conception of history is Euro-centric. Of course it isn't. But there is something to that accusation. Any interpretation of history that includes the various civilizations and takes account of them was achieved in Europe,

beginning with the Greeks—not by the Chinese or the Indians, but in Europe, by the Greeks and nobody else.

One can make guesses that the Greek achievement was due to the fact that there you have intelligent people who live in a moderate and climatologically bearable situation without an empire. Where you do get an empire, in China, it was an independent accomplishment. You can say the non-imperial character of the Greek polis was the reason why the priests were confined to the local cults, and there was no priestly group that could develop a dogma with which one could get into conflict when as an independent person one spoke about the republic. I don't know what more you can say about it.

On what is to be done where so much deformation in the academy and elsewhere abounds:

You have concrete cases, say in the sixteenth century's great so-called wars of religion. What does an intelligent person like Bodin say? He says that the king in such situations of grave civil war would have to be a mystic who doesn't believe doctrinally in the left or right, or Catholic or Protestant dogmas, or at least have an adviser who is a mystic. You have the same problem today. You have all sorts of wild men like Khomeini and so forth who take their dogma to be the absolute; but what they suppress socially through this doctrinal development is the function of the mystic to tell the doctrinal fanatics that there is a religious fanaticism that really amounts to murder. And that is not sufficiently present in the various civilizations affected by dogmatism today.

In brief, understanding the problem of mysticism as the simple doctrinal understanding of *phronesis* would be desirable as a task for educators today: reading Bodin's *Lettre a Jean Bautru* (of 1563) as a fundamental text in every university of the future, which every student must learn.

On the problem of recovering the experiences of mysticism:

We recover them through education. There is a readiness even in such very questionable movements as the hippie movement in

the Sixties and Seventies. When I first went through the Stanford bookstore, I saw that the two sections that were enormous in comparison to all the others were the section on religion and mysticism (*The Book of Changes—I Ching*—and such stuff) and the section on pornography. These were the two most voluminous sections in the Stanford bookstore. This has changed: The pornography section has receded, and the section on mysticism has increased.

Now why do so many want to read that *Book of Changes*, which is technically an extremely difficult, compact form (I couldn't tell you what the worth of it is)? Because these students, poor devils, are looking for something that they don't get in Sunday school or the universities. Nobody tells them that it would be a good idea to read, for instance, Meister Eckhart or the *Cloud of Unknowing*. That is the practical situation: What can we do to tell the college personnel to tell the students not to read *The Book of Changes* but the *Cloud of Unknowing* or Meister Eckhart? It's as simple as that.

I got into these problems of mysticism as a teenager, not because of religious education in school (I went to a Protestant Sunday school), but because Hindus came to give lectures. But one must get it from somewhere. And if you are systematically prevented from getting information about these things, then you are stuck.

On whether the act of remembering as described in the original foreword to Anamnesis is what Voegelin means by knowing:

I would go even further than that and claim that this symbolism of remembrance—and again, it was developed in a differentiated way in the *memnosyne* of Hesiod—doesn't mean only recollecting something that has happened but, in a sense that has become archaic, to remind somebody of who he is or what he is. Then you get the problem in Hesiod, for instance, that the gods have to be reminded by the Muses that they are gods in spite of all the problems they get into in governing the creation. The gods are in doubt about their nature. . . .

On presence in relation to remembrance and forgetting:

Parousia means presence, and you remember this presence by speaking it out: Where the name of Christ is pronounced, there he is present. But you have to be reminded you are in Christ, and pronounce it right. It is quite possible that the formulation of the Eucharist as “in my remembrance” (which is *anamnesis*) of which Paul speaks always evokes the double-meaning of the remembering of recollection and of remembering in the sense of establishing what the reality is to be.

On whether anything new is constituted by such remembrance:

It depends whether you want to call God new or whether you want to call his presence new.

On whether the self or the community is newly constituted:

Well, in the new community you have the expressions, sometimes the doctrinal formulae, of the presence of the divine reality in specific ways.

On whether expression is necessary for presence or whether presence of the divine is otherwise operative:

It isn't, except through presences: There would be no Christ without somebody who pronounces the Christ and recognizes the Christ in Jesus. You need an objectification in language. Reality is the tensional presence, and language is the way it is the reality; language is a part, a component of the reality.

On whether it is at all proper to speak of language (as either remembered or forgotten) as referring to anything outside itself:

If you introduce that question, you hypostatize the tension. You can't get beyond the fact that you don't see God as an object. God isn't a table.

On whether the It-reality and that which it creatively shapes, say, in the Genesis story, are really distinct:

No, they are not really distinct. These terms are expressions of experienced polarities within our existence. In that sense only are they real. They comprehend us.

Incidentally, since you bring up the matter, I hit on the expression of the It-reality from the extensive discussion of the *Es* by Karl Kraus in his philosophy of language; he has a collection of several articles on the problem of the *Es*.

On the nature of the “It”:

Let me formulate it very simply. We are sitting here talking. What is it that moves us?

On whether the theoretic conception of creatio ex nihilo is a derailment:

You get into the difficulty that Augustine and Plato had with this problem, namely, the problem of the *projectum* in the sense that the Demiurge is creating by operating on the material, and then the recognition that there is no such material. What Plato calls the material, the *chora*, is always defined negatively—it is not any form. And then in Augustine’s theory of creation, you get God, just like Plato’s Demiurge, forming things, but forming out of matter without any form.

On whether the notion of creatio ex nihilo does not represent an advance in the differentiation of divine transcendence:

You have two divine symbolisms coming from the *Timaeus* on which all rely: the creational (the Demiurge) and the salvational. Here the fundamental problem comes up: Why does the Demiurge create the cosmos from which God knows who (the salvational God) will have to save all the people? Then you have the peculiar problem that in Plato there is still the predominance of the cosmos as the *monogenes*: as the unique one, the son of God. And that term, *monogenes*, is the term that has been preserved in Christian

philosophy in the Gospel of John, where it has been transferred from the cosmos to the Christ, from the creational God to the savior God. This still does not solve the question. Why does the God who produces the world *ex nihilo* do so in such a manner that it needs a savior? And that problem is never capable of a solution.

Then, of course, you can ask the question, Why is there a story of reality at all?

On whether Plato and Aristotle might not have an adequate notion of divine transcendence:

You could say that, of course, since obviously the salvational aspects were not sufficiently differentiated by them.

On whether, prescindng from the salvational aspect, one mustn't conceive and affirm creation as a free, contingent event caused by a principle that is utterly transcendent:

Yes, you could say it, but it doesn't mean anything unless you place it in the context of some experience.

On whether the paradox of luminosity and intentionality, in Voegelin's interpretation, means that human beings have something within pushing them beyond, but the limit of their experience is always intrinsically conditioned by space and time:

That problem is formulated very well by Plato in the *Timaeus* where he says that to be in the state of thingness is to be in a state of disorder—*anarche*. If you would order reality, you would have to have ordered thingness. But things don't want to be in order, they want to be perfect. And Plato has no solution for getting out of this *aporia*. One can't get out of it.

There is an order that is an imperfect order. It can be made perfect only by abolishing the disorderly character inherent in thingness; and when we abolish thingness, there is nothing to be ordered.

On Stoicism as a response to the distress of disorder:

Stoicism is one relation to it. If you take a representative Stoic such as Marcus Aurelius, he was always of the opinion that you have to conform to the orders of the cosmos: You cannot achieve superperfect logical arrangement of reality, because there are always too many obstacles on account of the needs, passions, stupidity of man, and so on. By about the age of forty, one has understood that pattern of a desire for conformity as regards the laws and the impossibility of achieving perfection, and the constant need for compromise. By the age of forty you know everything about it. The only solution is, you get disgusted with those who can't do anything with the laws in the face of the obstacles. It's useless.

On whether there might be a more adequate salvational symbolism besides Stoicism:

What other answers can we give? You can figure on suffering injustice to the end—you're not permitted to commit suicide under any circumstances.

On whether a properly human end does not involve passing beyond what's intrinsically conditioned by space and time:

Yes. It is the salvational idea of Utopia. Utopia is a thing that can't be realized in space and time. You can bring in the eschatological conception of *phronesis*, which raises the question of thingness posed by Plato and which has fundamentally two solutions: Either you can abolish bodily thingness, and then you have the immortality of the soul; or you don't abolish the bodily thingness, and then you get the *doxa* problem.

On whether the idea of a Beyond not intrinsically conditioned by space and time is simply an experience:

It can simply be experienced as a tensional pole of your experience. It can never be an experience.

RESPONSES AT THE PANEL DISCUSSION

[Together with Paul Caringella, the following formulation was reached in conclusion:]¹ Plato in the *Timaeus* says you can't talk about the divine things except through the things in space and time in which the divine reality is manifest.

1. Editorial note from Fred Lawrence.



Autobiographical Statement at Age Eighty-Two

Ladies and gentlemen, I am under orders today. I have been told to talk about the motivations for my analysis of consciousness. What were the problems that inspired it? Well, that could fill a volume. I will be selective.

I was educated in Vienna, at the University of Vienna, during the situation of the breakdown of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Let me explain what that means. Until the breakdown in 1918 the Austro-Hungarian empire was a country equal in population to the United States. It was really an empire, embracing all sorts of nationalities—Czechs, Poles, Serbians, Hungarians, Croatians, Germans, and so on. The whole personnel of the empire was a mixture of these various cultures. For instance, at the breakup in 1918, older colleagues of mine who had been in the chancellery told me that on the morning after the resignation of the emperor the chancellery was empty, because all the personnel who were Slovaks had gone to Prague, the Poles had gone to Warsaw, the Yugoslavs had gone to Belgrade, the Italians had gone home to Italy, and so on. That is also why, after the First World War, these new secession states, like Czechoslovakia, Poland, or Hungary, functioned fairly well—the personnel operating the bureaucracies were the bureaucrats of the old Austro-Hungarian empire. This imperial tradition is still effective today, in the sense that upper Italy, above Florence, is as you know the progressive part of Italy,

Originally published in *The Beginning and the Beyond: Papers from the Gadamer and Voegelin Conferences*, ed. Frederick G. Lawrence, supplementary issue of *Loneragan Workshop* (Boston College) 4 (1984): 111–31.

because the Austrian bureaucracy organized it; but the southern part was neither organized by nor part of the Austro-Hungarian empire and so was never organized by bureaucrats from Vienna!

In this Vienna, therefore, all the cultural and ethnic problems of imperial size were concentrated after 1918, as well as in the war years. There has been a certain distortion of the picture of Vienna in recent studies of Vienna's intellectual life concentrating on the so-called Vienna Circle—the circle of people, like Rudolf Carnap and Moritz Schlick, with a positivistic orientation—which was no doubt extremely important. But there were half a dozen other such circles, about which nobody talks today. There was a historical society out of which came people like Otto Brunner, the medieval historian in Hamburg later; there was the art history represented by Dvořák, who had just died, and by Strzигowski, who was still alive, and by their pupils (Wilde, a pupil of Dvořák, became director of the Cooper Institute in Rome and emigrated) and others like Emanuel Winternitz, who became the organizer of the new music division in the Metropolitan Museum; and there were economists like Fritz Machlup and Gottfried von Haberler and Alfred Schütz, who became leading personalities in American economic circles. There was the Institute for Byzantine Music, under Egon Wellesz, who went to Oxford after 1937. There was an institute for *Urgeschichte* (the history of the Stone Age), whose organizer became a Nazi and also left Vienna after the war. He was minister of education at the time when I was fired, in 1938, and I owe him a certain gratitude, because I had to get his permission to leave the country, to accept a job at Harvard, and he permitted it. So there were a number of such circles. They represented considerable influence, not only of German and Austrian but also of Western intellectuals generally.

At the time when I was a student in Vienna, in the 1920s, there were the influences of Marxism through the Social Democratic Party; Freud was leading the psychoanalysts who were there; along with them there were the art historians, the Byzantinists, the medieval historians about whom I have just spoken. That was an environment. In this overall environment the dominant form or special environment in which I grew up was the Law School, with Kelsen and the neo-Kantian movement, first, of the Marburg

neo-Kantian persuasion under Cohen, and later that of Husserl, which developed in Freiburg. From that beginning I started.

In the Law School, my job was administrative law. I had to teach courses on the administrative code, which by the way was very good. (A lot of our present American problems in governing the administration of the country and the bureaucracy could be solved very effectively by adopting the Austrian administrative code of procedure!) From this position I had to get my bearings. The Marxist movements were very strong, as well as the psychoanalytic movement and the fascist movement. None of them seemed quite satisfactory, because at the same time there were intelligent people around who did not belong to any definite school or sect but from whom you could learn something about reality—spiritual, intellectual, and so on. A strong influence, for instance, was the circle of Stefan George, today almost forgotten, but extremely important at that time. Men like Friedrich Gundolf (who wrote on Goethe), Paul Friedländer, and Kurt von Hildebrandt promoted the revival of Plato; also my introduction to Plato came from the George circle. Then, too, there was the prevalent critique of the decadent intellectualism, especially of the Viennese daily press, by Karl Kraus. Every month, of course, I had to read *Die Fackel* of Karl Kraus, and I became aware of problems of the decay of the German language, which are very similar to the problems of the decay we have today in the English language, due to the press and the media and the destruction of rational language. Besides this, there were the great authors, Doderer and Musil, who had considerable philosophical education; they were able to formulate certain problems, such as the concept of “second reality” developed by Doderer in his *Daemonen*, which I have adopted. All of these people were always on the verge. You might say Doderer was perhaps, for a while, very strongly inclined toward National Socialism, but he wrote his novels after he saw what it was; his analysis of National Socialism in the postwar novels is extremely acute and results in the conception of the second realities, which replaced the first realities. So that was the general environment.

Now, out of this environment I was led in certain directions in the 1920s because of my period in America as a Rockefeller Fellow. Here I gained experience from Columbia and at Harvard and, most importantly perhaps, at Wisconsin, because John R.

Commons, the labor economist, and other people who later played a great part in the labor aspect of the New Deal were there. I was introduced to American problems and had to study an American civilization, the American "mind," which differed substantially from anything I had learned in Central Europe about problems of the mind or the intellect. And you might say it was a culture shock! Of course we understand that there is a plurality of civilizations and that the verbal and intellectual developments of the type dominant at this time in Vienna were not the last thing in the world; but there were other worlds, with their traditions, which were quite different according to the background—commonsense culture, religion, mysticism, and so on. And that is the reason why, when I came back after a third year as a Rockefeller Fellow in France, where I studied Mallarmé, Valéry, and so on, the German intellectual development afterward practically ran off like water from a duck's back. I simply had no sensitivity any more for the particular kind of thinking that was specifically German. So I was still strongly influenced in a positive way by Jaspers, but no longer (for instance) by Heidegger. After the American experiences I was impervious to Heidegger. He did not impress me at all with *Sein und Zeit*, because in the meanwhile, with John Dewey at Columbia and with Whitehead at Harvard, I was acquainted with English and American commonsense philosophy.

I now had to understand what I wanted to do as a political scientist in the law faculty. When I was about thirty I understood that if I wanted to be a political scientist I had to be able to read the classics of political science. That was when I started learning Greek, because I had not had it in high school. A similar development occurred later when I found out that I could not start the history of ideas with Greece, because there were a few things before that—the Hebrews, for instance, and the Babylonian empire, and so on. Later I learned Hebrew from a rabbi in Alabama. One has to get the instruments for dealing with the sources. I never learned Egyptian sufficiently well, because here the amount of language is very limited, and you cannot really know more about Egyptians than what the Egyptologists know. Here it is legitimate to have recourse to the experts. But usually, in other respects, one has to learn the languages. In the analysis of the Persian documents of the Achaemenian empire, all the translations by Hieronymus

are so different from each other that you would not believe they translate the same original. You really have to learn Old Persian well enough to be sure of what an Achaemenian document really says. So these language problems are a permanent problem: We always have to learn the languages in order to verify what we find in the sources.

Then there came the decisive point when I was kicked out of Austria in 1938—attended by a very funny incident, which I will report because I want to show you the atmosphere. On the one hand, there was in Vienna, of course, a strong center of Jewish intellectual culture, because 10 percent of the population were Jews: The intellectual upper class was determinately Jewish; one was expected to grow up in a Jewish intellectual environment. At the same time, on the other hand, because the Jewish environment was dominant, there was strong anti-Semitism in Vienna. In 1938 a colleague of mine on the law faculty wrote a book on fascism, in which he quoted my own study of fascism of 1936, two years earlier. And every time, he put after my name, in parentheses, *Jew*, exclamation mark—which was very dangerous at the time, because if anybody was treated worse than a Jew it was somebody who was a Jew and pretended not to be a Jew. So I had to go after that matter and find out what had induced him to do such a thing. And at last I got it out of him: One of the professors in the faculty had told him I was a Jew. It was the professor of Germanic law; I asked him how he had thought that. We had a conversation, and for a long while he did not want to come out with how he had found out that I was a Jew. At last he said, “Well, our people are not as intelligent as you are.” That is the atmosphere in which things happened. They are very funny. But they are not confined in their funniness to these Austrian or Viennese problems. You have the same problem. Later, in my emigration, I had to deal with an American vice-consul by the name of Smith, a very nice fellow and a Harvard boy. I had gotten an appointment from Harvard. It took some time to get the final confirmation of my appointment there; I was waiting to get my visa. The consul was very skeptical about my appointment, because as he explained it, “From the documents I received, you are not a Catholic, you are not a Communist, you are not a Jew. So why should you have to emigrate? And if you emigrate at all, you must have a criminal

record"! That was the American vice-consul. Well, in time the letter from Harvard came, with the signature of Arthur Holcombe, the chairman, consenting to my appointment. I was in; I was one of the boys. The criminal record was dropped. I mention these things to show you how funny it is in detail (if one forgets for a moment the horrible consequences that came about), when you deal with these idiots in these various positions in the political situation.

All these various experiences made clear to me that there was a stratum of stupidity as a relevant social factor—ignorance, illiteracy, stupidity; and that the quest for truth, the philosophical investigation, was a very thin upper stratum in any civilization or society, on any occasion always distinct from massive reactions on the part of the mass of stupid people who surround us. It is nothing new of course; it is an insight you find in Plato, in Aristotle. Thus, in the Aristotelian *Politics* we find the distinction between the *plethos*, the mass of the people, who are exposed to the special reaction on the stupid level, for one reason or another; and the *spoudaioi*, the very few mature people who maintain the civilization. If the establishment of the *spoudaioi* is disrupted by external events, then the civilization breaks down very rapidly within a generation. And that is the problem we have to deal with in various contexts, now internationally: When certain disruptive events occur, civilization breaks down, and the *plethos* in the classical sense—the mass of passionately directed people who are more or less illiterate and who do not know what they are doing—come to predominate.

Such phenomena are frequent; you find them frequently; the whole problem of the origin of Greek philosophy and of apocalypticism in Judaism, and so on, is simply motivated by the fact that expansion of empires, such as the Alexandrian empire or the Roman empire, destroys the ethnic community in which people live. They are thrown out of their positions of power and are no longer in control of the organization of their own lives; they become alienated from reality and so engage in all sorts of speculation for saving themselves from their situation, frequently reacting with violence. This problem in the time of Plato can be seen when, in the *Laws* for instance, he recommends what today would be considered a very liberal policy: that when one Greek *polis* con-

quers another, it should not kill on that occasion more than 50 percent of the population. That was a considerable improvement on the actual facts, where 100 percent of the population were murdered unconscionably. So the legal suggestion is, do not kill more than 50 percent. More—that one should leave perhaps more people alone and not murder them at all—even a Plato would not dare to suggest.

The same problems occur everywhere. Today we do not have the imperial expansion of Alexander or anything like that, but instead revolution caused by the so-called Industrial Revolution—large-scale organizations on the level of the division of industrial labor—that exposes the people engaged at the lower level of the process (in manual work, or secretarial work, and so on) to dependence on organizations far beyond their reach; and they can be all of a sudden dismissed because it is no longer possible, for economic reasons, to maintain such an enterprise. Then, when some fellow who has been employed for twenty or thirty-five years is thrown out or becomes unemployed without any fault of his own, he can either resign or be quiet, or he can become violent. Violence is a normal reaction on such occasions. Even if the majority do not become violent, but there are enough people, a few hundred or a few thousand who are of the violent kind, they can organize the rest to support them. Similar problems arose in Germany after the First World War, with the long process of reparations, which exhausted Germany completely and produced enormous unemployment and a decline in the standard of living, with the result that somebody aggressive like Hitler and his friends can instigate a mass agreement to violent reaction. I saw a similar problem growing in 1976 when I was in Tehran. The people I knew belonged to the middle class and were capitalist types: architects of universities and men of this kind. *Everybody* talked about the corruption at the core and the exploitation of the country through the corrupt members of the royal family and their friends. Now when such talk is general and openly divulged to an outsider, something is very wrong, and you can frequently suppose something is going to happen. And, of course, it did happen, because that sort of corruption was prevalent: For instance, the Iranian automobile company was in the hands of the royal court and its friends, and it made enormous profits because an

enormous duty was imposed on imported cars so that everybody simply had to buy a car produced by the Iranian company. Such things were perfectly well known by everybody, and everyone knew who stole what, and so on. At any rate, then, when such disruptions of a traditional form happen—and they happen all the time—then you get the violent reactions.

The question therefore emerges, How far does the function of reason and responsibility go? In this regard, Max Weber distinguished between the ethics of responsibility and the ethics of conviction. He had been faced with the problems of 1918–1919 when he was active in Heidelberg. He had to deal with young men, all of whom had become ideologists of one kind or another, either fascists or Marxists or communists or whatever. He tried to influence them and get them away from the ideologies by explaining to them that they were responsible for the consequences of realizing their ideas. If you have a conviction, for example, that all capitalists must be murdered, you are responsible for the murder of the capitalists, whatever happens afterward. This appeal, however, was ineffective, because emotions are so strong. We talked last night about the problems of the inspired idiot: When one gets an inspiration that one is on the just side, one feels no concern about consequences of nonsensical, even murderous actions; it is as if one no longer really effects the murders one will be committing.

The point here, then, is that this reality of murdering through inspired idiocy was a fundamental problem that induced me to deal with experiences of the social structures within which human experiences move, and the results of them. We might take as an example of the role of social structure the current Central American problems, which are being managed in various ways, due to the simple fact that Latin American countries are former colonial societies. In the structure of a colonial society, an irresponsible upper class exploits human and material potentialities without taking responsibility for the integration of the society. When, for instance, the lower class increases sufficiently, through demographic development, to the point that the instruments of production, in this case the fertile land on which they subsist, is no longer there, then what should they do? They have no possibility of doing anything, because they have no education; they cannot read and write. One way out is to take arms from whom

they can obtain them and start shooting. But the problem really lies in the structure of the colonial society and its aftereffects, not in communism or capitalism, which are entirely secondary phenomena; and that problem cannot be solved by formal intervention or whatever. The colonial structure is there.

Concrete experiences like this motivated the direction in which my research headed, and I should perhaps say the strongest influence is my perhaps misplaced sensitivity toward murder. I do not like people just shooting each other for nonsensical reasons. That is a motive for finding out what possibly could be the reason someone could persuade somebody else to shoot people for no particular purpose. It is not simply an academic problem, or a problem in the history of opinion and so on, that evokes my interest in this or that issue in the theory of consciousness, but the very practical problem of mass murder which is manifest in the twentieth century. It is a very crucial issue, that if one looks at the history of the twentieth century (say, in the *Cambridge History*), one finds that this century comes under the era of violence. This is almost the only description that can be given, since here various developments come to a crucial explosion.

Of course, the effectiveness of any analysis is quite limited. Let me give you an example. One of the great problems in the Vienna of the 1920s was of course the race question: anti-Semitism, antipathy between Gentiles and Jews, violence, and the rise of National Socialism. As a political scientist I had to deal with the race question. In my two books on the race problem, I worked and found out and published that the race idea was formulated as such in the eighteenth century. The formulation used in the sources was racial differences. At the same time, the question of evolution was under discussion (the topic of evolution includes the problem of the races, the lesser or lower races, or the better or higher races, and so on). The theory of evolution was analyzed very well in the eighteenth century, especially by Kant. As he explains, you cannot develop a causal theory of evolution, because evolution is evolution of reality as a whole. You cannot proceed by logical analysis from one species to another without knowing where one species develops out of another. You can only say that in fact it does occur. You can go back within the biological sphere to the vegetative level preexisting animal evolution and state the fact

that there is an evolution on the level of the vegetative. And then you can go back to before the vegetative realm, to the material levels that are the basis for the evolution of the vegetative. The vegetative are the basis for the evolution of the animal realm and the animal realm ultimately of the human realm. You can do all that and still not know how all that happens. What is the original force that structures reality and imposes structure on reality? This analysis supplied by the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* sustains the judgment that a theory of evolution is technically impossible, because evolution implies the mystery of a structuring reality. One should not think, however, that once this analysis is made it has any influence on anybody. It does not. Neither did Kant have any influence on anybody in this respect, nor did my analysis of this matter of the history of the race idea have any influence on anybody in this respect. If you read through the newspapers today you still find that there are, on the one hand, creationist conceptions of the creation of man, represented by a certain conservative fundamentalist Christianity, and, on the other, the biological conception of evolution in nature. But this is not so, because that the structures appear is just a mystery. We do not know why. In the present discussion of the issue, for instance, as to whether the creationist theory or the evolutionary theory should be put into a high school text, there is still the same level of stupidity as what you find in the 1920s and the same level of stupidity as you find at the time of Kant in the eighteenth century. So nothing happens in practice, even when the problem gets analyzed. One must not expect a rational analysis to make people intelligent all of a sudden. They remain as stupid as they were before.

One may ask what evolution is in the historical sense of the evolution of ideas. When I came to America I was asked by Mr. Morstein-Marx at Harvard to write a brief history of political ideas for McGraw-Hill. I thought it was a good idea. One could do that. There were standard histories of political ideas, which one could imitate to produce a textbook of 250 pages without much difficulty. But I was interested in the subject matter; I worked with the sources. It was a mistake. I found out that the standard history of political ideas was George Sabine's, beginning with classical antiquity and working (with a few gaps in the middle ages) up to the modern period. Well, I found out that this procedure would

not do, because, besides the predominant classical ideas, there were also a few Christian ideas which did not just fall from heaven but which were historically connected with the development of Judaism. And Judaism, too, did not just fall from heaven but was connected with reactions of certain tribal groups to Egyptian surroundings and cosmological-imperial constructions. At that time the Chicago Institute of Oriental Studies and the development of the theory of empires and so on were flourishing, and I included that material. That material increased, and instead of a short history of ideas, all of a sudden there was a manuscript of several volumes. I worked myself all the way from the Chicago Oriental School on the Oriental empires up through the nineteenth century. Then I arrived at Schelling and his philosophy of the myth.

That brought the crash. Because Schelling was an intelligent philosopher, and when I studied the philosophy of the myth, I understood that ideas are nonsense: There are no ideas as such, and there is no history of ideas; but there is a history of experiences that can express themselves in various forms, as myths of various types, as philosophical development, theological development, and so on. One has got to get back to the analysis of experience. So I cashiered that history of ideas, which was practically finished in four or five volumes, and started reworking it from the standpoint of the problem of the experiences. That is how *Order and History* started.

From this point on, I had to work until I found that one has to develop these analyses of consciousness, which I am trying to do now in the final volume, in order to bring out the complexities of symbolism. There is no single idea; one cannot write a history of the space idea, a history of the time idea, a history of the soul, a history of matter, a history of this or that, because all these ideas are parts; they are poles in the tension of complexes, and the tensions of complexes are the constants that always recur, from antiquity as far back as written records go and even further back to the archeological periods, right up to the twentieth century. I have tried to work out these constants in the last (that is, the fifth) volume of *Order and History*. From it, I have shared with you the first part of the problem of the Beginning of the story, which introduces the problem of a Beyond of the Beginning of reality, because there is a tension with the It-reality about which

the story is to be told; and the story must have an end. The story does not have an end; we are in the middle of an unfinished story. We start in the middle of the story and we stop in the middle of the story where the Beginning of the end is the Beginning. Consequently, the meaning of history—say, the sense of *meaning* that could be attached to something we call history—does not exist at all. The concept of history of which *meaning* may become a predicate—the meaning of history—is a concept that arose in the eighteenth century and has been explained in very good recent studies. Until the eighteenth century, history was always the history of something. History that is not the history of something is a new invention; similarly, revolution, which really is only revolution of something, and freedom, which is really only freedom from something, are new ideological *topoi* of the eighteenth century. They are deformed from analytical concepts and now are the great *topoi* about which everybody talks and which are used without any awareness of the deformation.

So perhaps that is as far as I want to go for the moment in recounting the various steps in my motivation. Now I am quite free to answer questions.

Questions and Answers¹

QUESTION: Professor, did you at one point participate in any economics seminars with von Mises or von Hayek? And what effect did that have?

VOEGELIN: Sure, I was with von Mises.

QUESTION: And what effect has that had on your work?

VOEGELIN: Well, the effect, for instance, was that I know that what people usually call inflation isn't inflation, but something else. It is very important to know things like this.

QUESTION: What is inflation then?

1. Questioners are identified by name where possible; where not, it says only "Question."

VOEGELIN: Inflation is the increase in monetary means to which no economic productivity-increase corresponds. In this country now we have an entirely different problem. For instance, when prices go up, it is usually called inflation. Actually, though, they don't go up because of an inflation of the monetary means, but because, say, the OPEC cartel raises the prices of oil. If you raise the prices of something, the prices go up, but it is not necessarily inflation. Inflation comes about on account of something different. If, after the prices have gone up for cartel reasons, you go on pretending they haven't gone up for that reason and that you are as rich as you were before, and then continue paying the same salaries and wages as before, *then* you have inflation. What causes inflation are the high salary levels to which no productivity corresponds because the productivity has actually been reduced on account of the price rise on the part of the cartel. It is also caused by Reagan's economics. This is now gradually being realized by workers who are finding out that they cannot keep on getting the wages they had gotten formerly, because the energy prices are so high—not for inflationary reasons, but because of adaptations needed in relation to the energy prices.

QUESTION: Is this connected with the displacement of traditional societies and cultures by industrial society and culture?

VOEGELIN: Yes. It is one of the side effects. Once you have internationalization, you get political influences like the OPEC cartel.

FRED LAWRENCE: You have suggested that social structures connected with the rise of the division of labor broke down the myths and community-solidarity and plausibility structures of the prior culture. Now, do you envisage any way forward, by way of replacement, since I know you're not advocating the dismantling of industrial development?

VOEGELIN: No. There are no solutions to certain problems. For instance, a lot of the problem is that the alienation from processes that are participated in accidentally and merely organizationally (like being a cog in the wheel, and so forth), arouses many different responses. Durkheim, for example, in a quite logical way assumed

that the division of labor would offer many opportunities to different abilities, ignoring the problem that different abilities to press a button are not as much of an ability as one might have expected.

When you go to the oil company or a credit union and see there a board of buttons opposite two chairs in which two gentlemen are seated who look at this board, and every once in a while, one gets up and pushes a button, and sometimes the other one does so—you can imagine the boredom!

This emptiness, however, is not necessarily a disaster, because a lot of people are most happy with that sort of thing. It doesn't disturb them at all. But there are others who are disturbed—the so-called intellectuals—and there are a lot of them. Among the intellectuals there always will be the activists who are not satisfied in a situation in which you can do nothing and want to do something. So then you get the whole development such as the mass development of behaviorism under the aspect of the revolution of society, but with the added fact that no behaviorist has ever been responsible for bringing about a solution. They are only in the universities; but there, too, of course, they are quite unhappy about the situation, because nothing beneficial is ever accomplished within the confines of the university.

LAWRENCE: How would you distinguish your whole undertaking from that of Jaspers? There are so many similarities in numerous ways: the philosophical faith, the influence of Schelling, the political concerns, and so forth. Would you contrast yourself with him?

VOEGELIN: Well, I wouldn't necessarily draw too much of a contrast. I frequently attended his lectures in Heidelberg, and my only objection really to Jaspers is that he's so prolix in his writing that it is difficult to find out what he really intends.

JAMES BERNAUER: I wonder if you would be willing to compare your project with Hannah Arendt's? I have been struck by the similarity in background you share, and in many ways the similarity of what you identify as significant crises. And yet, I note from one of your pieces in 1953, in which you criticized her interpretation of totalitarianism, that you obviously saw a significant difference in the solution.

VOEGELIN: Well, I can formulate first the parallel in our upbringings. When I saw her library in New York, she had practically the same books on her shelves as I had on mine. We had read the same things. But there is one great difference: She has an original inclination toward Marx; and my analysis of the philosophy of experience as well as my critique of ideologies, especially of Marxism, simply went against her grain. That Marxism should be nothing but a questionable sectarian movement . . . ran counter to her sense of propriety.

BERNAUER: If I recall correctly her response to you and your critique of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt felt that your way of approaching the integration of philosophy somehow lost the specificity of the different historic moments. For example, your account of the modern period (in contrast to hers) is not very specifically broken down into the combination of factors—the relatively autonomous realm of the industrial, as well as the breakdown of thought. I always had the sense that you conceived of a certain *Weltanschauung* movement that she would argue strongly against.

Maybe I can specify this in terms of the problem of race. You devoted two books to it; and, of course, in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt took up anti-Semitism. She rejected the significance normally placed upon race thinking as opposed to the process of imperialism as an industrial movement. I would be interested if you could address the issue of how race is a factor in the historical development that does culminate for both of you in a murderous situation. How precisely does thought serve? Is it mainly a matter of the articulation of thought? Or is it that thought finds itself in a specific historical dispensation that is involved with the industrial as well as . . .

VOEGELIN: Well, it is a historically complicated affair. We are faced with the fact that civilizations arrive at certain points and not at certain other points. You can take any conception of civilization: oil-based civilization, hydro-based civilization; you can start with the Hebrews, the Indus, in Mesopotamia, on the Yellow River there in China, and so on. And you can then ask, Why there and why not somewhere else? And you can answer, “Well, because the

Chinese, or the Indians at that time, or the Greeks or Hebrews, or the Mesopotamians are particular, distinct peoples." But what does this mean?

Then the question still arises whether this whole conception of civilization is true. There are always empirical limitations. I found, for instance, when I traveled in Yucatan and Malta for archeological purposes, that such civilizations as that in Yucatan and on Malta are based on chalk geology. They existed in a geological region where there is not much forest, but just enough of a topsoil to maintain their survival. You have a similar situation in Westchester in England—also a chalk-based civilization. They've had to contend with certain consequences, because the rock is of such quality that one could not, for instance, build roads opposite from the soil. In Yucatan, just as in Malta, therefore, the roads are built as sort of levees out of rubble. So these civilizations are older than any of the other civilizations I have mentioned, as may be verified by carbon dating. These neo- or paleolithic civilizations, which are far older than later civilizations, are called the chalk-based civilizations.

One could ask, then, Is it the rock or the river or is it the race that was the more crucial for the given civilization? This was a topic even in Mussolini. Mussolini was always of the opinion that the English are barbarians who were still climbing in the trees when the Romans were a great civilization. That was a racial comment. Are the Romans a superior civilization to the Celts and the Anglo-Saxons?

BERNAUER: May I say something specifically about the idea of race in the eighteenth century?

VOEGELIN: Yes.

BERNAUER: In trying to account for the emergence of the idea of race, what would be the line of questioning that you would see as a serious one today? I realize you wrote your book prior to the Second World War.

VOEGELIN: It came out in 1933. It was immediately suppressed by the Nazis. The next one treating the history of the race idea came out, and about three or four months later it was destroyed.

BERNAUER: Is it a traditional history of ideas trying to account for the emergence of the race idea in the eighteenth century?

VOEGELIN: No, there are specific reasons: the expansion of science, the history of biology, the observations accumulated from renowned scholars of people's different colors of skin. Buffon's *Histoire Naturelle*, which gave the first comprehensive classification, made the skin colors the basis of the different races—and of course there are different skin colors. *Why* there are different skin colors nobody knows. We can do the chemistry, but this still doesn't explain why the different colors.

Of course, there is something to the race problem insofar as biological organization is obviously the basis for intellectual functioning—without brains you cannot work. But how electromagnetic process in the brain produces thought we do not know. The most you can say for a race theory is that physiological organization co-determines the reactions of people.

BERNAUER: Was it a false question? Does the idea of race arise in a specific time and serve a specific political function, a specificity of function, that would perhaps be lost in a panoramic view of history which would see us in a state of derailment? Because of what was a more fundamental experience from the more panoramic perspective, the idea of race would reduce to an example of this more fundamental derailment. But could it be the case that as with Arendt, one could introduce a level of analysis to the idea of race that, in order to do it justice, would have to show its specific function at the time that it appears—in this case, the eighteenth century? I am not sure about the specificity of your reaction to the eighteenth century, since the derailment occurred a lot earlier, it seems.

VOEGELIN: Oh yes. For every area you can show these deformations of consciousness or of spirit as far back as we have records of history. But at some specific time, problems become acute for one reason or another.

With the development of the natural sciences, the problem of mathematical priority, and so on, became acute. With the developments in the later period, problems of the development of biology,

and so on. Such problems were complicated by the revolution, with the assumption that the upper class of France—the revolution is chiefly a French idea. . . . The upper class is obsessed by the revolution, which is carried by a lower class of a different race. Empirically, it's partly true.

BERNAUER: Thank you.

VOEGELIN: I'm not sure I understand your problem.

QUESTION: I was reading some Hannah Arendt, and it strikes me that because of your sensitivity to this mystery that reveals itself and constitutes history, you allow yourself a certain flexibility with regard to events of history, whereas someone like Hannah Arendt—I haven't studied her in depth—doesn't permit herself that kind of flexibility and so remains somehow more bound to the event itself; and that to the extent that Marxism plays an orientational role in her thought, she doesn't permit herself very much flexibility toward the events.

VOEGELIN: On the *Totalitarianism* I will make one valid criticism: that she overrates the anti-Semitism problem and she does not pay enough attention to the division of labor in the development of large-scale capitalism. That's what happens, since really these things are interrelated. One source of the German anti-Semitism at the end of the nineteenth century has to do with the liberation of the serfs. When the serfs were released from serfdom and made independent farmers, they had to start with land, seeds, and tools to get established. Who pays for that establishment? It is paid for by loans. In eastern Prussia, the loans came mostly from Jews. Since the Jews were the creditors for the farmers, and frequently they had to foreclose because the farmers weren't trained sufficiently for enterprise calculations and they lost their money, there was a very strong anti-Semitism in eastern Prussia. Did it have basically to do with race?

It is the problem of every peasant liberation. They will result in disaster, because you cannot free peasants by telling them, "You are free!" until they are really free. You must also give them capital to start buying machinery; and where does it come from?

I think she's not sensitive enough to the complexity of the issue.

PATRICK BYRNE: Still within the eighteenth century, but shifting somewhat, last night you mentioned the development of a series of personages who wanted to be the new Christ. You mentioned Fourier as one. Could you talk about that a little?

VOEGELIN: No, I don't have any passages in detail, but you can find passages cited in my *History of Ideas* that show that he considered himself a new Christ.

BYRNE: Have you written about Fourier at all?

VOEGELIN: I've mentioned him, I believe, in the context of Comte, in *From Enlightenment to Revolution*.

PAUL CARINGELLA: I'm almost sure there are some quotations from Fourier there . . . now in paperback.

VOEGELIN: The best work on that whole problem is the great three-volume analysis of Comte by Gouhier, a professor at the Sorbonne. In his work on Comte he set forth the periods of his development.

CARINGELLA: Pat, you had an example last night which might fit in—it's a little bit later than the eighteenth century.

BYRNE: Laplace.

CARINGELLA: Laplace. People might be interested in hearing about it.

BYRNE: In his philosophical essay concerning probabilities—among other things, this is the famous statement of determinism—it's quite clear that Laplace is systematically replacing the Christian theological virtues of faith, hope, and love by moving them into a context of deterministic mathematics. He starts right off by saying, "The reason I'm writing this is that people are believing things that they ought not to believe, and I'm going to give

you a calculus that's going to structure your believing." And about three chapters later he has a chapter, called "Concerning Hope," in which he replaces hope. Or, in other words, hope becomes in effect: "What should you bet on? What's a reasonable bet, and what's not?"

QUESTION: I've heard that you've done researches into the cave paintings in France. Was that a fruitful inquiry, and will your results appear in volume 5 of *Order and History*?

VOEGELIN: I don't know yet whether I can include them. These are complicated affairs, with pictures and so on. That is work done chiefly by Marie König, the German archeologist. She has analyzed the principal ornaments and paleographs. The cosmos is structured like an axis. A lot is to be done with it. But hers is the most interesting.²

CHARLOTTE TANSEY: I don't know if anything like this came up last night, but could you comment on any developments in your notion of intentionality from *Anamnesis* to the first chapter of your new book?

VOEGELIN: Well, I don't know if it's a development. It's just a more accurate description of the complexes, of the problem of complex itself, of the concept of tension (it's better developed), of all these tensions and systems of complexes.

TANSEY: But you wouldn't deny anything you said in *Anamnesis*?

VOEGELIN: No. I rarely have something to deny because I always stick close to the empirical materials and do not generalize beyond them. So when I generalize, I have to generalize because of the materials.

TANSEY: But sometimes you change your stresses.

VOEGELIN: Yes, one has to change the stresses on account of something one notes in the materials.

2. Editorial note from Lawrence: A section of the tape involving chalk-talk from a blackboard by Voegelin was not sufficiently retrievable to be included here.

TANSEY: I was wondering which texts Fred was referring to this morning, whether it was to *Anamnesis* or the current work?

FRED LAWRENCE: I took them all together.

VOEGELIN: I am really in agreement, but I would only hesitate to go beyond the formulation of the tensions and the complexes, because I see no real experiences of anything going beyond that formulation.

LAWRENCE: I think one way of thinking about our differences would be to begin from your analysis last night in answer to the question about the criterion. Your answer that the criterion for the answer resides in the question would be the same as I (or Lonergan, I think) would give. My approach then would be to go beyond speaking about questions and answers in a generic fashion by noticing real differences, specifying the questions that are aimed at understanding over against other sorts of questions.

Your emphasis is to say, "I don't want to talk about what I do not have an experience of." I do not want to discourage or deny that; but when we get insights into data, phantasms, or complexes of experience, that insight is starting to get beyond what is intrinsically conditioned by space and time. Insight is an experience we have; and we pivot, on the basis of the insight, to specify what it is in the data that we have grasped by our insight, in formulating and in conceiving. For example, in geometry, we can understand the difference between a dot, which we can see or imagine, and a point, which we can conceive of as an element in the intelligibility of the circle, but we cannot actually see or imagine it—there is an instance of our conscious intentionality's getting beyond what's intrinsically conditioned by space and time. We are conceiving of the intelligibility of the circle, of what can be verified as such; and yet it is not properly imaginable. Here we get an experiential opening for speaking about what is beyond the realm of bodily things we were speaking about last night with regard to the *Timaeus*.

VOEGELIN: Well, you see I would qualify that symbol of insight. I'm not quite happy about it. Insight is a result in your language,

as far as I understand you. I would say we can have insights that remain inarticulate . . .

LAWRENCE: Oh, sure!

VOEGELIN: This is the *phronesis* problem, which we have discussed last night.

LAWRENCE: Oh, yes, I think that too.

VOEGELIN: And they precede anything else.

LAWRENCE: Yes.

VOEGELIN: And then when you get an analysis of the insight, you find that the insight dissolves quickly.

LAWRENCE: Oh, I see. Well, it seems to me, then, that's really where we differ. Because when you go from not getting the point to getting the point (by insight or an act of understanding), that is an experientially discernible difference. It's something you experience, and it's not reducible to other experiences outside that. It's not just a result, but an event that supervenes on the tension of consciousness in the process of inquiry when we grasp the point, or better, perhaps, have the point stand out for us in a way that it didn't before.

VOEGELIN: I can only talk about these things concretely. Let's say God is a symbol resulting from some sort of insight. When I analyzed the problem at the beginning of the interpretation of the sources of the ancients, I find that there are two tensions fundamentally: the creational God and the salvational God. This raises the question, Is the creational God the same as the salvational God? If they are the same, then we arrive at the mystery of the divinity that creates the world from which it has to save people. Then the question, Why? arises. This question is answered by constructions: the fall of man, or the fall of God, if you happen to be a Gnostic. You cannot get beyond that.

LAWRENCE: Just as a question for information: Have you done work on the Ignatian mysticism?

VOEGELIN: No.

LAWRENCE: Ah. When we were reading your essay on the Beyond in my course on God last semester, I tried to suggest to my students what you were talking about in a context that might be familiar to them, so we took the *Spiritual Exercises* of Saint Ignatius: the tension, the experiences of consolation and desolation, and what Ignatius intends by the “consolation without a cause”—the difference between that and every other imaginable correlation within the feeling of the tension. It seems to me that, once again, here we are talking about something that is experienceable and yet it is clearly beyond. And one can speak about it in a nonparadoxical way . . .

PAUL CARINGELLA: Well, no. You just talked paradoxically. I don’t want to put words in your mouth . . .

LAWRENCE: Oh, go ahead!

CARINGELLA: (I’m taking the words from the second chapter.) You just said you have an experience of the inexperienceable. I think that’s what you just said.

LAWRENCE: No, I’m saying that experience. . . . It’s opening up the meaning of experience.

CARINGELLA: Yes, that it includes the experience of something . . .

LAWRENCE: Okay. Yes, “of something.” . . . What?

CARINGELLA: Beyond. You just used the word *beyond*.

LAWRENCE: Yes, beyond . . .

CARINGELLA: Beyond what?

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

LAWRENCE: Beyond what's intrinsically conditioned by space and time.

CHARLOTTE TANSEY: But that's where it seems to me the parallel is more with Lonergan's notion of love and less with his notion of . . .

LAWRENCE: I'd be happy with that, sure. But I think it can also be done with regard to insight. But I'm happy to go that route. That's the one that involves mystagogy as the center of philosophy and theology, the one that such philosophy and theology would go with.

VOEGELIN: I'm really not familiar with the matter.

MICHAEL O'CALLAGHAN: Is it ever possible to explain to a violent, murderous society that a nonviolent attitude is not also stoical? In other words, if I want to give an alternative to violence without becoming a Stoic, what do I say to violent people? Or will they even listen?

VOEGELIN: I'm not sure I understand your question. You cannot abolish violence altogether, because of the mysterious differentiation of human beings into people who have limited intelligence and people who are not so limited. I do not know what you can do with a violent man who disturbs your existence but to kill him. So violence produces violence. There is the historical account in Tacitus. His father-in-law, Agricola, was a Roman general dealing with two Germanic tribes on the border. There he portrays a speech by Agricola explaining to the Germanic tribe the consequences of a battle, and then a counter-speech by a Germanic chieftain explaining: "Well, if we don't have a place to live, we at least have a place to die." Violence is perhaps unavoidable in such a situation.

QUESTION: You see no hope in the efficacy of intelligent people? There is nothing for the intelligent person to hope for in terms of his efforts with the unintelligent?

VOEGELIN: Usually, results come when murderous excesses have gone far enough to make even an idiot see that he is not getting anywhere. But that can go very far.

QUESTION: At the start of *Order and History I*, you discuss what you call the quaternarian structure of reality consisting of God, man, world, and society. I am interested in how that structure fits in with the twofold or threefold paradoxical structure of consciousness discussed in the "Beginning of the Beginning." Do each of the four symbols of the quaternarian structure of reality partake of the paradoxicality of the twofold structure of consciousness as luminosity and intentionality, or is there another sort of relation between them? I am a little confused.

VOEGELIN: I am too. The problem was just raised: What is an insight? You start from symbols . . . and these are the symbols that constantly recur in all political and philosophical analysis since there have been historical records. We have to talk about these things because everybody talks about them without first knowing what they are. But we are already *in* . . . ; and this being-already-in is a special problem. We do not think from scratch, we do not start with a *tabula rasa*, but we think in terms that we grew up with; and these are such fundamental terms in which all practical problems about symbolizing/thinking about reality is done. Actually, we start the analysis with the formula of reality that we have found in Homer and Hesiod and then goes constantly through the history of mankind: "Reality is . . ." Now, what is reality? The things that are, the things that happen, the things that perish. This leads to the question, What are things? And, of course, that includes the gods. You start from somewhere, and then you can work your way around in terms of the beginning.

Index

- Abstractions, 285–86
Academy of Plato, 63, 337
Acculturation, 177–78
Adams, John Quincy, 148
Addiction, 239–41, 242, 330, 382
Adorno, Theodor, 322
“Advance” metaphor, 323–24
Aeschylus: on Promethean man, 280;
Prometheus story of, 339
Aesthesis, 200, 254, 263
Africa, 261, 269, 276, 326, 346, 413
Agathon, 202
Age des Empires, L’ (Grousset), 310
Agnoia (ignorance), 329
Agnoia ptoiodes, 319
Agnosticism, 342
Agricola, 404, 455
Aition (origin), 202, 366, 372, 387
Akhenaton, 204–5
Alazoneia, 121
Albertus Magnus, 82
Albright, William F., 205
Alchemy, 275, 347
Aletheia (truth and reality), 212, 357
Alexander the Great: beginning of
empire of, 310; and destruction
of ethnic cultures, 381, 437; and
ecumenic age, 346; expansion of
empire of, 412, 437; Greeks in armies
of, 375; and *homoioia*, 216
Al-Farabi, 254
Alienation: and anxiety, 341; Cicero
on, 330; and deculturation, 178;
and division of labor, 444–45; and
fools, 329–30; and gnosis, 280; and
paranoia, 379–83; Pascal on, 330; and
revolution, 283
Aliquid rationis, 126–28
Altizer, Thomas J. J., 340
Amathes (unwise, fools), 250, 313, 365,
366
Ambrose: and *dispensatio salutis*, 166;
on *iustitia*, 164, 165
America: civil government in, 92;
and communism, 85; Constitution
of U.S., 26; defense against anti-
democratic tendencies in, 3; Negro
revolution in, 157; and nuclear war,
73; population and size of, 69, 72;
as standard for humanity, 74–75;
standard of living in, 126; Voegelin
as Rockefeller Fellow in, 14, 434–35;
in World Wars I and II, 72
Amicitia, 161
Amon Hymns, 192, 376–77, 421
Amour propre, 226
Analogy of being, 212–13
Analysis: definition of, 100
Analytica Posteriora (Aristotle), 418
Analytics, Aristotle on, 364
Anamnesis (remembrance), 427
Anamnesis (Voegelin), 10, 203, 422,
426, 451–52
Anaximander, 321
Anaximenes, 388
Andary, Maria, 338
Andrzejewski, S., 106
Angels, 258, 378

- Anima animae*, 207, 209
Animal rationale, 185
Anoia (lack of *nous*), 365, 371
 Anthropogony, 316
 Anthropology: as deformation type, 389–90; and experience of man in tension, 363
 Anti-Semitism: Arendt on, 446, 449; in German Reich, 20–21; in Vienna, 436, 440–41. *See also* Jews
Antony and Cleopatra (Shakespeare), 383
 Anxiety, 319, 322, 341
Apeiron, 321
Apistia, 249
 Apocalypse: characteristics of, and modern man, 175, 177–81; and consciousness, 359–60; and “fifth monarchy,” 150; in Judaism, 437; symbols of, 90
Apocalypse of Abraham, 208–10
Aporein (questing), 329, 362
 Aporias, 287, 290, 429
 Arabic philosophy: on cycle, 45–46
 Arabic states: and Israel, 140
Arche (ultimate ground), 121, 202, 387
 Archeology, 161, 178, 308, 326
 Archetypes, 284
 Arendt, Hannah: on anti-Semitism, 446, 449; compared with Voegelin, 445–46; and Marxism, 446, 449; on race, 446, 448; reading by, 446; work, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, 446, 449–50
Arete, 54
 Aristarchus, 289
Ariste polis (best city), 374
 Aristotle: on *aesthesis*, 200, 254, 263; on analytics, 364; on *aporein*, 362; on *arche*, 121; on *Arete*, 54; on Beginning, 418; on *bios theoretikos*, 99; on *eros*, 362; on eternal return, 45, 191; on *euzen*, 132, 160; on form and matter, 158, 184, 257; on *homonoia*, 216; on human nature, 62, 63, 100, 113, 115, 155–56, 184, 185; on justice, 165; and Justinian’s code, 78; on *kinesis*, 213, 214, 251, 362; and Macedonian conquest, 375; on meditative complex, 390; on *metalepsis*, 251; on *meta ta physika*, 390; on natural law, 114–16, 132–33; on noetic theology, 11; on *nous*, 214, 215, 249, 298, 315, 329, 363; on *philia*, 118, 119, 362; philosophical language of, 358; on philosophy, 312–13, 319, 363–64, 419, 420; on *phronesis*, 215; on *physei dikaion*, 115, 116; on physical universe, 289–90; on *plethos* (the mass of the people), 417, 419, 437; on *polis*, 401–2; political science of, 53–54, 56–57, 59–60, 62–65, 91; on *politikos*, 53–54, 56–57, 59–60; on *psyche*, 363, 399–400; reading of, 82; and revelation, 386; and Roman Law, 78; on social disorder, 5; on *spoudaioi* (mature people), 62, 63, 113, 313, 419, 437; on *stasis*, 170, 351; on theology, 247–48
 —Works: *Analytica Posteriora*, 418; *Eudaemonian Ethics*, 121; *Metaphysics*, 246, 247, 251, 257, 259, 312, 334, 359, 366, 387, 390; *Nicomachean Ethics*, 100, 115, 116, 118, 120, 200; *Organon*, 247; *Politics*, 57, 63, 115, 118, 119, 130, 185, 419, 437
 Arnold, Matthew, 180
 Aron, Raymond, 97, 98, 103, 104–6, 108–11, 240
 Arrow, Kenneth, 97
Aspernatio rationis, 381
 Assyria, 189
Athanatizein, 313
Atman, 377
 Atom bomb, 94, 95, 137, 138–40, 324
 Auer, Albert, 119, 125
 Augustine, Saint: on absolute, 417; on *anima animae*, 207, 209; on Chosen People, 158; on *civitas Dei*, 154; compared with Eliot’s *Four Quartets*, 4; on God’s creation of world, 428; on history, 50, 168; on peace, 146; and Platonism, 82; work, *Confessions*, 252, 304
 Austria: anti-Semitism in, 436, 440–41; National Socialism in, 440
 Austro-Hungarian empire, 432

INDEX

- Authoritarianism, obedience in
 authoritarian states, 166–67
- Authority: of ancient authors, 405–6;
 ideology and sources of, 79; Kant on,
 167; Luther on, 167; of philosophers,
 55–56, 62–63, 76, 77; sources of, 6;
 temporal and spiritual sources of,
 75–80; and totalitarianism, 78–79
- Autobiographical Reflections*
 (Voegelin), 15
- “Autobiographical Statement at Age
 Eighty-Two” (Voegelin), 1, 14–15,
 432–56
- Autobiography, 184–85
- Averroës, 76
- Averroism: and cycle, 46; and Dante,
 75–76
- Avicenna, 254
- Axis time of mankind, 197
- Ayer, A. J., 257–58
- Babylon, and Great Year, 45
- Bacon, Francis, 80, 405–6, 408
- Bad faith, 235–39
- Bakunin, Mikhaïl, mysticism of, 59
- Balthasar, Hans Urs von, 338, 401
- Baudelaire, Charles-Pierre, 239–40,
 241, 330, 371, 382
- Bauer, Bruno, 47
- Baumann, Hermann, 161
- Beauvoir, Simone de, 322
- Becoming: importance of, 341; Plato
 on, 400
- Beginning: Aristotle on, 418; beginning
 of, 14, 415–31, 456; and being-
 already-in, 456; question on, 416–17;
 timeline of, 422; truth of, in relation
 to doctrinal truth, 420–21
- “Beginning of the Beginning, The”
 (Voegelin), 14, 415–31, 456
- Being: of act versus act’s meaning,
 113–14; analogy of, 212–13; ground
 of being, 211–12, 224–27; Heidegger
 on, 244, 372; ideal being, 113,
 127–28; Kelsen on, 113–14; Marx on,
 244; meanings of, 211–12; natural
 law, 126–35; and obligation, 112–13,
 122; origin of term, 211; Parmenides
 on, 244; Plato on, 399–400; Plotinus
 on, 244; Thomas Aquinas on, 127,
 244
- Being and Nothingness* (Sartre), 235,
 237–39
- Belair, John, 328
- Bellum justum* (just war), 94
- Berdyaev, Nikolay, 51
- Bergson, Henri: academic treatment
 of, 324; on experience, 177, 303; on
 openness of soul to transcendence,
 101–2
- Work: *Les deux sources de la morale
 et de la religion*, 51, 177
- Bernauer, James, 445–49
- Berthollet, Claude-Louis, 339
- Beyond: and Amon Hymns, 376–77,
 420–21; and *parousia*, 13–14, 396–
 414; Plato on *epekeina*, 202, 256,
 367, 368, 372, 376, 378, 396, 418; as
 tensional pole of one’s experience,
 430
- “Beyond and Its Parousia, The”
 (Voegelin), 13–14, 396–414
- Bible: and David Memoir, 410; Hegel
 on, 407; Pascal on, 406–7, 409.
See also New Testament; Old
 Testament; and specific books of
 Bible
- Biology: and beginning of speech,
 286–87; and evolution, 106, 355
- Bios theoretikos*, 65, 99
- Bloom, Dr., 373
- Bodin, Jean: on hierarchy, 129; on
 temporal and spiritual order, 76; on
 wars of religion, 425
- Works: *Lettre a Jean Bautru*, 425; *Six
 livres de la République*, 76, 153
- Boethius, 380
- Boke named The Gouvernour* (Elyot),
 36–37
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, 175
- Bonum commune*, 132
- Book of Changes*. *See I Ching*
- Bossuet, Jacques Bénigne, 50, 168, 231,
 308
- Boston College, 14
- Brahma, 377
- Brainwashing, 383
- Brandon, S. G. F., 261
- Breasted, James Henry, 204

INDEX

- Brentano, Franz, on value, 391
Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 206–7
 British analysis, 179–80
 Browning, Robert, 180
 Brunner, Otto, 433
 Bruno, Giordano, 338
 Brutus, 342
 Buber, Martin, 118–19
 Buddha, 197, 251, 262, 309, 326–27
 Buddhism, 163, 178, 266, 268, 321, 326, 346, 361
 Budget, federal, 171, 172–73
 Buffon, Georges-Louis Leclerc de, 448
 “Burnt Norton” (Eliot), 36, 39
 Byrne, Patrick, 450–51
 Byzantine empire: empires derived from, 163; and Nicean Council, 77–78; as Orthodox empire, 413
- Calvin, John, 62
 Camus, Albert, 342
 Caringella, Paul, 10, 431, 450, 454
 Carnap, Rudolf, 433
 Carthage, conquest of, 314
 Cassirer, Ernst, 262
Casus belli, 148
 Catastrophe, apprehension of, 46–48
 Catholic Church: dialogue between Catholic theologians and communists, 324–25; and resistance, 30; and spiritual power of popes, 75, 83–84
 Catlin, George E. G., 95
 Cave paintings/engravings, 277, 279, 285, 451
 Cave Parable, 294, 373, 413–14
 Central America. *See* Latin America
 Central Europe: and ideology, 92; loss of democracy in, 3, 26, 29–30
 Chalcedon, 420
 Charismatic leadership, 159
 Chicago Institute of Oriental Studies, 123, 229, 442
 China: Buddhism in, 163, 361; capital of Chou empire in, 279; Communists in, 273; compared with the West, 261, 280; Confucius in, 55, 163, 251; culture of, 161; empires in, 169, 310, 332, 346, 425; and geomantics, 273; Hegel on, 407; historiography of, 410–11; history of, 107, 231, 389; and international order, 148–49; and Opium War, 148; population and size of, 70, 72; as power bloc, 72; and *tao*, 55, 123; and yin-yang, 43–45
 Ch’in dynasty, 169, 346, 410
 Chomsky, Noam, 357
Chora (material), 428
 Chosen People, 150, 158–60, 169, 293
 Chou empire, 55, 279
 Christ: baptism of Jesus, 293; eminent presence of God in Jesus, 281; on God’s relationship with humans, 282; and historicity of Jesus, 368; as *imperator* and *rex*, 160; and incarnation, 372–73; Mystical Body of, 216, 301; and *parousia*, 373; and participation, 252; presence of, 427; as representative human, 119; and revelation, 368, 386; and sacred history, 50; as salvational God, 429; Second Coming of, 50; and Sermon on the Mount, 7, 117, 119; as standard of knowledge in Christianity, 113; on suffering injustice, 21; Thomas Aquinas on, 160
 Christianity: and angels, 258, 378; balance between State, Church, and Science, 65–66; Christ as standard of knowledge in, 113; Comte on, 247; and creationism, 336, 417, 441; on death, 321; and de-divinization of world, 80–81; degenerative doctrinism in, 299; and democracy, 85; dialogue between Jews and Christians, 245; dialogue between Moslems and Christians, 244–46; Diderot on, 299; and division between temporal and spiritual power, 75–80; and T. S. Eliot, 33–40; and Enlightenment, 178; on fools, 337–38; and grace, 121, 213; history as viewed by, 42, 45; and incarnation, 372–73; and missionaries, 148; and Mystical Body of Christ, 216, 301; and natural law, 7, 82, 117–19, 144; nominalist and fideist conceptions of, 340; omission of, from university departments of religion, 326; and

INDEX

- philosophy, 82, 302; and political theory, 81–82; and resistance, 30; and revelation, 301, 358, 368, 386; and Roman empire, 81, 82, 91; and saints, 378; significance of, 282–83; as source of disorder, 80–83; as successor of mystery religions, 311; theology of, 248, 257, 268, 301–2; and universal divinity, 205; virtues of, 249–50, 268; Voltaire on, 299. *See also* Church; Religion; Theology
- Ch'un-tse* (princely man), 55
- Church: achievement of, 159; and fundamentalism, 86; separation of state and, 84, 86; and spiritual power of popes, 75, 83–84. *See also* Christianity; Religion
- Cicero: on quality and quantity, 334; reading of, 82; on religion, 420; on *theologia civilis*, 92
- Works: *De Natura Deorum*, 420; *Tusculan Disputations*, 329–30
- “Civilization and Foreign Affairs” Notes (Voegelin), 11–12, 344–50
- Civilizations: in Africa, 346; apprehension of catastrophe in, 46–48; characteristics of, 345; and climate of opinion, 347; cosmological civilizations, 186–96; curriculum on civilization and foreign affairs, 11–12, 344–50; cycle theory of, 41–52, 67–68; and historical sciences, 345, 347–48; imperial-ecumenic genesis of, 345–46; multiplication of types of, 310–11; and permitted or obligatory conduct, 346–47; plurality of, 265–66, 309; and race, 446–47; Spengler on, 41, 48, 50, 51, 67–68, 74, 309; Toynbee on, 42–45, 48, 50, 51, 67–68, 74, 265, 309, 310, 311; Western civilization generally, 177–78, 346–48
- Civil theology, 92–93
- Civitas Dei*, 154
- Classes of things, 258, 259
- Class struggle, 155, 225
- Clauberg, Johannes, 391
- Climate of opinion, 347
- Cloud of Unknowing*, 325, 333, 426
- Cohen, Herman, 434
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 239
- Colonialism, 439–40
- Colossians, Letter to, 301, 372–73
- Columbia University, 271, 338, 434, 435
- Commentary* to Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (Thomas Aquinas), 246, 334, 359, 390
- Common law, 130
- Commons, John R., 434–35
- Commonsense philosophy, 266–67, 269, 369, 435
- Communism: and America, 85; compared with Marxism, 179, 228; and ecumenic rule, 144, 145; and Europe, 86; history of, 232; and institutionalization, 154–55; Laski on, 59; Sartre's attitude toward, 58, 239; in Soviet Union, 155, 179, 227, 402
- Community: desire for, 304–6; and *homonoiia*, 216–17, 304, 316; and *koinonia*, 316; and revolutionary communes, 305
- Competition, 225, 226
- Complex, 389–90, 394
- Comte, Auguste: on Christianity, 247; and doctrine of ultimate validity, 385; and Fourier, 450; Gouhier's study of, 450; on history, 90, 175–76, 178, 179, 180–81, 232, 405, 409; on industrial society, 76–77; on intellectuals, 76–77; on metaphysics, 246; as new Christ, 240–41, 423; positivism of, 79, 102, 106, 267, 307
- Concepts: and intentionality, 393
- Concupiscential Exodus, 314–15, 412
- Condorcet, Marquis de, 90, 168, 232, 233
- Confessions* (Augustine), 252, 304
- Confidence game, 328
- Confucianism, 163, 272, 321, 346, 361, 410, 411
- Confucius, 55, 179, 251, 269, 309, 326
- Conscious existence, 254, 260
- Consciousness: and analogy of being, 211–12; definition of, 199–200, 353–54; development of, 263; differentiation of, 186–87, 241, 281–82; and divine presence, 366–67;

INDEX

- as event in process of reality, 354–56;
and existential tension, 219–20,
263–64; and ground of being, 211–12,
224–27; Hegel on, 307, 354; historical
structure of, 365–66; historic
differentiation of, 323; Husserl on
intentional consciousness, 398; and
illumination experience, 365–66;
and immanence and transcendence,
202–3, 213, 256, 258; intentionality
of, 13, 353–54, 363, 392–93, 398,
429, 456; William James on, 176–77;
and languages, 356–61; luminosity
of, 13, 342, 355–56, 363, 392, 393,
429, 456; and metaxy, 213, 356,
361–64; noetic consciousness,
254, 315; of meaning, 312–13; of
order, 323; original consciousness,
260; paradox of consciousness,
398–99; and participation, 206–10,
263; and *periagoge*, 367–68; public
consciousness, 395; questions and
discussion on, 368–83; and reflective
distance, 13, 14, 364, 371, 393–94,
399, 422–23; and self-consciousness,
200–201; and space-time, 263–64;
structures of, 12–13, 351–83, 398–99,
456; and subject-object relation,
391–92, 398; and universal ideas,
203–6, 220; vocabulary
- Consolationis Philosophiae* (Boethius),
380
- Constitutio imperatoria majestas*
(Justinian), 77, 78
- Constitution: Aristotle on
constitutional primacy, 130;
Kelsen on, 133; and natural law, 118;
and positive legal order, 131; U.S.
Constitution, 26
- “Contemporary Situation” (Voegelin),
9, 174–86
- Contingent existence, 255
- Contra Gentiles* (Thomas Aquinas),
244–46, 248
- “Conversations with Eric Voegelin at
the Thomas More Institute for Adult
Education in Montreal” (Voegelin),
10–11, 243–343
- Conversion: experience of, 4
- Coonan, Patricia, 263, 264, 326–29,
341–42
- Copernicus, 289
- Corpus mysticum*, 92
- Corradini, Enrico, 29
- Corruption budget, 171, 172
- Corso* (courses), 50–51
- Cosmion: definition of, 190
- Cosmogonic myths, 335–36
- Cosmogony, 316
- Cosmological civilizations, 186–96
- Cosmos: definition of, 186–87, 201;
man in, 186–96, 201, 218; new
cosmos, 187
- Crashaw, Richard, 38–39
- Creatio ex nihilo*, 428–29
- Creationism, 336, 417, 441
- Creation of world: Augustine on, 428;
date of, 407; T. S. Eliot on, 33–34;
Empedocles on, 421; by God out of
nothing, 295; myths of, 211, 335–36
- Creator of Heaven and Earth* (Gilkey),
295
- Critique of Judgment* (Kant), 222
- Critique of Pure Reason* (Kant), 167
- Crying of Lot 49* (Pynchon), 379
- Cujas, Jacques de, 78
- Cycle: definition of, 42; symbol of,
45–46
- Cycle theory: and apprehension of
extinction, 46–48; decline and fall of
Rome, 48–49; definition of, 41–42;
and definition of cyclical movement,
42; and disintegration, 4–5, 41–52;
Nietzsche on, 43; opposition to, 42;
origins of, 5; and sacred and profane
history, 50–51; Spengler on, 41,
43–45, 48, 50, 51, 67–68; and symbol
of cycle, 45–46; Toynbee on, 42–45,
48, 50, 51, 67–68; Vico on, 4, 48, 50,
52
- “Cycle Theory and Disintegration”
(Voegelin), 4–5, 41–52
- Cyrus (first), 314
- Czechoslovakia, 432
- Daemonen* (Doderer), 381, 389, 434
- Daimonios aner* (spiritual man), 250,
313, 365
- Dance of Genghis Cohn* (Gary), 380

INDEX

- Dante Alighieri: and political collectivism, 19; on temporal versus spiritual power, 75–76
 —Works: *De Monarchia*, 76; *Divina Comedia*, 76
Darkness at Noon (Koestler), 236
 Darwin, Charles, 222, 225–26
Dasein: Heidegger on, 254
 David Memoir, 410
 Death, 321. *See also* Suicide
 Decalogue, 7, 117, 118–19
Decline of the West (Spengler), 41, 48, 67–68, 74
 Deculturation, 178–80
De Ente et Essentia (Thomas Aquinas), 258
Defensor Pacis (Marsilius of Padua), 46
 Deformations of existence, 280
 Demiurge: compared with gods, 421; and *Four Quartets* by Eliot, 35; Plato on, 375–76, 399, 421, 428
 Democracy: and Christianity, 85; classic idea of, 26–27; dangers threatening, 3, 25–30; and hierarchy, 3; Locke on, 26; loss of, in Central Europe, 3, 26, 29–30; and pluralism, 170–73; prerequisites for, 3, 24–25, 85; remedies for problems of, 30–32; role of individual in, 24–32; and voting, 24
 “Democracy and the Individual” (Voegelin), 3, 24–32
De Monarchia (Dante), 76
Demons (Doderer), 381, 434
 Dempf, Alois, 160–63
De Natura Deorum (Cicero), 420
 Dependence of the individual, 27–30
Depositum fidei, 86
 De Quincey, Thomas, 180, 183, 239
 Derrida, Jacques, 371
 Descartes, René, 97, 177, 269
 Despland, Michel, 323–24, 337
Determinatio, 121
De Tradendis Disciplinis (Vivès), 37
 Deussen, Paul, 343
Deux sources de la morale et de la religion, Les (Bergson), 51, 177
 Developing countries: industrialization of, 73–74
 Dewey, John, 216, 435
Dharma, 123
 Dialectics: and Hegel, 283, 356, 414; Plato on, 364
 Diderot, Denis, 299, 360
 Differentiation of consciousness, 281–82
Digest (Justinian), 157
Dignitas humana, 132
Disappearance of God (Miller), 261
Discourse sur l’histoire universelle (Bossuet), 50
 Disorder: Aristotle on, 5; Plato on, 429; and positivism, 385; process of, 83–84; sources of, 78–83; Stoicism as response to, 381, 430. *See also* Order
Dispensatio salutis, 166
 “Dispute of a Man, Who Wants to Commit Suicide, With His Soul,” 194–96, 197
Divertissement, 330
Divina Comedia (Dante), 76
 Divine right of kings, 151–54
 Division of labor, 444–45
 Doctrine, 299, 302, 302–5, 319, 320, 420–21
 Doctrine of ultimate validity, 385
 Doderer, Heimito von, 381, 434
 Dogmas, 175–77, 179, 189, 246, 283, 292–93, 296–99, 319, 320–21
 Dogmatomachies, 175
 Dominicans, 82
Doxa, 99, 101, 110, 212, 430
 “Drama of Humanity, The” (Voegelin), 8–10, 174–242
 Drug use, 239–41, 242, 330, 382
 “Dry Salvages” (Eliot), 37–38, 39
 Durkheim, Émile, 444–45
 Dvořák, Max, 433
 “East Coker” (Eliot), 36–37, 39
 Eastern Byzantine empire, 413
 Eastern Europe, 322
 Eckhart, Meister, 340, 426
Ecléctisme, 360
 Economics: and competition, 225; and dependence of the individual, 29; in eighteenth century, 225; and “good life,” 95–96; and inflation, 443–44; Reagan’s economics, 444
Ecumene, 144, 313–14, 411–12

INDEX

- Ecumenic age, 315–16, 345–46
Ecumenic Age (Voegelin), 8, 9, 11, 307–43
 Ecumenic empires, 412–13
 Eddington, Sir Arthur Stanley, 177
 Education, 107
 Educational institutions: departments of religion in, 325–26; problems of, 306–7, 324; specialization in, 331.
See also specific universities
 Egbert, 163
 Ego, 352–53
 Egophanic symbolisms, 353
 Egypt: Amon Hymns from, 192, 376–77, 420–21; cave paintings in, 279; construction of history in, 229; culture of, 161; “Dispute of a Man, Who Wants to Commit Suicide, With His Soul,” 194–96, 197; elemental gods of, 210; empire of, 197–98, 315, 335; Hyksos’ invasion of, 189, 192–93; literary documents of, 189; and *ma’at* (order), 123, 193–94, 196; monotheism of, 204–5; myths of, 190, 335; pharaoh in, 192–94, 197, 293, 388; priesthood in, 387; Queen Hatshepsut in, 192–94
Eidos (ideas), 56, 98–99, 401
 Einstein, Albert, 98, 287
 Eisenhower, Dwight, 85
 Elements, 210–11
 Eliade, Mircea, 188
 Eliot, T. S., 3–4, 33–40, 60, 181
Elpis, 249
 Elyot, Sir Thomas, 36–37
 Emory University, 9
 Empedocles, 421
 Emperors: functions of, 77–78, 157; and temporal order, 75, 84
 Empires: beginning of, 310; as cosmions, 190; different conceptions of, 163; Hegel’s sequence of, 230; levels of, 412–13; multicivilizational empires, 310; national empires, 413; orthodox empires, 163–64, 413; parallelism of, 310; Plato on, 375; Polybius on, 313–14, 375; Toynbee on, 163–64. *See also* specific empires
Encomion Helenes (Gorgias), 382
Encyclopedie (Diderot), 360
 Engels, Friedrich, on history of communism, 232
 England: civil government in, 92; and communism, 86; Egbert as emperor in, 163; as industrial society, 71; intellectuals in, 157; as nation, 92; parliament in, 170; Reformation in, 152–53
 Enlightenment: and alchemy, 347; and Christianity, 178; dogma during, 297; dogmatism of, 189; rational order of, 408; Romanticism versus, 424
En meso, 400
Ens rationis, 127, 130
Ens reale, 127
Enthusiasm (Knox), 293–94, 320
Enzyklopaedie (Hegel), 360–61, 424
Epekeina: Plato on, 202, 256, 367, 368, 372, 376, 378, 396; presence of, in reality of history, 397–414
 Epictetus, 403
 Epicurean schools, 257
 “Epiphany of Man” (Voegelin), 9, 197–218
Episteme, 65
 Epistemology, 391
 Equality, 62, 106
 Erikson, Erik, 342
 “Eristic” constructions, 356
Erkenntnistheorie, 391
Eros, Aristotle on, 362
Es, Kraus on, 398, 428
 Eschatology, 323
Essay Concerning Human Understanding (Locke), 303
Essence of Christianity (Feuerbach), 253
 Essenes, 208–10
 Eternal return, 191
 Ethics: of conviction, 439; Oppenheimer and, 93; Postan on, 93–94; of responsibility, 439; Weber on, 439
 Ethnography, 161
 Ethnology, 161, 162
 Eucharist, 427
Eudaemonian Ethics (Aristotle), 121
Eudaimonia, 54, 319

INDEX

- Europe: economic communities in, 71-72; population of, 69; as power bloc, 72; Renan on, 79; as standard for humanity, 74-75; after World War I, 74. *See also* specific countries
- European Coal and Steel Community, 72
- Euzen*, 118, 132, 159-60
- Evil: of National Socialism, 2-3, 22-23; and natural law, 116
- Evolution: and consciousness, 354; creationism versus, 336, 417, 441; Darwinian theory of, 222, 226; in eighteenth-century concept of, 221-22; of humans, 106, 221, 276-78; Kant on, 222-23, 291-92, 336, 354-55, 440-41
- Existence, 251, 253-58, 263-64, 280, 297-98
- Existence of God, 255-57, 319
- Existentialism, 58-59, 297-98
- Existential justice, 165
- Existential tension, 219-20, 249-51, 258, 260, 263-65, 270, 318-19, 363
- Exodus, Book of, 210
- Exodus story, 293
- Experience: analysis of, 295-96; Bergson on, 177, 303; Hegel on, 176; language symbols attached to concrete experience, 258-59; new experiences, 198, 287-90; philosophers' attempts to recapture, 176-77; symbolizations of original experiences, 179
- Extinction: apprehension of, 46-48
- Fackel, Die* (Kraus), 434
- Faith: bad faith, 235-39; as Christian virtue, 249-50, 268; Heraclitus on, 213, 217
- Farbenlehre*, 424
- Father-and-Son symbolism, 293
- Felix Krull: The Confidence Man* (Mann), 328
- Ferguson, Adam, 48
- Ferrar, Nicholas, 38
- Festugière, André-Jean, 339-40
- Feuerbach, Ludwig: on divine as projection of human consciousness, 394; on psychology of projections, 223-24, 253
- Ficino, Marcilio, 338
- Fideist, 340, 342
- "Fifth monarchy," 150
- Filmer, Sir Robert, 153
- Finis ultimus*, 122
- Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, 11-12, 344-50
- Flow of presence, 182-83, 213, 264
- Flux of presence, 340-41
- Fools, 313, 318-20, 329-30, 337, 365-66
- Foreign affairs and civilization curriculum, 11-12, 344-50
- Forma iustitiae*, 164-66
- Form and matter, 158, 184, 257
- Fortescue, Sir John, 92
- Fourier, Charles, 423, 450
- Four Quartets* (Eliot), 3-4, 33-40
- Fraenkel, Ernst, 170-72
- France: cave paintings/engravings in, 279, 451; centralized planning activity in, 29; civil wars in, 47, 76; "classical" French theory of government, 170; communism in, 86; and French language, 371; as industrial society, 71; monarchy in, 153; Voegelin as Rockefeller Fellow in, 435
- Francis, Saint, 327
- Franco-Prussian War (1870), 28
- Freedom: as collective singular term, 400; and grace, 294; law and protection of, 135; Toynbee on, 67-68
- Freud, Sigmund: on censor, 237; on divine as projection of human consciousness, 394; and projection, 253, 394; and psychoanalysis, 433
- Friedländer, Paul, 303, 434
- From Enlightenment to Revolution* (Voegelin), 450
- Fundamentalism: characteristics of, 175-77; and churches, 86; and creationism, 336, 417, 441; and dogmas, 175-77; and modern man, 175
- Fundamentalontologie*, 335
- Future: cautions about predictions of, 67-68; Kant on, 182; meaning of,

INDEX

- 181; spiritual and political future of Western world, 67–88; and spiritual order, 75–88; and viable order, 69–75
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg, 371, 373, 374, 378, 422
- Galileo, 289
- Gandhi, Mahatma, 107
- Garaudy, Roger, 266
- Gary, Romain, 380
- Gebhardt, Jürgen, 151–54, 156, 166–67, 169
- Gelasian principle, 75
- Gelasius, Pope, 75
- Genes* (kinds), 399
- Genesis*, 399–400
- Genesis, Book of, 316, 388
- Geomantics, 273
- Geometry, 452
- George, Stefan: influence of, on Voegelin, 434
- Germanic Tribes, Great Migration of, 46–47
- German Idealists, 400
- Germany: centralized planning activity in, 29; character of Germans, 167; federal budget of, 171, 172–73; as industrial society, 71; Institute of Political Science (Munich), 348–50; loss of democracy in, 26; Marxists in, 86; reparations from, after World War I, 438; value codex in, 171–72; and World War I, 74
- Geschichte* (history), 397
- Geschichte des politischen Denkens*, 349
- Gibbon, Edward, 48
- Giddings, Franklin Henry, 216
- Gilkey, Langdon Brown, 295
- Gilson, Étienne, 254
- Gnosis: and alienation, 280; ancient gnosis, 150–51; and messianism, 90–91; modern gnosis, 151
- Gnosticism: on different types of people, 421; of Hegel, 60–61; and messianism, 90–91; and *oikonomia*, 166; and Promethean man, 280; in second and third centuries, 280; types of, 360
- Gobineau, Joseph-Arthur de, 226
- Goclenius, 391
- God: and Amon Hymns, 192, 376–77, 420–21; and *Apocalypse of Abraham*, 208–10; attributes of, 212–13; being drawn to, 282, 294; creational God, 428–29, 453; creation of world by, 295, 421, 428–29, 453; definition of, 207–8; eminent presence of, 281; existence of, 255–57, 319; as function of man, 223–24; indelible presence of, 366–67; Leibniz on, 355; and love, 499; and Moses, 210, 261, 326; and mythic God-of-the-Beginning, 321; nature of God, 420; Otto on, 253; paradoxical propositions on, 272–73; participation between man and, 206–10, 251–53, 263, 272; Plato on Demiurge/God, 281, 375–76, 399, 421, 428; Plato on divine reality, 396, 431; presence of, 293, 427; revolt against, 224, 280; salvational God, 428–29, 453; soul's journey toward, 4; Thomas Aquinas on, 258; as transcendent, 80, 187, 201, 202, 256, 258; as Trinity, 304; universal divinity, 204–6, 220; unknown God, 191–92; Voltaire on, 253; and world religions, 326. *See also* Gods
- Gods: of cosmological civilizations, 188, 210–11; Demiurge compared with, 421; of Egypt, 210; elements as replacement for, 210–11; function of, 421; Hesiod on, 426; in Homer, 270, 378; Jeremiah on, 91; and *parousia*, 410; Plato on, 281, 372; in Plato's *Phaedrus*, 377; Plotinus on, 377, 421; revolt against, 280; Sophists on, 318. *See also* God; Myths
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 424, 434
- Going, Cathleen, 282, 286, 292–97, 300, 301, 324–25, 334, 339
- "Good life," 6, 95–98
- Good society, 6, 98, 102–3
- Gorgias* (Plato), 56, 195, 318, 382
- Gospels. *See* New Testament; and specific gospels, such as John, Gospel of
- Gouhier, Henri, 450
- Governance of England* (Fortescue), 92

- Grace: and Christianity, 121, 213; and freedom, 294; and natural reason, 328
- Granet, Marcel, 334
- Gravity's Rainbow* (Pynchon), 379
- Greaney, Francis, 265
- Great Year (Babylon), 45
- Greece: legal theory of, 130; origin of history of, 411; priesthood in, 387. *See also Polis*; and specific Greek philosophers
- Grey, Earl, 170
- Ground: origin of term, 202; search for, in cosmological sphere, 210
- Ground of being, 211–12, 224–28
- Ground of existence, 199–200, 218–19, 260, 318, 329, 362–64
- Grousset, René, 310
- Grynspan, Herschel, 2, 20–23
- Guard, Barbara, 340
- Gundolf, Friedrich, 434
- Gupta empire, 346
- Guyon, Madame Jeanne-Marie de la Motte, 293–94, 304
- Haberler, Gottfried von, 433
- Haiku*, 299
- Han dynasty, 169, 346
- Harvard University, 229, 243, 342, 433, 434, 435, 436–37
- Hatshepsut, Queen, 192–94
- Hayek, Friedrich August von, 443
- Health insurance, 3
- Hearst, Patty, 321
- Hebrews. *See* Israel; Israelites; Jews
- Hegel, G. W. F.: Adorno on, 322; on China, 407; on consciousness, 307, 354; and daring, 167; and deformations, 331–32; and dialectics, 283, 356, 414; and Enlightenment versus Romanticism, 424; error in system of, 394; on experience, 176; gnosticism of, 60–61; on history, 60–61, 90, 178, 179, 180–81, 230–32, 308, 405, 409, 414; introductions to works by, 303; and Logos of God, 408; and Neoplatonism, 360–61; as new Christ, 252–53, 331–32, 423; on philosophy, 385; and Plato, 423; Ricoeur on, 305; on Scripture, 407; and speculative systems as form of sorcery and alchemy, 275–76; and truth versus ideology, 423; on *Umkehrung*, 414; on vacuum situation, 380–81
- Works: *Enzyklopaedie*, 360–61, 424; *Logic*, 331–32, 408, 414; *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, 176, 385, 414; *Philosophy of Right*, 380–81
- Heidegger, Martin: on being, 244, 372; and Enlightenment, 424; on existence, 254; and *Fundamentalontologie*, 335; and National Socialism, 58; on trees, 129; Voegelin on, 435
- Helkein* (to draw), 282, 294
- Henry VIII, King of England, 153
- Heraclitus: contemporaries of, 197; date for, 262, 309; on elements, 211; on faith, hope, and love, 213, 217; on flux, 340–41; on Life and Death, 409; on logos, 249, 395; on private versus public, 395; and public affairs, 55
- Herbert, George, 38–39
- Heresy, 338
- Hermeneutics, 370–71
- Hermes, 339
- Hermes Trés mégiste* (Festugière), 339–40
- Hermeticism, 275–76
- Herodotus, 313, 314, 411–12
- Herrenhochkulturen* (high cultures), 161–63
- Hesiod: formula of reality in, 456; on gods, 426; on knowledge, 407; on *memnosyne*, 426; myths of, 301, 366, 419; as prophet, 417; and revelation, 386
- Hierarchy: Bodin on, 129; and democracy, 3; and dependence of the individual, 29
- Hieronymus, 435–36
- High cultures: genesis of, 161–63
- Hildebrandt, Kurt von, 434
- Hinduism, 191, 261, 272, 321, 326, 346, 361, 387
- Hippias, 117
- Hippie movement, 425–26
- Hippocratic medicine, 56, 98

INDEX

- Hippodamus of Miletus, 55
Histoire et Vérité (Ricoeur), 305, 322
 Historical constants, 413–14, 418–19
 Historical structure of consciousness, 365–66
 Historiogenesis, 218, 233–34, 316, 317
 Historiography: of China, 169, 410–11;
 and conflict and tension, 411–14;
 and David Memoir, 410; focus of, 309; of Greece, 411
 History: and accumulation of knowledge, 404–7; Bacon on, 405–6, 408; Comte on, 90, 175–76, 178, 179, 180–81, 232, 405, 409; definition of, 186; development of modern concept of, 397, 400–401; Eurocentric interpretation of, 424–25; immanentist constructions of, 180–81; Kant on, 182, 407–9; and La Querelle des anciens et modernes, 405–6; Marcus Aurelius on meaning of, 403–4, 407, 408; Marx on, 90, 178, 179, 180–81; meaning of, 397–414, 443; as open field of existence, 181–83; parallel histories, 231–32, 308; Pascal on, 406, 408; presence of *epekeina* in reality of, 397–414; sacred and profane history, 50–51; timeline of, 308, 311, 412; unilinear history, 191, 229–34, 308, 412; Voegelin's approach to, 441–43. *See also* Philosophy of history; and specific historians
History of Antiquity (Meyer), 308–9
History of Chemistry (Berthollet), 339
History of Ideas (Voegelin), 450
History of the Peloponnesian War (Thucydides), 56
History of the Race Idea (Voegelin), 447–48
 Hitler, Adolf: and fear of Russia, 47–48; as power figure, 381; victims of, 175, 338. *See also* National Socialism
 Hittites, 272
 Hobbes, Thomas, 5, 49, 59, 60, 117, 332
 Holcombe, Arthur, 437
 Hölderlin, Friedrich, 80
 Holland, 30
 Holy Roman empire, 413
 Homer: formula of reality in, 456; gods in, 270, 378; on knowledge, 407; on mortals, 250, 263, 313, 365; on *psyche*, 199
Homo faber, 276, 323
Homonoia, 216–17, 304, 316
Homo Novus, 252
Homo sapiens, 276, 277
 Hooker, Richard, 152
 Hope: as Christian virtue, 249–50, 268; Laplace on, 451
 Huish, Peter, 332–33
 Humanity: definition of, 9, 186; drama of, 8–10, 174–242. *See also* Human nature
 Human nature: actualization of, 101–2; analysis of, 122; Aristotle on, 62, 63, 100, 113, 115, 155–56, 184, 185; and beginning of speech, 286–87; changes in, 106, 107; Christianity on nature of man, 420; and contemporary situation, 174–86; and drama of humanity, 8–10, 174–242; epiphany of man, 187, 197–218, 218–20; and equality of man, 62, 106; Gnostics on different types of people, 421; as historical discovery, 281; Hobbes on, 5, 59, 60, 117; of humanity versus nature of man, 9, 183–86; as *imago Dei*, 2; immutability of, 105; international law and image of man, 141–46; and man in the cosmos, 186–96, 218; Marxist view of, 102; misconstructions of, 116–19; misuses of term, 102; and modern man, 174–86; and natural destiny of human beings, 122; and obligation, 112–13, 122; perfectibility or nonperfectibility of, 106–7; Plato on, 62–63, 100, 250, 263, 313, 365, 366; representative humanity, 7, 113, 117; revolt of man, 187, 218–42; Rousseau on, 60; and secular man, 175; and world-immanent man, 175, 187
 Hungary, 432
 Huns, empire of, 162
 Husserl, Edmund, 113, 398, 434
 Hyksos, 189, 192–93
 Hypostasis, 199

- I Ching*, 333–34, 426
Idea innata, 126
 Ideal being, 113, 127–28
 Ideas: and consciousness, 203–6; and Plato's demiurge, 375–76; theoretical development of, out of experience, 296; of universal divinity, 9, 204–6, 220; of universal humanity, 9, 203–6, 219–20; of universal world, 9, 205–6, 220; world as, 220–21
Ideas Concerning Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Standpoint (Kant), 407–9
 Id-elements, 394
 Identity, 342, 364
Idéologie, 317
 Ideologies: and apocalyptic construction, 178–79; cautions on use of term, 316; as deformation, 361; destruction of experience of transcendence by, 204; and general ideological suspicion, 268; and industrial society, 107–8; institutionalization of, 227–28; and international law, 147–49; Kelsen on, 149; Lifton on, 321–22; and magic operations, 339; and mytho-speculation, 316–17; and Nazi murders, 337–38; and paranoia, 380; problem of dialogue with ideologues, 6, 267–69; and sources of authority, 79; as totalitarian, 233; truth versus, 423
Idéologues, 317
 Ignatius, Saint, 454
Iliad (Homer), 270
 Illiteracy, 177, 217, 223
Imago Dei, 2
 Immanence: immanentist constructions of history, 180–81; Joachim of Fiore on, 91; meanings of, in nineteenth and twentieth centuries, 180; and messianism, 90; modern man as immanentist, 175, 187; paired with transcendence, 202–3, 206, 256, 258; symbolisms of, 6; and universals, 206
 Immortality, 321–22, 330
Imperator (emperor), 77, 157
Imperator in regno suo, 413
 In-between: and consciousness, 213, 356, 361–64; definition of, 250, 390; Plato on *metaxy*, 213, 250, 264, 362, 422. *See also* *Metaxy*
 Incarnation, 372–73
Inclinationes naturales, 120
 India: Buddha in, 163, 251; compared with the West, 261, 280; and *dharma*, 123; empires in, 310, 346; history of, 107, 231, 272, 389; languages of, 361; philosophy of, 271; and Upanishads, 206–8, 209, 272, 304, 333, 334, 343, 377; and Vedas, 272, 387
 Indus civilization, 161–62
 Industrial Revolution: and alienation, 381, 438; and dependence of the individual, 27–30; and social structure, 27–28
 Industrial society: Comte on, 76–77; conditions for, 69–71; and decline of messianism, 89–93; definition of, 69; and developing countries, 73–74; and ideologies, 107–8; meaning of, and the West, 89–111; and power blocs, 72–73
 “Industrial Society in Search of Reason” (Voegelin), 6
 Inflation, 443–44
 Innocent III, Pope, 338
 Inquisition, 338
In Search of Order (Voegelin), 2
Inside the Whale (Orwell), 283
 Insight, 315, 452–53, 456
Insipiens (fool), 366
 Institute for the Study of World Religions, 243
 Institute of Political Science (University of Munich), 12, 348–50
Institutio eucharistiae, 160
Institutions (Justinian), 77, 157
 Intellectuals: Comte on, 76–77; Plato's *philodox* as, 99–100; political significance of, 155–57
Intellectus (reason, intellect), 245, 249
 Intentionality: and concepts, 393; of consciousness, 13, 353–54, 363, 392–93, 398, 429, 456; Lawrence on, 452–55; paradox of luminosity and, 429; Voegelin's later comments on, 451
 Intercivilizational law, 148

INDEX

- International law: and Asiatic civilizations, 124; as coercive law, 135–36; existence of, 140–41; image of man from perspective of, 141–46; and international order, 146–49; Kelsen on, 135–37, 140, 142, 149; and natural law, 142, 144; and peace, 146; positive international law, 136–37; and positive law, 142; and prisoners of war, 136; and universality of human nature, 144–45; and war, 136–38
- International order, 146–49
- Intoxication, 242, 330, 331, 382
- Intuitus ordinarius*, 128
- Iran, 438–39
- Irradiatio*, 121
- Isaiah, 366
- Islam: dialogue between Christians and Moslems, 244–46; empire of, 413; and Koran, 245; and Old Testament, 268
- “Ismology,” 336–37
- “Isms,” 205, 336–37, 338, 342, 351–53, 356, 358
- Israel, 140, 274
- Israelites: as Chosen People, 150, 158–60, 169, 293; and Exodus story, 293; and messianism, 89–90; and priesthood, 387; prophets of, 91, 387–88, 417; and revelation, 358, 386, 387–88; and *ruach*, 198, 315. *See also* Jews
- It: Kraus on, 398, 428; nature of, 428; Nietzsche on, 392
- Italy, 86, 432–33
- It-reality, 13, 14, 392, 398–99, 414, 428
- Ius* (ethical virtue), 157
- Iustitia*, 157, 164–66
- Iustitia commutativa*, 165
- Iustitia distributiva*, 165
- Iyer, Raghavan, 107
- Jacobsen, Thorkild, 229
- James, William: on consciousness, 176–77, 303; philosophy of generally, 271; radical empiricism of, 303
- James I, King of England, 151–54
- Japan, empire in, 164
- Jaspers, Karl: on axis time of mankind, 197; compared with Voegelin, 445; influence of, on Voegelin, 435; Oppenheimer on, 93
- Work: *Philosophy of History*, 309
- Jennings, Margaret, 262
- Jeremiah, 91, 261, 262, 388
- Jesus Christ. *See* Christ
- Jews: murder of, and National Socialism, 2; in Prussia, 449; in Vienna, 436, 440–41. *See also* Anti-Semitism; Israelites; Judaism
- Joachim of Fiore, 91
- John, Gospel of, 281, 282, 332, 408, 428–29
- John, Saint, 90
- Johns Hopkins University, 261
- John the Baptist, 293
- Jonah, 283
- Joseph* (Mann), 208
- Jouvenel, Bertrand de, 95–97, 101
- Judaism: and angels, 378; apocalypticism in, 437; dialogue between Christians and Jews, 245; and revelation, 386. *See also* Anti-Semitism; Israelites; Jews
- Jung, C. G., 241, 253, 284
- Justice: Aristotle on, 165; existential justice, 165; and *iustitia* and *oikonomia*, 164–66; and Negro revolution in America, 157; in Old Testament, 165
- Justinian: code of, 6, 77–78; on functions of ruler, 77–78, 157; heresy in empire of, 338; on Paul, 302
- Justin the Martyr, 301
- Just war (*bellum justum*), 94
- Kafka, Franz, 263
- Kafka, Gustav, 131, 140, 141, 147
- Kallipolis* (beautiful city), 374
- Kant, Immanuel: aporias of, 287; on authority, 167; on evolution, 222–23, 291–92, 336, 354–55, 440–41; on history, 182; on meaning of history, 407–9; on progress, 408; on time, 182
- Works: *Critique of Judgment*, 222; *Critique of Pure Reason*, 167; *Ideas Concerning Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Standpoint*, 407–9; *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 222, 354–55, 441

INDEX

- Kelsen, Hans: on being, 113–14; on constitution, 133; and *euzen*, 159; on ideal being, 127; on ideologies, 149; on international law, 135–37, 140, 142, 149; on natural law, 112, 115, 124, 132, 133–35, 142–45; on natural order, 146; on *physei dikaion*, 115, 116; on positive law, 115, 116, 133, 135, 142–45; on pure theory of law, 132, 133–34; on value judgment, 120; on violator of the law, 137; Voegelin's relationship with, 8, 433; on will, 113–14
- Kennan, George, 92–93, 95
- Khomeini, Ayatollah, 425
- Khrushchev, Nikita, 141
- Kibbutzim* experience, 274
- Kinesis*: Aristotle on, 213, 214, 251, 362; and search for ground of one's existence, 330–31, 362–63, 384; Thucydides on, 56, 58, 94–95, 98–99, 411
- Kingship: Bodin on, 76; creation of, 158; divine right of kings, 151–54; and *imperator in regno suo*, 413; in Old Testament, 153; Sumerian King List, 229, 412. *See also* Rulership
- Klemm, Gustav Friedrich, 226
- Knox, John, 293–94, 320
- Koestler, Arthur, 236
- Koinai ennoiai* (common concepts), 303, 317
- Koinonia*, 316
- König, Marie, 277, 451
- Koran, 245
- Koselleck, Reinhart, 397, 400
- Kraus, Karl, 398, 428, 434
- Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Kant), 222, 354–55, 441
- Kulturtheorie*, 336
- Labor. *See* Division of labor
- Labor movement, 29
- Language: and consciousness, 356–61; contemporary linguistic conceptions of, 357, 399; contradictions in, 400; decay of German and English languages, 434; French language, 371; It-reality language, 399; Kraus on, 428; and magic of words, 382; plurality of languages, 13, 357–61; and reality, 427; as referring to anything outside of itself, 427; reflective distance language, 399; Thing-language, 422; thing-reality language, 399; Voegelin's learning of, 435–36
- Language, Truth, and Logic* (Ayer), 257–58
- Laplace, Pierre-Simon de, 450–51
- Laski, Harold, 59
- Latin America, 439–40, 447
- Law: as coercive order, 135–38; intercivilizational law, 148; unconstitutional laws, 131; violator of, 137. *See also* Common law; International law; Natural law; Positive law; Pure theory of law
- Lawrence, Fred, 14, 444–45, 452–55
- Laws* (Plato), 282, 318, 329, 365, 374–75, 382, 414, 418, 437–38
- Leakey, Richard, 276
- Leere*, 380
- Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm, 222, 251–52, 300, 355
- LeMontais, Harold, 260
- Lenin, V. I., 83
- LeRoy, Louis, 46, 47, 49
- Lettre a Jean Baudry* (Bodin), 425
- Leviathan, 59
- Leviathan* (Hobbes), 332
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 358
- Lex aeterna*, 121, 128
- Lex naturalis*, 121, 124
- Libido dominandi*, 7, 117, 121, 226, 381
- Lifton, Robert Jay, 321–22
- List der Vernunft*, 61
- Literary criticism, 261
- "Little Gidding" (Eliot), 38–40
- Locke, John, 26, 303, 424
- Logic* (Hegel), 331–32, 408, 414
- Logic* (Sigwart), 113
- Logical empiricism, 104
- Logical Investigations* (Husserl), 113
- Logos: Hegel on, 408; Heraclitus on, 249, 395; Marcus Aurelius on, 403; meaning of, 156; transcendent Logos, 100
- Lonely Crowd* (Riesman), 194

INDEX

- Lonergan, Bernard Joseph Francis, 297, 299, 330, 452, 455
- Lotze, Rudolf Hermann, 391
- Love: as Christian virtue, 249–50, 268; of God, 4n9; Heraclitus on, 213, 217; Nietzsche on, 217; *philia* as, 118, 119, 216, 249, 362
- Löwith, Karl, 402
- Ludwig Maximilians University, 5–6
- Luminosity, 13, 330, 342, 355–56, 363, 392, 393, 429, 456
- Luther, Martin, 167
- Lykeion, 65
- Ma'at* (order), 123, 193–94, 196
- Macedonia, 306, 375
- Machiavelli, Niccolò, 52, 53
- Machlup, Fritz, 433
- Machnik, Roberta, 269, 335
- Machnik, Stanislaus, 261, 270, 314–17, 320, 325, 329–30, 340–41
- Machnik, Stephan, 272, 273
- Magic: definition of, 339; history of, 339; speculative systems as form of sorcery and alchemy, 275–76; of Trobriand Islanders, 339; of words, 382
- Magyars, 47
- Maier, Hans, 167–69
- Majestas*, 163
- Malinowski, Bronislaw, 339
- Mallarmé, Stéphane, 371, 435
- Malta, 447
- Mandala, 284
- Manichaeism, 22, 311
- “Man in Political Institutions,” (Voegelin), 8, 150–73
- “Man in Revolt” (Voegelin), 9, 218–42
- “Man in the Cosmos” (Voegelin), 9, 186–96
- Mann, Thomas, 208, 328
- Mannerism, 275
- Mannheim, Karl, 268
- Man Without Qualities* (Musil), 381
- Marcic, René, 116, 126–29, 130–34, 139, 146–47, 155–57
- Marcus Aurelius: on meaning of history, 403–4, 407, 408; as philosopher, 156–57; Stoicism of, 430
- Marsilius of Padua, on cycle, 46
- Marx, Karl: on being, 244; on class struggle, 225; and deformations, 331; on divine as projection of human consciousness, 394; and doctrine of ultimate validity, 385; on history, 90, 178, 179, 180–81; on history of communism, 232; positivism of, 267; and power problem, 381; on Prometheus story, 339–40; on religion, 240; and speculative systems as form of sorcery and alchemy, 276; on superman, 224, 253; on surplus theory of value, 324
- Marxism: and Arendt, 446, 449; Aron on, 240; changes in, 147; compared with Soviet Communism, 179, 228; decline of, 227; and dialectical materialism, 308; and genesis of high culture, 161; and historical process, 42, 167–68; on human nature, 102; as influence on University of Vienna, 433, 434; Weber’s critique of, 227
- Mason, Thérèse, 273
- Masse totale*, 232
- Mass media, 87–88
- Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* (Lenin), 83
- Mathematics: development of, 404; geometry, 452; Laplace’s deterministic mathematics, 450–51; Pascal on accumulation of knowledge in, 406; questioning in, 300
- Mattar, Sam, 331, 336
- Matter and form, 257
- Matthew, Gospel of, 21
- Maurya empire, 346
- McGraw-Hill, 441
- Meaning: consciousness of, 312–13; of history, 397–414, 443; problem of, 312, 322
- Meaning in History* (Löwith), 402
- Meaninglessness, 341
- Meaning of History* (Berdyayev), 51
- Media. *See* Mass media
- Medicine, 56–57, 98–99
- Meditation: as basic form of philosophy, 2; definition and discussion of meditative complex,

INDEX

- 361, 389–95; disappearance of, as cultural factor, 303–4, 306; *Four Quartets* by Eliot as, 34–40; as origin of philosophical knowledge of order, 384–95; Plato and Aristotle on meditative complex, 390; and reading of Upanishads, 304
- Méditations* (Descartes), 177
- “Meditative Origin of the Philosophical Knowledge of Order, The” (Voegelin), 13, 384–95
- Mehta, Asoka, 95
- Melville, Herman, 328
- Memnosyne*, 426
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, 182
- Messianism, 6, 89–93
- Metalepsis*, 251
- Metaphysics: Comte on, 246; as corruption of philosophy, 246–47; development of, 359; first use of term, 246, 334; as meaningless term for Voegelin, 390; ontology as replacement term for, 334, 359; and Stoicism, 246, 283, 303; Thomas Aquinas on, 246, 334, 359; Voegelin’s definition of, 283
- Metaphysics* (Aristotle), 246, 247, 251, 257, 259, 312, 334, 359, 366, 387, 390
- Metastasis*: definition of, 90; historical types of, 90
- Meta ta physika*, 334, 390
- Metaxy: and consciousness, 356, 361–64; and flux, 340–41; Plato on, 213, 250, 264, 362, 422; tension of, 250, 362–64. *See also* In-between
- Methexis*, 251
- Meyer, Eduard, 48, 308–9
- Michels, Thomas, 158–60, 164–66
- Mill, John Stuart, 102
- Miller, Hillis, 261
- Mimesis*, 164
- Mises, Ludwig von, 443
- Missionaries, 148
- Mommsen, Theodor, 48
- Mongols, invasion of, 47
- Monogenes*, 428–29
- Monogenes theos*, 281, 292
- Monotheism, 204–5. *See also* God
- Montesquieu, Charles-Louis de
Secondat, Baron de La Brède et de, 48
- Moon symbol, 284–85
- Mores*, 271
- Morgan, Thomas Hunt, 276
- Morgenstern, Gert, 272
- Morstein-Marx, 441
- Moses: Amon Hymns parallel with, 376, 421; date for, 262; and God, 210, 326; Thornbush Episode of, 210, 261
- Murder, 2, 21, 116, 337–38, 437–40
- Muses, 426
- Musil, Robert von, 381, 434
- Mussolini, Benito, on race, 447
- Mutations, 276–77
- Mysticism: of Bakunin, 59; Eastern mysticism, 332, 333–34, 335; of Eckhart, 340, 426; of Ficino, 338; objections to, 320; and *phronesis*, 425; recovering experiences of, 425–26; as state of consciousness, 361; Voegelin’s study of, 4
- Mysticism East and West* (Otto), 333
- Mystic Man* (Neumann), 281
- Myth and Reality* (Eliade), 188
- “Myth as Environment” (Voegelin), 11, 307–43
- Mytho-speculation, 316–17
- Myths: cosmogonic myths, 335–36; of creation of world, 211, 335–36; definition of, 188–89; of Egypt, 190, 335; Eliade on, 188; as environment, 307–43; and God-of-the-Beginning, 321; Greek myths, 358; Hegel on, 423; of Hesiod, 301, 366, 419; Lévi-Strauss on, 358; Oriental myths, 358; and Plato, 301; plurality of, 419; problem of, 419–20; of Prometheus, 339–40; Schelling on, 442; and superstition, 420; and symbols, 278–79; types of, 190–92
- Nabal* (fool), 366
- Napoleon, 71, 84, 316, 317
- Napoleonic Wars, 138
- National Socialism: Doderer on, 434; ethical judgments against, 19–20; evil of, 2–3, 22–23; and Grynspan case, 2, 20–23; and murder of Jews, 2, 337–38; rise of, in Austria, 440; and suppression of Voegelin’s books

INDEX

- on race, 447; in Vienna, 236. *See also* Hitler, Adolf
- NATO, 72
- Natural law: Aristotle on, 114–16, 132–33; as being or *aliquid rationis*, 126–28; and Christianity, 7, 82, 117–19, 144; compared with pure theory of law, 132, 133–34; and *euzen*, 159; and evil, 116; and history, 125–26; and image of man in international law, 141–46; and international law, 140–41, 142; and *iustitia*, 164–65; Kelsen on, 112, 115, 124, 133–35, 142–45; and legal obligation of individual excluded from community, 20; misconstructions of, 116–21, 141; as mutable, 115; and nuclear war, 138–40; and ontological status, 112–14; and order of being, 123–25, 128; and Paul, 132; and pneumatic experience, 151; in political theory, 112–49; and positive law, 141, 143–44; and representation, 120; and return to ground of being, 125; as therapeutic knowledge, 121–23
- “Natural Law in Political Theory” (Voegelin), 7–8, 112–49
- Natural order, 145–46
- Natural reason: and grace, 328; revelation versus, 325–28, 385–89
- Natural sciences. *See* Science
- Nazism. *See* National Socialism
- Neanderthal man, 286–87
- Neo-Kantianism, 391, 433–34
- Neolithic civilizations, 312
- Neo-Pelagianism, 60
- Neoplatonism, 275, 360–61
- Nepshesh*, 199
- Neumann, Eric, 281
- New experiences, 198, 287–90
- New Science of Politics* (Voegelin), 5, 338
- News media, 87–88
- New Testament: and Islam, 244–45; social order and Gospels, 81; symbols of, 248. *See also* Bible; and specific books of the Bible
- Newton, Sir Isaac, 287, 424
- Nibelungenlied*, 47, 48
- Nicean Council, 77
- Nicholas, Henry, 252
- Nicholas of Cusa, 289
- Nicomachean Ethics* (Aristotle), 100, 115, 116, 118, 120, 200
- Niebuhr, Reinhold, 48
- Nietzsche, Friedrich: on cycle, 46; on cycle theory, 43; on end of the West, 47; on the “It,” 392; on love, 217; on superman, 106, 224, 253
- Noetic: versus pneumatic, 198–99, 418; Voegelin’s use of term, 329
- Noetic consciousness, 254, 315
- Noetic theology, 11, 249–60
- Nomikon dikaion*, 116
- Nomos* (law), 165
- Nomothetes*, 131
- Nonexistence, 341
- Nosos (disease), 56, 64
- “Notes on ‘Civilization and Foreign Affairs’” (Voegelin), 11–12, 344–50
- “Notes on T. S. Eliot’s *Four Quartets*” (Voegelin), 3–4, 33–40
- Nous*: classical concept of, 100, 185, 214, 215, 216, 298, 315, 329, 363, 384; differentiation of, and noetic experience, 198; meanings of, 249, 329; and reason, 105; tension of existence toward, 298; translations of, 213–14; Voegelin’s use of term, 329. *See also* Consciousness; Reason
- Novum Organum* (Bacon), 405, 406
- Nuclear war: as deterrent, 73; and natural law, 138–40. *See also* Atom bomb
- Obedience: in authoritarian states, 166–67; limits of, 133
- Object-subject relation, 391–92, 398
- Obligation: and being, 112–13; and representation, 114
- O’Callaghan, Michael, 455
- Ockham, William of, 340
- O’Connor, Eric, 10–11, 272–93, 295–301, 303–7, 312, 314, 317, 321, 324, 339, 343
- O’Doherty, Patrick, 273
- Odyssey* (Homer), 270
- O’Hara, Martin, 271

- Oikonomia* (process of salvation, dispensation), 165–66
- Old Testament: and Islam, 268; and Jews, 245; justice in, 165; kingship in, 153; Philo Hebraeus on, 248; as unilateral history, 234. *See also* Bible; and specific books of the Bible
- O'Neill, John, 368–70
- One-line history. *See* Unilinear history
- One-man conception of mankind, 406n7
- Ontology: as meaningless term for Voegelin, 390–91; of order, 124; as replacement term for metaphysics, 334, 359
- Ontosophie*, 391
- OPEC cartel, 444
- Opium War, 148
- Oppenheimer, J. Robert, 93, 95, 109, 161
- Opsis* (vision), 418
- Oratio directa*, 35
- Order: categories of, in different societies, 123–24; consciousness of, 323; Gelasian order, 75; healthy versus diseased order, 56–61, 63, 65, 98–99; meditative origin of philosophical knowledge of, 13, 384–95; natural order, 145–46; ontology of, 124; and process of disorder, 83–84; and sources of disorder, 78–83; spiritual order, 75–88; viable order, 69–75. *See also* Disorder
- Order and History* (Voegelin): on Christianity, 282–83; development of volumes of, 10–11, 11, 14, 307–12; on differentiation of consciousness, 282; genesis of, 441–43; on quaternarian structure of reality, 456; research for, 275–80, 451
- Order of being, and natural law, 123–25, 128
- Organon* (Aristotle), 247
- Origenes, 302
- Original sin, 7, 121
- Origins of Totalitarianism* (Arendt), 446
- Orthodox empires, 163–64, 413
- Orwell, George, 283–84
- Otto, Rudolf, 253, 333
- Ouranos*, 377
- Ousiai* (existing things), 372
- Ousias eidos* (two kinds of being), 399
- Ovid, 82
- Paleontology, 276–77, 286
- Paradis artificiels* (Baudelaire), 239–40, 241, 330, 382
- Paradox of consciousness, 398–99
- Paranoia, 379–83
- Parekbasis* (pathological states of society), 59, 64
- Parmenides: on being, 211, 244; on construction of universe, 289; contemporaries of, 197
- Parmenides* (Plato), 371–72
- Parousia*: and Beyond, 13–14, 396–414; and Christ, 373; definition of, 396, 427; Plato on, 366–67, 403; and polytheism, 410; and Sermon on the Mount, 119
- Participatio*, 251
- Participation, 203, 206–10, 251–53, 263, 272, 290
- Participatory self, 394
- Pascal, Blaise: on accumulation of knowledge, 406–7, 408; on *divertissement*, 330; pessimistic psychology of, 49; on Scripture, 406–7, 409
- Patrios politeia*, 131
- Paul, Saint: effectiveness of, 302; on Eucharist, 427; on Mystical Body of Christ, 216; and natural law, 132; symbols used by, 302; vision of, on road to Damascus, 294, 342
- Paulus-Gesellschaft*, 243
- Peace: Augustine on, 146; and international law, 146–49; and justice, 157
- Peace of Utrecht, 225
- Peace of Westphalia, 83–84
- Peasants, 30, 449–50
- Peitho* (persuasion), 215
- Pelagianism, 60, 294, 297
- Periagoge*, 280, 367–68, 414
- Perichoresis*, 304, 305
- Persian empire: beginning of, 310; as ecumenic, 346; Herodotus on, 313,

INDEX

- 411–12; history of, 230–31, 389;
kingdom states within, 231
- Persian Wars, 169, 411
- Pessimism: and apprehension of
extinction of civilization, 46–48;
and internal moral and spiritual
disintegration of the West, 48–49
- Peter (apostle), 21
- Phaedrus* (Plato), 372, 377, 418
- Phenomenologie de la perception*
(Merleau-Ponty), 182
- Phenomenology of the Spirit* (Hegel),
176, 385, 414
- Philebus* (Plato), 340
- Philia* (love), 118, 119, 216, 249, 362
- Philia politike* (love among men), 194,
216
- Philo, 165, 388
- Philodox*, 99–100
- Philo Hebraeus, 248
- Philosophers: authority of, 55–56, 62–
63, 76, 77; Bodin on, 76; Dante on,
76; Plato on, 62–63, 99; statesmen
versus, 55–56
- Philosophes*, 317
- Philosophical reflection, 111
- Philosophie du Boudoir* (Sade), 332–33
- Philosophy of Mythology and*
Revelation (Schelling), 51
- Philosophy: Aristotle on, 312–13, 419,
420; and Christianity, 82, 302; early
literature distinguished from, 261;
Hegel on, 385; identity philosophy,
364; Leibniz on fundamental
philosophical questions, 222,
251–52, 300; as love of wisdom,
385; Pascal on accumulation of
knowledge in, 406; Plato on,
298, 312–13, 363–64; problems
in currently, 86–87; relation of
prophetic and philosophical, 417–48;
relation of theology to, 419–20;
renaissance of, 93–108; revelation
versus, 198–99; separation of
science and, 84. *See also* specific
philosophers
- Philosophy of history: definition of,
90; existence of, 8, 167–70; of Hegel,
60–61, 90, 178, 179, 180–81, 230–32,
308, 405, 409, 414; and relevance,
169–70; and unilinear history,
228–34; and Voltaire, 168, 228
- Philosophy of History* (Jaspers), 309
- Philosophy of Right* (Hegel), 380–81
- Philosophy of speculation, 400
- Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*
(Cassirer), 262
- Phronesis*: as eschatological concept,
430; Gadamer on, 422; and
mysticism, 425; Plato and Aristotle
on, 215; problem of, 422, 423, 453;
and reflective distance, 423
- Physei dikaion*, 115, 116
- Physics: and construction of “physical
universe,” 287–90; development of,
404; Einstein on, 98; and evolution,
354; nuclear physics, 292; Pascal on
accumulation of knowledge in, 406
- Pistis*, 249
- Planic, Zdravko, 12–13
- Plants, 290–91
- Plato: Academy of, 63, 337; on *aition*,
366, 372; on *amathes*, 250, 313,
365, 366; on *anarche* (disorder),
429; on *anoia*, 365; on *apeiron*,
321; on *aporia*, 429; on *ariste polis*
and *kallipolis*, 374; on Athens as
doomed, 306; on becoming, 400;
on being, 399–400; on Beyond, 376,
418; and Cave Parable, 294, 373,
413–14; on *chora*, 421; on *daimonios*
aner (spiritual man), 250, 313, 365;
on Demiurge/God, 281, 375–76,
399, 421, 428; on dialectics, 364;
dialogues of, 103, 271, 306, 373,
393; on divine reality, 396, 431; on
education, 107, 324; on *eidos*, 56; on
empirical average, 117; on *epekeina*,
202, 256, 367, 368, 372, 376, 378,
396; on “eristic” constructions,
356; existential experience of, 296;
on fools, 337; on *genesis*, 399–400;
on god as puppeteer, 282, 329;
and God in Promethean fire, 326;
and Hegel, 423; on helmetsman
myth, 46; on human nature, 62–63,
100, 250, 263, 313, 365, 366; on
In-between, 390; interpretations
of, 370; on last judgment, 367–68,
374; on meditative complex, 390;

INDEX

- on metaxy, 213, 250, 264, 362, 422; on *methexis*, 251; on *monogenes*, 428–29; and myths, 301; on noetic theology, 11; on *nous*, 214, 249, 298, 315, 329, 363; on *ousias eidos* (two kinds of being), 399; on *parousia*, 366–67, 403; on *peitho*, 215; on *perialoge*, 280, 414; on *philodox*, 99–100; on philosophers, 62–63, 99; philosophical language of, 358; on philosophy, 298, 312–13, 319, 363–64; on *phronesis*, 215; on *plethos* (the mass of the people), 417, 419; on *polis*, 62–63; political science of, 54, 59–60, 62–65, 91, 99; as prophet, 418; on *psyche*, 363, 399–400; question of thingness in, 430; reading of, 82; on reflective ego versus participatory self, 394; and revelation, 386; on Sophists, 262, 271; on *ta onta*, 369, 372; on theology, 247–48, 262, 318, 319, 326, 334; on types of persons, 250, 263, 313, 365, 366; Voegelin's introduction to, 434; on war, 137, 375, 437–38
- Works: *Gorgias*, 56, 195, 318, 382; *Laws*, 282, 318, 329, 365, 374–75, 382, 414, 418, 437–38; *Parmenides*, 371–72; *Phaedrus*, 372, 377, 418; *Philebus*, 340; *Politeia*, 202, 262, 294; *Politicus*, 46; *Protagoras*, 103, 337; *Republic*, 62, 318, 334, 367–69, 373–75, 378, 396, 413–14, 418; *Symposium*, 252, 304, 313, 365; *Timaeus*, 46, 368, 399–400, 421, 429, 431
- Pleonexia* (power), 117, 121
- Pleroma* (optimal presence), 373
- Plethos* (the mass of the people), 417, 419, 437
- Plotinus, 244, 377, 421
- Pluralism, 170–73
- Pneuma* (spirit), 198, 315, 360, 388
- Pneumatic, 198–99, 418
- Poland, 432
- Polanyi, Michael, 93
- Polis*: Aristotle on, 401–2; and *euzen*, 118; genesis of, 162–63; non-imperial character of, 425; philosophers in, 55–56; Plato on, 62–63; Plato on war among *poleis*, 137, 375, 437–38
- Politeia*, 62, 115, 130–31
- Politeia* (Plato), 202, 262, 294
- Politeuma* (constitution), 401
- Political institutions: democracy and pluralism, 170–73; and genesis of high cultures, 161–63; *iustitia* and *oikonomia*, 164–66; misconstructions of, 150–55; obedience in authoritarian states, 166–67; and philosophy of history, 8, 167–70; and political significance of intellectuals, 155–57; as problem of “tension,” 158–61; state and sovereignty, 163–64
- Political Religions* (Voegelin): first edition of, 2, 19; foreword to second edition of, 1, 2–3, 15, 19–23
- Political science: branches of, 57–59; classical political science, 251–56; confusion in currently, 66; and “good life,” 96; and Institute of Political Science (Munich), 348–50
- Political theory: and balance between State, Church, and Science, 65–66; and branches of political science, 57–59; and Christianity, 81–82; meanings of *politikos*, 54–57, 59; and modern derailments, 58–62; nature of, 53–66; origins of, 92; and Platonic-Aristotelian science of politics, 53–60, 62–65; principles and beginnings of, 5, 53–66; range of problems relevant to, 64–65
- Politics* (Aristotle), 57, 63, 115, 118, 119, 130, 185, 419, 437
- Politicus* (Plato), 46
- Politikos*, 53–57, 59
- Polybius, 144, 313–14, 375
- Polytheism. *See* Gods
- Pontifex Maximus*, 77
- Popes, 75, 83–84
- Population of industrial society, 69–71
- Populos* (people), 157
- Pornography, 332–33, 426
- Portman, Adolf, 276, 277
- Positive law: and formal basic norm, 133, 134; and international law, 142; and *iustitia*, 164–65; Kelsen on, 115,

INDEX

- 116, 133, 135, 142–45; and natural law, 141, 143–44
- Positivism: of Comte, 79, 102, 106, 267, 307; decline of, 227; of Marx, 267; as phenomenon of disorder, 385; and science, 104
- Postan, M. M., 93–94
- Post-Christian man, 175
- Potentia* (power), 96
- Potestas* (accrual of power), 96
- Potvin, Colette, 330–31, 334, 342
- Power: division between temporal and spiritual power, 75–80; human striving for, 117; knowledge as, 80–81; problem of, 85, 381; Shakespeare on, 96
- Power blocs, 72–73
- Praz, Mario, 275
- Predestination, 62
- Préface pour le traité du vide* (Pascal), 406
- Presence, 181–83, 264, 293, 366–67, 427
- Princeton University, 162
- Principia Mathematica* (Russell and Whitehead), 258
- Prisoners of war, 136
- Problemata* (Pseudo-Aristotle), 45
- Produktionsverhältnisse*, 226
- Profane versus sacred history, 50–51
- Projections, 223–24, 253
- Projectum*, 421
- Promethean man, 280
- Prometheus, 339–40
- Pronoia*, 380
- Propaganda of atrocities, 94
- Prophetic: relation of philosophical to, 417–18
- Prophetica administratio*, 158
- Prophets: on false gods, 91; relation of prophetic and philosophical, 417–18; and search for or possession of truth, 418
- Protagoras* (Plato), 103, 337
- Proté philosophia* (first philosophy), 247
- Protestantism, 30. *See also* Christianity
- Proust, Marcel, 183
- Prudentia*, 161
- Prussia, 28, 449
- Psalms, 318
- Pseudo-Aristotle, 45
- Pseudos* (falsity, lie), 386
- Psyche*, 199, 200, 202, 363
- Psyche-logike*, 403–4
- Psychoanalysis, 105, 241, 433, 434
- Psychology: as deformation type, 389–90; identity psychology, 364; of projection, 223, 253; of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, 226
- Psychopathology, 329–30
- Public consciousness, 395
- Public unconscious, 324, 394–95
- Purcell, Leo, 260, 264
- Pure theory of law, 132, 133–34
- Puritanism, 60, 90, 147, 153, 154
- Pynchon, Thomas, 379–80
- Pythagoras, 199
- Quaternarian structure of reality, 456
- Querelle des anciens et modernes*, La, 405–6
- Questioning, 299–300, 330–31
- “Questions Up” (Voegelin), 275–307
- Race: Arendt on, 446, 448; Buffon’s classification of, 448; and civilizations, 446–47; Gobineau on, 226; history of concept of, 447–49; Klemm on, 226; Mussolini on, 447; struggle between the races, 226
- Race and State* (Voegelin), 447
- Radiocarbon dates, 312
- Radix*, 23
- Randa, Alexander von, 163
- Ray, John, 277
- Reagan, Ronald, 444
- Reality: *aletheia* as, 357; and common sense, 369; definition of, 353–54, 357; quaternarian structure of reality, 456. *See also* It-reality; Thing-reality
- Reason: in classical philosophy, 214–17, 219; and consciousness of tension, 328; Descartes on, 97; and ground of existence, 218–19, 260; meanings of, 214–17, 219, 225, 329; natural reason versus revelation, 325–28, 385–89; origin of term, 329;

INDEX

- religious roots of, 3; and science, 347; techniques for blocking rational discussion, 103-4, 110
- "Reason: The Classic Experience" (Voegelin), 370-71
- Recherche du temps perdu* (Proust), 183
- Rechtsgemeinschaft* (legal relationship), 20
- Rechtssetzenden* (law-creating), 129
- Reconquista*, 163
- Reflections (Meditations)* (Marcus Aurelius), 403-4
- Reflective distance, 13, 14, 364, 371, 393-94, 399, 422-23
- Reformation, 75, 152-53
- Regna*, 163
- Reibstein, Ernst, 154
- Reid, Thomas, 266, 369
- Reinhold, Christian Ernst, 391
- Relevance, 169-70
- Religion: Bodin on wars of religion, 425; Cicero on, 420; confrontation between theology and world religions, 243-74; importance of, 108-9; Marx on, 240; psychological explanation of religious ideas, 223-24, 253; in Russia, 82-83; wars of religion, 49, 76, 83, 138, 381, 425. *See also* Christianity; Church; Theology
- Religiosissimus iuris*, 78, 157
- Remembrance, 426, 427
- Remusat, Abel, 309
- Renan, Ernest, 28, 79
- Representation, 114, 119-20
- Representative humanity, 7, 113, 117, 119-20
- Republic* (Plato), 62, 334, 367-69, 373-75, 378, 396, 413-14, 418
- "Responses at the Panel Discussion of 'The Beginning of the Beginning'" (Voegelin), 14, 415-31, 456
- Responsio*, 386, 390
- Revelation: and Christianity, 301, 358, 368, 386; fantasy versus, 328; and Israelites, 358, 386, 387-88; natural reason versus, 325-26, 385-89; philosophy versus, 198-99; as process in history, 300-301; and world religions, 326
- "Revolt of Man" (Voegelin), 9, 218-42
- Revolution, 283, 400
- Revolutionary communes, 305-6
- Revolutionary deformations, 280
- Ricoeur, Paul, 305, 322
- Riesman, David, 194
- Rig-Veda, 361
- Ritter, Gerhard A., 151-53
- Rituals, 299
- Roman empire: and Agricola, 404, 455; beginning of, 310; and Christianity, 81, 82, 91; decline and fall of, 48-49; destruction of ethnic community by, 437; as ecumenic, 346; expansion of, 412-13, 437; and Germanic tribes, 47; legal theory of, 130; and *Pontifex Maximus*, 77; Vico on, 50-51
- Roman Law, 78
- Romanticism, 197, 275, 347, 424
- Rostoftzeff, Michael I., 48
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques: Baudelaire on, 240, 330, 382; on education, 107; on human nature, 60; theory of qualified sovereignty of the people prior to, 154
- Ruach* (spirit), 198, 315, 388
- Rulership: Justinian on functions of ruler, 77-78; symbols of, 286. *See also* Emperors; Kingship
- Russell, Bertrand, 258
- Russia: and Napoleon, 71; religion in, 82-83. *See also* Soviet Union
- Russo-Japanese war, 28-29
- Rüstow, Wilhelm, 161
- Sabine, George, 441
- Sacred versus profane history, 50-51
- Sacrum imperium*, 164
- Sade, Marquis de, 332-33
- Saints, 337, 378
- Saint-Simon, Claude Henri de Rouvroy, comte de, 423
- Salman, Dominic, 267-70
- Samuel, Second Book of, 410
- Santa Clara University, 13
- Sartre, Jean-Paul: on bad faith, 235, 237-39; and communism, 58, 239; existentialism of, 297-98; and

INDEX

- French language, 371; on old age and death, 322
- Schaff, Adam, 322
- Scheler, Max, 4n9, 126
- Schelling, F. W. J.: and daring, 167; influence of, on Voegelin and Jaspers, 445; on myth, 442; on sacred history, 51
- Schiller, Johann Christoph Friedrich von, 322
- Schlick, Moritz, 114, 433
- Schmitt, Carl, 171
- Schmölz, Franz-Martin, 116, 120–22, 124–30, 132, 138, 141, 142, 145–47, 150–51, 153, 155, 157–61, 164–66, 168–70
- Scholasticism: and natural law, 114, 126–27; and order, 125; and reason, 215; and Thomas Aquinas, 123, 189
- Schriftenreihe zur Politik und Geschichte*, 349
- Schütz, Alfred, 4, 433
- Science: balance between State, Church, and Science, 65–66; methodology of, 104; in organizations outside of universities, 306–7; origins of, 81; and reason, 347; separation of philosophy and, 84; specialization in, 331; and universal world, 205; and *Wertbeziehung Method*, 104. *See also* specific scientific disciplines, such as Physics
- Science of society, 98–99
- Scientia divina*, 61–62
- Scientia humana*, 61–62
- Scienza Nuova* (Vico), 50
- Scipio, 314
- Scripture. *See* Bible
- Second Reality, 234–40, 381–82, 434
- Sein, das* (the being), 112
- Seinsanalyse* (analysis of nature), 122
- Sein und Zeit* (Heidegger), 435
- “Self” compounds, 352–53
- Self-consciousness, 200–201
- Self versus object, 398
- Sensorium*, 200, 203, 215
- Separation of church and state, 84, 86
- Serenitas*, 163
- Serfs, 449–50
- Sermon on the Mount, 7, 117, 119
- Shakespeare, William, 96, 382–83
- Siger de Brabant, on cycle, 46
- Sigwart, Christoph, 113
- Sin. *See* Evil; Original sin
- Six livres de la République* (Bodin), 76, 153
- Social sciences: and “good life,” 95–97; methodology of, 104; rational discussion in, 104–5, 110; and value judgments, 97
- Social security, 3
- Societas perfecta* (society perfect by nature), 68–69, 71, 72
- Society: good society, 6, 98, 102–3; science of society, 98–99
- Sociology: and “good life,” 96
- Socrates: death of, 250, 368, 374; on fools, 337; on last judgment, 367–68, 374; as savior, 368; as statesman, 56
- Sollen, das* (the obligation), 112
- “Song of the Harper,” 190
- Sophism: and *amathes*, 250; and gods, 318; and negative triads, 318; on obligation, 114; Plato on perversions of, 262, 271
- Sorcery. *See* Magic
- Sorel, Georges, 29
- Soul: Bergson on openness of, to transcendence, 101–2; of Negroes, 265
- Southern Political Science Association, 5
- Sovereignty, 153, 154, 163–64
- Soviet Union: centralized planning activity in, 29; changes in, 147; communist government of, 155, 179, 227, 402; dialogue between Catholic theologians and communists in, 324–25; and ecumenic rule, 144, 145; exchanges between Western societies and, 110; Hitler’s fear of, 47–48; Kennan on, 92–93; and nuclear war, 73; population and size of, 69, 72
- Space-time, 263–64. *See also* Time
- Spain, 154, 163
- Spann, Othmar, 8
- Specialization in academic world, 331
- Species, theory of, 276–77

INDEX

- Speculation, 400
 Speech: beginning of, 286–87
 Spengler, Oswald: on civilization
 as unit of history, 309; on cycle
 theory, 41, 48, 50, 51, 67–68, 74; on
 technological age, 59
 —Work: *Decline of the West*, 41, 48,
 67, 74
 Spinoza, Baruch, 283
 “Spiritual and Political Future of the
 Western World, The” (Voegelin), 5–6,
 67–88
Spiritual Exercises (Ignatius), 454
 Spiritual Exodus, 412
 Spiritual order, 75–88
Spoudaioi (mature people), 62, 63, 113,
 313, 419, 437
 Ssu-ma Chien, 410
 Ssu-ma T’an, 410
 Staël, Madame de, 167
 Stalin, Joseph, 338, 381
Stände, 75
 Stanford University, 332
Stasis, 170, 351, 353, 358
 State: balance between State, Church,
 and Science, 65–66; separation of
 church and, 84, 86; and sovereignty,
 153, 163–64
 Statesmen versus philosophers, 55–56
 Stewart, Dugald, 266
 Stoicism: and *agnoia ptoiodes*, 319; and
 alienation, 330; and dogmatization
 of philosophy, 246, 283, 303; and
 existence, 257; and Justinian’s code,
 78; and *koinai ennoiai* (common
 concepts), 303, 317; and natural law,
 114; and physical universe, 289; as
 response to disorder, 381, 430; and
 tasis (tension), 249
Storia eternal ideale (eternal, ideal
 history), 50
 Structuralism, 370–71
 “Structures of Consciousness”
 (Voegelin), 12–13, 351–83
 Strziguowski, Josef, 433
Study of History (Toynbee), 42
Stufenordnung (graduated order), 129
 Stupidity and idiocy, 305, 419, 437,
 439, 441, 455–56
 Subject-object relation, 391–92, 398
 Suicide, 194–96, 342, 403, 404, 430
 Sumer: empire of, 197–98; history of,
 229–30, 233; King List of, 229, 412;
 literary documents of, 189
 Sumerian King List, 229, 412
Summa Theologiae (Thomas Aquinas),
 212, 301
Summum bonum, 101, 332
Summum malum, 332
 Sun symbol, 285
Superbia, 121
 Super-ego, 394
Superiores, 157
 Superman, 106, 224, 253
 Superstition, 420
 Surrealism, 275
 Survival of fittest, 226
 Switzerland, 30
Symbola, 61
 Symbolism movement, 275
 Symbols: apocalyptic symbolism, 90;
 and communication difficulties,
 265–66; of cycle, 45–46; definition
 of, 262, 415–16; development of,
 334–35; and discrimination between
 true and false, 416; and dogmatism,
 320–21; emergence of, 278–79;
 Father-and-Son symbolism, 293;
 immanence and transcendence as
 language symbols, 6, 202–3, 256, 258;
 and insight, 456; language symbols
 attached to concrete experience,
 258–59; and luminosity, 393; of
 moon, 284–85; and myths, 189–90;
 of Paul, 302; Praz on, 275; primitive
 symbols, 284–86; of rulers, 286
Symposium (Plato), 252, 304, 313, 365
 System: as term, 269
 Tacitus, 404, 455
Ta eonta (being-things), 407
 Talmon, Jakob L., 92
 Tansey, Charlotte, 262, 266–67, 271,
 281, 283, 285–88, 290–92, 296,
 298–99, 301–3, 306, 322–23, 325,
 335, 338, 451–52
Tao, 55, 123
 Taoism, 163, 321, 361, 410
Ta onta (existing things), 369, 372
Tasis (tension), 249, 254, 362

- Television, 331
Telos, 117
 Ten Commandments. *See* Decalogue
 Tension. *See* Existential tension
 Thales, 211
 Theocracy, 119
 Theodicy, 21
 Theogony, 316
Theologia, 247
Theologia civilis, 6, 92
 Theology: Aristotle on, 247–48; civil theology, 92–93; conceptualization in, 299; confrontation between world religions and, 243–74; as deformation type, 389–90; and existence, 251, 253–58; and existential tension, 249–51, 258, 260, 263–65, 270, 318–19, 363; fallacies of, and Hellenistic philosophy, 303; first use of term by Plato, 247, 262, 334; meanings of, 247–48; medieval theology, 359; mystical versus doctrinal theology, 302; and natural reason versus revelation, 325–26, 385–89; noetic theology, 11, 249–60; and participation, 203, 206–10, 251–53, 263, 272; Plato on, 247–48, 262, 318, 319, 326, 344; relation of philosophy to, 419–20; role of, 296; and universals, 259–60. *See also* Religion; and specific theologians
 “Theology Confronting World Religions?” (Voegelin), 11, 243–74
 Theomorphy, 125
 Theopolity, 158–59
 Theories and theory making, 168–69, 283–84, 336. *See also* Political theory
 Thing-language, 422
 Thing-reality, 13, 14, 398–99, 402, 414, 416
 Thirty Years War, 138
Thnetoi (mortals), 250, 263, 313, 365
 Thomas Aquinas: and Aristotelianism, 82; on being, 127, 244; on Christ as head of Mystical Body, 301; Christology of, 160; on community, 160–61; on existence, 254–55, 258; on human being and right conduct, 130; on metaphysics, 246, 359; on natural law, 82, 120, 121, 122, 130, 144; on *nous*, 249; on *participatio*, 251; on positive law, 144; on reason, 328; and Scholasticism, 123, 189; on *superiores*, 157; theology of, 248, 325–26; and universal divinity, 205
 —Works: *Commentary* to Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, 246, 334, 359, 390; *Contra Gentiles*, 244–46, 248; *De Ente et Essentia*, 258; *Summa Theologiae*, 212, 301
 Thomas More Institute for Adult Education (Montreal), 10–11, 243–343
 Thorndike, Lynn, 338–39
 Thucydides: influence of, on Hobbes, 59; on *kinesis*, 56, 58, 94–95, 98–99, 411; on war and international law, 137
 —Work: *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 56, 94–95, 98–99
Thus Spake Zarathustra (Nietzsche), 46
 Tillich, Paul, 202
Timaeus (Plato), 46, 368, 399–400, 421, 429, 431
 Time: axis time of mankind, 197; consciousness and space-time, 263–64; in early civilizations, 228–32; and future, 181–82; Merleau-Ponty on, 182; Ponty on, 182–83; timeline of beginning, 422; timeline of history, 308, 311, 412
Topoi, 4, 443
 Totalitarianism: Arendt on, 445–46, 449–50; assumptions underlying, 233; authority in, as out of balance, 78–79; groups inclined toward, 30; and totalitarian structure, 28
 Toynbee, Arnold: on axis of mankind, 197; on catastrophe in civilization, 46; on civilizations, 46, 74, 265, 309, 310, 311; on cycle theory, 42–45, 48, 50, 51, 67–68; on empire, 163–64; on freedom, 67–68; on post-Christian man, 175; on yin-yang, 43–45
 Transcendence: Bergson on openness of soul to, 101–2; God as world-transcendent, 80, 201, 202; origin of term, 202; paired with immanence,

INDEX

- 202–3, 206, 256, 258; and universals, 206
- Transcendent ground, 202
- Tremendum*, 253
- Trobriand Islanders, 339
- Truth: *aletheia* as, 357; of beginning in relation to doctrinal truth, 420–21; ideology versus, 423; and meditative origin of philosophical knowledge of order, 384–95; problem of, 384; prophets' search for, or possession of, 418; propositional truth, 422
- Tufts University, 11–12, 344–50
- Turgot, Anne-Robert-Jacques, 232
- Tusculan Disputations* (Cicero), 329–30
- Tutsch, George, 264–65, 271
- Type concepts: compared with language symbols, 203
- Types: changes in, 198
- Ultimate validity doctrine, 385
- Umkehrung*, 414
- Unconscious, 394
- Unemployment, 438
- Unilinear history, 191, 229–34, 308, 412
- United Nations, 136
- United States. *See* America
- Universal divinity, 9, 204–6, 220
- Universal humanity, 9, 203–6, 219–20
- Universals, 9, 203–6, 219–20, 259–60
- Universal world, 9, 205–6, 220
- Universities, 79, 306–7, 325–26, 331.
See also specific universities
- University of Munich, 12, 348–50
- University of Salzburg, 7, 8
- University of Vienna, 8, 432–34
- University of Wisconsin, 434–35
- Upanishads, 206–8, 209, 272, 304, 333, 334, 343, 377
- Usher, Bishop, 407
- Utopia, 430
- Utopianism, 374
- Utrecht, peace of, 225
- V (Pynchon), 379
- Valéry, Paul, 435
- Value: absolute values, 116; as meaningless term, 116, 120, 336; and Neo-Kantianism, 391; and *Wertbeziehung Method*, 104
- Value judgments, 6, 97, 120
- Varro, Marcus Terentius, 92
- Vasquez, Fernando, 154
- Vedas, 272, 387
- Verdross-Drossberg, Alfred, 128–29, 133, 136, 140, 146–49, 154, 159, 160, 164
- Viable order, 69–75
- Vico, Giambattista, 4, 48, 50–51, 52
- Vienna Circle, 433
- Vietnam, 266
- Violence: and colonial societies, 439–40; and heresy, 338; and Industrial Revolution, 438; and murder, 2, 21, 116, 337–38, 437–40; as unavoidable on, 404, 455–56. *See also* Wars
- Virgil, 82
- Virtues, 120–21, 249–50, 268
- Vitoria, Francisco de, 148
- Vivès, Juan Luí, 37
- Voegelin, Eric: in America as Rockefeller Fellow, 14, 434–35; autobiographical statement of, at age eighty-two, 14–15, 432–71; dialogues between other scholars and, 1–2; dissertation of, 8; education of, 8, 14, 432–34; and forced emigration from Austria, 2, 433, 436–37; on generalization, 451; genesis of *Order and History* by, 441–43; Harvard faculty appointment for, 433, 436–37; and Institute of Political Science (University Munich), 12, 348–50; languages learned by, 435–36; preparation of, to be political scientist, 435–36; as professor at Ludwig Maximilians University, 5–6; reading by, 446; as Rockefeller Fellow in France, 435; teaching of administrative law by, 434. *See also* specific works
- Voltaire: on Bossuet's one-line history, 231; on God, 253, 299; and parallel histories, 231–32, 308; and philosophy of history, 168, 228
- Von der Heydte, Friedrich August Freiherr, 120, 122, 135–40, 142–45
- Voting, 24

INDEX

- Wagner, Richard, 330
 Wakeman, Geoffrey, 371
 Wars: Bodin on wars of religion, 425; casualties from, 137–38, 375, 437–38; *casus belli*, 148; and international law, 136–38; just war (*bellum justum*), 94; nuclear war, 138–40; Plato on, 137, 375, 437–38; religious wars, 49, 76, 83, 138, 381, 425; Thucydides on, 137
 Weber, Alfred, 161
 Weber, Max: critique of Marxism by, 227; on ethics of responsibility and ethics of conviction, 439; on rational discussion, 105
 Wellesz, Egon, 433
 Welty, Eberhard, 119–21, 142–44
Wertbeziehung Method, 104
 “West and the Meaning of Industrial Society, The” (Voegelin), 6–7, 89–111
 Westphalia, Peace of, 83–84
 “What Is Political Theory?” (Voegelin), 5, 53–66
 Whitehead, Alfred North: on climate of opinion, 347; and commonsense philosophy, 435; on experience, 177, 303; on fallacy of misplaced concreteness, 223
 —Work: *Principia Mathematica*, 258
 Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, Ulrich von, 378
 Wilde, Johannes, 433
 Wiles, Peter, 97
 Will, Kelsen on, 113–14
 Will to power, 381
 Winternitz, Emanuel, 433
 “Wisdom and the Magic of the Extreme” (Voegelin), 389
 Wisdom literature, 190
 World: as absolute, 221; as idea, 220–21; universal world, 205–6, 220
 World-immanent man, 175
 “World Technology and Human Destiny” Conference (1959), 6
 World War I, 72, 94, 138
 World War II, 72, 93–94, 139
 Xenophanes, 197
 Yates, Frances, 338, 360
 Yin-yang, 43–45
 York University, Toronto, 12, 14
 Yucatan, 447
 Yugoslavia, 227–28
 Zen Buddhism, 178, 326, 327, 361
Zetesis (search), 213, 214, 265, 294, 329, 362, 384, 386, 388
 Zeus, 339
Zoon logon echon, 156
Zoon noun echon, 185
Zoon politikon, 155–56