

**Carleton University**

**An Inquiry Concerning the World-Picture: Kojève, Schmitt and Strauss**

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the requirements for the degree of  
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## **Abstract**

This thesis, based on Heidegger's theoretical elaboration of the world-picture discourse, aims to outline a comprehensive and critical account of the relation of philosophy to politics manifested in the writings of Kojève, Schmitt and Strauss. This thesis argues that Kojève seeks to orient and advance the logic and dynamics of the world-picture and its discourse through his anthropocentric Hegelianism; and in diametrical contrast, Schmitt aims to reorient its trajectory and content by revitalizing traditional power politics; finally, Strauss intends to destroy both Schmitt's traditional and Kojève's revolutionary 'order of the human things' by seeking to impose a violent, radical turn to classical philosophy and ancient power politics. In examining the specificities of their discourse, this thesis also attempts to narrate and reveal different dimensions and forms of appropriations of totalitarianism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**qui tacet consentire**

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## INTRODUCTION

“The fundamental event of the modern age is the conquest of the world as picture. The word ‘picture’ [*Bild*] now means the structured image [*Gebild*] that is the creature of man’s producing which represents and sets before. In such producing, man contends for the position in which he can be that particular being who gives the measure and draws up the guidelines for everything that is.”  
(Heidegger, *The Age of the World Picture*)

The world is “conceived and grasped as picture” writes Heidegger. The world picture does not imply a mere presentation or representation of the world unfolding itself; the-world-as-picture is, whilst encompassing all facets of existence, the conduct in and by which we perceive and interpret existing realities in that it connotes the total conquest of the world as *a* picture vis-à-vis the absolute compression of time and space, and hence the entrapment of *a* moment within an eternal present. And, it is the 20<sup>th</sup> century spirit, the modern age, which made possible for Heidegger the total capture of the world as a picture. This thesis seeks to offer a comprehensive account of the relation of philosophy to politics manifested in the writings of Kojève, Schmitt and Strauss. The world-picture discourse —as a manifest outcome of a particular metamorphosis of the relation between philosophy and politics— elaborated and interpreted by these three remains relevant and instructive today. Questions concerning the parameters and horizons of this discourse are integral to an urgent and crucial task of exploring the unsaid and overlooked side of the extremities of the world-spirit shaped in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. And the potential pathways of the world-discourse are best mapped in the writings of Kojève, Strauss and Schmitt. Let us now briefly outline the world-picture of Heidegger to contextualize its constituent dimensions.

For Heidegger, modern science manifested in and by scientific method has turned into the formal epistemological foundation of the modern age in that “science becomes research through the projected and through the securing of that plan in the rigor of

procedure” (QCT, 120).<sup>1</sup> Science as research theorizes the real, orients and arranges things and, above all, it secures the factual and positive certainty of the things; as such, through a secured process of specialized researches, scientific observations, calculations and deductions dictate the parameters of nature, the specificity of being and the trajectory of becoming. Modern subjects conceive of being as a securely objectified existence, which is essentially not different from the form of scientific objects dwelling in the space of causality—in short, being sinks into thingishness, viz., that being transmutes into an object of scientific analysis, a part of “ongoing activity”. That the particularities and the essence of being are excluded (if not subsumed) within the modern “ongoing” scientific process, research and program, according to Heidegger, in the modern age authentic relations, distance and standard of nature have been decisively vanished (if not forgotten). And yet, could we grasp the dissemination and domination of the modern science by science itself? What is that which constitutes the particular perception of being in the modern age and which posits the world as picture?

Heidegger’s response to these questions reveals the content of the world picture—that it is technology which neutralizes the authentic questions concerning being and the particular status of human existence. And yet, he qualifies his contention, expectedly by preserving his chronic enigmatic tone, that “the essence of technology is by no means anything technological” (QCT, 4). Here, a manifestly open-ended and nebulous exposé of the content of the world-picture inaugurates the discourse with which we are concerned. The intriguing and triggering question, in other words, is this: what is concealed in technology which conquers the world-soul? Kojève, Schmitt and Strauss would exploit

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<sup>1</sup> Heidegger, Martin. *The Question Concerning Technology, and Other Essays*. Canada: HarperCollins, 1982.

and advance this Heideggerian curiosity almost like a guiding thread in their own projects. For Heidegger, the essence of technology unfolds itself neither as modern functionality nor rational instrumentality but as a mode of revealing —precisely, as an “ordering revealing”— which posits and brings together “the real as standing reserve [resource]” (QCT, 19); that is to say, it is the essence which moves into its substance while transmutating and trans-forming both the things and human existence into standing reserves. This Heidegger calls a grand process of “enframing” which is experienced as “destining of revealing” (QCT, 25) and which tends to conceal “the danger” embodied in the process itself: “man ...exalts himself to the posture of lord of the earth” (QCT, 27).<sup>2</sup>

Let us translate Heidegger’s mystic eschatological scripture, which would also hint at what follows in Kojève, Schmitt and Strauss. Mastery over nature or precisely, the conquest of nature deceives and perplexes man in that it submits human existence and activity to a metaphysically alien form, which crafts, whilst conquering the contingent destiny of existence, a hallucinated consent that man is historically and existentially emancipated: to use Nietzsche’s words, man cannot throw a dice anymore and as such, philosophy cannot start from wonder but dread. Art for instance is dead, for it is already enframed. Works of art do not reveal anymore; and art, in cancelling its tie with nature and human potentialities, orients towards the “purview of aesthetics”, a contentless subjective expression of human experience (QCT, 116). Or, the same enframing process also takes place in extra-terrestrial horizons of human existence; theological and

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<sup>2</sup> Here we cannot treat such Heideggerian terms as ‘standing-reserve’, ‘ordering-revealing’, ‘destining of revealing’, etc., in entirety; such terms belong to his elaboration of the modern world-picture (*Weltbild*), as something from the world-view (*Weltanschauung*), which serve to detail the constituents of the world-picture: the domination of mathematical physics, machine technology, the relegation of art to an objectified human experience and the mechanization of human existence.

metaphysical void are at stake that “the gods have fled” the earth. In brief, that which is deceptively technological obliterates that which is human: the total appropriation of the world as such in the modern age is the world picture.

Heidegger’s depiction of the order of the human things is of course in the service of establishing what he thinks to be right, orderly and traditional. Nevertheless, one could well read his despair, anxiety and melancholy as a way to narrate the spirit of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Indeed, denying the 20<sup>th</sup> century metamorphosis of the relation of philosophy to politics would utterly be unwise and imprudent. The world-picture should be placed under intellectual scrutiny, not to recognize its totalitarian discourse but to unfold and recount what lies beneath its surface. That that which is in essence not technological should be assessed carefully and, in turn, one should urgently cast doubt upon the content of the world-picture discourse. This thesis proposes that an inquiry concerning the world-picture can best be pursued by an exegetical reading of Kojève, Schmitt and Strauss. The relation of philosophy to politics in the writings of these three is closely related with that of Heidegger’s portrayal; besides, firmly agreeing with the horizon and discourse of the world-picture, each of these three seek to exploit existential, political and sociological vacuums inaugurated by that discourse, which makes a close examination of these three crucial and pivotal. This thesis argues that Kojève seeks to orient and advance further the world-picture through his anthropocentric Hegelianism; and in diametrical contrast, Schmitt aims to reorient its trajectory and content by revitalizing the traditional power politics; and finally, Strauss intends to destroy both Schmitt’s traditional and Kojève’s revolutionary order of the human things by seeking to impose, violently, a radical turn to classical philosophy and ancient politics. Orienting, reorienting or annihilating, these

three thinkers cannot move beyond totalizing and governing dynamics of the world picture; indeed, each of these posits totalitarian political projects.

An inquiry focused on Kojève, Schmitt and Strauss is central to an understanding of different and, to an extent, invisible appropriations of totalitarianism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; as such, a close examination of these three is integral to a scrutiny of the ways that regulating and totalizing power conceal its governing dynamics under the guise of emancipatory projects. The latter we shall observe under the rubric of the movement towards a world-state; for the world-picture necessarily presupposes the coming-into-being of a world-state in order to actualize its regulating idea, a totalizing existential posture as well as homogenizing and expanding spheres of influence. Indeed, the world-state doctrine is the manifest articulation of the world-picture, which entails and embodies counter-strategies and theoretical maneuvers outlined in the writings of these three.

A critical reading of Kojève, in this context, is vital to a comprehension of what that world-picture discourse amounts to. Manifest in his philosophical writings is both the pre-history of the world-picture, which is mapped vis-à-vis anthropocentric phenomenology, and the future of ‘the idea’, which is revealed from within the discourse itself. He projects an activist-futuristic Hegelianism which entails a progressive practical elaboration of the world-picture. In addition, what Heidegger sees as “the danger” concealed under the guise of technology becomes, in Kojève, an irreversible and emancipatory movement of the spirit; that is to say, Kojève formulates a Hegelian matrix of authority embodying a totalitarian movement which obliterates the future and which

creates a mediated process of eternal recurrence of the same extracting the eternity of the immediate present. The world-state would mark the end of history.

The Kojèvean world-picture is confronted by Schmitt's narration of political romanticism and Strauss' romanticized phronetic-action orientation, the latter emanating from classical philosophy. Schmitt presents the historical course of modernity as the concrete manifestation of an aestheticized idea of a movement towards a world-unity; and therein, within its substance and essence, he finds "the danger" similar to Heidegger's exposé: the eclipse of political hierarchy, the demise of violent political groupings, the aestheticization of egalitarianism, the romanticization of political subjects—in short, the eschatological end of history. Against the movement towards the world-state and the world-unity elaborated through Kojève's revolutionary Hegelianism, in Schmitt we shall observe a form of conservative Hegelianism striving ceaselessly to update its philosophical content and political trajectory in order to reorient the world-picture condition. But, besides this intellectual confrontation, reading Schmitt is integral and instructive to call into question political specificities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century *Weltgeist*. In other words, Schmitt, while narrating counter-strategies against the world-picture, also details and maps alliances and forms taking place within the territories of liberalism and socialism, which provides a profound insight into the power relations that emerged in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His analysis of the quantitative total state and its historical romantic pedigree are unique traits of his Hegelian narration which points to an unprecedented negation process in liberalism and socialism that takes place at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Strauss' position, compared to Schmitt and Kojève, possesses a rather simple and yet more radical mentality —the absolute denial of everything modern and the immediate return to classical motives of politics and philosophy. Severely hypnotized by Heidegger's interpretation of classical philosophers and remaining under Heidegger's anxiety concerning the apocalyptic world-picture, Strauss formulates a new mode of phronetic-reading —theosophical esotericism— which is intended to provide a guiding thread for violent, militarist political action. Indeed, a new belief system is at stake with him, which mediates classical philosophy through the aristocratic trans-valuation of Nietzsche and which projects the re- and trans-appropriation of classical nature vis-à-vis the political transformative education of the youth. A peculiar elitism based on nature constitutes Strauss' political agenda. And this, the anachronistic revolution, is a translation of classical philosophy into modern political forms, which entails the establishment of 'the politics of the rare' strictly based on nature (as a selection-measure).

As a final remark, it should be noted that an examination of these three together concerning the world-picture thesis is essential both to posit an effective critical standpoint and to understand the interrelatedness of what they argue. For instance, Strauss closely reads the writings of Kojève, particularly his thesis on the end of history and his critique of classical philosophy, and in turn, seeks to reformulate and advance his system; besides, one must read Hegel in Strauss as Kojève's Hegel. Or, as we shall see, there is a notable influence of Schmitt's Weimar period writings on both Kojève and Strauss. Kojève's notion of authority, his critique of political romanticism and theory of empire are closely related to Schmitt's formulations of total state; and Strauss' conceptualization of 'the rare' is substantially based on a set of corrections of Schmittian

elitism. In what follows we shall observe in greater detail why assessing these three together is of vital necessity.

This thesis will begin with an outline of Kojève's anthropocentric Hegelianism, which provides an insight concerning the pre-history of the world-picture and hence, the world-state doctrine. The anthropological phenomenology would also provide a background concerning Schmitt's confrontation and Strauss' revolt against the 20<sup>th</sup> century spirit; and, in addition, it would philosophically contextualize Kojève's political writings which we shall examine in the fourth chapter. In the second and third chapters we shall assess, respectively, Schmitt's analysis of political romanticism and Strauss' appropriation of classical philosophy in relation to 20<sup>th</sup> century political forms and technology. In developing the first three chapters, let it be noted, we maintain, both implicitly and explicitly, the argument that there is a theoretical, thematic, conceptual and discursive continuation between Kojève, Schmitt and Strauss. Briefly, we aim both to advance a critique of each and to develop necessary theoretical grounds in order to direct a critique and to initiate a debate in the fourth chapter.

## CHAPTER I

### The Pre-history of the World-Picture

“The secret of Hegel's dialectic lies ultimately in this alone, that it *negates theology through philosophy in order then to negate philosophy through theology*. Both the beginning and the end are constituted by theology; philosophy stands in the middle as the negation of the first positedness, but the negation of the negation is again theology. At first everything is overthrown, but then everything is reinstated in its old place, as in Descartes. The Hegelian philosophy is the last grand attempt to restore a lost and defunct Christianity through philosophy, and, of course, as is characteristic of the modern era, by *identifying the negation* of Christianity with *Christianity itself*.” (Feuerbach, *Principles of the Philosophy of the Future*)

-I-

### Introduction

This chapter aims to outline Kojève's anthropocentric interpretation of Hegel's *Phenomenology*. We unfortunately encounter, within the existing literature, a series of conceptual overemphases and speculations based on Kojève's life. That these barely suggest a way to understand him, moreover, we come across a series of manipulative pursuits, which distort both the content and the context of Kojève's writings. With the exception of a few scholarly interests, indeed much of the literature on Kojève is monopolized by conservative circles, particularly by Straussian circles, those which merely trans-value the end of history thesis to politically justify the writings of Strauss. Apart from these, another problem which compels us to pursue an expository effort is the way Kojève writes. Notes on anthropocentric phenomenology are particularly scattered and somewhat obscure in nature, which necessitates a stable and firmly established outline in order adequately to assess the depth and breadth of his writings.

Assessing Kojève in general and his anthropocentric phenomenology in particular derives its significance from his thought on the world-state thesis. In its most profound and potent form, political and philosophical formulations of a world-state find exactitude and matter-of-factness in the writings of Kojève. Seeking an answer concerning 'how of' a world-state and influencing several intellectuals of his time, both within France and

beyond<sup>3</sup>, upon the reception of Hegel, he became the most controversial architect of a world-state thesis. He introduces a cluster of interrelated themes and concepts, which constitute the skeletal structure of his particular Hegelianism and which summarize the course of history from Plato to Hegel. Desire, nothingness, science, wisdom, technique, romanticism are such concepts and themes, among many others, to which this chapter shall call attention. And above all, this chapter shall be a preliminary stage for what follows. Both Schmitt and Strauss refer and/or respond to Kojève's Hegelianism either directly or obliquely, yet still with perfect awareness of his system.

Let us listen, as a final remark, to what Kojève himself thinks of his writings; for nowhere else is his task clearer. "The work of an interpreter of Hegel takes on the meaning of a work of political propaganda...Hegelianism is of more than purely literary interest...the future of the world and the meaning of the present and the significance of the past, depend, in the final analysis, on the way in which the Hegelian writings are interpreted today" (*HMC*, 42). The interpreter of Hegel, without resorting to any form of political romanticism, thus conducts a futuristic propaganda; and here, this is the active Hegelian movement elaborated by Kojève.

## -II-

### **The Genesis unconcealed**

Kojève's anthropocentric phenomenology, in tracing the prehistory of being and becoming, seeks to answer 'what I am' (Hegel) rather than 'who I am' (Descartes) since the genesis of pure being is the pedigree of the 'I.' And for Kojève, the pure existent

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<sup>3</sup> It is worth noting that Kojève's ideas had a deep influence on the intellectuals of his time, both within France and beyond, particularly concerning the reception of Hegel. To name a few of these eminent thinkers, Bataille, Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, Lacan, Raymond Aron and Raymond Queneau directly attended his lectures and proved the importance of Kojève's Hegelianism. Moreover, without resorting to any form of exaggeration, Althusser, Foucault and Derrida, those who come from different circles of French thought, also owe varying degrees of debt to Kojève's thought.

being is a form of “passive quietude” which posits itself only within itself through “passive contemplation” of things, thus, appearing first “within a herd.” At this stage, ‘I’ is the animal I (i.e., thingish I or bare living I) directed towards a ‘natural non-I,’ which cannot surpass the sentiment of the self. The historical specificity of human desire resides here. Once desire is directed towards a non-natural non-I (i.e., to things), desire “disquiets” ex-animal existence and in turn, moves man to action, i.e., active engagement and confrontation with the external. Explicitly put, in Kojève’s account, “the (human) I is the I of a Desire or of Desire” (*I*, 4) directed toward a non-natural object—that is none other than desire itself and therefore nothingness.

The transition from the existence of passive being to active being comes about only (and only) by human desire; for desire itself is realized as action (i.e., negating-negativity), which in turn makes possible positive ‘content’ in place of the emptiness of “I of desire” (i.e., nothingness) to satisfy its desire through, of course, transforming the non-I. Within the frame of anthropocentric phenomenology, nothingness as an in-between realm is the metaphysical medium in and through which desire actualizes, yet progressively, itself.<sup>4</sup> Thus, to overcome the herd-like existence (i.e., thingish-mode-of-

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<sup>4</sup> This particular contention will become clearer throughout this chapter. Yet, to make it more concrete, an illustrative example would suffice. In 405 B.C., for instance, if a painter draws a man flying over the mountains and above the oceans with the help of wing-like apparatuses, this would perhaps correspond to a work of pure imagination and in fact, to nothing (sensible). Materially, historically and scientifically, here, the painter draws what impossible is or what an error is. To Kojève, the attempt of the painter is nevertheless a reflection of a desire, which rests neither as an idea nor as a material fact—that it is pure nothingness. Anthropocentric phenomenology suggests that the painting would become ‘the truth’ with the negative-corrective action sublated through nothingness (the medium), rendering furthermore the cancellation of that which is impossible-idea. In other words, when a scientist in 1638, called *Hezarfen Ahmet Celebi* glides (for the first time in history) with artificial wings from the *Galata* tower and flies above the Bosphorus, this implies the negation of a desire of desire, which was put forth in a painting in 405 B.C. Or, an aircraft for instance is the truth of *hic et nunc*, which verifies (based on this assumption) the desire to fly in 405 B.C. and which does away with the desire to fly. ‘How of’

being) and therewith to make human reality as a social reality, “each member of the herd must be directed –or potentially directed- toward the Desires of the other member” (*I*, 6). For the ultimate desire is the desire of the other. And recognition accordingly receives the supreme value since within the herd exists the multiplicity of desires. Herein Kojève finds the turning point of the universal human history.

To strive for recognition is precisely what transforms humanness into a verifiable historical social reality. Man in other words does not reveal his very own self-consciousness only to himself that he ‘needs’ to overcome pure subjectivity with the value of ‘the other’ which objectifies certainty. And the desire to objectify self-consciousness “comes to light” only once one risks his life, that is, through the primordial free act. Kojève *assumes* that “the ‘first’ anthropogenetic action necessarily takes the form of a fight (i.e., a fight to death) between two beings who claim to be man —a fight for pure prestige carried on for the sake of ‘recognition’ by the adversary” (*I*, 11-12, 43). Therein rests the absolute premise as well. The fight must end without annihilating biological existence; it must end without killing one another. As Kojève puts forth, “one must refuse to risk his life for the satisfaction of his desire for ‘recognition’...one must ‘recognize’ the other without being ‘recognized by him’” (*I*, 8). For fear is present during the fight —and that, terror is *undeducible*. And it is at this stage two existentially opposing extremes come into being: autonomous existence and dependent existence — the Master and the Slave.<sup>5</sup>

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this simple, yet profound, formulation will become clearer later in this chapter. And what would happen then, if an author writes on godmanhood is the real question.

<sup>5</sup> What is the purpose of portraying the first historical transformation, the transition from animal-beings to human-beings? Kojève sketches the *sine qua non* conditions —phenomenological, ontological and metaphysical conditions— that mark ‘the beginning’ of human time, history and action, emanating from the anthropogenetic human desire. This, the anthropo-phenomenological

In the fight for recognition, the master does not kill but “dialectically overcomes” his adversary and thereby enslaves him; that is to say, the master does away with ‘only’ his adversary’s autonomy, i.e., freedom. Objective certainty, freedom from nature and satisfaction on the side of the master occur at this moment of recognition. Absolute terror exerted by the master compels the slave to realize the “seriousness” of biological existence. The slave starts working upon nature in order simply to satisfy the master’s enjoyment, i.e., consumption. The master cannot move beyond the given value of mastery (i.e., identity), implying “an existential impasse” (*I*, 19). He can only fight and die in the battle field. In contrast, there is nothing fixed in the slave and above all, for Kojève, “he is ready for change; in his very being, he is change, transcendence, transformation, education; he is historical becoming in at his origin” (*I*, 22). The idleness of the master and the fear of death shaking every stable support in the slave impede an authentic, mutual recognition. This condition at stake and hence the genesis of human history is remarked therefore by an “unequal and one-sided recognition,” i.e., erroneous recognition.

Nevertheless, the absolute terror and forced labor are the advantages of the slave since these two uniquely constitute the fuel of human history—that is, *Bildung*. Kojève uses the term *Bildung* as educative-transformation; and for him, the mastery over nature is coeval with the educative-transformation of the self. These are, of course, not passing

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genesis of time and action, surely finds exactitude upon meeting the necessary and sufficient conditions: revelation of given being by speech, i.e., the initial pronouncement of the human I; existence of human desire, namely, the anthropogenetic action which negates the given being; next, verification of the multiplicity of desires directed towards other desires; and finally, preservation of the biological existence (*I*, 39-41; see also, 5-6). For Kojève, these are four irreducible historical conditions and “true premises” that make possible, progressively in history, “the advent of the absolute knowledge” by Hegel’s *Phenomenology* and too, the possibility of the Battle of Jena (*I*, 41).

remarks from Kojève. Here, *Bildung*, in connoting an education-towards-freedom, alters the traditionally held meaning of wisdom, e.g. pure contemplation (Socrates), old age (Cephalus) and so forth. When he writes “the terror inspired by the master is the beginning of wisdom” (*I*, 23), what he actually has in mind is this: perfect autonomy is wisdom and *Bildung* expresses the content of that wisdom in question. Wisdom is attainable through *Bildung*; and as such autonomy comes forth as the presence of the absence of a reality, i.e., an absolutely non-existent reality in the present, entailing “the presence of a future in the present” (*I*, 134).

The trajectory of the slave’s desire is “the future” satisfaction, i.e., wisdom. The future takes primacy in the forced work through which the rhythm of human history unfolds. Herein lays the significance of reading Kojève. Exposing Hegel’s *aufheben* in concrete terms, he ascribes an unprecedented insight to the dialectical dimension of historical materialism. Autonomy, freedom and wisdom attain truth and reality with the movement of the (Marxist-) Hegelian spirit. And, “the movement” according to Kojève “is engendered in the future and goes toward the present by way of the past: future→ past→ present (→ future)” (*I*, 134, also 138). To elucidate this profound contention, figuratively, an idea for instance does not rest in the eternal (i.e., idea-as-a-form) or in the heaven above (i.e., absolute-*logos*-as-god), but in the future. And as we shall see, an idea that expresses an error in the present, corrects itself in time, implying a sort of Marxist-Nietzschean content in historical materialism. But what is suggestive and radical at this stage is rather implicit. Here, an orientation of action towards ‘the future’ is at stake; that is to say, to realize change, man acts into the future rather than into the present, entailing further anthropocentric formulations as man is time, history and negativity. And since

history is the history of the working class (the slaves), Kojève signals that history could end upon the completion of the unique project of the slave, that is, with the transformation of the world “in which he is not recognized into a world in which this recognition takes place” (*I*, 11). In principle, therefore the final —that is, perfect—satisfaction belongs to the working slave and not to the warlike, idle master.

There is however no slave and hence no creative work without the presence of an absolute terror. The master does not partake actively in the historical process but “the master is the catalyst of the historical, anthropogenetic process” (*I*, 25). For only the master brings forth the primordial ‘error’ (i.e., the doubling of self-consciousness within its unity in the fight), without which man could not surpass the given reality. Here, Kojève in other words *up-dates* Hegel’s ‘broken middle’ with the notion of error. The latter, which is more (content-wise) concrete than Hegel’s abstract-idealistic ‘broken middle,’ implies by its nature a process of progressive correction, a process of restoration through the real work of the slave —through science and technique. Besides, at an ontological level, Kojève captures the relation between error and correction by equating being and becoming (i.e., negativity in being) as well as equating those with time, history and action. As outlined earlier, here, the very same conclusion shines forth again —that man is being-in-time positing becoming. Alluding to the final struggle or the rebellion of ‘the people’ (or, the many as slaves), Kojève rightly concludes that science and technique, and thus, “work one day produces a machine gun, and no longer an axe” (*I*, 51). Neither idle masters nor “vulgar scientists” or the philosopher can alter the given reality. For, history is the history of the working slave. Parallel to this technical human

world, there is yet another historical horizon that exists in abstraction, namely, the dimension of philosophy.

For Kojève, “every philosopher is necessarily a dialectician” (*I*, 87) and moreover, “at each dialectical turning point there must be a philosopher who is ready to become conscious of the newly constituted reality” (*I*, 85). This account applies only to pre-Hegelian philosophers.<sup>6</sup> For philosophy at that stage does not partake in reality; rather, within the dialectics of the real, it merely inclines to abstractions (*I*, 172, 186, 212). This reminds us Marx’s 11<sup>th</sup> thesis on Feuerbach and even Lenin’s Marxist-Hegelianism. Yet, Kojève’s purpose is to incorporate Marx’s historical materialism and Nietzsche’s genealogy:

Each philosophy correctly reveals or describes a turning point or a stopping place...of the real dialectic, of the *Bewegung* of existing Being. And that is why each philosophy is “true” in a certain sense. But it is true only *relatively* or *temporarily*: it remains “true” as long as a new philosophy, also “true,” does not come along to demonstrate its “error.” However, a philosophy does not by itself transform itself into another philosophy or engender that other philosophy in and by an autonomous dialectical movement. The Real corresponding to a given philosophy itself becomes really other..., and this other Real is what engenders another adequate philosophy, which, as “true,” replaces the first philosophy which has become “false”...And that is why all philosophy that is “true” is also essentially “false”: it is false in so far as it presents itself not as the *reflection* or description of a constituent element or a dialectical “moment” of the real, but as the revelation of the Real in its totality. Nonetheless,

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<sup>6</sup> In chapter two, with Schmitt, we shall see the same note concerning the position of philosophers that they are ‘the reminders of the moments of truth’ in history. On this issue, there is a perfect agreement between Schmitt and Kojève, however, except for one assumption. On this particular issue, although these two underline (in explicit terms) their agreement on historicist Hegelianism (which assumes finitude in philosophy), in Kojève Hegel’s success (Hegelianism) translates itself into the real and for ‘the people’ (i.e., the many), whereas in Schmitt, Hegelianism is for ‘the few,’ namely, for those who truly understand Hegel. Kojève interprets Hegel in a Marxist-Nietzschean fashion and in contrast, Schmitt interprets Hegel in a theologico-political way. Strauss, on the other hand, as we shall see in chapter three, regards philosophy and its task in a diametrically opposed manner to these two. Philosophy, for him, precedes history and thus, philosophical pursuits are of trans-historical nature. These preliminary remarks on these three shall become clearer as we proceed in our assessment.

even while being or becoming “false,” all philosophy (worthy of the name) remains “true,” for the total Real implies and will always imply the aspect (or the “moment”) which that philosophy revealed (*I*, 184-5) [italics are mine].

Here, a self-revelatory passage is at stake which summarizes both the course of philosophy from Plato to Hegel (i.e., the content) and the movement of the abstract (the Nietzschean historical context). In other words, philosophy merely “reflects” and “reminds” the real for the coming generations that philosophy emanates substantially from the real, from the paces of the concrete. As Kojève restates, “understanding, abstract, thought, science, technique, the arts –all these, then have their origin in the forced work of the Slave” (*I*, 49). Philosophy is then pseudo-philosophy and the vulgar science (i.e., abstract science) is the pseudo-experience, which cannot go beyond “verbal fights” and abstract “refutations.” These two, philosophy and science, nevertheless form an indispensable part of the dialectical “logic”, “abstract” aspect (*Verstand*) along with the negative (or the dialectical) and the positive aspect (*Vernunft*) by which we arrive at the real trinitarian spirit (*Geist*) (*I*, 171-172). Kojève is convinced that these three aspects —*Verstand*, *Aufheben* and *Vernunft*— have not successfully been united to form the absolute truth (or knowledge) and hence the real science —that is, the trinitarian *Geist*. Yet, he seems more convinced that, as a natural consequence of this particular Hegelian system, only at the end of history (that is, at the end of the dialectical moments) will these three culminate in an absolute moment in and through which wisdom (and hence, Hegel’s science) would be realized as the final unity. Before assessing this conclusive thesis at stake, one is obliged to investigate the major historical moments revealed in Hegelian science: the masterly existence, the slavish existence and finally, the synthesis of the

master and the slave, i.e., perfectly “neutralized” existence (*I*, 44-45). These three phases of history constitute, according to Kojève, the source of ‘the true verification’ of Hegelian spirit from within which anthropocentric phenomenology attains veracity (objective conviction) and also, through which the clash of the universal and the particular aspects of existence is justified.

### -III-

#### The phases of Geist

“The first historical period must certainly be the one in which human existence is entirely determined by the existence of the Master” (*I*, 45) notes Kojève and this, he finds in the pagan state, “the City-State of the nonworking warlike Masters” (*I*, 60).<sup>7</sup> The pagan state is governed by warlike actions due to which this state recognizes *only* the universal aspect of existence. The particular aspect is preserved as well. Yet, rather than the laborious slave, particularity is preserved within the family and through “love,” and above all, by the master alone. Thus, only, in principle, could the pagan master realize a synthesis of the universal (political) and the particular (familial). As the affirmative ‘in principle’ suggests, such a synthesis is impossible and improbable. For in the pagan world, the state and the family are mutually exclusive entities. Not only that, “the pagan state excludes work” (*I*, 62).<sup>8</sup> This Kojève calls the tragic character of the pagan life. The

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<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, Kojève admits that “in truth, Hegel does not explain how a Master can be recognized by another Master...he does not explain the genesis of the state. And this is the most important gap in his phenomenology. One could however allow that the state is born from the mutual recognition of the victors of a collective fight for recognition” (*HMC*, 132, [ft. 3]). Kojève hereby also reveals the anatomy of his interpretation of Hegel: transcendence of the text vis-à-vis historicism.

<sup>8</sup> Kojève’s Hegelian lexicon does not allow us, at least here, on this subject, to penetrate into the Greek way of life. And the conclusions he deduces, by way of anthropocentric phenomenology, is for the most part obscure to those who are not familiar with the classical life. Nietzsche, to whom Kojève owe a profound debt, could be more than suggestive in regard to the relation of the pagans to work. In his *Prefaces to Unwritten Works* and with his piece titled *The Greek State*, Nietzsche argues that ‘the dignity of the human’ and ‘the dignity of work’ were regarded as “conceptual-hallucinations” by the Greeks: “...with them it is expressed with shocking openness that work is a

master renounces neither the state nor the family; and this alone makes him “always and necessarily *criminal*, either toward the state or toward the Family” (*I*, 61-62). In addition to the absence of work in the pagan world, the dissent of the familial particularity against the state (i.e., the stately universality) represented by “the woman” culminates in a tragedy, which in turn brings forth the dialectical demise of the pagan world and therewith, its transformation into the Roman Empire. We shall return to this transformation later in this chapter. Now, the real question should be cast upon Kojève’s repeatedly underlined remark —the tragedy inherent in the pagan world: what does the exclusion of work (or, the master’s existential impasse) suggest in understanding anthropocentric phenomenology?

In his *Christianity and the Origins of Modern Science*, Kojève perfectly illustrates the conditions rendered by the exclusion of work through the domination of the idle, warlike citizens, i.e., the masters. For him, the Greeks, because they were all pagans, did not have a progressive understanding of science. At the heart of the matter, they “did not want, or were not able, to surpass the limits of their own science” (*COMS*, 1) and above all, those “convinced pagans” (Plato and Aristotle) regarded mathematical physics “pure madness” or “a great scandal” (*COMS*, 3). Pagan theology, both polytheism (Aristotle) and monotheism (Plato) together with its particular perception conceiving mathematical physics as an *impenetrable* domain illustrates none but the relegation of the active particularity (and therefore the exclusion of the work). The “or” in Kojève’s contention (“...they did not want, *or* were not able...”), which implies indecision *prima facie*, is

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disgrace...because existence shines forth in the seducing adornment of artistic illusions” (*PUW*, 45) and a page later, he notes “such phantoms, as the dignity of the human being, the dignity of work, are the needy products of a slavish condition hiding from itself” (*PUW*, 46). Masterly existence in brief conceives work as shame, disgrace and even a piece of survival tool.

pivotal to grasp the pagan content of science and also, work. The former interpretation (“they did not want”) presumes a form of mysticism and of esotericism; the latter, in contrast, implies a task of factual and historical assessment.<sup>9</sup>

There is no further need to restate Kojève’s position. The task of this chapter is not to treat his writings in the light of notorious theosophers, who sought to read between the lines in order both to read the minds of the classics and to extract the hidden messages (e.g., Heidegger). Plato and Aristotle were incapable of understanding the insights embedded in technique and mathematical physics. Not only that indeed. The political trajectory of these two pagans, based on natural elitism, viewed the creative content of work and of labor as shame and disgrace. Thus, exclusion and suppression in question were not projected on moral grounds, which imply the pagans were *aware* and *conscious* of the future direction of science and technique and therefore, they concealed technical aspects from the many. Plato in particular rather explicitly tried to establish a well-disposed tyranny after his emotional breakdown caused by the death of Socrates —a tyranny to oppress the many and glorify the few. All in all, Kojève rightly notes that “the existence of the class of idle warriors is only a transitory historical phenomenon” (*IOD*, 144) and thus “the pagan state...cannot...be truly human, i.e., free and historical” (*IOD*, 145). In the pagan world, the creative force of negative-negativity as well as any sort of

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<sup>9</sup> Later, in the third chapter, we shall observe that Strauss’ esoteric interpretation is substantially based on the (theosophical) opinion that the classics “did not want to surpass the limits of their own science.” For the purposes of according the reading of the classics to his political agenda, Strauss would propose, in a rhetorical manner, that the classics were well aware of the modern expedients of science and technique. And borrowing Kojève’s notes on the classics word-by-word, he regards modernity as “pure madness” and “a great scandal,” entailing further a profound disagreement between him and Kojève. We shall return to this particular issue in greater detail in the third chapter on Strauss.

future projection was obliterated on political grounds.<sup>10</sup> If the pagan content reflects and reminds a moment of error and of unfreedom, how then does Kojève locate the notion of wisdom? His answer to this would not only articulate the relation of wisdom to Hegelian science, but also assist the philosophical course of the proceeding chapters.

Kojève proposes that wisdom, and in turn the wise man, encompasses a threefold “definition” upon which “all philosophers are in agreement” (*I*, 75). At the risk of crudely outlining, the wise man is competent to answer *all* possible questions in a coherent and comprehensive discourse vis-à-vis perfectly self-conscious *encyclopaedic* knowledge (*I*, 75-76); next, the wise man is he “who *wants* nothing, who *desires* nothing:... *change* nothing, either in himself or outside of himself; therefore he does not act. He is simply *is* and does not *become*” (*I*, 77; also, 79); and finally, the wise man must embody “moral perfection” (*I*, 78). The underlying message here is this: each of these three definitions is the same in that these three are all paraphrases of each other. Each, in other words, implies the final consummation of anthropocentric phenomenology in wisdom, that is, satisfaction and contentment in the end moment of history. Kojève’s rightful refutation of theologico-philosophical content of wisdom is thoroughly explicit and coherent. On this particular issue, Kojève thinks that although Plato posits the very same premise embraced by Hegel that ‘man is self-consciousness’, he denied the possibility of realizing the ideal (or the ideal-idea) of wisdom by man, “by real man, living in a real world, during the length of time limited by his birth and his death” (*I*, 83; see also 76, 88, 89). Interpreting Plato through the Hegelian lens would of course hint at such notes. Yet, the conclusion is

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<sup>10</sup> In its depth, the passive condition of the pagan world enables Kojève to justify his anthropocentric Hegelianism from a different dimension as well: “the Man that Hegel analyzes is...that Man who appears in the Judeo-Christian prephilosophical tradition, the only [one that is] truly anthropological” —the man who/that is unknown in the pagan world (*IOD*, 120; see also 121-122). The pagan content of work, determining human nature, is the reason of this remark.

rather different in Kojève that the impossibility of wisdom incarnate in man amounts to either the complete denial of philosophy (madman) or the assertion of god's existence (theologian) (*I*, 89). And surely, given the historical account, Plato was not a madman.

Plato's denial is rather to transform philosophy into theology, so thinks Kojève: "Plato, who denied this possibility, saw very well that his dialectical...philosophical discourse could be meaningful only provided that it was theological, always being related in the final analysis...to the transcendent One" (*I*, 91 [ft. 4]). Similar to the religious conversion, wisdom entails, strictly in the Platonic sense, an "abrupt jump" or "conversion," i.e., "contemplation of God in absolute silence." Kojève's line of reasoning implies that Greek philosophy in general and Plato's Socrates in particular are constituent dimensions of linearity in abstractness that there are no spontaneous events in the mythical or theological time frame. Nevertheless, the essential idea here is this: in Plato "all philosophical progress is, in fact, not an *anthropo*-logical, but a *theo*-logical progress" which projects itself towards absolute knowledge of god (*I*, 89). Plato thus appears simply as an important *theosopher*. Not only that. Turning upside-down the so-called 'classical tradition', he further notes that in Plato "the System is rigorously monotheistic and radically transcendentalist," which explain an "angelic" existence rather than a real, temporal and historical existence (*I*, 112-113) and also which means in Plato 'eternity' does not exist in and through the real time but rather outside of time (*I*, 104, 111, 113). Thus, there is no meaningful and creative force that exists between here-below and above in the pagan world (i.e., the pagan exclusion of work as the exclusion of

nothingness). And unlike the Judaea-Christian theology, the pagan theology possesses “double transcendence” (*COMS*, 2).<sup>11</sup>

With Kojève, we thus far observed that the exclusion of work and therewith the obliteration of wisdom constitute the dialectical demise of the pagan state. And we have also indicated that the clash between the universal and the particular aspects resulted in the victory of the familial particular, i.e., the triumph of the feminine aspect. Now, Kojève assumes that this aspect “acts on the young man” vis-à-vis the parental particularity and in turn, progressively transforms the warlike pagan state into a “private

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<sup>11</sup> In Plato, God is conceived *always* as transcendent and therefore man cannot arrive at the absolute knowledge of god even after death. More precisely, within pagan theology, god rests in beyond- the-beyond, in an “ideal utopian” spaceless infinitum outside time —that is why, in Plato, “the One is ineffable” (*I*, 118 [ft.11]). Kojève’s interpretation of Plato’s philosophy as theosophy seems to have veracity. Before his persecution, Socrates himself emphasizes (as Plato writes) there is another “journey” after death, a bridge to be passed through towards God, i.e., double-transcendence.

There are yet two crucial statements which at first glance contradict Kojève’s standpoint. He notes that “according to Hegel, Plato was right in denying the possibility of the Wise Man” (*I*, 96-ft.8) and a page later, he considers the relation between Plato and Hegel a tension, the only one “serious dilemma” in history (*I*, 97). “Plato was right” together with “serious dilemma” contentions contradict the basic premises of anthropocentric phenomenology; for there is progressive-corrective movement proposal. Obscurity as such cancels itself once we qualify what Kojève argues: Plato was right but he was not conscious (in the Hegelian sense). Plato’s philosophical “error” (to be overcome in time) was to conceive “the real State of his time” as “the ideal state” (*I*, 96 [ft.8]). The pagan state was imperfect however; for it excluded work. Plato and his competent friends, in other words, were mistaken in considering the pagan state a perfect model.

Moreover, Kojève indicates that “the opposition between Plato and Hegel is not an opposition *within* Philosophy” and as such “it is an opposition between Philosophy and Theology —that is, in the final analysis, between Wisdom and Religion” (*I*, 89). Thus, if Plato, as a theologian, was right in denying the possibility of the wise man and if there is a tension between philosophy and theology, that is, a tension between the man who claimed that he is wise at the end of history (Hegel) and the man who rejected the possibility of human wisdom (Plato), we are eventually left with the conclusion that “Hegelian philosophy is a *theo*-logy; however, its God is the Wise Man” (*I*, 96 [ft. 8]). Man realizes in earth the idea of god in and for himself, implying that man becomes the god-man. This, the notion of godmanhood, presupposes a gigantic historical leap where quality conflates with quantity. Rare contemplation competence (quality) diffuses to the people (quantity) —the great masses, so to say, become wise gods. Apart from Solovyov’s oblique and Nietzsche’s explicit impact on him, Kojève’s conclusion should be assessed bearing in mind his portrayal of the pagan state. We shall return to this particular theme later in this chapter.

property,” into a “family patrimony” of citizens (*I*, 62). Alexander the Great realized is the young man, who created the Roman Empire. Here, Kojève’s scheme does not allow any room for a critical comment since only the historical facts are translated into the Hegelian language. Often overlooked or ignored historical maneuvers once transfigured in anthropocentric phenomenology, as Kojève successfully pursues, appear like the standing-reserves of history. One such moment of negation occurs when the masters of the (ex-) city become too few to conduct a war (e.g., defense of the new empire). For Kojève, once the emperor resorts to the mercenaries, the warlike masters cease to fight and this is the precise moment of the masters accepting —without any resistance— the particularity of their emperor. Thus, the pagan masters cease to be the masters and in turn become the slaves of the emperor: the ex-masters accept the “ideologies” of their slaves, which were initially “imagined” to justify slavery, “to reconcile the ideal of Freedom with the fact of Slavery” (*I*, 53). These ideologies are, in sequence of their appearance in history: stoicism, skepticism and Christianity.

Elaboration of these ideologies represents the most potent form of anthropocentric phenomenology and hence Kojève’s experimental endeavor to prove the creative exchange between *hic et nunc* and the eternal. The movement of the Hegelian *Geist* expressed hereby articulates the inherent relation of satisfaction to wisdom as well as error to correction within the dialectics of the real. *Geist*, in the form of ideology, comes forth first with stoicism. The discourse on the possibility of human wisdom within “the imperfect state” of the pagan world or precisely, Plato’s assertion (underlined earlier) “made it necessary to transform the very ideal of Wisdom into the caricature of the Stoic...Wise Man” or a “would-be” Wise Man (*I*, 96 [ft.8]). The error of the pagan state

was to conceive its state as the perfect state and now, the stoic error is to perceive himself perfect —that is, a wise man who desires nothing and who *believes* that he is free. For Kojève, the stoic slave has *only* the abstract “idea” of freedom; that is to say, here, autonomy has no counterpart in reality and “the real conditions of existence would have no importance at all” (*I*, 53). The slave thus lives in his inactive idea, which has nothing to do with negation or action posited in accordance with the idea of autonomy. What is at stake is indeed a condition similar to a depolitical form of romanticism; for contentment, satisfaction and action is ironically inactive and non-negative, and besides, as Kojève notes, stoic “ideology obliges him [the stoic] to be content with *talking*” (*I*, 53).

Recalling a memorable slogan painted on the university walls of Paris during the 1968 movements —“boredom is counter-revolutionary,” in a similar mode, boredom fuels the dialectical demise of stoicism (implying an action) since both “the stoic chatter” and its discourse is “boring.” And besides, the stoic is bored with himself, indeed. And once again, remembering the concrete ramification of the 1968 movements, that revolution did not take place (properly), similarly, the stoic slave “does not yet to dare” to act, to fight against the master. He rests “content” in activating his thoughts. He gives birth accordingly to the second ideology, “skeptical-nihilism.” At this state of existence, he tries to negate the given reality ‘in his thought,’ which further culminates in “solipsism.” As Kojève highlights, in its radical form, skepticism contradicts ‘idea’ with ‘existence’ and therefore, the radical skeptic denies the empirical existence —he “commits suicide.” Thus, the radical skeptic is not an agent within the historical process; committing suicide does away with humanness, i.e., biological being. Within this movement, “only the Nihilist who *remains alive*” is capable of perceiving “the contradiction implied in his

existence” (*I*, 54), which, nevertheless similar to the stoicism, does not compel the skeptic to take action against the master. Rather he invents a new and the final ideology to justify his contradictory existence: Christianity.

How and by what means Kojève scrutinizes these inner-revolutions is rather straightforward. Stoicism, skepticism and unhappy consciousness (here, with Kojève, Christianity) are the consecutive phases of consciousness which pursues an abstract inner-odyssey towards reason, that is, towards the restoring of self-consciousness in Hegel’s *Phenomenology*. Devoid of any positive, *ergo* material, content in Hegel, these three phases of mind upon receiving a conflation with material history imply moments of existential disposition of becoming. Abstract notions accord to the essentiality of concrete concepts. Kojève’s presentation of these phases thus assumes the task of scientific verification that ‘the people’ (the slaves) passed through all these intermediary stages of mind and thus of reason. That this must be substantially controversial, nevertheless, as we shall see, he would note that thinking (or believing) that these are ‘true’ depends on either conviction or acceptance —depends on the success of political propaganda carried out by an interpreter of Hegel. The ramifications of both acceptance and refutation shall be assessed in the fourth chapter.

The last ideology of the slave, where we left our assessment, was Christianity. In a very Nietzschean tone, Kojève notes the invention, “imagination” of an “other world” existing in the beyond under the theological imperative of Christianity. Unlike stoicism and skepticism, here with Christianity, freedom is externalized, entailing its articulation in the beyond. And, unlike pagan theology, the Christian transcendental beyond is considered the true beyond since there is no “screen” which divides it as ‘beyond’ and

'beyond the beyond' (Plato). Kojève is convinced that freedom exists in the Christian beyond because it is real —“real in the *Beyond*” (I, 55). Earth becomes slavish and the mastery a mere “mirage,” which calls a halt to any concern requiring fight against the master. Servitude to the god, that is, obedience to the absolute master, liberates the Christian from the human master; and the Christian participates accordingly in the beyond. Figuratively, Christians can, unlike pagans, die properly since there is no further meditative odyssey or bridge awaiting there to reach god and hence his knowledge.

Moreover, for Kojève, the Christian slave is “a Slave in himself” that “he is the pure essence of Slavery” (I, 56). At the risk of crudely sketching, through Christianity, the fear of death is transformed into the fear of god and accordingly, the risk of “biological life” (initial paganism) into the risk of “eternal life;” and above all, worldly anthropological desire shifts towards a desire for the eternal life. The cardinal inadequacy of the Christian ideology, as Kojève presents it, resides in these major shifts. The slave cannot bear “the necessary condition of Man’s existence —the condition of death, of finiteness” (I, 56). Overcoming immortality, which involves *conscious acceptance* of the idea of death, is both a process of negating the Christian theology and the moment of realizing the ultimate anthropological “ideal” of Christianity —namely, “individuality.” Similar to the theme of Dostoevsky’s *The Grand Inquisitor*, in Christianity finds Kojève the unique source of atheism, which would later culminate in the French Revolution. Atheism as a mediated negation of theism rather than a spontaneous or an immediate denial of god is the basic premise of Kojève’s Hegelianism.

In place of a provisional summary of what has been assessed so far, the process that the slave anthro-dialectically passes through projects primarily towards autonomy,

which exists in the future. Autonomy in the Kojèvean sense requires certain qualities, which could be called *Bildung* or *Bildung-as-work*. As indicated earlier, *Bildung* implies an anthropological movement *into* wisdom, to free individuality and thereby to achieve autonomy. In addition, through the elaboration of the de-theism process within the Christian theology, we observe that atheism forms an indispensable part of both autonomy and wisdom. A closer investigation reveals Kojève's experimental intention that the movement of *Geist* vis-à-vis the progressive maturation of *Bildung* aims principally at cancelling those who reside in the eternal and/or those who embody metaphysical content of any sort. As we shall see in what follows, to this end, atheism and the existential disposition of the bourgeoisie are pivotal. It is important to note, in passing, that these two negative forces are both dependent upon and independent of each other, articulating that they express the necessary energy in themselves and yet, are not sufficient in themselves to unfold (Kojèvean) history towards the maturing of the material conditions marching to the French Revolution.

### -III-

#### **The Birth of Atheism and Bourgeoisie**

Unlike the pagan world, the Roman Empire is a bourgeois world.<sup>12</sup> The bourgeois character is the basis of transformation of the Roman Empire into a Christian world. To scrutinize this contention is to verify how the particularistic ideologies coincide with reality in the Empire. For Kojève, conceiving man a "legal person," the Roman civil law concretizes stoicism. Regardless of material qualities of the stoic existence, a legal person

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<sup>12</sup> Because they no longer have real slaves and because they no longer wage war, the masters become "the pseudo-masters." And as we indicated earlier, the slaves are no longer the real slaves either. Since their servitude is not for a real other, the slaves become "the pseudo-slaves." Precisely from here arrives Kojève at the definition of a bourgeois: "this slave without a Master, this Master without a Slave, is what Hegel calls the Bourgeois, the private property-owner" (*I*, 63).

is always and everywhere an equal legal person. Civil laws, in other words, direct its absolute value to the very being of man and, in turn, transform the abstract idea of stoicism (here, freedom) into a historical reality (*I*, 64). That this is the foundation of legality, the same historical process corresponds to skeptic-nihilism as well. Because skepticism valorizes only values (to the degree that it subordinates everything else), “private-property” constitutes the historical and social reality of skepticism. The skeptic speaks only of his own property and nothing else. What then is the particular significance of verifying these existential attitudes? Kojève’s cardinal purpose is to prove the parallel (or, the two-fold) movement of ‘the ideal’ and ‘idea’ from within which the universal human history unfolds. An idea descends dialectically from the level of the ideal, that is, from the horizon of ‘the impossible’ and finds a concrete existence. Each and every error becomes corrected-true-in-time, *ergo* real, through the dialectics of the real.<sup>13</sup> What interests us here more than anything else is how could these individualistic ideologies, through the metaphysical possession of private property, become the real social forces?

In his view, “the bourgeois essence of the Roman Empire is what explains its transformation into a Christian World, makes the reality of Christianity possible, transforms the Christian *idea* and the Christian *ideal* into a social and historical reality” (*I*, 64). The existential attitude of ‘the bourgeois’ and of ‘the Christian slave’ in relation

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<sup>13</sup> The link between stoicism and legality provides a perfect sketch of Kojèvean method. But, nevertheless, whether there is an irony or a critique within this elaboration does belong to further curiosity. He proves the error of stoicism with the Hegelian science of logic (based on anthropology) and next, he goes on to prove how that error corrects itself and thus renders the real and factual, i.e., legality. But if these are verifiable (here, they are), then, legality, which is still valid today (e.g., modified Roman civil law), is a mere fiction of freedom and equality because of the simple fact that the stoic idea of freedom is self-deceptive and fictional. Moreover, as we shall see later, Kojève’s portrayal of stoicism is almost identical to how he positions the German Romantics, the latter considered as the foundation of liberal political economy. It seems that, figuratively speaking, the Polybiusian circle of history and the Nietzschean eternal recurrence of the same meet where irony and critique conflate into one another –yet in obscurity.

to work (work-as-*Bildung*) are radically different. The latter works for the absolute master and, in contrast, the former “believes that he works for himself” (*I*, 64). On the surface therefore the bourgeois has no master at all. And yet, since he is a legal person and private-property owner, he does not know (*Entfremdung*) the fact that he works for “capital.” Abnegation and transcendence —that is, the dialectical negative-ascend— occur in and for capital. Kojève’s exposé has two profound implications: for the bourgeois the Christian beyond becomes capital and next, the abnegation project of the bourgeois further culminates in the conflation of the bourgeois existence with the Christian duality. Thus, the antinomial duality appears to be between “the man of blood and flesh” and the existence of a transcendent world. From the real dimension ‘atheism’ and from the abstract horizon ‘capital’ compress time and space to cancel that which is transcendent and unreal. And it would not be a mere speculation to propose that besides anthropocentric phenomenology, Kojève, a committed Marxist, seeks the origins of capitalism in Christianity.

Unlike the religion of the warlike masters (i.e., paganism) which attributes a value only to *universality*, bourgeois legal persons attribute an absolute value to *particularity*. According to Kojève, particularity is revealed and manifested “in the myth of the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ” (*I*, 66). For the Christian god has a direct and immediate relation to each and all men (which is absent in paganism). Moreover, taken as a form of *complexio oppositorum*, Christianity “implies the idea of a synthesis of the particular and the universal” (*I*, 66). It “implies,” so to speak, a withering away of the opposition between the masters and the slaves in a world “in which all men are equal before an omnipotent, truly universal Master, who recognizes...the absolute value of

each Particular” (*I*, 66). From this trans-empirical and the purely ideal synthesis, which occurs presumably in the beyond, springs nothing but “alienation.” Surely, Kojève’s system is valid on this particular matter.

That Christianity presupposes immortality and a resolution of dichotomies in the beyond and that these two given imperatives are not compatible with that of true, material existence which would, in turn, result in a synthesis of universality and particularity — thus, autonomy, freedom and individuality— Kojève indicates that although the ideal of a Christian is to emulate the Christ, no one can attain that god-like perfection. Thus, in the path towards satisfaction and contentment, man simply inclines to negate the Christian theology; for there is no solution elsewhere. His remark on this matter, which signals atheism, is not a passing remark: “Christian Man can really become what he would like to be only by becoming a man without God —or if you will, a God-Man ....to be really Christian, he himself must become Christ” (*I*, 67). Teleology of anthropological phenomenology emanates precisely from here —that the determinate telos is godmanhood. Free historical individuality incarnates in the image of the Christ. The non-pagan content of material conditions incarnates therein as well, of course, in the form of science, i.e., Newtonian physics. Kojèvean Hegelianism assumes the coming of the free historical individuality, which necessarily embodies atheism, this-worldliness and progressive perfection of mortal existence: “to describe Man as a free historical individual,” Kojève argues, “is to describe him as finite in and through himself, on the ontological level; as ‘worldly’ or spatial temporal, on the metaphysical level; and as ‘mortal’ on the phenomenological level” (*IOD*, 124).

Atheism and those qualities mentioned above are not spontaneous events. Nor do they spring forth indeterminately and independent of the notion of wisdom. The bourgeois mentality expressed as *Bildung*-for-capital and the non-pagan content of science (that is, mathematical physics) are the major catalysts of a series of conscious negations of *hic et nunc* from within which wisdom encloses within itself on earth (positive-natural sciences) and uniquely in man (atheism). It could be proposed without doubt that modern science and its concrete expedient as technique (or loosely called, technology) —all in all, positivism— constitute the substance of wisdom. At this stage, of course, Kojève’s account presents the anthropomorphic dynamics of autonomy, free historical individuality and wisdom towards which the slave strives. And, if we think of wisdom as a level of abstraction, positivism is at work in and through *Bildung* and likewise, if think of autonomy, *ergo* freedom, as the real, concrete dimension, through which being posits itself, the modern science and also advances in technique are at work. What is then the political unit under which all these take place? Kojève argues,

[t]he Christian synthesis must be effected not in the Beyond, after death, but on earth, during man’s life. And this means that the transcendent Universal (God), who recognizes the Particular, must be replaced by a Universal that is immanent in the World. And for Hegel this immanent Universal can only be the State. What is supposed to be realized by God in the Kingdom of Heaven must be realized in and by the State, in the earthly kingdom. And that is why Hegel says that the “absolute” State that he has in mind (Napoleon’s Empire) is the realization of the Christian Kingdom of heaven (*I*, 67).

Here, of course except for his emphasis on Napoleon’s Empire, Kojève explicitly follows Marx’s reading of Hegel’s absolute state —that heaven and earth should conflate with one another on earth, rather than in an ideal horizon. We shall return to this issue later in this chapter and also in the fourth chapter. Attention, at this stage should rather be on the

anthropological content of the state in question, which provides (for Kojève) ‘the true and real medium’ of universality —thus, the synthesis of universality and particularity. The core binary contradiction, within the level of the ideal (or, superstructure), which sets the motion towards the progressive realization of the absolute state, is one between the divine world and the human world. Or, as emphasized earlier, the determinant antinomy exists between ‘the men of flesh and blood’ and the believers in a god. All in all, the dichotomy exists, both at the level of state and of man, between “the laic” (secular) and “the cleric” (*I* [fr.], 71). Although these two complete one another (recalling the theosophy of Plato), there is no mutual recognition at this moment. And Kojève’s account suggests that the creative conflicts between reason and faith, that is, particularity (intellectuals) and universality (ideologues) are necessary and inevitable; for, otherwise, the transcendental content could not be negated progressively.

The intellectuals to whom Kojève refers are the Christian bourgeois intellectuals and “the bourgeois intellectual is nonetheless something different from the Bourgeois properly so-called” (*I*, 68).<sup>14</sup> Unlike the bourgeois, intellectuals neither work nor fight —

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<sup>14</sup> The genesis of the bourgeois intellectual is explained in great detail by Kojève. Now, the religious man works —work as *Bildung*— in the real world creating, forming and preparing the social and political conditions of the real, i.e., the concrete world proper. For the religious man, work is a given however. “He does not know that man works to realize his individuality in this world” and worse, “religious man does not know that his action is his action” (*I* [fr.], 70-72). The positive content of and the absolute value ascribed to work (here, particularity) do not ‘immediately’ occur to the religious working man but rather ‘mediately’ by a “human mediator,” a mediator who stays between man and transcendent existence, i.e., between sin and god. This human mediator between two aspects of existence —the universal and the particular— is “the priest.” In the final analysis, the socialization of work is realized in the church by the mediation of the priest, he who tells the worker that his action (or work) is a “broken certitude” (*gebrochene Gewissheit*) and “unhappiness” which will be restored as “joy” up-above —in heaven. According to Kojève, alluding to the Hegelian future, the priest is the “prototype of citizen” and the church “the germ” and “the scheme” of the coming world-state (*I* [fr.], 71). And yet, in the writings of Kojève the church is the church of the Anti-Christ (or, the world-state) and the priest-like citizen is the atheist wise man.

and in addition, they are irreligious and atheist (*I* [fr.], 108-110). Intellectuals seem to be competent in negating the slavish aspect of Christianity, i.e., the eternal. Yet, being neither the slaves nor the masters, for Kojève, intellectuals *only* “conceive” the synthesis of mastery and slavery—that they cannot realize ‘the final unity’ in reality. Besides, every attempt they pursue remain “verbal,” that is, idle and non-negative. Thus, argues Kojève, “the ideal process must rejoin the real process” (*I*, 68). Assessing the level of consciousness and scrutinizing the necessary material conditions, he finds ‘the spark’ or ‘the push’ in the French Revolution. Signifying a dialectical turn, within the phases of Geist, the French Revolution according to Kojève planted the seeds of the Hegelian state and its citizens since, in principle, revolutionary actions prepare the active transformative-content of the movement and its spirit. Once again, passing judgment on Kojèvean system on this particular issue is not an easy task. What he is convinced of is

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Solovyov’s influence on Kojève is undeniable in regard to these decisive conclusions. Equally important to mention, Schmitt would also consider the coming world-state a form of church within which the belief in humanity occurs and with which ‘the people’ would preach technology. Yet, whereas Kojève supports and theorizes the inevitability and historical necessity of such a state formation, Schmitt finds it diabolical and in turn views it something to be countered. And whereas Schmitt, by way of his philosophical investigation of German Romanticism, would condemn the world-state thesis as a form of romanticized hallucination and thus would propose restoring the traditional course of history, Strauss would propose to turn back the Athenian type of elitist democracy. These remarks shall be clarified in what follows; the question is how Kojève presents the priest becoming atheist.

For him, the religious man remains uncertain and unhappy, i.e., unhappy consciousness (Hegel). “Man will now” argues Kojève “understand that his action is *an sich* and that his doing [*Tun*] and his being [*Sein*] are all the reality” (*I* [fr.], 72). The religious man becomes ‘the man of reason’ and in turn atheist. The essential message on such a dialectical transformation is that, for Kojève, it was ‘described abruptly’ by Hegel and in fact only with a brief sentence. And yet, Kojève does not give an account either. He rather indicates that the transformation of the religious man is a “conversion” to Hegelian atheism, i.e., “anthropotheism.” Moreover, for him, interesting to note, such an abrupt conversion is not necessary. Religion is indefinitely viable in theory and he tries to verify the co-existence of theology and philosophy. Like boredom of stoicism, sterility of skepticism, the theological unhappiness of man represents the fuel of movement, which at the very end (in reality) would lead to a moment of truth through which philosophy and theology would cancel each other. And this is expected particularly when the history is completed, under the empire of Napoleon and with the absolute knowledge of Hegel (or of wisdom proper).

neither right nor wrong. He accords (indeed, successfully) historical facts to his reading of Hegel. And this is certainly not the task of an interpretative effort but rather a matter of conviction —and perhaps, political propaganda. In one way or another, he is certainly convinced that “at the moment of the French revolution, during which the immanent idea of Individuality, elaborated by the Intellectuals of the Enlightenment, was realized in and by the Fight of the working Bourgeois, who were first revolutionaries and then citizens of the universal and homogeneous State (the Napoleonic Empire)” (I, 68-9).

#### -IV-

#### **Towards the Universal and Homogeneous State**

The Kojèvean mode of historical analysis suggests that the French Revolution and its transformative-negative action appear with “the enlightened man.” This, for him, together with the demise of the *Ancien Regime*, is coeval with the birth of “absolute freedom,” i.e., libertarian ideology, which is none but the revealing moment of “the sky taken down [descended] on earth” (I [fr.], 142). And, this particular moment implies, among others, an absolute anthropological desire by which everyone wants “to become” ‘the reality’ for everyone else —yet, without the destruction of the given world. The world exposed here has no structure because it appears as a thing (*Gegenstand*) without any form. The reality of ‘the given’ disappears accordingly and everyone in turn takes refuge to ‘for-itself’ aspect of being with an immediate interest to invent their “personal” social and political reality. Each and all, according to Kojève, say “*c’est l’Etat c’est moi*” (I [fr.], 142) the terror (*der Schrecken*) of pure nothingness, which is tyranny proper.

Kojève’s purpose with this outline of the revolution is perfectly clear. He presents the recurrence of the same anthropocentric assumption that in the beginning was the struggle for recognition. Modern repetition of the initial terror, upon the sharpening of the

material conditions, is at stake. And historically the terror is the terror of Robespierre, which transforms the working bourgeois into the warriors (the revolutionaries) by instilling the consciousness of death. In line with the basic premise of anthropocentric phenomenology, here, not work (*Arbeit*) but “the bloody struggle for recognition” and fighting (*Kampfen*) transforms society into a revolutionary society. It is precisely this material moment which brings forth the condition that the warrior-working man, “consciously and voluntarily risking his life, while knowing that he is mortal” (*I*, 69), take back what he has lost at the beginning —his autonomy and freedom. As such, out of the terror and the risk of life comes the state within which the final synthesis and hence the satisfaction of recognition are realized. History, “by passing through the intermediary stages,” culminates in “the perfect neutralization” of mastery and slavery (*OPR*, 213) and above all, it gives birth to the (neutralized) humanity uniting under the Napoleon’s Empire, namely, under the universal and homogeneous state. This is what Kojève calls the end of history.<sup>15</sup>

Often misinterpreted or misunderstood in the existing literature, the end of history thesis in the writings of Kojève does not intend to convey an apocalyptic message. Nor

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<sup>15</sup> Two conditions, among others, qualify the end of history in the writings of Kojève: passing through the intermediary stages and neutralization (as depoliticalization). Although these two are implicitly outlined in his *Lecture Notes*, Kojève directly refers to these in his magnum opus *Outline of a Phenomenology of Right*, where he assesses the anthro-legal dimension of his system. There is nevertheless not enough space here to treat the breadth of that work. It is essential to note that these conditions explicitly occur in the writings of Kojève after his reading of Schmitt. And of course, it is evident from several dimensions that they owe a debt, though with varying degrees, to one another. That we encounter a complete agreement upon the conceptual terms, nevertheless, whereas in Kojève neutralization takes place vis-à-vis ‘passing through intermediary stages of history’, in Schmitt neutralization occurs due to ‘skipping of intermediary stages of history’. In other words, Kojève argues that the people consumed Hegelian science and formed humanity whereas, Schmitt suggests that the concrete political expedients of German Romanticism strives to unite the people, based on fictitious grounds, rather than Hegelian philosophy. In either case, nevertheless, both Kojève and Schmitt indicate that the history ceased continuing.

does it, quiet ironically, suggest an end to history. This significant thesis as well as its theoretical expedients, like the universal and homogeneous state, reflects only a political model and likewise, a futuristic existential disposition. We shall return to this issue and its implications in the fourth chapter. Yet, it is worth noting that the notion of ‘end’ embodies Kojève’s idea that “the wars and the revolutions are henceforth, impossible” (*I* [fr.], 145). This contention cannot and should not be detached from his lexicon that war and revolution have a specific connotation within anthropocentric phenomenology, namely, *aufheben* and *Bildung*. Surely, history lasts forever; but there could be, implied in Kojève, no revolutionary change after Hegel. Through recognition, contentment would arise and “the man will thus no longer change himself” (*I* [fr.], 145). For Kojève, the citizens of the coming universal and homogeneous state would accordingly say,

I am fully and definitively ‘satisfied,’ when my own exclusive personality is ‘recognized’ (in its reality and in its value, its dignity) by *all*, provided that I ‘recognize’ the reality of the value myself of those who are supposed to have to ‘recognize’ me. Being ‘satisfied,’ —it is being ‘unique in the world and (nevertheless) *universally* valid.’ Now, it is what is realized for the Citizen of the universal and homogeneous state. On one hand, thanks to its universality, there I am ‘recognized’ by all men, who are all my *peers*. On the other hand, thanks to its homogeneity, it is really me who is recognized, and not my family, my social class, my nation (‘me’ as ‘representative’ of a rich or renowned, of a wealthy or governing class, of a powerful or civilized nation, etc.). The Particular (me) ties directly with the Universal (State), without there being screens formed by the ‘specific differences’ (*Besonderheiten*: families, classes, nations). (*I* [fr.], 146)

And to this, Kojève comments,

It is to say that in the post-revolutionary world (for the first time) Individuality is realized. Now, being an Individual, that is to say Man proper, —he is being ‘satisfied’, he is no longer wanting, hence no longer being able to, ‘transcend’: becoming other than one is...It is what Hegel does in and by his System (*I* [fr.], 146).

The real question which must immediately be posed is this: did such a change take place? Or, do these constitute only the hallucinated convictions of Kojève? The end of history thesis (outlined earlier) and here, the post-revolutionary world picture are *only* futuristic assumptions based on anthropocentric Hegelianism, those which offer *only* the model of Kojèvean system. Kojève admits in several occasions, both explicitly and implicitly, that all these constituent dimensions of the end of history thesis have yet to be experienced, actualized and realized —with one exception. For him, the true and real satisfaction has been realized *only* by Napoleon, who is, in principle, the head of the universal (i.e. non-expandable) and homogeneous (i.e., non-transformable) state —in short, by the chief of the world-state. Interpreted either as an assumption or as an historical fact, textual evidence in the writings of Kojève suggests that this is a decisive movement, which he foresees as being inevitable. Surely, the conditions to this end goal are put forth explicitly: neutralization of the masses and ‘not skipping’ the intermediary stages of history —“the integration of the (“experiences of”) becoming conscious previously accomplished in the course of history” (*HMC*, 34; see also *I*, 70). Who then would understand and recollect the experiences of becoming and in turn translate them into praxis? Was Napoleon conscious of his acts? Is it only Kojève who grasps all these and then imposes them upon us?

Kojève interprets Hegel rather offering a mere reading. And as such he assumes the task of an interpreter who seeks to see through the mind of the author in question. He, in a sense, transcends Hegel. Thus, it would not be erroneous or unusual to argue that Kojève thinks he reads what ‘Hegel has in mind.’ Now, for him, Napoleon acts but he does not understand himself; that is to say, he lacks self-consciousness. And therefore he

is satisfied ‘only’ by action —not by the unity of action and thought. In accordance with the threefold definition of the wise man (outlined earlier), Kojève asserts that Hegel is the wise man and above all, Hegel is “somehow Napoleon’s Self-Consciousness” (*I*, 70).<sup>16</sup> The completion of history occurred, hypothetically and in principle, therefore only with the Hegel-Napoleon dyad. Why then Hegel and not the others?

Hegel is *assumed* to be the wise man within the Kojèvean anthropological system; he is *assumed* to be fully self-conscious of ‘the phenomenon’ that completes the historical evolution of humanity. He is, that is to say, perfectly conscious of ‘what he is’ since he is the author of *Phenomenology*, “the book” which summed up the experiences of human history and marked the final historical action of Napoleon. “The wisdom which reveals (by the ‘knowledge’) the reality (incarnated in Napoleon),” Kojève writes, “is the incarnation of the absolute Spirit” and later, he adds, “it is thus...the incarnated God which the Christians dreamed of” (*I* [fr.], 147). The dyad formed by Napoleon and Hegel, more explicitly, represents “the true Christ,” “the perfect man,” who brings heaven back to the earth. The self-assured tone of Kojève’s arguments attains its peak moment furthermore with a transparent formulation exposing the core dynamics of the science of logic: “the genuine, real Christ = Napoleon-Jesus + Hegel-Logos” or likewise, “revelation= Napoleon + Hegel” (*I* [fr.], 147). Essential to Kojèvean Hegelianism, these anthropocentric formulations are expected to culminate in the post-Hegelian phase. The notion of authority, the course of movement towards the (Hegelian) world-state and the

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<sup>16</sup> Arguing that Hegel is “somehow Napoleon’s Self-Consciousness” is a matter of interpretation. But, worth noting, in October 13, 1806, “the day the French occupied Jena and the Emperor Napoleon penetrated its walls,” Hegel wrote a letter to Niethammer: “I saw the Emperor – this world-soul – riding out of the city on reconnaissance. It is indeed a wonderful sensation to see such an individual, who, concentrated here at a single point, astride a horse, reaches out over the world and masters it.” This encounter, the Battle of Jena, had a profound impact on Hegel and it is reflected further in his *Phenomenology* (1806).

existential disposition of those who are assumed to be living in such a world-state would be deduced from these simple formulations. Before going through these, it is equally significant to stress that it is the period of German philosophy, to which Kojève pays notable attention in elaborating his somewhat shepherd-flock like Hegelianism.

Kojève assesses this particular period under the rubric of “morality,” with the subtitle “the conscience, the beautiful psyche, the evil and its pardon” (*I* [fr.], 147-154). His intention is to justify Hegel’s philosophical success in comparison to the contemporaries of Hegel. The first period takes place between Kant and Hegel, i.e., German Romanticism. Through the lens of Hegelian logic, he criticizes the romantic perception of reality as being immediate (*Unmittelbar*) reality rather than a mediated (*Vermittlung*) one. Thus, he concludes, similar to the assessment of stoicism, that immediate perception of reality leads only to inaction and passivity (Fichte). For, in principle, reality emanates from a mediated action. In fact both Kojève’s Hegel and Hegel himself consider the romantic posture to be an error, from which the reality of the romantic genius emanates. Pure imagination erroneously becomes the absolute reality of the romantic. And, according to Kojève, the romantics say: “we accept the Revolution, but we do not take an active part there” (*I* [fr.], 150). Passivity and refuge into pure imagination lead them ‘skipping the intermediary stages of history’ that they do not partake in the fight. “This is the attitude of the post-revolutionary Intellectual” (*I* [fr.], 150), writes Kojève.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> As we shall see in the second chapter, both Kojève and Schmitt have the same conclusions upon the posture of the romantic. However, whereas for Kojève the romantics could not succeed in history, in a diametrical contrast, for Schmitt, the romantics have shaped and are still shaping the world order.

In addition to passivity, living in a perfect conformity with (personal) “convictions,” which do not have any active-transformative content, mark the existential disposition of the romantic. Not only that. For Kojève, the romantics do desire an immediate recognition, entailing the second error of the romantics. “When he sees that the others do not recognize his convictions as *the True, the Good, the Beautiful*,” writes Kojève, “he is content that the others recognize that these are his convictions: always accepted (among others) and sometimes truthful (*bonne ou belle*)” (*I* [fr.], 150). Here, “hypocrisy” is at stake, which pushes further to erect an illusionary notion of “tolerance” and which incites conformity and passivity. Kojève’s assessment is more than a mere Hegelian critique of the romantic period. He seeks the pedigree of the liberal political form of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, an unusual form which apparently impedes the movement of the Hegelian spirit. And he finds the liberal form within the romantic period; for he decisively stresses, “this pacifist ideology of the Conscience —this is the *political and economic Liberalism*” (*I* [fr.], 151). Passivity and conformity —in short, enclosing the self within itself— through the romantic medium —that is, language and hence idle chatter— render satisfaction and contentment for the romantic. And the liberal political and economic liberalism works in a way to offer a definitive safe haven for those who live in their *own* “fictitious” and “magical” world. All in all, Novalis’ imaginative world as opposed to the political action of Napoleon is at stake for Kojève (*I* [fr.], 152).

This, “the beautiful psyche” of the romantics, would of course characterize Napoleon as “the evil” and therewith Hegel “its pardon.” Concerning the tyrant act of Napoleon and its justification by Hegel, there is no doubt that Hegel’s contemporaries would accuse him of being the vulgar, violent and perhaps ‘somehow consciousness of

the Anti-Christ.’ Schelling wrote much about this; but the task here is not to treat him and Hegel. It suffices here to note how Kojève summarizes the Napoleon-Hegel dyad in view of those who condemn such a unity,

From the Christian point of view, Napoleon realized the Vanity: he is thus the incarnation of the Sin (the Anti-Christ). He is the first who dared to attribute effectively an absolute value (universal) to the human Particularity. For Kant, and for Fichte, he is the Evil: being amoral par excellence. For the tolerant and liberal Romantic, he is a traitor (he betrayed the Revolution)...[t]he adversaries of Napoleon do not act against Napoleon, they do not destroy him: their judgment is thus pure vanity, chatter. They are pure inactivity, that is to say, a Being (Sein), thus Nothingness: --if the German (thus the German philosophy) refuse to recognize Napoleon, they disappear as Volk; the Nations (Particularity) wanting to oppose universal Empire (Universality) will be destroyed (*I* [fr.], 153).

We encounter perfectly self-revelatory lines. The Napoleon-Hegel dyad is the dyad of the Anti-Christ and its pardon revealed in *Phenomenology*, “the new bible.” This is thoroughly on the surface. And to restate, this conclusion as such is a matter of interpretation, as Kojève does with anthropocentrism. In its depth, however, the Kojèvean *eschaton* is at stake. Theology and philosophy coincides in Kojèvean Hegelianism and forms *the dicta* of the coming *nomos* of the earth. “If Napoleon is the revealed God (der erscheinende Gott), it is Hegel who revealed it” (*I* [fr.], 153) interprets Kojève and qualifies it: “the nations wanting to oppose universal empire will be destroyed.” Explicit in these remarks is the message that not only history has not ended but also history should end in accordance with the dyad. Kojève’s position reminds us of Hegel’s memorable line in his *Phenomenology*, “the wounds of the spirit heal and leave no scars behind,” which occurs in a passage on conscience. In other words, the success as well as the matter-of-factness of the world-state and of wisdom depends on “conviction”

or “acceptance” of *Phenomenology* (I, 98). *Cave ab homine unius libri*. As we shall see in the fourth chapter, Kojèvean system offers a totalitarian world-state system based on a belief system, i.e., active Hegelianism.

At the heart of the matter, which should be restated, the anthropocentric system in question proves an either-or condition: you either “accept” the movement towards the world-state or you would be “terminated.” Violence is transparent. And there is in fact nothing textually evident to indicate Kojève thinks the world state is existing *hic et nunc*. “What is neither an error nor a truth is an idea, or... an ideal” he argues and then he goes on to assert that, “this idea can be transformed into *truth* only by negating action, which will destroy the World that does not correspond to the idea and will create by this very destruction the World in conformity with the ideal” (I, 98). Or elsewhere, he poses two significant questions, which convey uncertainty as well as curiosity: “(1) if the current state of things actually corresponds to what for Hegel is the perfect state and the end of History; and (2) if Hegel’s knowledge is truly circular” (I, 97). All these imply the difference between the post-revolutionary and post-historical world, i.e., the appearance of the Napoleon-Hegel dyad and its concrete realization. In its most elaborate form, the universal and homogeneous state does not exist *in concreto* and its future depends on the Hegelian system propagated through the masses by political propaganda. And the resistance to this movement would be met with violence and terror, as Kojève clearly indicates. What then is the form of authority? How and by what means does the political propaganda work? What would be the life in the post-historical stage: totalitarian or libertarian? Pursuing a debate between Kojève, Schmitt and Strauss, in chapter four we shall seek an answer to these questions.

## CHAPTER II

### The Turn

The true content of Romantic thought, then, is absolute internality, the adequate and appropriate form of which is spiritual subjectivity, or conscious personality, as comprehension of its own independence and freedom. Now that which is in itself infinite and wholly universal is absolute negativity of all that is finite and particular. It is the simple unity with self which has destroyed all mutually exclusive objects, all processes of nature, with their circle of genesis, decay, and renewal which, in short, has put an end to all limitation of spiritual existence, and dissolved all particular divinities into itself. In this pantheon all the gods are dethroned. The flame of subjectivity has consumed them. (Hegel, *Lectures on Aesthetics*)

### Introduction

In the second chapter, I aim to outline the relation of philosophy to politics in the writings of Schmitt. Recent critical attempts to understand Schmitt and the crux of much of the recent debate on Schmitt concerns assessments of the concept of the political, the notion of the exception, political decisionism and the theory of emergency powers. This chapter argues that the trajectory of Schmitt's writings cannot and should not be reduced to such conceptual framings and thematic assessments but rather, that there is a philosophical line of argumentation, praxeological and theoretical, through which we can approach Schmitt's world-picture. The focus of this chapter is political romanticism and Schmitt's political and philosophical responds to that Romantic Movement. How political romanticism evolved and to what extent its political project has been appropriated by 20<sup>th</sup> century intellectuals and politicians will be the questions posed. Schmitt's insights concerning political romanticism are not only relevant for an attempt to understand his philosophical and political standpoint, but are also highly significant and remain instructive today.

The relevance of reading Schmitt will become clear in the chapter itself. But why do I read him after Kojève? The best and yet perhaps the easiest assessment would be a critical reflection on the scholarly exchange between Schmitt and Kojève which is

available to us in the form of letters. Kojève’s unsurprising reverence for Schmitt’s writings and Schmitt’s own serious and line-by-line treatment of Kojèvean Hegelianism constitute the mood of the letters. More importantly, their correspondence informs us of the fact that both were perfectly aware of each other’s politico-philosophical trajectory. I shall provide, when necessary, some crucial and relevant instances of their correspondence in the fourth chapter. It would nevertheless be supportive to note Schmitt’s hymn written for Kojève in place of a friendly memento, written after Kojève’s lecture on the dynamics of the new world-order at Schmitt’s invitation in Düsseldorf (1957).

**Chant du vieux mosellien ( 1957)**

Maintenant, on intègre l’humanité,  
 On canalise la Moselle,  
 Le sacrement reste détourné,  
 Le calice demeure toujours soustrait au laïc,  
 Le Bon Dieu demeure caché,  
 Le monde entier devient *melting pot*,  
 L’automate devient global,  
 Au laïc on offre du véronal.

**Hymn of the old Mosellian (1957)**

Now, we integrate the humanity,  
 We channel the Mosel,<sup>18</sup>  
 The sacrament remains hijacked,  
 The chalice always remains taken away from  
 the laic,  
 The Dear God remains concealed,  
 The entire world becomes the *melting pot*,  
 The automaton becomes global,  
 To the laic, we offer the veronal.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The Moselle is a river flowing through France, Luxembourg and Germany. The area around which the Moselle River flows is an industrial area hosting coal mining and steel manufacturing industries. Likewise, the Moselle River has been designed to be navigable for large transportation ships. Schmitt had in mind, most probably, Heidegger’s notes on technology, emphasizing how and by what means ‘the modern conquest of nature’ has become possible and how the mankind and nature have been transformed into ‘ordering-’ and ‘standing-reserves’. In addition, Schmitt signals the energy of the liberal political economy in uniting humanity and transforming the world into a gigantic supply depot —that the project is to make man a joyful, happy automaton (“the melting pot”). The space here is too limited to treat the relation between Schmitt, Kojève and Heidegger on this particular issue that the following chapters shall make clear what is at stake.

<sup>19</sup> Veronal is often used to mean a ‘hypnotic drug’. Yet, it could well be suggest that Schmitt uses the term to convey the essence of the romantic-praxis —a placebo-effect of fictitiousness. This shall be clarified in the chapter on Schmitt.

Schmitt's hymn aptly summarizes the Kojèvean world-picture and, in fact, he takes us to the heart of Kojève's Hegelianism. The course of technology, the notion of humanity, anthropocentric atheism, the conquest of human nature and the coming-into-being of automata—in short, the world-state thesis—are noticeably, without requiring further interpretation, embodied in Schmitt's hymn through melancholic and pessimist tones. Yet, these particular instances would constitute only the preliminary insights as to why reading Schmitt is integral to this thesis—that there are some pivotal textual evidences which are essential and suggestive in this regard. Kojève is a fervent Marxist-Hegelian scholar, whereas Schmitt is a radical conservative-Hegelian; and yet, both were concerned with the end of history doctrine. Let us note in this context the defining disagreement between their distinct appropriations of Hegelianism with their own words.

In line with the basic premises of anthropocentric Hegelianism, Kojève notes that, “die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht. Universal history, which is at the same time the supreme Tribunal, acquits man in its final judgment, which is the only valid (judgment) because it is the only (judgment that is) possible and real” (*HCM*, 36). And in diametrical contrast, in an intense passage on the critique of irrational political drives, Schmitt, while revealing the essence of conservative-Hegelianism, notes that “if a world history is also the world court [Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht], then it is a process without a last instance and without a definitive, disjunctive judgment” (*PC*, 56). What would these remarks suggest to us in regard to the relation of philosophy to politics?

Kojève pursues a Hegelian political propaganda declaring that the end of history will actualize the earthly kingdom of humanity, whereas Schmitt politically provokes an elitist Hegelianism to re-erect the throne of ‘the few’. And this Schmitt fosters by

defending the validity and continuity of the pre-Hegelian dialectical movement *ad infinitum*. Kojève's Dionysian Hegel and Schmitt's Apollonian Hegel are in conflict. Kojève thinks of the coming-into-being of humanity in and through a world-state as a benign, irreversible and undisputable facticity. In his account, the wisdom of technical-scientific reason would neutralize all the historical controversies and conflicts and then, embrace the mankind in perfect harmony. And in contrast, Schmitt would relegate whatever pertains to the notion of humanity to the level of a global fiction, to an extra-historical romance —that the unity of humanity is metaphysically diabolical. Unlike Kojève, there is nothing fixed in history and in man, entailing Schmitt's proposals on disputability and reversibility of the Kojèvean Hegelianism.

It is always a temptation to favor one of the thinkers over the other; and yet, disagreements could be misleading, blinding and, to an extent, deceiving. Schmitt and Kojève unhesitatingly and ruthlessly defend the necessity of violence, totalization of knowledge and even 'an Idea' in place of a regulative-ruling political form. And even if this is unacceptable, whether what they (particularly Kojève) suggest is open to creative-transformative resistance would be a curious question. For whatever the form it takes, in the final analysis, Hegelianism and here, the fanatical Hegelianism is totalitarian in manifold ways. This thesis in general and the following chapters in particular could perhaps show potential political points of escape and dissent.

Having mapped in outline agreements and disagreements, we need to restate Kojève's position bearing in mind how Schmitt might have perceived it as a whole. Earlier, we noted Schmitt's somewhat pessimistic, gloomy and cynical hymn written for what Kojève's system might have brought forth. Now, the best way to grasp Kojève's

Dionysian spirit as well as Schmitt's ire against the rise of the masses is to note the hymn of *The International*, which provides a bridge from the first to the second chapter and which would remind what is at stake with Kojève's Hegelianism.

Arise, the damned of the earth,  
Arise, prisoners of hunger,  
For reason thunders in its crater,  
It is the eruption of the end!  
Let us make a blank slate of the past,  
Army of slaves, arise, arise!  
The world is changing at the base,  
We who have been nothing, let's be  
everything!  
This is the final struggle  
Let us gather, and tomorrow  
The Internationale  
Will be mankind!

There are no supreme saviours,  
Neither God, nor Caesar, nor tribune.  
Workers, let's save ourselves!  
Together let's enact a common decree  
To force the thief to return his loot,  
So that the mind is set free from the prison cell!  
Let us blow upon our furnace ourselves,  
Strike the iron while it is hot!  
It is the final struggle  
Let us gather, and tomorrow  
The Internationale  
Will be mankind!

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity..." so begins Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities*. The memorable lines of the hymn of *The International* render the same feeling. Kojève's "joyful, automaton" slaves revolt against Schmitt's "serious, violent" masters—that this must be the story of the end of history.

Now, the introductory account offered hitherto is necessary but not sufficient as an answer to the question why reading Schmitt is integral for this thesis. Reading Schmitt would be a necessary endeavor for the central arguments of this thesis and yet, an understanding of Schmitt's political romanticism seems to be more than a necessity. As we shall see, Schmitt completes, thematically and socio-politically, what is substantially lacking in Kojève's elaboration of the Hegelian movement: the post-revolutionary period. Kojève's account does not suggest the definitive, immediate end of history. Nor does it imply the existence of a world-state *hic et nunc*. What we see is rather a mediative-

transitory stage in between the post-revolutionary and the post-historical periods. There are only obscure and truly subtle remarks on the existential posture of being, which takes place in the transitory stage and also, some brief notes on the political form that governs the post-revolutionary world, of which I shall give an account in the fourth chapter. The post-revolutionary world is the romantic-world fueled and administered by political romanticism which has a distinct stately (*Staatliche*) political form —the quantitative total state. Thus, the focus of this chapter is political romanticism and its political implications in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, through which we can grasp the essence of both Kojève's and Schmitt's world-picture.

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#### **The Romantic Paradise**

Introduction is aimed against Fichte and his 'subjective Idealism'. 'I' [Ich] here is not Hegelian Geist, but Fichtean, the 'I' was 'abstracted' from the Fichtean Idealism... Recall what action is (=freedom=negation=mediation). In Fichte, there is only Sollen (a duty to act) and not a true action. (**Kojève**, Introduction à la lecture de Hegel)

In his *Political Romanticism*, Schmitt undertakes a philosophical investigation to address the question what is political impotency. His treatise, crudely put, is a comprehensive critique of an impotent political disposition and mentality rooted in the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century Romantic Movement —a movement which had a profound impact on the development of both liberalism and socialism. At the centre of Schmitt's argument lies the idea that Romanticism is neither a transitory philosophical phase nor a purely enclosed system of thought isolated from the real; rather, the political alliances (liberalism) and the political extensions (socialism) find foundations therein. In this treatise, Schmitt's task is to verify, both historically and philosophically, the political trajectory and project of the Romantic Movement; and to this end, initially, he sketches the 'how of' romanticism within the dialectics of modernity.

Schmitt seeks the philosophical pedigree of Romanticism by mapping the history of the modern dualism —the real and the abstract— inaugurated by the early-modern philosophers. The rupture between the objective natural-scientific rationality (Copernicus) and the modern subjective rationality (Descartes) constitute a decisive schism between *res cogens* and *res extensa* (*PR*, 52).<sup>20</sup> And therein Schmitt finds the force of the historical movement, as though the early-modern rationalism culminated in a chain reaction striving (consciously or unconsciously) to restore the duality at stake. He accordingly reads those restoring attempts as a series of ‘philosophical decisions’ contributing to the dialectical movement towards the unity of the abstract and the real.

Within this line of reasoning, he regards Kantian philosophy as “a vulgarization on a grand scale” (*N*, 133); Kant’s solution, i.e., formal rationality, could not allow grasping the essence of the concrete and above all, exacerbated the inexplicability of the existing irrational being. The Kantian problem, as his legacy, resonated intensely in the 19<sup>th</sup> century German philosophical tradition, which would, as Schmitt presents it, end the four hundred year long problem of modernity. The synthesis of ego and non-ego was to be restored and yet, the first philosophical attempt, Fichte’s proposals laid the foundations of “indifference” toward the objective reality. Absolute ego, rather than a moment-in-the-real, was designed whereby “each and every ego would itself constitute the highest

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<sup>20</sup> In his *Leviathan*, Schmitt would return to the analysis of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century. He would complete the metaphysical image of that particular period through a detailed interpretation of Hobbes’ *Leviathan*. He would deem the early-modern age as “not only metaphysically but also scientifically the greatest age of Europe –the heroic age of occidental rationalism” (*N*, 132). And he would argue that the first transformation of modernity occurred through the philosophical collaboration between Descartes’ conception of man (the mechanical perception of the human body) and Hobbes’s theory of the modern state (the mechanization of the state). At the centre of his interpretative endeavor lies the argument that the metaphysical leap inaugurated by Descartes had been effectively completed in Hobbes’s theory of the state.

substance.” In the Fichtean philosophical system, ego, *ergo* man, becomes passive; for the presence of an “indifferent third entity” —a quasi-transcendental dimension in and through which the unity occurs— steals the moment of reality (*PR*, 53). And Hegel, as Schmitt introduces it, was the first to achieve the resolution of the modern dualism based on a genuine and real —thus concrete—synthesis. Hegel in brief restored the unity by verifying the vital necessity to unfold ego in-and-for itself, i.e., non-ego (*PR*, 54).<sup>21</sup> Schmitt’s philosophical ire against the Romantic Movement is rooted here. Given the key contrast between the two philosophical responses to the post-Kantian German philosophy, Hegel and Fichte, the Romantics initially embraced the Fichtean notion of absolute ego, i.e., individualism proper and thereon determinate their particular metaphysical posture towards the real world.<sup>22</sup> The Romantics could not provide an entrenched philosophical solution to the modern duality; rather, what they pursued was, as Schmitt argues, “an emotional-aestheticist (lyrical) reaction” (*PR*, 55).

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<sup>21</sup> It is worth noting that Schmitt provides references to the tension between Hegel and Fichte, which is respectively between ‘is’ and ‘ought’ or precisely, between concrete realities and abstractions. The theoretical pedigree of romanticism rests on an adequate understanding of this tension: “against Fichte, Hegel argued that it would be a violent abstraction to assume that the world had been abandoned by God and was only waiting until mankind could bring a purpose to it and build it according to an abstract notion of ‘how things should be.’ An ‘ought’ is impotent” (*PC*, 57; see also [tr.] note, 105). On what philosophical basis Schmitt supports Hegel (political power) and refutes Fichte (political impotency) is perfectly clear in this concluding remark. Besides, it is crucial to mention, in developing his philosophical premises, Schmitt in fact follows the outline provided in Hegel’s *The Difference between Fichte’s and Schelling’s System of Philosophy*. He bridges the gap between philosophy and the politics by adjusting Hegel’s critical philosophical endeavor (against the German Romantics) to the political circumstances of his time, of course, under the rubric of political romanticism. He materializes Hegel’s thought against the romantic and idealist horizon of the politics.

<sup>22</sup> Later, the romantics would give up the Fichtean ego and embrace Schelling’s philosophy of nature; for Schelling revised the Kant’s dualism and Fichte’s absolute ego by positing nature as the ultimate medium in and through which ego resolves its tensions (and different from Hegel) by subjective productivity. Indeed, in Schelling nature (in-itself) is thought of as productivity, which will be adapted, for Schmitt, both by liberals and socialists.

Implied in his treatise, Schmitt's ultimate purpose is to create a decisive either-or decision, which determines, so to speak, the future course of disposition against the real: either an active-orientation (Hegel) or a passive-orientation (the romantics). Tacitly mapped in his treatise on political romanticism, the philosophical dimension of decisionism is at stake, which has significant socio-political implications. Then, what is romanticism, an aestheticist movement appearing as the very source of neutralization of Hegel? Neither transforming the antinomial determinations of time (i.e., negative action) nor realizing the conflictual relation of 'I' to 'non-I', the romantic praxis transfigures every real opposition into an emotional contrast —a lyrical dissonance— by way of an insurmountable, atomistic self-confidence —that what counts is how individuals trans-value the given reality. There is no order, no system, no tradition and above all, no integrity in the content of that confidence which resolves the tensions, quarrels and conflicts. The medium, within which all clashing dichotomies are to be resolved, is 'the aesthetic' (*PR*, 36). For that very reason alone, the concrete disposition occurs in and through 'the aesthetic,' as Schmitt insists; and as such, the supremacy of the abstract ego —that is, the privatization of perception and experience *in concreto*— is manifested exclusively (*PR*, 16). The domain of 'the emotional' via 'the aesthetic' initiates an intellectual vacuum through which an existing reality, concrete knowledge, and the active idea metamorphose into a mere fantasy of opinion and feeling (e.g., epistemology into doxology). Absolute ego culminates in the conflation of the personal and the aesthetic.

Yet, with the aesthetic determination, as Schmitt advances it, the romantics achieved a new will to power by replacing the ultimate point of legitimation in history — here, with Schmitt, the transcendent God— with the praise of sovereign ego, which in

turn led both to an intense secularization of mind and to the dissemination of ‘the absolute art’ into the multifarious domains of life, e.g., into the political domain (*PR*, 58). There is no need to repeat how conservative Schmitt is on this particular subject —on the disappearance of the god from the historical scene. What is at stake here is rather the eclipse of traditional measures and standards dictating the parameters of existence, from which the complete image of the politically impotent individual is born. This self-revelatory and transparent portrait Schmitt calls “subjectified occasionalism” (*PR*, 18). And he has in mind, most probably, a formulation of romanticism which preserves both theology and subjectivism —explicitly, a belief system expressing a belief in-and-of-the-self. For the absolute ego —that which is “the third entity”— is not the god and nor is it nature, but the pure imagination of ego (the self). And this must, most probably, be the heart of Schmitt’s Hegelianism implied further in his assessment of *causa* and *occasio*.

The core of subjectified occasionalism is constituted by a particular relation of occasion to cause. By an effective negation of *causa* by (and in) *occasio*, according to Schmitt, the aesthetic romantic acquires its utmost visibility with its seductive disposition towards the concrete reality. The romantic ego does not project itself into the causality of events and nor does it partake in reality; rather, its ego withdraws from reality. Thus, the romantic denial of causality-in-time neutralizes Hegel and thereby creates an historical impasse.<sup>23</sup> In principle, history ends with the sovereign romantic ego; for there are endless occasions to be exploited in a given moment —that that ego finds itself in ‘finite infinite’. The effective attachment of ego to *occasio* (the romantics) rather than to *causa*

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<sup>23</sup> It is ‘the object’ (*Gegenstand*) which is subjectively romanticized through an endless relativization process —that the romantic irony stands against the reality by glorifying “the magic hand of chance” (i.e., the denial of causality and the praise of occasions) and by concurrent praise of life’s lyrical side (i.e., the concealment of tragedy [e.g., violence]).

(Hegel) denies everything historically held as binding, consistent and above all, orderly. Everything repeats itself in the same scene of the eternal recurrence of the same and so, the sovereign ego pretends to exist in an indisputable multiplicity, diversity and difference. The trajectory of the romantic ego seems to be an invisible hand of kitsch. Moreover, determinateness of the object and the subject interaction become, so to speak, *void ab initio*, as Schmitt clearly indicates, since “the object is without substance, essence, and function” (*PR*, 84). And, for certain, Schmitt does not rest satisfied with a series of philosophical verifications concerning the birth of the romantic ego. He advances his notes to mirror the material implications of the romantic ego; for this peculiar romantic (metaphysical) posture unfolds and manifests itself most notably whenever a conflict arises. Schmitt’s method, political sociology, rather than political theory or political theology and above all, his later exposition of ‘the political’ as well as ‘decisionism’ emanate precisely from here.

The aesthetic romantic neither settles a given tension nor transfigures that which is given into a meaningful and true synthesis (as Hegel does for Schmitt). The romantic rather seeks “contentment” and “amusement” through an endless trans-valorization of his sovereign genius. For Schmitt, to this end, the romantic ascribes an emotional-dissonance value to a given (concrete) tension, whereby (within this conflict) the romantic finds infinite occasions, chances and opportunities to “poeticize” the conflict—that tragedy for instance becomes a literary piece (*PR*, 83). The romantics in the final analysis conceal the essence of the real life moments by changing “‘tragedy’ into *Trauerspiel*” (*ST*, 138). As Schmitt exemplifies what is at stake, Novalis sees the life as “an endless novel” and likewise, for Schlegel, the real life is only an opportunity to pursue an “endless

conversation.” From a practical point of view and for the lack of better word, tragedy is kitschified (*Verkitschen*). Wars, struggles, conflicts and, in short, the tragedies of life are translated into trans-valorized “ghost-like” entities. What then is the political form in which the romantic genius manifests itself as such? Schmitt seems to be more than convinced that liberalism makes possible and also allows, both legally and politically, the romantic disposition. He argues accordingly that only in an “individualistically disintegrated society,” that is, in a liberal bourgeois world-order, whereby the individual becomes “the private priesthood,”<sup>24</sup> romanticism is possible (*PR*, 20, 99). And this is precisely the topos of the alliance between liberalism and romanticism in the writings of Schmitt, from which later, he would only deduce conclusions in accordance with the changing material and political conditions. How this particular alliance takes place and how he would later formulate the concept of ‘the political’ and decisionism are explicitly advanced in his note,

Neither religious, moral, nor *political decisions* nor scientific concepts are possible in the domain of what is exclusively aesthetic. But it is certainly the case that all substantive oppositions and differences, *good and evil, friend and enemy, Christ and Antichrist*, can become aesthetic contrasts and means of intrigue in a *novel*, and they can be aesthetically incorporated into the total effect of a *work of art*. (*PR*, 16) [Italics added]

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<sup>24</sup> In criticizing the individualistically-disintegrated society, Schmitt’s emphasis is on the notion of the private priesthood. However, Schmitt also advances his argument that the individual in question is not only his own priest but also “his own poet, his own philosopher, his own king, and his own master builder in the cathedral of his personality” (*PR*, 20). Political relativism and nihilism are at stake here, which is exemplified by a reference to ‘the three high priests’ of the private priesthood: Byron, Baudelaire, and Nietzsche. Later, in his *The Tyranny of Values*, Schmitt would pursue an investigation particularly on Nietzsche, ‘the father of philosophy of values’, with direct references to Weber, Heidegger, Hartmann and to a lesser extent, Max Scheler. We shall return to what Schmitt’s concerns are on this particular issue later in this chapter. For the moment, it is sufficient note that politicized radical subjectivism and romantic relativism constitute the skeleton of the private priesthood.

Immediately available here is the idea that the ethos of both the liberal and the romantic forms conflate into one another and in turn, they radically alter the traditional order and hierarchy. But besides, from the romantic incapacity to recognize the aforesaid antinomial entities is born the core deficiency of that which appears to be the political form: passivity and the absence of political decision. Political action, it is significant to note, is not obliterated. On the contrary, political action, albeit paradoxically, is rather romanticized, entailing a submissive and docile passivity which promotes the liberal political form (*PR*, 98). Passivity in-and-toward the concrete reality and indifference toward the agonistic dichotomies culminate in a political quietism and political irresponsibility which brings about an indeterminate emasculation of political action. Thus, rather than taking concrete political action, a series of criticism, discussion and conversation—as Schmitt presents it—appear to be ‘the political’ (of the romantic). The fundamental criterion of the political —“the capacity to make a concrete decision between right and wrong”—vanishes. Herein Schmitt sees a potential threat emanating directly from the particular praxis of political romanticism which targets directly the substance of a political community: “everything that is romantic is at the disposal of other energies that are unromantic, and the sublime elevation above definition and decision is transformed into a subservient attendance upon *alien power* and *alien decision*” (*PR*, 162). *Qui tacet consentire*. What does Schmitt mean by ‘alien power’ and ‘alien decision’? The answer to this lies in the link he seeks to establish between political romanticism and the unromantic energies, which would also provide the content of Schmitt’s future investigations.

A closer examination of ‘the concept of the political romantic’ would reveal that Schmitt had in mind, most probably, two interdependent criteria which determine the notion of the political —historical and psychic criteria. Historical perception assumes “the correct” perception of time based on questions concerning the present material circumstances —loosely referred to as RealPolitik. The capacity to act upon the given conditions should be derived from the rational historical-consciousness. And next, the psychic criterion of the political corresponds to the correct (*ergo* rational) decisions which can generate decisive, ‘qualitative’ political actions. The potential threat engendered by political romanticism lie in its negation of these two criteria. Political romanticism not only breeds an anti-political spirit but also, more importantly, it promotes (albeit tacitly) the metaphysics of the liberal order. Schmitt’s remark is not a passing one that “psychologically and historically, romanticism is a product of bourgeois security” (*PR*, 99). The depth and breadth on this contention lies in how we interpret “bourgeois security.” Schmitt may have in mind, in line with his previous notes on romanticism, the political coincidence of ‘self-comfortableness’ and “indifference”, those which are secured in an individually-disintegrated society in order successfully to perpetuate the status quo. The economy of the indifferent individuals is the political economy of contentment, happiness and amusement —and these are the economies of security. That these observations are self-revelatory, he also proposes the birth of new metaphysical realities —“the new demiurges,” which have been initially signaled by the romantics and later romanticized in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century —“humanity and history”. Schmitt regards humanity as the revolutionary god and history as the conservative god. In seeking what he has in mind by alien power and alien decision, what interests us here is

rather the revolutionary demiurge, humanity, of which Schmitt offers a detailed account.<sup>25</sup>

In Schmitt's account, the bearers of the romanticized notion of humanity are the Marxists and the liberals. In his *Political Theology*, Schmitt clearly demonstrates his early concerns upon this new reality,

Today, nothing is more modern than the onslaught against the political. American financiers, industrial technicians, Marxist socialists, and anarchist-syndicalist revolutionaries unite in demanding that the biased rule of politics over unbiased economic management be done away with. There must be no longer political problems, only organizational-technical and economic-sociological tasks... [which are] no longer capable of perceiving a political idea...The core of the political idea, the exacting moral decision, is evaded in both. (*PT*, 65)

Above exhibition mirrors the historical-political status corresponding to the spirit of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century —“a state of mind which finds the core categories of human existence in production and consumption” (*N*, 133). Schmitt would later refer to this phase of history as the epoch of ‘industrial appropriations,’ a period in between sea- and air-appropriations. At this stage of history, technology —the alien energy behind the new god (humanity) — was still attached to the progress of industrial development. A guiding thread exposing the coming of the technological era and hence humanity is shown for the first time in his *Roman Catholicism and Political Form*, where he coins the term “gigantic dynamo” (*RC*, 13). Explicit in this phrase, the gigantic dynamo, is the concern with technology and technicity, with which Schmitt moves beyond the limited categories of ‘consumption and production’ held by the early-liberals and the early Marxists. Here, a decisive shift in the writings of Schmitt is evident:

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<sup>25</sup> In the writings of Schmitt, humanity is used to refer to both a mediated process of the unity of the people (*Bewegung*) and in some occasions, a measure to reflect its natural difference from ‘the few.’ In the latter occasions, humanity could be read as the many, the masses or the people.

The world-view of the modern capitalist is the same as that of the industrial proletarian, as if the one were *the twin brother of the other*...The big industrialist has no ideal than that of Lenin —an “electrified earth.” *They disagree essentially only on the correct method of electrification.* American financiers and Russian Bolsheviks find themselves in a common struggle for economic thinking, that is, the struggle against politicians and jurists. (RC, 13) [Italics added]

The twin brothers, capitalists and proletarians, share the very same ideal —an electrified earth. Once the world becomes depolitical and once it is governed through constant conquest of nature, perhaps, the world will transform into the earth. And, perhaps, Schmitt had in mind the idea that the world, once perceived as a gigantic, electrifiable standing-reserve (Heidegger), transmutes into the earth. Nevertheless, the explicit message in the above passage is the medium, a medium that both unites and separates liberalism and Marxism-Leninism —technology. On the one hand, these two ideologies unite vis-à-vis the romanticized idea of humanity and yet, on the other hand, these two confront upon the ‘how of’ arriving at humanity. That he sees a threat in these two political formations, in the fourth chapter I shall assess how Schmitt perceives a danger within the notion of humanity itself. For the moment, the question should focus upon the medium as technology. How has technology successfully inhabited a political form? Or, does technology in-and-for-itself constitute a political form while revealing the depoliticalization process and at the same time, concealing its own political side? In regard to this question, Schmitt’s cardinal premise draws upon political sociology, from which he proceeds further in his investigation: “the metaphysical image that a definite epoch forges the world has the same structure as what world immediately understands to be appropriate as a form of its political organization” (PT, 46). It is precisely this irreducible premise which determines and shapes Schmitt’s “point of attack.” And later,

as we shall see, he would firmly frame and embrace this historicist-sociological premise by coining the term “the central sphere,” a term which implies the particular *Zeitgeist* embedded in a particular and determinate historical moment of the Hegelian *Weltgeist*. Then, how does Schmitt locate the liberal and socialist political forms within this Hegelian frame?

For Schmitt, on the basis of representing ‘the people,’ the 19<sup>th</sup> century liberalism was materialized in the alliance of the parliament and democracy, from which in turn “parliamentary government” was born. And, at the heart of this new emergence lies the hybridization of the romantic praxis with the liberal economic-technical thinking —the birth of political romanticism. Essential to this spawning form is the belief that unrestrained, eternal competition of opinions “government by discussion” can generate truth (*PC*, 8-9, 35; *N*, 133). Knowledge of the real and judgments upon the matter-of-factness of life are effectively and above all, politically transformed into an institution of competing opinions —that political romanticism is an institutionalized sophistry. Here, in brief, the political is not the struggle or ever-possible existence of conflicts; rather, it is the business-like, managerial-type competition of opinions —a passive, idle-chatter. Moreover, this gigantic transformation process has successfully culminated in the erroneous equation of the state with the political upon which, according to Schmitt, the movement of parliamentary democracy has begun to represent a blurred ground, through which the distinction between the state and society has begun to be progressively overcome. In line with his premises assessed earlier, Schmitt thinks that these changes are rather metaphysical in nature and he notes accordingly that “it is essential that liberalism be understood as a consistent, comprehensive metaphysical system” (*PC*, 35).

Schmitt's Hegelian world-picture is consistent to the extent that he correctly locates how the scientific-technical rationality (liberalism) and the romantic metaphysics-as-praxis could collapse into one another as a political form. And, perhaps, one should seek the dynamics of that which is eternally recurrent in the contemporary world with Schmitt's theoretical toolbox. But what is immediately available in his investigation is the transformation of "auto-administrative society" into "auto-organization of society" (*WTT*, 3, 9).<sup>26</sup>

This transitory stage entails "both a dualism and equilibrium between state and society." The notion of openness and the checks-and-balances system incorporated in such a political formation give political power to the masses ("auto-administrative society") and thereby progressively cancel the duality and equilibrium ("auto-organization of society"). Explicitly revealed here, Schmitt's ire stems substantially from both the eclipse of 'the politics of the few' and the particular form of power shift (i.e., technicity). More explicitly, within this process, secrecy, hierarchy and elitism in politics—the elements which are, for Schmitt, essential to an orderly and stable political community—have vanished. But besides Schmitt's unending anxiety concerning the decline of the few, if he is assessed within the historical context, he assumes the task of a neutral observer (ironically) who only intends to propagate political warnings. To recall his notice, that the alliance of liberalism and romanticism give way to the most illiberal forces, the liberals are considered to be politically blind. More explicitly, the liberal bourgeois is "an individual who does not want to leave the apolitical riskless private sphere" (*CP*, 62). Entrapped by radical subjectivity, the romantic praxis "lets the crucial

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<sup>26</sup> The former represents the 19<sup>th</sup> century *Zeitgeist* whereas the latter expresses the 20<sup>th</sup> century *Zeitgeist* within Schmitt's Hegelian framework. Later, we shall seek whether the latter could still be assessed as a liberal political form.

events pass by” and in turn, though tacitly, depoliticizes and normalizes any given political circumstance. The political is transfigured into romantic “free play of convictions”, empty-formalities and to say the least, normative correctness. In this societal auto-administration project Schmitt finds the initial steps in the rise of the masses pursued in the name of humanity. And given his political elitism, Schmitt’s reaction is of course sharp: the political inequality intrinsic to human nature cannot and should not be superseded (or overcome) by human equality based on legal positivism. Legal egalitarianism cannot and must not be replaced by natural inequality that

Where a state wants to establish general human equality in the political sphere without concern for national or some other sort of homogeneity, then it cannot escape consequence that political equality will be devalued to the extent that it approximates absolute human equality. And not only that. The sphere of the political and therefore politics itself would also be devalued in at least the same degree, and would become insignificant (*PC*, 12)

Explicit in this passage is the critique of legal positivism regarded as the ideology of the rule of law. For Schmitt, particularly in a liberal world order, the credo of “the equality of all,” while (in principle and in theory) preserving heterogeneity, is maintained and sustained by legal positivism. And yet, the heterogeneity in question is what Schmitt calls pure homogeneity that the legal-positivist dimension of scientific-technical thinking that conglomerates the individuals regardless of ‘the specificity of an identity’ i.e., regardless of their culture. This, Schmitt calls the alien power. For positivism cannot codify prudent discretion and above all, laws “infected” by positivism are thoroughly impotent in identifying what is alien, *ergo* foreign.<sup>27</sup> For Schmitt, in short, culture (or the specificity

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<sup>27</sup>Following the traditional conservative lines of argumentation that praises the ancient political forms, Schmitt contrasts parliamentary government with Aristotelian democracy. What he seeks to emphasize is the vital necessity of setting out rigid parameters concerning the identity of ‘the

of *Bildung*) determines and in turn governs the parameters of what is foreign. Moreover, in his *The Plight of European Jurisprudence*, Schmitt advances the metaphysics of legal positivism that he thinks legality as such has “no origin and home” advancing only for “control and calculability” (*PJ*, 294). We shall return to the issue of legal positivism in relation to its link with Schmitt’s total state formulation later. And we shall assess accordingly how and why legal positivism strives for control and calculability. For the moment it is sufficient to restate that the liberal legal machinery cancels the differences, hierarchy, secrecy and the autonomy of prudent political orientation. And there is no need to give an account concerning our thinker’s distaste. His message is clear: a political community must recognize the different capacities of ruling and being ruled.

Given his portrayal of the liberal ethos, Schmitt characterizes the newly emerging Soviet Union as the twin brother of the liberal-bourgeois world order is a curious question. Rather than any argument, Schmitt poses a crucial question: how and by what means could an underdeveloped country declare a ‘historical enmity’ against the bourgeois class, without passing through the intermediary stages of the western economic development and of western history? Or, how could “the class-conscious proletariat of the big cities and the Russian masses estranged from Europe” (*RC*, 38) come together? That there are differences about the ‘how of’ mastering technology and also conquering nature, the premise which unites the liberals and the Marxist-Leninists remains the same—the romantic-effect. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, aristocracy’s contempt for the bourgeoisie was romanticized by poets and artists and later,

[I]t has taken on the dimension of a world-historical construction through the work of Marx and Engels...In this way the image of the bourgeois has

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ruled’ and ‘the ruler’ as well as an understanding of equality emanating from the natural inequality (*PC*, 9-14, 25).

been boundlessly extended and carried further away toward the east with a fantastic, not only world-historical, but also metaphysical background...All the energies that had created this image were united on Russian soil...But there it seized a myth for itself that no longer grew purely out of the instinct for class conflict, but contained strong nationalist elements. (*PC*, 74; see also, *RC*, 38)

The genesis of the Soviet Union is romantic and yet, the political drive of its movement is unromantic. Romanticized myths and novels have created the metaphysical energy behind that fictitious movement. Schmitt is resolutely convinced that the Soviet communism is a mere romanticized fiction, fantasy and dream that he advances the argument rather with ironic remarks: “Marx did not yet know the difference, because he still lived with traditional political thought” (*PC*, 72). In line with his notes on culture and foreignness, what he thinks seems to be reasonable and in fact, expected; for what counts is the continental *Bildung* regardless of its political direction. His position nevertheless could be clarified from a different dimension as well. If we think of Schelling, who was the true romantic type and who was advancing the intellectual ferment of German Romanticism and Idealism after Fichte and before Hegel, we would perhaps come closer to what Schmitt thinks. For both Engels (a German socialist) and Bakunin (a Russian anarcho-communist) were the students of Schelling. And, not surprisingly, there is no substantial critique of Engels and Marx at all. On the contrary. Schmitt would later refer to Marx as the true representative of the 19<sup>th</sup> century *Zeitgeist*, i.e., “the cleric” of the economic-technical thinking. But the un-German anarchist, Bakunin, whose legacy still lies in his slogan “the passion for destruction is a creative passion,” is regarded as the alien romantic. The revolutionary rupture from the continental tradition and the distance from the so-called fertile soils of European culture and metaphysics are Schmitt’s basic

premises in treating Soviet communism—in short, “the machine has no tradition” (*RC*, 22).

For Schmitt, the political energy generating the Soviet movement does not emanate from rationality; rather, it is substantially based upon instincts, irrationality, myths and feelings. The romantic praxis successfully works through the romanticization of thought and the aesthetization of political action. And here together with Bakunin, Schmitt’s actual reference point is Georges Sorel, a French philosopher who rejected Marx’s historical and dialectical materialism and above all, who denied the scientific aspects of orthodox Marxism. As a voluntarist-Marxist, Sorel’s philosophy was based on ‘will’ and ‘direct action’ emanating from myth-making which would provoke the masses for violent acts. In Sorel’s formulations Schmitt sees the power of myths generating political capacities to actualize *the* history vis-à-vis the direct use of force against the West. In contrast to the scientific premise of orthodox Marxism—that humanity would be achieved by economic determinism—the Soviets transformed historical determinism into an iron necessity, which would be carried out by massive industrialization—and if not, by violence. More explicitly, in his *Dictatorship*, as Schmitt presents it, whereas the orthodox Marxists regard the proletarian dictatorship as a temporary phase within historical development, through Lenin’s political agenda and propaganda, the proletarian dictatorship acquired the necessity of a permanent existence.

Schmitt’s underlying concern about the Soviet emergence lies in the link he seeks to establish between the 19<sup>th</sup> century economic-technical rationality and the irrational, violent political orientation emanating from a romantic metaphysical system: “a new evaluation of rational thought, a new belief in instinct and intuition” (*PC*, 66). And, yet

there is also another concern which might have occupied Schmitt's mind more than anything. That the foundation of both metaphysical systems is identical, romanticism, the concrete course of political romanticism in each case is not similar at all. In Schmitt's account, whereas the West experiences a depoliticalization process, the East materializes 'the political' through romantic decisionism. And in either case, the romantic metaphysical system projects into the future the unity of mankind on earth —that political romanticism is an inescapable and irreversible metaphysical movement, as Schmitt presents it. And this would be the major theme of his essay on neutralization.

Humanity, either as a new political category or as a new god descend upon earth, in the writings of Schmitt, does not suggest an independent, spontaneous event; rather, the metaphysical emergence of humanity depends on the progressive rise of technology, entailing a futuristic negation of the traditional transcendental horizon. Technology, as we shall see, is in fact the romantic third entity as well as the sublime medium in and through which the idea of humanity progressively attains facticity —*vox populi vox dei*. The alien power (liberalism) and the alien energy (the Soviet communism) are coeval with the idea of humanity embodied in a new metaphysical horizon, technology.

## -II-

### **The tale of the Anti-Christ**

Schmitt's essay, *The Age of Neutralization and Depoliticization*, begins with a significant observation: "We in Central Europe live under the eyes of the Russians...Their vitality is strong enough to seize our knowledge and technology as weapons" (*N*, 130-131). It is not a coincidence that his exposition of neutralization and depoliticization restates the Soviet emergence within the historical scene. From the historical-political point of view, Schmitt's primary purpose is to declare enmity against

the Soviet communism. His audience is the liberal politicians who have forgotten the friend and enemy distinction. The context of the Weimar period (1919-1933) and Schmitt's practical position should nevertheless be assessed by the historians. What interests us is rather his tacit emphasis on the metaphysical horizon in which Soviet communism partakes as well as the shift of audience towards the intellectuals of his time. Schmitt calls for an immediate historical assessment and his note is intended to provide an *aide memoire* and a concrete evidence for an urgent recollection of history. His essay, *Neutralization*, is a political reminder and forewarning concerning the political events that are progressively eradicating the traditional supports of culture, nationality and identity. The helpless and hopeless intellectuals are his addressees to whom Schmitt writes that the 20<sup>th</sup>-century "can be understood only as the consequence of the last centuries of European development" (N, 131).

In an attempt to prove this vital necessity of historical awareness, concerning the roots of the crisis of modernity, Schmitt introduces a more detailed, systematic scheme than the one outlined in his *Political Romanticism*. According to this up-dated account, the modern (Western) mind started to pursue its philosophical odyssey with an urge to find a conflict-free, neutral ground within which the inconsequential and controversial theological disputes of the 16<sup>th</sup>-century could be overcome. For Schmitt, it is the desire for neutrality that is the fuel of the dynamics of the Western history which generated the successive stages of the neutralization, depoliticization and secularization process. Four decisive shifts occurred: from the theological central sphere to the metaphysical sphere of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century and then, to the humanitarian-moral sphere of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century and

finally, to the economic sphere of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century (*N*, 131, 137).<sup>28</sup> However, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the intellectuals gave a final decision which put an end to ‘the regular’ shifts of history: “the absolute and ultimate neutral ground has been found in technology” (*N*, 138) within which “all peoples and nations, all classes and religions, all generations and races appear to be able to agree” (*N*, 138). Here, both the birth of (the idea of) humanity vis-à-vis technology and the end of history thesis is explicitly available to us, from which Schmitt’s point of attack emanate.

To elucidate, in the West, ‘the many’ has acquired the political power and thereby become the victorious side against the few, entailing the decisive deactivation of the shifting of the central spheres.<sup>29</sup> The people (or ‘the many’) take refuge in technology since they “believed” (i.e., the metaphysical aspect) that technology would serve ‘all’ regardless of moral, theological, or political differences. Of particular significance, Schmitt notes, the industrialized masses “skipped all intermediary stages typical of the

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<sup>28</sup> That the central sphere of a previous century is neutralized to inaugurate a new central sphere (*Bewegung*), for Schmitt, nevertheless, a historical law or “the rhythm of world history” (*N*, 132) cannot be derived from the regularities of the historical motion. The shifts of central sphere unfold rather the ever-changing political positions of the intellectual vanguards. Thus, “the active elites,” appearing within each individual century, are ‘the decisionists’ to the extent that through their perceptions and experiences not only the tensions of central spheres are neutralized but also, indeed consequently, the specific concepts (e.g., the political, the state) acquire their *existential* meanings.

<sup>29</sup> In his *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, Schmitt clearly portrays the political distinction between ‘the few’ and ‘the many’ in regard to the historical movement: “The *Weltgeist* only manifests itself in a few minds, at any stage of its development. The spirit of an age does not thrust itself into the awareness of every person at a single stroke, nor does it appear in all members of the dominant nation or social group. There will always be a vanguard of the *Weltgeist*...” (*PC*, 58). Here, there is no need of recourse to a form of between-the-lines reading. Schmitt clearly exhibits his conservative reading of Hegel that the historical-evolving consciousness not only occurs to those who are fit-to-conceive, the few, but also, the Hegelian consciousness in question manifests its unending motion in-and-by the few. Thus at each dialectical turn there must be an intellectual-political vanguard in order to reveal the content of the dialectical turn, implying further that the vanguards are the Hegelian shepherds (the few) leading the slavish flocks (the many).

thinking of intellectual vanguards and turned the belief in miracles and after life —a religion without intermediary stages— into a religion of technical miracles, human achievements and the domination of nature” (*N*, 134). What Schmitt means is this: the four hundred year long journey of (the modern) consciousness has not been actually conceived and experienced by the masses, let alone recognizing the Hegelian moment of consciousness; rather, the masses consumed the political premises of the Romantic Movement and also recognized the liberal world-order. Thus, the alliance of romantic praxis (“a religion without intermediary stages”) and the liberal ethos (“a religion of technical miracles”) characterize the eclipse of the traditional elitist spirit (“domination of nature”) and in turn, bring about the rise of the masses.

Moreover, Schmitt’s account explicitly suggests that technology is contentless; for it excludes and abandons any dichotomy-laden criterion —in short, the negation of *causa by occasio*— which could generate anthropological and/or theological contingency, e.g., friend and enemy or the Christ and the Antichrist. And this entails further the alienation of the world —the romanticization of humanity— through technology. Indeed, In the writings of Schmitt there is no difference between technologically neutralized world and a globally romanticized world: “a world that is only occasional, a world without substance and functional cohesion, without a fixed direction, without consistency and definition, without decision, without a final court of appeal, continuing into infinity and led only by the magic hand of chance” (*PR*, 19). This is not a passing remark —it perfectly summarizes Schmitt’s world-picture. Political romanticism renders the world contentless, meaningless, inconsistent and to say the least, chaotic. Anxiety and optimism and, despair and realism coexist in his observations. And as we indicated earlier, the

*Neutralization* essay serves both to provoke the intellectuals and to maintain a realist account out of which a counter-action could become re-activated. To illustrate, earlier, in his *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, he notes that “if a world history is also the world court, then it is a process without a last instance and without a definitive, disjunctive judgment” (*PC*, 56) and in his *Neutralization* essay, this metaphoric and somewhat romantic premise turns into a radical, decisive and sharp principle: “one creates a new sphere of struggle precisely through the shifting of the central sphere” (*N*, 138). This sort of abrupt theoretical maneuvers and practical shifts would be the true source of his defense of an aggressive political community and violent political action. *Ab uno disce omnes*.

All in all, his *Neutralization* essay is both a political and an intellectual manifesto which explicitly reflects Schmitt’s Hegelianism and the end of history thesis. Technology is the Anti-Christ that hinders and neutralizes the content of struggle inherent in the matter-of-factness of life and thereby creates an historical impasse. In passing, Schmitt would later preserve the very same line of argumentation in his *Nomos of the Earth*. Alluding to the 20<sup>th</sup> century state of mind, he would argue that “some believe that they are experiencing the end of the world” (*NOE*, 355)) and accordingly, he would paraphrase *in toto* what we have repeatedly noted that “as long as world history remains open and fluid, as long as conditions are not fixed and ossified; as long as human beings and peoples have not only a past but also a future, a new *nomos* will arise in the perpetually new manifestations of world historical events” (*NOE*, 78). Schmitt’s concern is with both the end of history and technological contentlessness, those which are disseminating vis-à-vis political romanticism into “the order of the human things”. And

he is utterly convinced that the continental spirit is losing its political integrity and stability.

Surely, a network of causalities stemming particularly from technology, modern natural science and technical-scientific perception nexus is regarded as the 20<sup>th</sup> century's cardinal problem. Nevertheless, Schmitt seems to condemn the intellectuals, those captains of consciousness who are competent to decide upon the course of events and the orientation of the political order, more than anything. He observes a certain mood of helplessness and powerlessness, that is, a despair caused by perceiving technology as "the domination of spiritlessness over spirit" (*N*, 140, 142). And along these lines, he sees a constant anxiety concerning the rise of the masses, a worry about the end of culture and above all, "the doubt about the ability to control and utilize...the new technology" (*N*, 140). Hopelessness or impotence, against the intellectuals' refuge in a global romance Schmitt calls for an urgent historical evaluation and immediate self-assessment. Claiming that "technology serves everyone" (*N*, 138) and "technology is always only an instrument and weapon" (*N*, 139), he aims to cancel the romantic image of "technology [which] appeared to be a sphere of peace, understanding and reconciliation" (*N*, 139). And, perhaps to provoke a synthetic drive for struggle and 'the political,' Schmitt simply restates over and over again that technology is "not neutral" (*N*, 139) and "every strong politics will make use of it" (*N*, 134). In an effort to convince the intellectuals, he pursues a political propaganda which sets forth an enemy into the contentlessness of the political condition. Ironically, he does exactly what he observes in the Soviet emergence that he aims to create a metaphysical enmity—or a myth—whereby violent political action is

born. To understand how he paves such a way, let us first note what Schmitt presents to his particular audience, to the intellectuals,

We in Central Europe live under the eyes of the Russians...Their vitality is strong enough to seize our knowledge and technology as weapons Their prowess in *rationalism and its opposite*, as well as their potential for good and evil in orthodoxy, is overwhelming...The Russians have taken the European 19<sup>th</sup> century at its word, understood its core ideas and drawn the ultimate conclusions from its cultural premises...one thing is certain: that *the anti-religion of technicity has been put into practice on Russian soil...*(*N*, 130-131) [Italics added]

As we highlighted earlier, Schmitt had already claimed that liberalism and communism unite in agreeing to electrify the world and yet “they disagree essentially only on the correct method of electrification” (*RC*, 13). In this sort of disagreement between these two ideologies he finds a potential threat based on the premise that “every type of culture, every people and religion, every war and peace can use technology as a weapon” (*N*, 139). The romantic intellectuals are unaware of all these observations, particularly the threat that Schmitt foresaw in Russia. They thus ‘let the crucial events pass by’ and take refuge in global romanticism —namely, the unity of ‘the people’ (humanity) in a peaceful process. Given the mental and the psychic conditions of *Zeitgeist* at that particular moment of history (hopelessness), Schmitt resorts to a somewhat romantic pessimism as well. This state of mind becomes clearly transparent when he notes that “no single decision can be derived from the immanence of technology, least of all for neutrality” (*N*, 139). Thus, to restore the elitist energy, which generates the historical motion, is to invent an enemy; for the motion in question emanates from struggle. The Soviet emergence enables him to utilize the romantic vacuum (of contentlessness) and to suggest that “the anti-religion of technicity” is the ultimate enemy. A brief elaboration of what is at stake is necessary at this stage.

In his writings, it is clearly exhibited that a neutral central sphere resolves every antinomial existence within itself. Technological central sphere has no antithetical counterpart either in theory or in reality that it is truly contentless. The Soviet emergence allows him to invent and conceptualize a new force which is antithetical to technology — that is, technicity. He expects and in fact hopes that his audience realizes how technology creates a counter-horizon to itself, technicity, with an intention to revitalize what has been forgotten —and that is, the political. The enemy and friend distinction is expected to return to its traditional energy and dignity vis-à-vis technicity. However, as we qualified Schmitt’s proposal on technicity that it is a ‘pragmatic invention’ to provoke the intellectuals, it is worth noting that technicity is no different than technology. And not only that. Technicity is not antithetical to technology at all —that it articulates only the forgotten metaphysical dimension of that which is contentless (technology). Technicity is in this sense, as he clearly exhibits, an “activistic metaphysics,” “an anti-religious activism,” “an evil and demonic spirit,” “fantastic and satanic belief,” and above all else, technicity is a form of “domination of man over nature, even over human nature” (*N*, 141). That this diabolical metaphysical aspect within technology is forgotten, ignored and neglected, Schmitt’s account suggests that the refuge in technicity applies extensively to the Western industrialized masses more than the Russian proletarians. This contention becomes crystal clear particularly when he writes, “pure technical problems have something refreshingly factual about them” that “they are easy to solve, and it is easily understandable why there is a tendency to take refuge in technicity from the inextricable problems of all other spheres” (*N*, 138). Theoretically there is no relation between

technicity and the notion of the central sphere; for the latter is exclusively related to the Western mind. What could this theoretical accident suggest?

Technology and technicity refer to the very same entity and its political form. If technology is the engine of a romantic ideal (i.e., the rational urge), technicity is its fuel (i.e., the irrational drive). Juxtaposing these two energies as antinomial entities entails a provocative intention and to revitalize the premise “one creates a new sphere of struggle precisely through the shifting of the central sphere” (*N*, 138) against the romanticized end of history. Out of such an intellectual provocation Schmitt hopes to see a change in the *Zeitgeist* and he accordingly poses optimistic proposals: “the present century can only be understood provisionally as the century of technology” (*N*, 141), “a tentative characterization of the whole situation” (*N*, 134). And that the 20<sup>th</sup> century technological sphere is regarded as a transitory phase of history, Schmitt would relegate almost all the political movements to romantic fictitiousness, which would also overwhelm the content of his writings between 1919 and 1957 with the political objective to reorient technology.

One such theme investigated in great detail together with the end of history thesis is the world-state thesis. Regarded as the political form of political romanticism —thus, the movement towards “spaceless universalism”— Schmitt provides a comprehensive account of a coming world-state. The assessment of such a political entity is central to understand Schmitt’s political and philosophical orientation since a cluster of pivotal concepts and notions occurs in the context of the world-state analysis. To name a few, the concept of the political, political decisionism, the friend-enemy distinction, the total state thesis and the like are closely related to the world-state thesis.

-III-

**Ab Integro Nascitur Ordo**

“Where political activity begins, political romanticism ends...”

(Schmitt, Political Romanticism)

“Ever since Hegel’s death, everything is merely a countermovement...”

(Heidegger, Overcoming Metaphysics)

Why Schmitt calls Hobbes “the great decisionist” (*L*, 55) should be the real question for an investigation concerning the pedigree of the world-state thesis. Hobbes’ decisionism lies in the total *suspension* of the 16<sup>th</sup> century theological controversies and religious conflicts. This he achieved, according to Schmitt, by locating a rigid protection and obedience nexus at the heart of the modern state —that “the *protego ergo obliigo* is the *cogito ergo sum* of the state” (*CP*, 52). In Hobbes, peace and the political order were accomplished as a result of integrating the sovereign-representative person (the soul) with the state mechanisms (the body). However, in and through the dialectics of the neutralization process (outlined earlier), this particular Hobbesian composition has been turned upside-down, viz., that it has been neutralized. The modern state, both in theory and in practice, completely absorbed the sovereign-person within itself; that is to say, “the scientific human reason,” “inventiveness,” and “intelligence,” as Schmitt presents them, killed the sovereign-person and in turn transformed, once and for all, the soul into a machine (*L*, 33-34). Or, from a different dimension, one could well propose that Hobbes’ mortal god (*deus mortalis*) has been transformed into a machine, indeed, into a gigantic dynamo. Then what is (or who is) the new sovereign? Although Schmitt offers a grand scheme of neutralization, he has no direct answer to this question; and yet, in his writings, a significant guiding thread concerning the pre-configuration of the new sovereign power is available to us.

... [Hobbes's state] may even be regarded as *the first product of the age of technology*, the first modern mechanism in a grand style, as a *machina machinarum* in Hugo Fischer's appropriate formulation. With that state was created not only an essential intellectual or sociological precondition for the technical-industrial age that followed but also the typical, even the prototypical, work of the new technological era, the development of the state itself. (*L*, 34) [Italics added]

In Hobbes's modern state theory Schmitt finds the germ of the modern phenomenological motion and also the intrinsic scientific tendency towards technologization. Nevertheless, this observation does not hint at a complete negation of the state in question; rather, the neutralization process and the aforesaid technological trajectory inherent in the modern state preserve that which is negated (*Aufheben*). Both the shifts of the central spheres and the concepts embodied within those spheres, in other words, preserve those which are neutralized: "all significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts" (*PT*, 36; see also *CP*, 42).

Perhaps the most crucial and effective metamorphosis concerning the theories of the modern state occurred with the death of *deus mortalis* —namely, the neutralization of the sovereign-representative person. For Schmitt, modern technical advances, deistic philosophical constructions and above all, Kant's distinction between "living being" and "dead matter" are the primary causes of such an historic event (*L*, 41, 53, 65; *N*, 133-4). Out of Hobbes' *Leviathan* was born the secularized and technologized state of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, namely, *stato neutrale ed agnostico* (*L*, 56; *N*, 136, *WTT*, 8; *CP*, 22). In this context, the transmutation of the modern state, which exhibits Schmitt's reading of Hegelian dialectics, could be extended further that he must have in mind something more than a scholarly sketch of the Hegelian historicism. A closer investigation could suggest two pivotal implications in regard to the nature of the movement in question: at each shift

the progressive motion cancels ‘the transcendent’ while preserving it through an actualization on earth (e.g., divine authority [Aquinas] → divine sovereign-representative [Hobbes]); and next, all theological attributes of god (e.g., omnipotence, omnipresence and ubiquitousness) are preserved during the neutralization process and more importantly, the theological qualifications are articulated within the newly emerging state formations. Then, what would the romanticization of humanity and the so-called final faith in technology suggest in regard to this particular modern state theory? Has the form of the modern state transformed into a god-like entity, the church of *complexio oppositorum* (as Schmitt calls it) expanding its polymorphic domains of *dicta*? Has the King’s head really been cut off?

We should not resort to any form of speculation; we should rather assess what Schmitt deems to be the most profound transition that occurred in the 20<sup>th</sup>-century. We should investigate the emergence of the total state.<sup>30</sup> The total state is total to the extent that it permeates into all domains of life and to the extent that it represents the unity of the state and society. This process, Schmitt calls “the auto-organization of society,” where the previously held hierarchical distinction between the state and society is cancelled (or better, neutralized). ‘The people’ under the guise of the sociological category of society progressively takes the form and the image of a state; and moreover,

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<sup>30</sup> The question whether the total state could still be called a liberal state or at least a liberal form of state is an ambiguity in Schmitt’s writings. Thus, it would be a mere reduction to read Schmitt as the critic of liberalism—that an analysis of the total state requires more attention. He argues that the liberals of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century “have tied themselves to very illiberal, essentially political, and even democratic movements leading to the total state” and thereby they put an end to the neutral, liberal state of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century (*CP*, 69; see also, *WTT*, 9-10; *FD*, 22). To restate, the total state is neither neutral nor a liberal state; rather, as we shall see, it is the initial or transitory mode of state transforming itself into a world-state, which is totalitarian to the extent that it sets the parameters of humanness and inhumanness, and thus subdues any form of plurality, diversity and resistance. We shall return to Schmitt’s notes concerning “patriotism of species” and “world revolution” in the fourth chapter.

as Schmitt indicates, this new emergence explicitly sets forth “everything” as “potentially state-related and political” (*WTT*, 9, 15; see also, *CP*, 22, 44, 72). In other words, “the state-political and the societal-unpolitical spheres” have coalesced and thereby become blurred so that one cannot distinguish the purpose of one particular domain from the other domain.

Schmitt must have in mind an account of how ‘the people’ as well as the intellectuals have forgotten the orderly integrity and hierarchy, which are in essence substantially the logical derivations of ‘the political.’ And, at the same time, his investigation concerning the emergence of the total state must probably have enabled him to map the coming of a world-state. Political indifference, the movement towards mundane (economic) comfortableness and legal egalitarianism, and the desire to cancel particular aspects of human existence, that is, the unity of each and all, constitute according to Schmitt the essential link between the emergence of the total state and the coming-into-being of the world-state. And it is precisely in this context that Schmitt identifies the telos of the total state —the attainment of “universal happiness”. The total state “must bow to everybody’s wishes, please everyone, subsidize everyone and be at beck and call of conflicting interests at one and the same time” (*FD*, 23; see also *CP*, 53) and in short, “changed into a state, society becomes an economic state...a provider state” (*WTT*, 10, 13). And thus, for Schmitt, the total state is the quantitative total state; for it incessantly and progressively expands its “volume” and thereby claims to be universal. The total state in this sense is the most concrete manifestation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century technological era and hence the most significant outcome of the transformation of the romanticized parliamentary system. As such, in the writings of Schmitt, the total state is

the first transitional stage towards the formation of a world state —the unity of humanity.

Yet, it is hardly understandable that Schmitt still regards this particular development of the total state as a mere romantic fiction. He notes,

As long as a state exists, there will thus always be in the world more than just one state. A world state which embraces the entire globe and all of humanity cannot exist. The political world is a pluriverse, not a universe...The political entity cannot by its very nature be universal in the sense of embracing all of humanity and the entire world...Universality at any price would necessarily have to mean *total* depoliticalization and with it, particularly, the non-existence of states (*CP*, 53-54) [Emphasis added]

If the given circumstance and its material implications constitute a fictional world picture, then why does Schmitt need to pose a critique and call for an urgent assessment? And besides, if all those conclusive remarks on the total state express the fictitious character of the material conditions, does not the critique itself become a fiction? These questions must be the curious reflections which differentiate three irreducible standpoints concerning the formation of a world-state: accepting its facticity, denying its becoming, or recognizing that entity as possible and probable while concealing that recognition. In the fourth chapter we shall see what these three standpoints amount to. For the moment we need to restate some notes on the quantitative total state.

Schmitt thinks that the emergence of the total state should not be considered as a success of the mankind —that the state in question is an “empty farce” having no determinate boundaries to distinguish enemies and friends. And even the process itself, of its coming-into-being, reflects “not of its strength but of its weakness” (*FD*, 23). Here, Schmitt makes a crucial distinction between administration (or governance) and ruling in that, for him, the total state is politically weak because it only administers things. The total state in other words does not rule the people. Technical administrators, businessmen,

scientists and the like “govern” the total state as well as its future progress in that there is no “ruling” at all, a ruling which would clearly determine and foresee the parameters of a political community. And he concludes accordingly that where there is only ‘governing of things’ rather than ‘ruling the people,’ the eclipse of political integrity spontaneously emerges therein. The romantic political discourse has no such words as political community, integrity, order, let alone “the genuine state.” This must be the source of Schmitt’s ire. *Ab integro nascitur ordo*. And yet, at the bottom of the political mainstream —the romantic praxis— lies mediocrity which has nothing to do with integrity. However, although Schmitt correctly locates the dictates of the *Zeitgeist*, his reaction (or better, provocation) should not be overlooked. He proposes that “against the total state there is only one antidote, a revolution just as total” (*FD*, 20).

Recalling Schmitt’s outline of the intellectual psyche in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the sharpness of his argument above could be taken as an intellectual reaction against those who hinder political opposition to technological progress. And, in its depth, there is a certain logical line of argumentation in the writings of Schmitt, which would justify a total revolution: out of technology we cannot deduce anything other than technology, “neither a concept of cultural progress, nor a type of cleric or intellectual leader, nor a specific political system” (*N*, 139). Hence, the political position of the intellectuals is integral and key to an understanding of what that total revolution implies. Romantic melancholy, helplessness, hopelessness and pessimism of the intellectuals are preceded by the link Schmitt seeks to establish between “the philosophy of values” and the neutralization process. In this context, his *The Tyranny of Values* provides the definitive source of an investigation concerning the intellectuals for two explicit reasons: this text

expands the breadth of political romanticism and also establishes the link between political valorization and neutralization. “What are values?” asks Schmitt.

It should be noticed that the values talked about by the philosophy of values are not meant to have an existence of their own, but rather, validity. Value is not, rather, it validates. There are some people who talk of the ideal being of values. Nevertheless, such shades of meaning need not be deepened, because no matter what, values is not, but rather it validates...value readily implies a stronger urge to materialize. Value pines for direct actualization. It is not there, to be pointed to, but realization-prone and on the watch for enactment and execution (*TV*, 17).

A self-revelatory message is at stake: value (and thus valuation itself) should be action. Value is action and therefore the will to value is a will to act. Valuation is coeval with the energy to act upon material conditions. This value-praxis must be lacking in political romanticism. And, not only that. Schmitt makes a pivotal distinction between (the authentic existence of) values and the philosophy of values, the latter as the philosophical outcome of 19<sup>th</sup> century nihilism (or here, 19<sup>th</sup> century German Romanticism). “Both historically and philosophically, it is always true what Martin Heidegger had to say about the origin of the philosophy of values” (*TV*, 19) notes Schmitt acknowledging “the accuracy” of that mystic theologian. And, rather than posing an argument, he quotes Heidegger at length, indicating that “the dissemination of Nietzsche’s writings” is the accurate origin of the philosophy of values as an attempt to set out “a positivistic substitute for the metaphysical.” Apart from the seduction of Heidegger’s esoteric mind tricks, Schmitt finds the gigantic political transformation towards “the valorization of values.”

Against the ‘will to trans-value’ (Nietzsche), Schmitt defends, the ‘will to value’ (Nicolai Hartmann). For whereas in the former existential posture, value is a mere ideal awaiting to be eternally valorized, in the latter disposition “value ‘does not attach itself to

its ideal valuations', that is to say, 'the value-affected individual subject'" (*TV*, 20). The will to trans-value shies away from political action as a form of sheer impotent "perspectivism" and the will to value generate action culminating in 'the point of attack'. In brief, for Schmitt, the Nietzschean will to trans-value, like the Fichtean ego, is actualized by 20<sup>th</sup> century romantic-bourgeois intellectuals. Schmitt's purpose is more than a philosophical comparison of Nicolai Hartmann, Max Scheler, Nietzsche and Heidegger. He does not seem to be concerned with the neo-Kantian re-systematization and its scholarly commerce with philosophy, as Heidegger puts it; rather, he is interested in the socio-political corollaries of that valorization of values and its direct political impact upon the process of neutralization and depoliticalization. With somewhat obscure references to Weber, he notes that the attempts of the valorization of values have nothing to do with the concrete aspects of living —that they conceal, so to speak, the matter-of-factness of human existence. And besides all, again alluding to the romantic intellectuals, he remarks that valorizations of that sort render "the struggle more ghostlike and the fighters hopelessly dogmatic" (*TV*, 20). It seems, most probably, that Schmitt cannot think of life and existence without struggle and violence. Essential to human existence is for him the irreducible element of fighting (*Kampfen*), without which life dwells in the spaceless universalism devoid of any real content. Schmitt's position is of course disputable that human existence could hardly be reduced to a constant pursuit of struggle and violent posture. And yet, given the romantic-bourgeois praxis which has essentially no integrity and which strives to conceal the tensions of the real, material life, Schmitt's philosophical (not political) position might contain veracity.

Value must continuously value, that is to say, it must bring its influence to bear: otherwise it dissolves into an empty manifestation. Whoever says

value, brings its influence to bear and has it enacted. Virtues are practiced, norms are applied, orders are executed, but values are set up and enacted. Whoever asserts a value, must bring its influence to bear. Whoever maintains that it has value regardless of the influence brought to bear by any individual human being who endorses it, is simply cheating (*TV*, 21)

Blindness or cheating, the alliance of the romantic-bourgeois praxis and the authority of modern scientific-technical rationality is the foundation of indifference and neutralized political form. And again, blindness or cheating, Schmitt is convinced that “the genuinely subjective freedom of value setting leads...to an endless struggle of all against all, to an endless bellum omnium contra omnes” (*TV*, 20). How ‘the war of all against all’ is linked to the unity of humanity under the governance of the world state is the real question to which we shall seek an answer in the fourth chapter. For the moment, Schmitt suggests that the tyranny of values is at stake perpetuated and sustained by the romantic-bourgeois intellectuals after the end of history. The will to trans-value, while progressively emptying the content of the will to value, fosters an existential terror whereby everyone becomes the Robespierre-like tyrants within the total state. The romantic tyrants are overwhelmed by the earthly self-comfortableness and universal happiness by the great provider, the total state, so that they let all the events pass by. This must be the message of Schmitt. And this must be the source of his transparent irritation that leads him to prescribe a total revolution. Neutralization, depoliticalization, the world-state thesis and his notorious notions, decisionism as well as the political cannot and should be assessed without the context of political romanticism outlined hitherto. The real question is this: what does Schmitt formulate against the world picture he portrays?

“The sovereign is he who decides on the exception” (*PT*, 5) argues Schmitt and therein the exception signifies “a case of extreme peril, a danger to the existence of the

state” (PT, 6). *Ex nihilo nihil fit*. Schmitt, in an overly self-assured fashion, is utterly convinced that *Zeitgeist* verifies what he thinks to be true in regard to the romantic ethos outlined hitherto. The sharpness as well as the precision of this formulation on the sovereign and on the exception expresses the perfect exemplary of ‘will to value.’ In other words, in line with what he proposes (“value is not, but it validates”), the exception is his valuation (thus, ‘the real’ *hic et nunc*) to be enacted (“values are set up and enacted”). The exception is nevertheless not a singular spontaneous instrument. Nor does it connote an artificially constructed concept attached synthetically to the concept of the state; rather, for Schmitt, the exception is already a natural part of the state. This particular characterization refers back to Hobbes’ construction of the modern state. Schmitt’s interpretation of Hobbes suggests that the exceptional case in the writings of Hobbes was essentially linked to a mythical character, the *Behemoth*, which corresponds to the ever-present possibility of a revolution, i.e., civil war (L, 21, 35). However, with the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, as the corollary of the neutralization process, this particular notion of the exception “died.” The King’s head has been ‘theoretically’ cut off. The death of the exception is coeval with the death of the sovereign person. Not only that. With the profound impact of modern science and positivism, “the rationalism of the Enlightenment rejected the exception in every form” (PT, 37). If so, what co-determines the exceptional case, if any, within the quantitative total state? For Schmitt, there are only “disturbances” in the total state as ‘the efficient’ substitutes for ‘the exception’, those which are based simply on economic competition. An adversary is thus not an enemy proper but only an economic competitor. The political economy of universal happiness imposed by the total state administers the parameters of enmity; and through

neutralization and depoliticization, enmity transmutes into a form of disturbances. Or, figuratively speaking, rather than the friend-enemy distinction, there is “the good client” and “the bad client” distinction, which does not necessarily entail any form of struggle. Given the topology of the exception in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Schmitt’s task is crystal clear: to restore the original political dignity, *ergo* power, of the exception.

Re-monopolization of the finality of political decisions upon the exception is the only way to restore the discretionary political power (i.e., prudence) of the genuine state. To this end, Schmitt initially attacks liberal-bourgeois constitutional laws, namely, legal positivism which perpetuates and preserves the romantic praxis in the total state. “All law is situational law” (*PT*, 13) in the total state that legal positivism is the medium in and through which abnormalities are transformed into a form of normalcy. Political control and normalization of the matter-of-factness of human existence is accomplished through the administration of things, whilst suppressing ruling the people. Thus, to re-erect that which is forgotten and vanished —the authoritarian rule— Schmitt concludes that “authority proves that to produce law it need not be based on law” (*PT*, 13). *Auctoritas, non veritas facit legem*. And, as authority spontaneously implies the sovereign, it is the sovereign who “decides whether there is an extreme emergency as well as what must be done to eliminate it” (*PT*, 7).

Here, political authority in the above sense entails the creation of a political vacuum for two reasons: first, *hic et nunc* aspect of the total state implies contentlessness that it is already an existential vacuum by itself (yet not a political one) and next, from this first implication, authority *suspends* (following Hobbesian doctrines) everything previously held as authority, e.g., the negation of positivist laws. Consequently, out of the

political vacuum is born “the unlimited authority” which leads to “the suspension of the entire existing order” (*PT*, 12; see also, *D*, 16).<sup>31</sup> Here, a normless and exceptionless exception is at stake, which is completely, both theoretically and practically, unacceptable and should be intolerable; for it unlocks arbitrary energies of pure violence. And this must be the total revolution that Schmitt has in mind (which unfortunately took place). A curious scrutiny also reveals that the idea of total revolution reflects a substantial contradiction in regard to his line of argumentation, which strives to restore the historical movement (*aufheben*) of the central spheres. The total suspension of order in other words also entails the total suspension of the regular shifts of the central spheres. From a practical level whether the proposal in question is contradictory or not cannot be decided —since there is always contingency. Yet, supposing that theory precedes praxis (here with Schmitt it does), any political intervention to *Zeitgeist* suspending its determinate bridge (if any) with *Weltgeist*, it seems, would not render a contradiction. On the contrary. Schmitt thinks that,

[d]ictatorship seems to be an interruption of the continual series of development, a mechanical intervention in organic evolution. Development and dictatorship seem to be mutually exclusive. The

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<sup>31</sup> The suspension of the legal order means the total negation of existing laws and of the prevailing political order. The suspension as such liberates, so to speak, the political decision from all neutralized, secularized and depoliticalized norms, entailing further the emancipation of the exception which is not codified in legally positivist norms or laws. Moreover, the suspension is integral to an understanding of dictatorship in Schmitt’s system of thought. In his *Dictatorship*, where he offers a quasi-genealogical account of the concept of dictatorship, Schmitt makes a clear distinction between the commissarial dictatorship and the sovereign dictatorship in relation to the probable interventions to the exceptional case. The commissarial dictatorship is regarded as the limited form of dictatorship that its duration of holding power is short and above all, its sole purpose is to restore the existing circumstances —that the commissarial mode of dictatorship uses the exception for benign reasons. By contrast, the sovereign dictatorship is permanent and more importantly, it possesses an unlimited authority directed to create a new political order, i.e., a new beginning (*D*, 26, 141-142; see also, *PC*, 56-57). Schmitt’s notions of the total revolution, the total war and the total state embody the latter aspects of dictatorship —that he recognizes the exception and *Gegenaktion* in a sovereign form (at least in his Weimar period writings).

unending process of a world spirit (Weltgeist) that develops itself in contradictions must also include within itself even its own real contradiction, dictatorship, and thus rob it of its essence, *decision*...The essential point is that an *exception* never comes from outside into the immanence of development. (PC, 56) [Emphasis added]

Dictatorship is *a* moment wherein the decision rests latent and dormant, waiting to be actualized, in principle, by those who could grasp the moment of truth (here, the exception). Dictatorship is the will to value incarnate in the decision. These conclusions are nevertheless on the surface —that the 20<sup>th</sup> century itself constitute the exception and thus requires the dicta of the sovereign authority through decisionism. Underlying his views is Schmitt's intention to create a decisive combat between the two gods —*deus mortalis* and *numen praesens*. Now, this is not an interpretative deduction. Nor is this contention a mere speculation. The combat is conspicuously highlighted in Schmitt's philosophical orientation to displace Hobbes's (now technologized) mortal god (*deus mortalis*) by Hegel's temporal god (*numen praesens*). Whereas the former represents *a/the* present without a future (or, in legal terms, an eternal "status quo"), the latter expresses "finite infinity" (L, 100). Or, whereas *deus mortalis* presupposes an end-in-itself and an impasse in history, *numen praesens* projects towards the present vis-à-vis the future. This is Schmitt's radical Hegelianism incarnate only in *dicta*, which occurs to those who have not skipped the intermediary stages of history. Hegelianism, in this particular sense, implies a constant quarrel between those who have a compact with (Faustian) Mephisto and those who remain loyal to the constitution of (Plutarchian) Lycurgus.

Now, to restate what is at stake, Schmitt constantly seeks to reactivate the motion of history ("the energy") with the sovereign decision ("the majesty") and through 'the

political' ("the dignity"). And the abstractions outlined above, particularly those on *numen praesens*, find relevance and significance only when they are related with 'the exception' in question. Rather than any argument let us note how Schmitt reveals the essential link between the exception and the nature of an elitist intervention: "the exception confounds the unity and order of the rationalist scheme" (*PT*, 14) that "in the exception the power of real life breaks through the crust of a mechanism that has become torpid by repetition" (*PT*, 15). The will to value (Nietzsche) in alliance with both the technical-scientific rationality and politically romanticized domains of life creates the repetition and serves to sustain the eternal recurrence of the same within the rationalist scheme. Certainly, Schmitt's words are not passing remarks. They signal what "the miracle" is in his writings, which is integral to the understanding of the exception.

A politically valid solution to the progress of the total state, according to Schmitt, comes about only when the historical-consciousness coincides with the concrete reality; that is to say, the Hegelian *Weltgeist* has to recognize the exception *symbolically* as the miracle (*PT*, 36). The exception is the miracle; for it saves from the eternal recurrence of the same—from "the magic hand of chance." Schmitt of course did not have in mind the biblical image of the Christ 'touching the blind people'—that the miracle here has essentially no theological connotation or purpose at all. The sovereign decision upon the exception is the miracle rather because the decision comes out of *nothingness* (*TTJT*, 62; *PT*, 32). And it is theoretically a miracle because the Hegelian dicta cannot truly spring from (technical) contentlessness and move towards its essentiality within (existential) nothingness. Moreover, the notion of 'the miracle' is actually in accordance with Schmitt's authoritarian thesis that "authority proves that to produce law it need not be

based on law” (*PT*, 13). Prudent arbitrariness that reveals its substance in a violent form, as it comes to light, is also regarded as the miraculous decision. There are perhaps more than two implications of that which is miraculous in the writings of Schmitt. Yet, at the bottom of the human things, one should note that the exception as a miracle should be seen as a political metaphor signifying a direct intervention in the system totalized by technology—that it is violent dissent against the total state. And as such, it is also a radical intervention to the movement which may lead to “a world-state which embraces the entire globe and all of humanity” (*CP*, 53). All in all, in Schmitt, the world-clock shows the confrontation of the sovereign power (authorityless authority) with technology (autonomous authority).

To understand the matter-of-factness of the sovereign decision and its power, one must grasp how ‘the political’ is positioned in Schmitt’s theory as whole. Similar to the search for a ‘borderline concept’ pursued concerning the concept of the exception in his *Political Theology*, according to Schmitt, the specificity of the political can only be understood by revealing the dimensions of this particular concept without suggesting an exhaustive definition of it. For Schmitt, the political has its own criteria and above all, it has an intrinsic polarity in-and-for-itself. Distinct and autonomous from historically recognized distinctions, e.g., good and evil (morality), ugly and beautiful (aesthetics), “the specific political distinction to which political actions and motives can be reduced is that between friend and enemy” (*CP*, 26). Here, there is nothing cryptic, mysterious, esoteric or theological about the specificity of the political—the political is nothing but the essence of pure violence. Likewise, a theorist recognizing Hegel’s success right from the beginning as an irreducible premise and principle must have in mind, of course, Hegel

while presenting such integral concepts. Hegel's understanding of negation (*Aufheben*) as well as the Hegelian movement (*Bewegung*) necessarily imply violence (which is absent in the bourgeois-romantic praxis) particularly once an absolute value is ascribed to the political (*Begriff*). The governing (internal) dynamic of the friend and enemy distinction is the ever-present possibility of violent conflicts. In other words, the fear of the anthropologically contingent is the political which transforms the quality of the political into quantitatively formed collectivities. For Schmitt, the leading intellectuals of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century however failed to grasp the autonomy and the specificity of the political, and in turn resort of false perceptions of the spirit,

A life which has only death as its antithesis is no longer life but powerlessness and helplessness. Whoever knows no other enemy than death and recognizes in his enemy nothing more than an empty mechanism is nearer to death than life...*A grouping* which sees on the one side only spirit and life and on the other only death and mechanism signifies nothing more than *a renunciation of the struggle* and amounts to nothing more than a romantic lament. For life struggles not with death, spirit not with spiritlessness; spirit struggles with spirit, life with life... (*N*, 142) [Emphasis added]

The will to trans-value is the basis for Schmitt to propose that the enemy cannot and should not be positioned as a dead mechanism or a spiritless entity—that technology as well as the total state does not mirror Cervantes' windmills. More explicitly, the will to trans-value generates Don Quixote's praxeology. Renunciation of the struggle vis-à-vis the romantic bourgeois world-view must reside therein since, for Schmitt, the romantic world articulates the complete rupture from the concrete world. What is uniquely emphasized by the term 'the concrete world' is nonetheless the specificity of a culture (*Bildung*). In other words, Schmitt replaces Hegel's notion of 'the content' with that of culture and in turn, he seeks pragmatic ways to equate 'contentlessness' with cultural

blindness; for technology is, in his account, by nature “culturally blind” (*N*, 139). This should be Schmitt’s romantic conservatism similar to that of the 19<sup>th</sup> century scholars (actually the German Romantics), those who had rigid and exclusionary parameters of German culture based on the distinction between Germans and un-Germans.

Schmitt’s perspective on culture translates itself, almost spontaneously, into the notion of the political. A culture if it remains blind to itself, that is, to its spirit, according to Schmitt, implies political impotency to the extent that culture cannot verify “the other... [as] existentially something different and alien” (*CP*, 27). In this context, blindness explicitly suggests the progressive cancellation of the ever-present possibility of the conflict embodied in the other; for the essence of the political is the recognition of the possibility of the most extreme case, the possibility of physical killing and therewith, the negation of “one’s form of existence” (*CP*, 27). Rather than a pluralistic anthropological optimism, the radical anthropological contingency, i.e., dangerousness and seriousness, dictates the terms of the political. In brief, Schmitt’s writings suggest that culture is inherently and by nature violent.

Moreover, unlike Hobbes’s state of nature within which the dangerousness of human-beings is based on individualism, Schmitt’s notion of dangerousness and seriousness possess a dormant potentiality to generate decisive, collective groupings based on friend and enemy distinction. The fear of death (or the idea of death) emanating from radical contingency, which totters and shakes human existence to the degree of losing all the stable supports of existence, unites the solitary individuals and in turn politicizes the content of their existence. There is no doubt that here Schmitt alludes to Hegel and in fact, he ascribes both anthropological and sociological —and thus,

political— dimension to Hegel’s understanding of fear. Let us listen to Hegel on this particular issue.

For this [slave’s] consciousness was not in peril and fear for this element or that, nor for this or that moment of time, it was afraid for its entire being; it felt the fear of death, the sovereign master. It has been in that experience melted to its inmost soul, has trembled throughout its every fibre, and all that was fixed and steadfast has quaked within it. This complete perturbation of its entire substance, this absolute dissolution of all its stability into fluent continuity, is, however, the simple, ultimate nature of self-consciousness, absolute negativity, pure self-referent existence, which consequently is involved in this type of consciousness (*Phenomenology*, #194)

It is the teleological dimension of (an irreducible) fear once translated into ‘the political’ and disseminated into ‘the social’ which creates the motion of history. And it is the same teleological aspect of fear once transfigured into a form of political permanency which reveals the content of Schmitt’s ‘the political’. Yet, theological or conservative, anthropological or sociological, nothing changes the fact that once the Hegelian *Zeitgeist* is interpreted as finite infinity and the trajectory of *Weltgeist* as indeterminate determinacy, the political aspect of those few who bear the historical motion implies violence, elitism and political realism—in turn, the political itself becomes inescapable. And likewise conflating all these dimensions with the specificity of a particular culture would most probably imply a series of quests to justify the horrific means to attain that which is genuine, authentic or pure. *Ne quid nimis, omnia causa fiunt*—that this is the struggle of culture as ‘finite infinite’ and humanity as ‘infinite finite’. And this is the conflict, which Schmitt wants to see actualized, between the future and the present without a future.

To continue with Schmitt’s refutation of the romantic political praxeology, the private individual lacks a self-sacrificial disposition against a probable collective enemy.

He deems (legally) private persons' notion of enmity as a form of sentimental mood — in short, the bourgeois romantic individual possess only 'hatred' that is enclosed within itself. The private enemy (*inimicus*) is therefore not an authentic measure by which a counter-friend-and-enemy grouping can be formed. A true enemy, in his account, is “the public enemy” (*hostis*) who has the potential capacity to combat and to annihilate an adversary's both physical being and the form of existence (*CP*, 28-9). The enemy in the final analysis prepares existential and anthropological grounds which in turn render “the utmost degree of intensity of a union or separation, of an association or dissociation” (*CP*, 26) and therefore, as Schmitt remarks, “the concept of the state presupposes the concept of the political” (*CP*, 19).

The decision to act upon and combat belongs nevertheless to the state, the ultimate political entity. The mobilization of political action derived from the state's right of a *hostis* declaration (*jus belli*), according to Schmitt, “transcends all other associations or societies” (*CP*, 47), i.e., religious communities, economic associations. Declarations of *hostis* are extra-economic, trans-religious and most probably, trans-moral. For no other societal association possess “the right to demand from its own members the readiness to die and unhesitatingly to kill enemies” (*CP*, 46). The autonomy of the political mentioned here does away with all normative and neutral conceptions; for such autonomy seeks constantly to instill the absolute fear of physical killing. Schmitt has in mind the re-assertion of the obedience and protection relation that sets the foundation of a “genuine state,” a state which is “strong” not quantitatively but qualitatively. The defense of violence here becomes more transparent. The genuine state is the total state formed “with regard to quality and energy” and which can “discriminate between friend and enemy”

(*FD*, 21-22). The theoretical appearance of the quantitative total state based on the dynamics of the political is juxtaposed against the quantitative total state. It seems thus far that Schmitt positions himself like the legendary lawgiver of Sparta, Lycurgus, who set forth the political authority and will in a way that, as Plutarch notes in his *Life of Lycurgus*, “no one was permitted to live as he chose, but all lived in the city as in a soldiers’ camp” (paragraph 24).

### **Conclusion**

What could the second chapter suggest *summa summarum*? Political romanticism is a metaphysical movement possessing its distinct political and existential form, which is essentially unique and substantially different from the liberal or socialist parameters — that political romanticism is an end-in-itself which possesses a determinate *telos*. The movement towards the creation of a world-state in and through the quantitative total state is the stately teleology and the progressive depoliticalization and neutralization through the authority of technical-scientific thinking is the sociological *telos* of political romanticism. The citizen as well as the intellectual of this particular transitory stage is the romantic-bourgeois, who is essentially atheist (non-metaphysical), passive (non-negative) and perfectly self-conscious of himself as a being-in-the-world. The administration of things rather than ‘political-ruling’ dictates the political parameters of a politically romantic state form —that technology regulates and governs the people. At the heart of this transition lies forgetfulness as well as indifference that the political aspect of existence has yet to be negated.

There is no need to restate once again that the observations made above are defended by Kojève and reacted to by Schmitt. And yet, it is an imperative to state that Schmitt’s unacceptable revolt against political romanticism is truly romantic. He

aestheticizes political action to the extent that action acquires pure violence and hence existence purely militarist existence. The politics of the few, which reduces existence to bare existence, is a violent romantic form. However, accusing Schmitt in this way does not and should not imply that we need not assess and investigate the world-picture he portrays. Not his practical orientation but the particular delineation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century *Zeitgeist* should in other words not be skipped. For history proved the horrific consequences of that which is Schmitt's political.

The politics of the few, once romanticized, could not and cannot move beyond practical failures —that history reveals its content as an anachronistic-error. Romantic-radicalization of the few, that is, Schmitt's politically romantic-violence is a theoretical mistake as well (if not an accident) that it cannot answer the question 'who or what next?' *Diktat* incarnate in man (or vice versa) cannot, as history verifies, attain infinitude that tyrant or dictator, man is mortal and yet, aesthetically immortal. The latter, the aesthetic immortality of man (or man-as-idea) is what the theoretical gap, which supplies, while preserving the transparency of violence and struggle, the question 'who or what next?' In other words, a theoretico-practical way to correct the fatal error of Schmitt could only be the aesthetization of the immortal idea, not the man incarnate in an immortal idea.

This takes us to the third chapter on Strauss whose mentor was Schmitt. Not 'the few', which cannot theoretically maintain and practically sustain a totalitarian system, but 'the rare' would be Strauss' solution in counter-acting the very same world-picture drawn by both Kojève and Schmitt. The politics of the rare would strive for erecting what Schmitt wanted to achieve; and this, as Strauss would present it, would not be through an intervention in the political but the philosophical. And not the political mechanisms but

the educational institutions would be Strauss' ultimate target —that he would try to invent a mythical culture in order successfully reorient technology (*Erziehung zur Bildung*). In the third chapter one must bear in mind that the direct political opponent of Strauss is Kojève. And indeed he owes a profound intellectual debt to Kojève that Hegel in his writings must be read as Kojève's Hegel and above all else, his interpretation of the classics as well as the political project he envisages is borrowed from Kojève's interpretation and formulations —in short, Strauss intellectual trajectory and capacity were rigidly dependent on what Kojève elaborated as a system.

## CHAPTER III

### The Descend

“I do not wish to persuade anyone to philosophy: it is inevitable, it is perhaps also desirable, that the philosopher should be a *rare* plant...” (Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*)

“Making itself intelligible is suicide for philosophy...” (Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy*)

### -I-

#### Introduction

This chapter aims to expose the relation of philosophy to politics in the writings of Strauss. Considering the breadth and depth of this particular subject, this chapter will be concerned with three interrelated themes in the writings of Strauss: the city of the ancient Greeks, liberal education and modernity. In Strauss’ political and philosophical trajectory these themes occur in response to what he calls, the catastrophic crisis of the West and its political form as the technological world-state. He argues that “the crisis of West consists in the West’s having become uncertain of its purpose” (*CM*, 3) and thus “the return to classical philosophy is both necessary and tentative or experimental” (*CM*, 11). Strauss furthermore qualifies this romantic world picture of his own with the claim that there exists a “quarrel between the ancients and the moderns” (*LAM*, xi). Precisely from the content of ‘the quarrel,’ this thesis argues, Strauss’ interpretative works of the classics, his elaboration of liberal education and his critique of modernity—in short, those which are written under the guise of ‘the philosophical’—turn out to be parts of a grand political project, namely, ‘the return to Athens project’.

Now, a brief glance, in place of an outline, is necessary. In the writings of Strauss, the crisis of the West in the 20<sup>th</sup> century could be briefly defined as the spread of decadence, i.e., “intoxication” by radical relativism, historicism and nihilism. For him, decadence of the spirit which bears us today emanates from a conscious and intentional struggle against the ancient way of living. And moreover, for Strauss, if the engine of this

struggle is the march towards the erection of a technological world-state, the fuel of this decadent movement is the appearance of the modern man. The modern man or precisely *homo novus* is portrayed as the vulgar, progressive and even wise man to the extent that this man is perfectly self-conscious of the quarrel against the ancients, entailing that the rise of the masses are assumed to be perfectly successful against the traditional political authorities. For Strauss, in brief, the eclipse of ‘true’ philosophy and the demise of ‘magnanimous way of life’ mark the essence of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Strauss of course does not think of these to be true; indeed, he rather firmly believes that these are true and real, *ergo* factual. In this context, by borrowing ideas and conclusions of prominent thinkers of his time —notably, Kojève and Schmitt— and with a messianic posture, Strauss envisions a talmudic savior, namely, the classical man, who is positioned at the heart of the assumed quarrel between the moderns and the ancients as a political means to generate a series of reactions against modernity. In addition to this holy purpose, he ascribes new values (hence, definitions) to the city of the ancient Greeks, which are almost identical to the passionate glorification of classical philosophers by 19<sup>th</sup> century Romantics and which are similar to Heidegger’s mystical call for an immediate reassessment of the ancients. And, thus, when he writes “the theme of political philosophy is the City and Man” (*CM*, 1), he gives the essential and adequate source of his political project: seductive mysticism of the city and Dionysian trans-valuation of the classical man govern his political trajectory.

Strauss does not and cannot think through reason. Nor does he present a historical account. He rather resorts to a belief system based upon mystified interpretations of the classical texts and upon their trans-valued expressions. And yet, Strauss does not interpret

classical texts but rather accords 'what he reads' to his political project. Plato's dialogues and Aristotle's treatises take primacy in his teaching (or political doctrine); and, beneath the logic of interpretation of these prominent classics resides his indoctrinative-formative political system. Plato and Aristotle express, according to Strauss, a decisive political collaboration; they represent the vanguards of classical perception of the so-called harmonious and healthy city, a perception of which is, for Strauss, still relevant and viable today. Thus, when he asserts that "the city comprises state and society," he simply aims to cancel the apparent anachronism inherent in his readings; for he later notes, the modern equivalent of the city is "the country" (*CM*, 30-1). Here, what is at stake is more than a longing and nostalgic eros —rather, a grand political project. On Strauss' view, what was viable and real for the ancients is still possible and feasible, which is introduced as the only way to save humankind from modern decadence: the old city of the ancients must be urgently re-erected. The relation of politics to philosophy in the writings of Strauss lies precisely in his formulation of the city.

## -II-

### **Politics of 'the rare' and classical decisionism**

As Strauss presents, albeit obliquely, the city has a tripartite dimension: philosophical, political and doxological. Unseparated and inseparable in its form, these three constitutive realms form a conglomeration of both quantitative and qualitative groupings based on nature: the rare (philosophers), the few (politicians) and the many (the people). Ranking, distance and hierarchy based on nature mark, qualitatively and quantitatively, the pedigree of this architectonic configuration of the city. In brief, the city is established, as Strauss asserts, upon classical aristocracy. Now, this is not new to us. Medieval philosophers, those who were actually and essentially theologians or

theosophers, had almost identical views on an ought-to-be structure of a city as a form of reflection or of emulation of the nature (e.g., Farabi's *The Virtuous City*). But, none of these political projections could attain the level of permanency in the course of human history; nor did some reach matter-of-factness in that most of these political forms could not go beyond being a mere utopia. Strauss' political ambition lies before us on this subject matter. To correct and hence, to revitalize—in short, to “up-to-date”— what has earlier been deemed as natural and righteous political system, he mediates Nietzsche's ‘philosopher of the future’ (i.e., the rare) vis-à-vis the classical distinction between the few and the many. This, the modern up-date of classicism, demands further reflections to posit an adequate understanding of the relation of politics to philosophy in the writings of Strauss.

Strauss follows Heideggerian lines of reading what philosophy for the ancients was. Yet, he positions, unlike Heidegger, the philosopher at the top of the natural-hierarchical ranking as though philosophy is a religious activity. The philosopher appears to us within a priestly mediation process, an endless striving to attain a sublime horizon, e.g., the transcendent in Plato's theory of forms, the metaphysical ascend to an eternal existence and so forth. Philosophy reflects, as he contends, “knowledge that one does not know...it is knowledge of what one does not know, or awareness of the fundamental problems and, therewith, of the fundamental alternatives regarding their solution that are coeval with human thought” (*NR*, 82). This remark is the beginning of how Strauss theologizes philosophy and mystifies its content while detaching, however *prima facie*, its counterpart in praxis. Philosophy is presented as an endless quest for knowledge of ‘the whole,’ of that which rests in a presumed unknown. On his account, possibilities and

potentialities that bridge praxis to theory or theoria to praxis seems to be canceled. Let us reflect upon what is at stake here in detail.

For Strauss, a pathway to wisdom is impossible and improbable; and, this, an infinite quest for wisdom, is rooted, on a theoretical plane, in Socratic question ‘what is’ which has a “trans-historical” character “by nature”. Philosophical activity and its content remain an eternal striving to grasp ‘what is’, radically transcending *hic et nunc* dimension of existence. Justice for instance, according to Strauss, can never be actualized, partially or perfectly, in reality; or, conversely, matter-in-space-and-time has no relatedness to contemplation. Strauss does away with the active (or positive) content of philosophy to the extent that matter-of-factness has no relevance to philosophical contemplation. Thus, passive (or pure) contemplation seems to appear the credo of philosophy. The real question then is this: is there any difference between contemplating ‘what is’ and presupposing a predetermined unattainable unknown, i.e., ‘the whole’ referred constantly in Strauss’ writings?

The question above can find a real and meaningful expression only when one asks whether theology and classical philosophy can be reconciled. To restate the earlier proposal, Strauss’ reading of classical philosophers is thoroughly shaped by political intentions of medieval philosophers of Islam and Judaism as well as Nietzsche’s philosophical disposition: to keep the gates of political rule under strict controls in accordance with the dictates of nature and therewith, to justify any means of political action through nobility claims. This perspective cannot be detached from Strauss’ views on philosophy and its contemplative act. Strauss synthesizes natural right doctrine with Nietzsche’s nobility, i.e., natural superiority as a political form. A crucial conclusion

shines forth accordingly that Strauss' standpoint is neither philosophical nor theological but theosophical. One such justification point, among others, is notable to mention. "The first philosopher was the first man who discovered nature" (NR, 82) notes Strauss, that is, philosophy is coeval with the discovery of nature (or of 'the things'); and he later qualifies this with a belief that "the discovery of nature is identical with the actualization of a human possibility which...is trans-historical, trans-social, trans-moral, and trans-religious" (NR, 89). Here, in its depth, he offers the definition of theosophy emanating from a pragmatist reading of theology and classical philosophy.

Moreover, once we think of the required qualifications of philosophizing, those which are marked by 'trans-', it becomes visible that the creation of such a prototype falls under the category of 'the rare'. And, it is in this sense timeless solitude and aesthetic immorality (i.e., immunity from any theologico-social order) is carefully designed. Not only that. This, the quixotic depiction of the philosopher, implies two significant points not to be dismissed: 1) articulation of corrective measures, those which do away with anthropological errors of practicing pure theology or contemplation, i.e., madness; 2) birth of a political cult, i.e., radical politicization of philosophy and theology. Theosophy or more precisely, presence of philosophers in this sense implies and reveals 'the political' in the writings of Strauss. Through Strauss' interpretation, logos-wisdom interaction —the expression of the tension between *hic et nunc* and eternal—transmutates into the political elevation of logos to the horizon of a divine simulacra. What lies before us is a contradiction to an extreme degree: first philosophers appeared as passive contemplators taking refuge into absolute solitude and next, they appeared as the

bearers of the political. The vital question for now is then whether Strauss' philosopher remains futile or impotent in the city.

Let us first contextualize what philosophy stands for in regard to the logos-wisdom interrelation. On his view, attainment of wisdom is impossible and improbable even for the wisest of all; yet not, of course, due to the character of wisdom but rather due to the ultimate weakness of man, i.e., anthropotheistic imperfection. Human wisdom achieved through contemplation (that is, philosophy) mirrors or mimics imperfect wisdom—as he notes, “philosophy is essentially not possession of the truth, but the quest for the truth” (*WPP*, 11; *CM*, 20). Then, does the philosopher withdraw from the affairs of the city? In answering these questions Strauss puts forth his opinions in crystal clear terms. Since contemplation is a quest, that is, an eternal striving to replace opinions with knowledge through contemplative activities and since complete solitude results in madness,<sup>32</sup> in Strauss' system the philosopher of the city must find “competent friends,” those who are “competent by nature” to philosophize. Philosophy here takes the form of a “discussion,” a mere practice of “conversation” between “competent friends” and as such, based upon the natural right doctrine—a doctrine which identifies here intellectual and natural capacity—philosophy is experienced only as a dialogue through friendship.

The anatomy of this grouping is worth considering.<sup>33</sup> Theosophical friendship, under the guise of philosophical contemplation, is the pedigree of political indoctrination.

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<sup>32</sup> Here, purely passive contemplation widens the gap between subjective and objective convictions. An idea, in and for itself, is purely subjective to the extent that consciousness or awareness does not inhibit in and of itself—that it requires, consciously or unconsciously, objective conviction to become an idea incarnate in flesh. Thus, for instance, purely passive contemplation becomes a matter of error (therefore, madness), if not substantiated by objective conviction, i.e., speech or writing.

<sup>33</sup> We propose however that Kojève's critique of Strauss in regards to this particular point is the best demonstration of the real intentions of Strauss; therefore, we shall return to this issue later in the fourth chapter.

Pure contemplation is coeval with the birth of political eros that exists only between and among competent friends since it assumes (aristocratic) natural superiority. The political radically precedes the philosophical in Strauss' account; his natural-right thesis emanates from political intentions and not from philosophical concerns. Rather than "saving" classical philosophy, he aims to rationalize the natural right doctrine which projects to rule 'the many' by those who are "naturally superior". Here, political decision, which belongs substantially to the rare, is carefully concealed.

And yet, on the other hand, Strauss indicates that "philosophy will never go beyond the stage of discussion or disputation and will never reach the stage of decision" (*WPP*, 11). But, when he specifies that philosophical discussion "never" reaches "the stage of decision," his intention is to differentiate atemporal 'the political' from the temporal one; theosophical friends should still "decide" but not based on the matter-of-factness of *hic et nunc*. Rather, trans-historical, trans-moral or trans-religious dimensions dictate the parameters of political decisions given by the rare.<sup>34</sup>

The real question is then how Strauss' theosophers interact with and dictate the terms of the political. How can "the competent friends of philosophy" partake in the social and the political? To be sure, in his doctrine, the gap between theory and practice cannot be bridged permanently; that is to say, the bridge between the trans-historical and *hic et nunc* can only be sustained temporarily, implying that philosophy can neither participate nor contribute nor directly assist the social and the political. But, as argued

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<sup>34</sup> In Strauss' view Plato's dialogues, for instance, constitute those fictional dimensions and hence "inspire" the policy makers, politicians and political philosophers. *Republic* taken then as a trans-historical foundation contains infinite combinations from which political directives emanate. Decisionism through trans-valuation of the classical rationality is therefore a radical turning point in Strauss' writings. For herein finds the so-called tension between the ancients and the moderns a genuine expression.

earlier, this is certainly not the case: the philosophers are, in Strauss' opinion, the hidden political rulers. The trans-historical and its alleged existing horizon are fictitious; it is the writings of classical philosophers which constitute that (unknown) horizon, primarily that of Plato and Aristotle. To be more precise, the trans-historical is the hermeneutical.<sup>35</sup> In regard to theological texts Strauss' perspective holds certain validity; Talmud, Bible and Quran, all these are interpreted based on the assumption that there exists a contingent, unknown or beyond-being realm. Or, even, classical writings could be interpreted as such—which would still be a fiction. But, contrary to all these, Strauss' interpretations are not interpretations proper; his works function only to justify and maintain a pre-designed and predetermined system of thought, a condition which doubles the degree and extent of fictionalization. In Strauss, classical philosophy, that is, both content and context of philosophy, loses authenticity and originality.

To this, Strauss assumes that intellectual capacity and skill for interpretation are not open to all; indeed, philosophy is open only to those who are “fit for philosophy” and for those who are “naturally competent” and “chosen”. Here, what comes to light is Strauss' second category: political philosophers. As hybrid prototypes, political philosophers are positioned in the city to prevent permanent and direct interaction between the political (and/or the social) and the philosophical wherein the departure of

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<sup>35</sup> The split between author and text radically heightens, particularly, when it possesses a quality of ‘the oldest,’ ‘the first,’ ‘the rare,’ etc; and besides, the schism as such doubles once we attribute hermeneutical or romanticized values to the text. It is in this context that the dialogical format of writings (i.e., Plato's dialogues) receives a surplus value for esotericism—they possess infinitely different interpretative reading possibilities. According to Strauss, for instance, every word has a specific purpose, function and place in the dialogues of Plato; and as underlined earlier, for him, words and their combinations have esoteric messages, specifically addressed to those who are “fit to comprehend by nature.” Out of these comes order, Strauss believe; for the classics, in his reading, concealed the prophetic messages between the lines, the messages which are assumed to be still ‘applicable’ today. Implications of this subject matter are further discussed throughout this chapter.

political philosophy from philosophy (or theosophy) resides. For Strauss, “in the expression ‘political philosophy’, ‘philosophy’ indicates the manner of treatment: a treatment which both goes to the roots and is comprehensive, ‘political’ indicates both the subject matter and the function” (*WPP*, 10). The ultimate trajectory of a political philosopher is “to replace opinion about the nature of political things by knowledge of the nature of the political things” (*WPP*, 11). The question of ‘what is’ transforms into the examination of ‘what is political’ by the political philosopher; and in turn, the political philosopher acquires responsibility (only) for ‘the political things.’ Figuratively, Strauss’ account amounts to the idea that Socrates was a philosopher (i.e., conversation [speech]) and that Plato was a political philosopher (i.e., conversation and writing [speech and deed]).

Looking at Strauss’ project from a broad perspective, the following observations in regard to political philosophy could be made: 1) political philosophers are those who interpret philosophical dialogues; 2) they translate esotericism into exotericism when necessary, that is, depending on evolving political circumstances; hence, 3) political philosophy is positioned as an ‘in-between’ realm which rests between philosophy and politics or sociology, between the rare and the few; and thus 4) political philosophy is the bearer of ‘the tradition’ that carries forth the trans-historical and *hic et nunc* interrelation. Political philosophy in short is the ultimate instrument both to advance the order of rank (i.e., natural hierarchy) and to preserve nature. It is in this sense that Strauss aims to overcome progressive depletion of nature while assuming the task of a political philosopher. To this end, for him, in aspiring political philosophy, philosophy directly “humanizes and civilizes the city and man” (*LAM*, 25) since “political philosophy is the

attempt truly to know both the nature of political things and the right, or the good, political order” (*WPP*, 12). ‘The right, or the good, political order’ is the political order desired, and yet not actualized, by Plato and his competent friends.<sup>36</sup> As modern political philosophers Strauss and his friends claim to find ‘that which is right and good’ for a political order; and, they suggest accordingly that political philosopher must monopolize political decision and judgment while orienting the course of political action. What is at stake is indeed the formula of *classical decisionism* elaborated by Strauss.

To define classical decisionism is to bring forth an outline of what has been hitherto assessed. In Strauss’ account, classical decisionism, in entailing three constitutive horizons of existence —phenomenology, metaphysics and ontology— assumes the character of a tripartite interaction: mystified theosophical esotericism of philosophers, its translation into exotericism (i.e., politicization of ‘the idea,’ [e.g. ideology]) vis-à-vis chosen political philosophers and subsequently, its actualization in the form of (conducting) a political action, i.e., change. Classical decisionism, at the risk of crudely summarizing, is the concrete political design constructed among and between the rare and the few to rule the many.

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<sup>36</sup> At this point, it is necessary to note that ‘the right or the good order’ in Strauss’ account presupposes two vital conditions: the acceptance of “one’s country or one’s nation as the most comprehensive or the most authoritative association” and as we highlighted earlier, interpretation of the classics. The former condition, without doubt, does not require any argumentation. Not only in theory but also in practice, it is shallow and exclusionary. The latter however should be elaborated. That Strauss’ hermeneutical is the political and that the interpreter is the political philosopher were noted earlier. In seeking to establish the right or the good order, political philosopher interprets, according to him, only the works of the ancients. But this mystic call for hermeneutics is illusionary. In his case, political decisions or judgments do not come out of such a reading-interpretation practice. Strauss’ own interpretation is required to be interpreted, which indeed constitutes the dictum of his project. We shall return to this point later, particularly when elaborating his liberal education thesis.

Now, the question is by what means an interpretation can partake in reality and in turn, become a principle of political action. To conduct decisions and to translate judgments into (political) action, Strauss invents another category which is utterly different from philosophy and political philosophy: political science. His opinion for this further departure in the city is crystal clear that, political philosophers lack “the leisure not only for political activity but even for founding political science” (*CM*, 29). Political science is the expression used to connote the few, those who are positioned to rule the many and conduct (not to say, decide) the smooth functioning of the political project. The few, in other words, do not rule but govern, for they are located at a lower level of natural hierarchy; and Strauss refers to them as “the gentlemen.”<sup>37</sup> Elaboration of the gentleman nevertheless does not answer why philosophers or political philosophers do not govern.

Philosophers are not incapable of governing (or conducting political affairs); rather, according to Strauss, “it is extremely unlikely that the conditions required for the rule of the wise will ever be met” (*NR*, 141). And, even if the conditions are mature, philosophers cannot govern because “the rule of the wise dependent on election by the unwise or consent of the unwise would mean to subject what is by nature higher to control by what is by nature lower, i.e., to act against nature” (*NR*, 141). Strauss’ message could be understood only when one distinguishes ruling from governing. Behind the curtain philosophers “decide” and rule; yet, if they govern (i.e., revealing who they are),

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<sup>37</sup> Strauss and his friends claim to find the existence of such an ontologically distinct character in the texts of Plato. His disciple Allan Bloom, for instance, translated and interpreted Plato’s *Republic* with an unprecedented emphasis on ‘gentlemanliness’ in Athens. They are manifested as the heroic, well-educated and well-bred guardians of the city. Philologically and historically, the term gentleman in the classical sense (if any) cannot move beyond absurdity; that is to say, portrayal is radically fictitious and extremely quixotic. Anthropological dimension, however, of this almost mythical and (allegedly) naturally superior character should be dealt with. Thus, rather than asking ‘who’ the gentleman is, about which there is no meaningful account, the question is what “gentlemanliness” is.

it would threaten their existence. Out of paranoia and obsessed with secrecy, Strauss notes that the natural right of philosophers would act “as a dynamite for civil society” (*NR*, 153). Who would not rebel against those who are ruling over the masses based on natural selection? Who would not march against those who are imposing a concealed form of racial purification? Classical decisionism in this sense, simply discredit and suppress these questions, must of course hide its real program, which is successfully undertaken by Strauss and Straussian logic. And, that is why, and for no other reason, Strauss differentiates philosophy, political philosophy and political science from one another, simply to conceal the intention, goal and futuristic act of his doctrine. And, in each departure, political decisions are translated from esotericism to exotericism thereby rendering everything else fictional, automatic extensions of philosophy. Let us turn to political science and the concept of ‘gentlemanliness’ to elaborate on this issue.

“The gentleman is not identical with the wise man” argues Strauss and then, he goes on to indicate that “he is the political reflection, or imitation, of the wise man. Gentleman has this in common with the wise man that they ‘look down’ on many things which are highly esteemed by the vulgar or that they experience in things noble and beautiful” (*NR*, 142). The identification is self-explanatory. The gentlemen are those who are “by nature” capable of conducting the political; and yet, they are those who do not possess the so-called natural capacity to contemplate upon things or on political things. These implications are on the surface however; as argued earlier, the caricature of gentlemen is a mere theoretical maneuvering tool. The presence of gentlemen conceals ruling (or the political) based on nature. Strauss describes this link without hesitation. Gentlemen rule the city in view of ‘what is political good and right’ rather than ‘what is

good by nature' but for one unique reason: "‘the politically good is' what removes a vast mass of evil without shocking a vast mass prejudice" (NR, 153). Here, suffice it to note that 'evil' corresponds to the people and 'prejudice' to modernity.

Moreover, anthropocentric potentiality separates the gentleman from the rare and the many, which is expressed as gentlemanliness. The question turns out to be who selects the few. Since gentlemanliness is regarded by Strauss and his followers as a dormant potentiality requiring a "guide" to be actualized, political science and education become a matter of curiosity. The target of political education is the youth; and the epicenter of education of the youth is indoctrination, which shifts Strauss' reference point from Plato to Aristotle or precisely, from classical dialogues to classical treatises. For Strauss, the true political science is founded by Aristotle; that is to say, "treaties" rather than "dialogues" address to the gentleman since they "teach directly" how to rule to "the noble and well-bred men" (CM, 21, 28). He accordingly indicates that "comprehensive and coherent understanding of political things is available to us in Aristotle's *Politics* precisely because the *Politics* contains the original form of political science..." (CM, 12). Aristotle, it is true, had no political ambition like that of Plato and his friends; and he wrote treatises within a more concrete framework compared to Platonic dialogues. This however does not explain the shift in the writings of Strauss in regard to the politics.

Strauss revalues under the disguise of interpretation Aristotle's writings to conceal his political agenda or precisely, his return-to-Athens project. The sole purpose of political science as well as the notion of gentlemanliness is to sustain a "noble lie," a myth-based lie to prevent the revolt of the masses against the authority of the rare. Thus, political science and references to Aristotle function only to "dilute" the natural right

thesis in order to “lie” (*NR*, 125).<sup>38</sup> This is, if you will, the core assumption of classical decisionism in the writings of Strauss. In constructing this new ideology of decisionism, perhaps, he did not want to be remembered as a racist, especially considering his Nazi leanings; and perhaps, he was “harmlessly” correcting the basic errors of early Schmitt: lying, in the Straussian sense, is that which conceal the intention. Leaving aside what is obvious, let us pursue a close investigation of classical decisionism.

Aristotle proposed, according to Strauss, that “natural right is mutable” and “concrete decisions” can be taken in accordance with the changing circumstances, particularly when “an extreme situation, a situation in which the very existence or independence of a society is at stake” (*NR*, 160).<sup>39</sup> ‘The good or right political order’ is to be protected which is the order of the rare, i.e., hierarchy and ranking based on nature; or, to put it in different terms, natural right should be preserved and re-erected. And, of course, to this end, Strauss indicates that natural right is mutable —that it is not a theoretical-practical concession of Strauss. What then is the extreme situation? Or, the question is what constitutes the state of exception wherein natural right mutates. Modernity in general and the coming of a world state in particular is the state of exception (that is, an extreme situation). Life in modernity is the exception and indeed,

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<sup>38</sup> Strauss in fact clearly demonstrates this argument in the same page: “In descending to the cave, the philosopher admits that what is intrinsically or by nature the highest is not the most urgent for man, who is essentially an “in-between” being –between the brutes and the gods. When attempting to guide the city he knows then in advance, that, in order to be useful or good for the city, the requirements of wisdom must be qualified or diluted...in order to become compatible with the requirements of the city. The city requires that wisdom be reconciled with consent...Civil life requires a fundamental compromise between wisdom and folly” (*NR*, 152).

<sup>39</sup> Following this remark, Strauss continues to note that “every dangerous external or internal enemy is inventive to the extent that he is capable of transforming what, on the basis of previous experience, could reasonably be regarded as a normal situation into an extreme situation. Natural right must be mutable in order to be able to cope with the inventiveness of wickedness” (*NR*, 161).

“the quarrel between the ancients and the moderns” represents none other than the struggle within the state of exception, from within which, furthermore, the crisis of the west is identified.

To express the crisis Strauss often takes refuge in the language of classical philosophers. In his view, there has always been a tension between the laws of gentlemen and arts; or, precisely, he believes that *techne* and political prudence always conflict. But through modernity *techne* has been revolutionized and gone beyond its parameters while suppressing governing moralities of political prudence; for arts (or *techne*, which belongs to the sphere of the many) always inclines to infinite modification and progress, whereas laws (i.e., natural right) are all about stability. Modernity progressively destroyed, Strauss believes, the golden balance between arts and laws; the fusion of *techne* and passion — that is, “the wickedness of invention”— and therewith the revolt of the masses annihilated the classical harmony.

Strauss outlines the above belief in almost all his works; and to understand his position two significant passages would suffice rather than any argument:

Aristotle is especially concerned with the proposal of Hippodamus that those who invent something useful to the city should receive honors...He is much less sure than Hippodamus of the virtues of *innovation*. It seems that Hippodamus had not given thought to the difference between innovation in the arts and innovation in law, or to the possible tension between the need for political stability and what one might call *technological change*. His [Hippodamus'] scheme as a whole seems to lead, not only to confusion, but to *permanent confusion* or *revolution*. (CM, 21-22) [Emphasis added]

Here, what Strauss means is simply this: Aristotle ‘is’ concerned about how to prevent Hippodamus (i.e., modernist mentality) and thus, how to protect the city from science and the many (i.e., permanent revolution and constant perplexity). And yet, in its depth,

Strauss believes that Aristotle had already envisioned the trajectory and project of modernity and he was therefore introducing protective measures for the future; that is to say, for Strauss, Aristotelian politics is still relevant and feasible: classical rationalism and also classical decisionism in other words must be put into practice. Here, there is no need to restate the implications and ramifications of such a political ambition; for we have already outlined its threads. But Strauss goes further,

It is obviously untrue to say, for instance, that Aristotle could not have conceived of the injustice of slavery, for he did conceive of it. One may say, however, that he could not have conceived of a *world state*. But why? The world state presupposes such a development of technology as Aristotle could never have dreamed of. That technological development, in its turn, required that science be regarded as essentially in the service of the “conquest of nature” and that technology be emancipated from any moral and political supervision. Aristotle did not conceive of a world state because he was absolutely certain that science is essentially theoretical and that *the liberation of technology from moral and political control would lead to disastrous consequences...* (NR, 23) [Emphasis Added]

According to our messianic caricature, Strauss, we are all guilty of not “listening” to the advice of classical philosophers; we are in fact guilty because we are not fit for and capable of understanding classical philosophy and its esoteric messages. We all experience disastrous consequences of modernity—which is progressive becoming of a world state in and through technology; and we are all responsible for persecuting the rare, classical philosophers. We are all the bearers of liberated, vulgar arts. Strauss wants to emancipate and “tame” us (i.e., the free vulgar masses) by introducing his right and good political order. This portrayal of modernity is not only an outcome of the greatest distortion and manipulation of classical texts (under the guise of interpretation) but also, and perhaps worse, it is the ideological legacy of Strauss to which Straussians of today fervently and adamantly subscribe, i.e., hallucinated consent.

“Life in the light of sun” (*CM*, 29) or “eternal recurrence of the same progressive process” (*RCP*, 236), these two express Strauss’ portrayal of modernity from which he concludes that “the fusion of science and the arts together with the unlimited or uncontrolled progress of technology has made universal and perpetual tyranny a serious possibility” (*NR*, 23). In his view, tyrannical political form is the coming world state and its citizens the tyrants, who are completely emancipated, perfectly equal, egalitarian masses, i.e., the “decadent” masses. Evolving consciousness in modernity, good or benign, and to say the least, modern democracy (in principle) “disturbs” both Strauss and his circle of friends; political proposals and projects of classical democracy, militaristic and racist in nature, are the ultimate solutions advanced by Strauss. To restate, since the authority of *techne* has become the new *nomos* of the earth — i.e., “perpetual and universal” tyranny (*OT*, 27)— and since “man’s humanity is threatened with extinction by technology” (*RCP*, 42), modernity is a universal state of exception which should be intervened by classical means. This takes us to Strauss’ thesis on liberal education, through which he introduces the counter-hegemonic return to classical way of life.

### -III-

#### **Liberal education as ideology and indoctrination**

Liberal education and the notion of gentlemanliness are coeval; and, these two imply the practical extension of Strauss’ ideology. For “one becomes a gentleman by education, by liberal education” (*LAM*, 11) argues Strauss. Gentlemen, those who become what they are through liberal education, are indeed the captains of classical consciousness, ancient perception and antique mentality. Liberal education indoctrinates classical liberalism and ancient democracy with the necessary means deduced from the writings of classical philosophers mediated through interpretative works of Strauss. At

the heart of liberal education lies the selection of the youth (from only those who represent the few wealthier in a society) and then instilling the notion of gentlemanliness. In fact, the fundamental criterion of this peculiar selection process is the possession of wealth; liberal education selects the chosen young minds on the basis of wealth and then teaches them the secrets of philosophy (as well as politics). “Liberal education” Strauss proposes “is the necessary endeavor to found an aristocracy within democratic mass society” (*LAM*, 10).<sup>40</sup> Aristocracy in Strauss’ lexicon is the natural superiority of the rare and the few against the many; liberal education in his doctrines is no more than a form of social Darwinism based on nature.

Moreover, in outlining the trajectory and the content of liberal education, Strauss asserts that “liberal education will...consist in studying with the proper care the great books which the greatest minds have left behind –a study in which the more experienced pupils assist the less experienced pupils, including the beginners” (*LAM*, 3); and later he indicates that “we must not expect that liberal education can ever become universal education. It will always remain the obligation and the privilege of a minority” (*LAM*, 24). In fact, there is nothing new in these lines; his intention is crystal clear. *Omnes viae*

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<sup>40</sup> Strauss’ striving for an aristocratic mode of governance is not new. And in fact there are astounding similarities between him and Nietzsche’s project of education. In his *On the Future of Our Educational Institutions*, Nietzsche elaborates, vis-à-vis a dialogue between a philosopher and his companion, on two major arguments: first, modernity has a conscious political project progressing towards the liberation of the vulgar masses and next, only classical education can save the rare qualities of mankind, i.e., philosophy. The philosopher sketched by Nietzsche further describes (to his companion) a definitive counter-movement and indeed, strategy for an ultimate takeover of educative institutions in order to regenerate classical mentality and perceptions for the coming youth. The noble rare and the aristocratic few would consequently be the heroic saviors of the future generations. Besides, throughout the treatise of Nietzsche there are fundamental elements of thought which directly corresponds to what has hitherto assessed, i.e., politicization of esotericism via political philosophers, country as the unit from which parameters of thought are determined, the selection process of youth, etc. Line by line Strauss takes Nietzsche’s treatise on education and aims at actualizing the ideal of ancient Greek way of life.

*Romam ducunt*: ability to read and understand Strauss belongs to the privilege of a very small minority. Liberal education has nothing to do with reading, understanding, discussing on and about philosophy; it simply imposes the lens and intentions of Strauss. And this is the actual reason of why we see an intense illiteracy among the disciples of Strauss.

Moreover, Strauss *believes* that the end of history is factual and real and thus, modern education is simply the universal “entertainment industry” (*LAM*, 25) which helps the coming-into-being of a world state (as the truth). His belief gives birth accordingly to the credo of liberal education that “there must... be a few who are wealthy and well-born and many who are poor and obscure of any origin” (*LAM*, 12). The emphases on “well-born” and “obscure” as antithetical anthropological categories in qualifying “origin” demand notable attention in order to expose the purpose of liberal education. Liberal education is designed exclusively for the recruitment of the gentlemen (the few); and education as such is an ideological training camp for the course of classical political action. Exotericism, rather than esotericism (i.e., the science of the rare), dictates the parameters of ideological orientation within liberal education: “the essential purpose of any exoteric teaching is,” argues Strauss, “government of the lower by the higher and hence in particular the guidance of political communities” (*PAW*, 121). He knows the power of manipulation and indoctrination inherent in the mystical atmosphere of esoteric and exoteric teaching, which prohibits any reading other than classical philosophy (here, Strauss). That there is truth which must be hidden from the masses and that philosophers have always been living in “grave danger” due to the existence of “the vulgar masses” constitute the *raison d’être* of these two writing techniques. And it is as such, exotericism

is invented to protect the cause of esotericism. Strauss' note on this particular subject is crucial: "the exoteric teaching was needed for protecting philosophy. It was the armor in which philosophy had to appear. It was needed for political reasons. It was the form in which philosophy became visible to the political community. It was the political aspect of philosophy. It was 'political' philosophy" (PAW, 18). In other words, the gentlemen or the so-called few politicians are recruited to protect the elite rare, to conceal those who stay behind the curtain.

Strauss' remark on the function on exotericism summarizes what has been hitherto delineated. Since philosophical activity is regarded as trans-moral and trans-religious activities, while assuming that the majority of the people cannot live without pre-established herd-like instincts (i.e., myth or religion), Strauss thinks that any disturbance caused by philosophy (and its act) would destabilize society (the masses) and eventually culminate in the persecution of philosophers. This, the spectacle of persecution, has happened several times in the course of history; but the trial of Socrates reflected perhaps the most elaborate form of conflict between politics and philosophy which led to Socrates' persecution. Accusations directed to Socrates reflected none but public disturbances in the city, e.g., questioning gods, inventing new gods, educating the youth. The gadfly of Athens could not be saved by "the competent friends of Socrates"; for they did not have political positions. Strauss interprets this event as follows: the inferiors persecuted the superior and, in fact, the many condemned and persecuted philosophy.

The event mentioned above should of course have had a great impact on Strauss.<sup>41</sup> But still it is not understandable and hence reasonable to suggest a general doctrine that philosophers have “always” been in grave danger. Strauss’ concern is not philosophy at all; he is rather concerned with the demise of a privileged group, those who supposedly contemplate “harmlessly” and those who supposedly have no political project. There is nevertheless no doubt that under favorable political circumstances Socratic “competent friends” were willing to overtake, albeit indirectly, through the means of education, the city. But, as Strauss underlines, political conditions and the status of philosophy started to get worse after the death of Socrates, particularly with the advent of modernity. His major doctrine, “the quarrel between the ancients and the moderns” (*LAM*, xi), finds the most accurate expression at this point. The dichotomous binary between the ancients and the moderns, which is indeed a spectacular fiction, is intended to correct the political errors of Ancient Greeks and in turn to actualize ‘the ideal’ of classical philosophers. Thus, modernity and its movement are presented as a conscious and uniform political project (i.e., existing in a linear historical time frame) striving to sublimate the ancient mentality and thought. Modernity as such is viewed not only as a project by itself but also as a project having an enemy, namely, the ancients.

In view of the dialectics of modernity, it is absurd to ascribe an immutable antithetical entity (or existence) to the ancients. Besides, Strauss turns upside down, albeit erroneously, and yet intentionally, historical facts, phenomenological dichotomies and genealogical realities by exhibiting the ancient way of life as a constant invariable.

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<sup>41</sup> “Persecution, then, gives rise to a peculiar technique of writing, and therewith to a peculiar type of literature, in which the truth about all crucial things is presented exclusively between the lines. That literature is addressed, not to all readers, but to trustworthy and intelligent readers only” (*PAW*, 25).

World has not been transformed by a uniform (linear) or even cyclical tension between two forces, the ancients and the moderns, as Strauss believes. The argument that there is a quarrel between the moderns and the ancients and that the modern masses are the incarnation of “the greatest scandal of all time” could only be the pieces of a grand political provocation. His intention is to create and disperse an ideological myth which would function to generate a quarrel between perfection and decadence, good and evil, and to say the least, hierarchy and freedom. What is at stake is therefore the invention of a myth which would provoke the mobilization of the masses in compliance with the dictates of authority. Liberal education invents and teaches myths, through the doctrine of gentlemanship, in order successfully to instill docility (or herd-morality). As Strauss writes, “the most important instrument for the moral education of ‘the many’ must be supported by ancestral opinions, by myths...or by a ‘civil theology’” (*CM*, 22). Myth or civil theology, liberal education constitutes all in all governance by the so-called “noble lies.”

One such myth or “noble lie” designed to be taught at educational institutions is the portrayal of the modern man, whose existence is antithetical to Strauss’ depiction of a ‘decent,’ ‘magnanimous,’ ‘virtuous,’ ‘wise’ and ‘prudent’ man. The modern man is depicted as the progressive man who embodies evilness and decadence. And, as Strauss believes,

Progressive man... looks back to a most imperfect beginning. The beginning is barbarism, stupidity, rudeness, extreme scarcity. Progressive man does not feel that he has lost something of great, not to say infinite, importance; he has lost only his claims. He does not suffer from the recollection of the past. Looking back to the past, he is proud of his achievements; he is certain of the superiority of the present to the past... The life which understands itself as a life of loyalty and faithfulness appears to him as backward, as being under the spell of old prejudices.

What the others call rebellion, he calls revolution or liberation. To the polarity faithfulness —rebellion, he opposes the polarity prejudice—freedom (*PR*, 230).

Progressive man, that is, modernity incarnate in flesh, is juxtaposed as the ultimate enemy of the gentleman. And, for Strauss, the gentlemen should declare war against the modern progressive man whose existence expresses vulgarity.<sup>42</sup> The quarrel between the ancient man and the modern man is clearly exemplified particularly when Strauss comments on modern liberalism: “the difference between ancient liberalism with its direct orientation toward human excellence and modern liberalism with its orientation toward universal freedom” (*LAM*, v). Ancient liberalism is militaristic and hierarchical whereas modern liberalism is pacifist; and, excellence, dignity and magnanimity belong to the ancient form of liberalism. This is Strauss’ message in brief. But neither such a quarrel nor those antinomial beings exist in reality. These polemical notes are only the ideological apparatuses of and propaganda for liberal education. And in fact, in view of the long quote above and its implications, Strauss’ cardinal point is this: vulgarity, that is, modern progress stems primarily from “the conquest of nature” (i.e., depletion of nature).

The conquest of nature in Strauss’ teaching means the termination of the natural right doctrine and successful acquisition of political power “by those who are not fit to rule or govern”. Through the conquest of nature, the modern-progressive-vulgar masses according to Strauss have acquired political power. That this argument seems to be a conservative cliché, Strauss nevertheless qualifies ‘vulgarity’ with a startlingly fictional claim. He argues that the progressive man, the end product of modernity, is the concrete and complete accomplishment of Nietzsche’s futuristic political project. “Nietzsche’s

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<sup>42</sup> In Strauss, vulgar disposition is often characterized by legal egalitarianism, equal rights for education, emancipatory social science practices, non-discriminative politics and so forth.

creative call to creativity was addressed to individuals who should revolutionize their own lives, not to society or to his nation” writes Strauss and goes on to argue that “he [Nietzsche] expected or hoped that his call...would tempt the best men of the generations after him to become true selves and thus to form a new nobility which would be able to rule the planet” (*WPP*, 54). Indeed, he *believes* that Nietzsche’s expectation has become real, *ergo* true, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

One should cast doubt upon Strauss’ contention. Is a Nietzschean mass society possible? Did Nietzsche have a political project or a futuristic agenda? Did Nietzsche write to establish an ideology for the masses? It is deeply absurd, however possible in principle, to reconcile Nietzsche’s notion of nobility with the rise of masses. But, Nietzsche did not write to disseminate a determinate level of consciousness (or awareness) as a futuristic ideology in the service of the masses —on the contrary. Nor is it possible to form a Nietzschean society in concreto. But, again, a theoretical possibility could still be maintained, which could later be translated into practice and into ideology. Strauss was well aware of this possibility; and in conducting his theosophical studies, Kojève’s interpretation of Hegel provided him a great source to interpret and position Nietzsche.

As we indicated throughout the first chapter, the key to Kojève’s interpretative endeavor was his experimental mediation of Hegel, Marx and Nietzsche, an endeavor of which Strauss was perfectly aware. Due to his focus on classical philosophy and mostly because lacking a knowledge on history and history of ideas, Strauss had to maintain Kojève’s system as an existing (actual) reality; indeed both Strauss and his disciples positioned Kojève as an enemy, he who is responsible for spreading “decadence” through

Hegelianism. In view of this system, for Strauss, Hegel's system elaborated the end of philosophy, entailing a future projection of an end state wherein 'the many' would possess and actualize Nietzschean disposition: "the decayed Hegelianism with which Nietzsche was confronted preserved Hegel's "optimism," i.e., the completedness of the historical process" (*RCP*, 25). The end state of Strauss is Kojève's 'the universal and homogeneous state'; and indeed, it is identical to Schmitt's 'quantitative total state'. All these three envisioned different forms of world states. Strauss' depiction is as follows:

Society thus constructed was the final society. History had come to its end precisely because the completion of philosophy had become possible. The owl of Minerva commences its flight at the beginning of the dusk. The completion of history is the beginning of the decline in Europe, of the West, and therewith, since all other cultures have been absorbed into the West, the beginning of the decline of mankind. There is no future for mankind. The man of the world society who is perfectly free is so in the last analysis because all specialization, all division of labor has been abolished; all division of labor has been seen to be due ultimately to private property. The man of the world society goes in the hunting in the forenoon, paints at noon, philosophizes in the afternoon, and works in his garden after the sun has set. He is a perfect jack-of-all-trades (*RCP*, 40)

The above passage, apocalyptic in tone, summarizes how Strauss perceives the spirit of time. In place of a restatement, for him, 'the end of history' thesis is real and factual to the extent that it has brought about an irreversible movement of the masses towards the formation of a world state.<sup>43</sup> Or, in more precise terms, Hegel's 'evolving-consciousness' found its peak moment and final (that is, absolute and thus complete) expression in Nietzsche's philosophy; that is to say, at the end of history (Nietzschean) wisdom has

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<sup>43</sup> For this matter, besides his explicit references to Kojève and implicit borrowings from Schmitt, Strauss elsewhere gives a crucial reference to Heidegger: "A world society controlled either by Washington or Moscow appeared to be approaching. For Heidegger it did not make any difference whether Washington or Moscow would be the center. America and Soviet Russia are metaphysically the same" (*RCP*, 42).

been successfully and fully attained by the masses. Thus, not surprisingly, Strauss equates decadence with vulgarity, progressivism and wisdom; science and technology, rather than classical notion of contemplation, has replaced and altered the notion of wisdom and has started accordingly to dictate the parameters of philosophy and politics.

Such an assumption of existence is a theoretical-practical necessity in Strauss' system, which can maintain and sustain its particular disposition of 'being' (since 'becoming' is presumably ceased in principle) only in a world state. In other words, the world state thesis becomes none other than an either-or assumption in that acceptance of its facticity (i.e., hallucination proper) inclines towards the ancient side and the other (i.e., its denial proper) towards the modern side within the framework of Strauss' "quarrel." From the side of 'reason' this argument amounts to absurdity; and yet, from an ideological and a rhetorical point of view, Strauss' intention in such a polemic is more than strong. Through the political power of esoteric and exoteric teaching, he assures an establishment of entrenched ideological apparatuses of liberal education. Under the guise of interpretation, he and his disciples define the parameters of thought and trans-value classical philosophy in order to form an all-encompassing form of indoctrination.

Moreover, Strauss' argument that there truly exists a world state governed, ruled and shaped by the wise masses is of course fictional, which is particularly visible in his reception of Kojève's Hegel-Nietzsche synthesis as the ultimate truth. Yet, either as a fiction or an orthodox belief system, his perspective derives its viability from more concrete terms. Identical with Schmitt's and Kojève's demonstrations of a coming world-state, Strauss highlights the alliance of the masses with 20<sup>th</sup> century modern scientific-technical developments: the masses perceive technical progress as wisdom. Or, in precise

terms, for Strauss, modern technical-scientific thinking has become the main constituent of wisdom whereupon Nietzsche's philosophy (which is regarded as the rebellious force of the masses) finds its exactitude in Hegelian spirit, namely, technology. Strauss voices such claims with reference to the rise of modern science:

The victory of the new philosophy or science was decided by the victory of its decisive part, namely, the new physics. That victory led eventually to the result that the new physics and the new natural science in general became independent of the rump of philosophy which from thereon came to be called "philosophy" in contradiction to "science"; and, in fact, "science" became the authority for "philosophy"...Thus not modern philosophy but modern natural science came to be regarded as the perfection of man's natural understanding of the natural world...It became apparent that the scientific understanding of the world emerges by way of a radical modification, as distinguished from a perfection, of the natural understanding (*NR*, 79).

The message is crystal clear: in and through modernity, modern science has negated philosophy. His observation, shared by many conservative thinkers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, might seem to have a benign intention in regard to the authority of science. But in its depth Strauss strives to justify anthropological ranking, that is, rationalized racism. This, the most extreme form of revolt against modernity, constitutes Strauss' political project. Perception, which precedes consciousness, and its modern mutation are targeted; and it is assumed that modern science and technology in alliance with the masses have completely altered the standard relation between being and nature. Thus, according to Strauss, there must be a natural selection of those who possess 'the noble and virtuous classical perception' and of those who are willing to save the coming apocalypse of 'manhood' while sacrificing their lives in the struggle between good and evil; and if not, there must be an educative selective program from which the noble youth can be recruited. Strauss'

note —“man’s humanity is threatened with extinction by technology” (*RCP*, 42)— must therefore be reassessed within this context, i.e., modern eugenics.

Besides, the re-monopolization of nature and the revitalization of nature-as-the-standard are Strauss’ theoretical and practical maneuvers; objective conviction of these two of course through liberal education (that is, indoctrination) renders nothing but a feeling of urgency to quarrel against modernity and the many. It is also in this sense modern progress is placed as the ultimate equivalent of vulgarity and decadence, which in turn constitute, in principle, the final age of humanity. For “once mankind has reached a certain stage of development, there exists a sound floor beneath which man can no longer sink” (*RCP*, 238) thinks Strauss. His messianic cult comes forth with the superlative “the final,” i.e., the final state, the final philosophy, the final stage, etc. Seduction of unreason conceals itself in and through the talmudic concept of ‘the final.’ And, along these lines, Strauss proposes that “liberation from vulgarity” (*PAW*, 8) and “counter-poison to mass culture” (*PAW*, 5) lay before us within the system of liberal education which in its depth strives to erect an aristocracy —politically racist and fascist aristocracy: heroic saviors and messianic liberators are the gentlemen who would execute the “rebellious” and “creative” masses in order to save the mankind and to preserve nature.

In Strauss’ political agenda, against modernity and against a world-state-as-technology, the gentlemen would pursue, based on nature, moral-political discretion, that is, political prudence; for Strauss *believes* that classical philosophers have already foreseen the possibilities of denaturalization (of the city) by technology. Liberal education teaches that in classical philosophy “no future progress...in the decisive respect was envisioned” (*RCP*, 235). And if there needs to be progress at all, this must

belong to a small minority, to the rare and the few, that is, to those who are by nature “trustworthy” and “decent.” Here, Strauss confines not only philosophy but also science to “the selected.” Not only that; Strauss goes further to argue that “the progress of this tiny minority, does not affect society at large —far from it” (*RCP*, 236). His lionization and glorification of classical philosophy amount to the idea that the ancients were perfectly aware of the fact that simultaneous, parallel progress (that is, what modernity is) would lead to “telluric” and “cosmic” catastrophes. And that catastrophe is the tyranny of the masses and its progressive elaboration the technical world-state. Liberal education and an aristocracy based on nature come into play exactly with this schizophrenic hallucination of Strauss.

Potentialities of esoteric teaching, of liberal education and of classical way of life, Strauss finds in America. Absence of philosophy (in the continental sense) and presence of an imperial psyche at a political level should have been the rationale behind his choice. But whatever the reason behind the curtain, according to Strauss, the American youth is assumed to shape and dictate the new world order. The city of classical philosophers in his interpretation is the American state; and thus, Plato’s Republic and political prescriptions in its content establish the political agenda and trajectory of this state. If the engine of such a barbaric desire is the Straussian interpretation of classical philosophy under the guise of esotericism, the fuel of the system is the indoctrinated youth. “For all practical purposes,” the gentleman of the new world order, notes Strauss, “will be a republican” (*LAM*, 29). And for this matter at hand, as a final remark, the gentleman would govern the people and would be governed by the political philosophers primarily by the principles of exoteric education, which is “based on the assumption that there is a

rigid division of mankind into an inspired or intelligent minority and an uninspired or foolish majority” (PAW, 59).

#### -IV-

#### **Conclusion:**

This chapter has touched upon several crucial themes in the writings of Strauss and tried to underline the political implications of his theosophical *Weltanschauung*. To restate, Strauss distorts and flawlessly manipulates texts of classical philosophy under the guise of interpretation. He is however more successful in borrowing ideas from several thinkers (e.g., Nietzsche, Schmitt, Kojève, Heidegger, etc.) simply to accord their opinions into a belief system of his own (these ideas are reflected implicitly throughout this chapter by way of a particular selection of the terms). Apart from these, the heart of the matter, which lies before us, is the grave implications and consequences of Strauss’ political project. Nobility and elitism based on nature for the purpose of establishing *novus ordo mundi* through overtaking educative-formative institutions is not the purpose of philosophy; nor does it reflect traditional *RealPolitik*. Strauss destroys not only classical philosophy and its possibilities but also the tradition embodied in philosophy. In the context of Strauss, the political precedes the philosophical with a grandiose dream to re-erect the ancient barbarism. And this is of course not new to us. Did not Plato, out of an unprecedented theological and emotional reverence for Socrates, try to cross the borders of his *eros* with his ambition to establish a “well-disposed” tyranny? Whatever the reason (or here, with Strauss, revelation) there will always be some few who would aim to actualize Epicurean dreams.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **The World-Picture Unfolds**

This chapter aims, while maintaining the content and path of the preceding chapters, to outline the debate between Kojève, Schmitt and Strauss. In an attempt to reveal the world-picture of these three intellectuals, we shall call into question a cluster of interrelated concepts, themes and theories mapped in the preceding chapters; and more importantly, we shall introduce a critical exposition of why and in what ways reading these three together is central to understand the discourses they inaugurated. We shall also bring in some neglected works of Schmitt and Kojève as a way to expand the breadth and the depth of the debate with which we will be engaging.

#### **-I-**

#### **Kojève-Strauss Debate: Kojève's falsification of Strauss' turn to classical philosophy**

The debate between Kojève and Strauss is significant for two reasons: it outlines an effective refutation of the re- and trans-politicization of classical philosophy and it gives an account as to whether it is possible (or probable) to bridge the gap between *theoria* and *praxis*. That there exists a historical (Kojève) or trans-historical (Strauss) tension between these two, the debate is centered essentially on how to resolve that tension. Xenophon's dialogue, *Hiero or Tyrannicus*, which expresses the nature of philosophy and the trajectory of classical political life and which narrates the dialogue between Hiero (the tyrant of Syracuse) and Simonides (the poet-philosopher who was reputed to be a wise-man), is the experiential-hermeneutical ground from which the content and the context of the Kojève-Strauss debate emanates. Apart from minor, negligible hermeneutical-textual remarks, both Kojève and Strauss calls into question and casts doubt upon Simonides'

“advice” to the tyrant Hiero —a phronetic advice intended to satisfy Hiero’s political praxis. Xenophon however intentionally ends the dialogue “inconclusive” that after the occurrence of Simonides’ advice Hiero remains “silent”. The interpretation of what that “silence” implies is the source of the Kojève-Strauss debate.

For Kojève, if we (the moderns) were in Hiero’s position, we would immediately “drop everything” and follow Simonides’ advice; and yet, it was historically impossible and improbable for Hiero to drop everything and actualize Simonides’ advice —that there is always some “current business” of the tyrant to be completed “in a limited time.”<sup>44</sup> Thus, Simonides’ “ideal” presented in the form of an advice is merely a “utopia,” which “does not show us how, here and now, to begin to transform the given concrete reality with a view to bringing it into conformity with the proposed ideal in the future” (*OT*, 138). Kojève’s interpretation seems to be consistent and coherent in view of his pagan philosophy outlined in chapter one. Simonides is only a pre-Hegelian “intellectual” who does not partake in reality; and since Hiero neither “acts” nor “decides” in accordance with Simonides’ advice, his silence expresses an existential disposition of a “liberal statesman.” The ideal tyranny —in short, “the beneficent tyranny”— materializing the power and wisdom synthesis was improbable given the insufficient material circumstances of the pagan world; and such, Kojève expectedly concludes, the necessary time to finalize that “current business” has elapsed with the Napoleon-Hegel dyad that “the Simonides-Xenophon utopia has been actualized by modern tyrannies”.

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<sup>44</sup> Here, with the term “current business,” Kojève summarizes the discourse of chapter one. Current business means the development of the necessary and sufficient conditions (the human history before Napoleon) under which the citizens of the universal and homogeneous state recognizes Napoleon.

Kojève's interpretation and its reliability depend only on a mediated acceptance of the Hegelian system in general and anthropocentric phenomenology in particular; for his hermeneutical conclusions are intended to convince —objectively— those who do not 'believe' that the final moment of truth is incarnated in the Napoleon-Hegel dyad. Kojève's position on this particular issue also reveals, though in a very crude frame, his interpretative method. He seeks to accord everything, under the guise of interpretation, to the conclusions of his Hegelian system. Strauss' response, as a rare instance of contention based on reason and as though he utterly forgot how he treats the classical texts, seems noteworthy: "I need not examine Kojève's sketch of the history of the Western world. That sketch would seem to presuppose the truth of the thesis which it is meant to prove. Certainly the value of the conclusion which he draws from his sketch depends entirely on the truth of the assumption that the universal and homogeneous state is the simply best social order" (*OT*, 207). Strauss' remark, however true, must really be an accident of his mind; for otherwise it would be a notable contradiction to his belief system —he becomes ironically the victim of his laws of interpretation. And that "I need not examine Kojève's sketch of the history of the Western world" is no more than a scholarly maneuver; Strauss does not know, as Kojève and Voegelin argues, history at all —in fact, he denies, recalling his trans-historicism, history *in toto*.

We should not turn a deaf ear to Kojève, particularly after his Hegelian interpretation of the 'silence' in Xenophon; for the debate taking place in the context of Xenophon's dialogue enables Kojève to pose an effective and a non-Hegelian critique of Strauss' understanding of philosophy (examined in chapter three). In asking whether the philosopher is "capable" of governing and "willing" to assume governing power, Kojève

asks: “*can* the philosopher govern men or participate in their governance, and does he *want* to do so; in particular, *can* and does he *want* to do so by giving the tyrant concrete political advice?” (*OT*, 148-9) It is precisely this question which undermines any modern political project aiming to return to classical politics and philosophy.

Kojève demonstrates the first part of the question with precision: the philosopher is superior compared to both “the uninitiated” and the tyrant, a superiority based on such traits as the possession of the dialectical art (i.e., discussion), openness to reality (i.e., being freed from prejudices) and the metaphysical proximity to the concrete (i.e., being distant from abstractions) (*OT*, 148). That these are the distinct traits of the philosopher separating him from “the uninitiated” and yielding a capacity to “maneuver” against the authority (here, the tyrant), Kojève concludes that “the philosopher is perfectly capable of assuming power and of governing or participating in government” (*OT*, 150). Yet, the real question is whether the philosopher is willing to participate in the art of government. Here, in view of man’s temporality and finitude (i.e., finitude-in-time and mortality), the philosopher is in fact left with an either-or path. He has to choose either political activity or the quest for wisdom, implying a choice between the theistic conception of truth and being (Strauss) and the atheistic conception of truth and being (Kojève).

Kojève’s account suggests that the renunciation of action by taking refuge in pure contemplation quest—in short, pure *theoria*— and living-outside-the-world by pure inwardness expresses the key consequences of the first choice, signifying the existential attitude of Epicurean philosophers. Kojève’s critique of Strauss begins here. Two historically manifest Epicurean movements, the pagan (or aristocratic) Epicureanism and the Christian (or bourgeois) Epicureanism (*OT*, 150-151). Both these two Epicurean

variants defend the absolute isolation of being; nevertheless the form, within which the isolation is maintained and sustained, substantially differs. The aristocratic pagan realizes the isolation, Kojève presents it, in and through a quite and secret “garden,” whereas the Christian bourgeois expresses it in “the Republic of Letters.” In its depth, ancient and modern paraphrases of political romanticism are at stake here. We shall limit our assessment for the moment to an examination of the ancient Epicureanism.

To justify the (absolute) isolationism of the philosopher, Kojève argues, “one has to grant that Being is essentially immutable in itself and eternally identical with itself, and that it is completely revealed for all eternity in and by an intelligence that is perfect from the first; and this adequate revelation of the timeless totality of Being is, then, the truth” (*OT*, 151, 212). Kojève summarizes both the content of Strauss’ ‘the philosophical’ and his absolute premise, the immutability of being in-and-for-itself existing in eternity, which are aimed both to preserve nature and to transfigure that nature’s political implications into the modern way of life; as such, it is a more technical way to suggest radical elitism based on natural selection. In addition, earlier we argued that Strauss is a theosopher; and here, Kojève voices this proposal through a similar line of argumentation that the truth, or precisely, the theistic truth to which Strauss subscribes does not require an absolute moment in time; the participation in truth rather requires “talent,” “divine revelation” or the Platonic “intellectual intuition,”<sup>45</sup> through which one arrives at the same conclusion that Strauss is a theosopher.

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<sup>45</sup> These terms are not utilized randomly in Kojève’s account in that they represent the odyssey of the inactive intellectual existed in different phases of the human history. ‘Intellectual intuition’ (or as we shall see, ‘conversion’) corresponds to pagan philosophy, ‘divine revelation’ to Christian intellectuals, and finally, ‘talent’ to bourgeois intellectuals (see chapter one; *I* [fr.], 91-2). All these historical dispositions rejected atheistic truth and did not partake in reality, which justify, according to Kojève, that they cannot attain objective certainty properly so-called; but

To understand the thesis above, we should open the gates of “the garden” as Kojève presents it. In the garden, there are “friends,” those who represent “the elect” and those who are selected upon the exclusion of “the many,” “the uninitiated” (*OT*, 154). And, the medium, by which “the best” are selected and those who have “limited capacities” are eliminated, is esotericism (or, the esoteric-oral instruction). Recalling how we have characterized Strauss’ ‘the philosophical’ earlier—that in Strauss, philosophy is a political indoctrination concealed in and through the system of liberal education—Kojève arrives at the very same conclusion: the Epicurean garden expresses “doctrinal teaching,” that is to say, it does not imply a rare type of philosophical activity, i.e., pure *vita contemplativa*, but rather adopting “doctrines” (*OT*, 155). This we earlier called Strauss’ (synthetic) construction of an aristocratic distance based on nature; for Kojève, members of the garden—in short, disciples of this “cloister”—are “the egoistical philosophers”, those who posit an anthropological-existential distance vis-à-vis an “aristocratic prejudice”. Thus, one should recognize that Strauss’ theosophy and in particular his esotericism generates only a series of political indoctrination, which is further sustained by a political cult and its disciples.

Moreover, the member of the garden can never objectively know “whether he has attained Wisdom or sunk into madness”: he constantly seeks friends of/for philosophy with whom he “discusses from morning till night” in order comfortably and safely to acquire “recognition” of a limited number of friends. It is the recognition of the few which translates subjective convictions into objective convictions; otherwise, not only would the theosophical contemplation culminate in absolute subjective nothingness, but

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above all, it is interesting to note that all these existential postures to reality express also the disposition of the romantic-bourgeois (see chapter one and two).

also without the recognition of the friendship circle that theosopher cannot sustain an aristocratic distance against those who are naturally inferior. Strauss' theosophy, in brief, significantly necessitates a politics of recognition without which madness is probable in the circle and, above all, without which the members cannot satisfy their egoistical posture. Nevertheless, the recognition issue does not possess the utmost significance according to Kojève that Strauss' rejection of the notion of recognition does not change the principles of theosophy nor does it verify that such a political recognition does not take place in the circle. Kojève rather calls into question what Schmitt earlier called the romantic blindness —i.e., the skipping of the intermediary stages of history. That “the members of the ‘cloister’ are isolated from the rest of the world and not really taking part in public life in its historical evolution,” Kojève argues, they “will, sooner or later, be ‘left behind by events’” (*OT*, 155). Strauss' competent friends in other words fail to “notice” what has happened in the course of time. And this is, as Kojève calls it, the ancient tradition to which Strauss and Xenophon subscribe (*OT*, 155-6, 158). Thus, Strauss is not a theosopher proper, who enjoys the recognition of disciples, but he is rather a romantic theosopher who denies history and defends trans-historicism in order successfully to maintain the nature embedded in that Epicurean garden.

To flee from this existential disposition and thus from the theistic thesis of the immutability of being, Kojève claims, one should accept the Hegelian radical atheism, that is to say, one should realize and recognize “historical verification,” viz., that being = becoming or revealed being = truth = man = history. And the philosopher must accordingly actively “participate” in history vis-à-vis the desire for recognition. Kojève thinks, in diametrical contrast to Strauss, that both Simonides (“advice”) and Hiero

(“silence”) wanted to be recognized: “from this perspective there is therefore in principle no difference whatsoever between the statesman and the philosopher: both seek recognition, and both act with a view to deserving it” (*OT*, 156). But, “Hiero is not fully “satisfied,” not because he has *no* authority and governs *solely* by force, but because his authority (recognized by some) is not recognized by *all*, by those whom he considers to be the citizens, by those who are worthy of recognizing it, and hence supposed to do so” (*OT*, 145). Thus, only if the atheistic notion of truth and being—in short, the mutability of being—are accepted, the philosopher becomes a “philosopher-pedagogue” and the statesman a political-pedagogue (i.e., “enlightened despot” or “pedagogical tyrant”). Theoria that is to say must be accompanied by praxis; for otherwise would only render romantic-intellectuals and liberal statesmen. This Kojève calls the tension between tyranny and wisdom, which is verified by historical materialism.

The philosopher writes on politics —“the bookish advice”<sup>46</sup>— which is no more than a “compromise” implying the philosopher’s lack of time to assume power, to take political action. “Faced with the impossibility of acting politically without giving up philosophy, the philosopher gives up political action” (*OT*, 166) and thus remains entrapped in “discussion,” pure verbal (discursive) dialectics. Similar to Schmitt’s critique of the early German Romanticism (Schelegel and Novalis) and again, similar to Schmitt’s affirmation of the philosophical success of Hegel, in line with the premises outlined in chapter one, Kojève concludes that the two thousand years of philosophical

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<sup>46</sup> To clarify, Kojève claims that “if philosophers gave statesmen no political ‘advice’ at all, in the sense that no political teaching whatsoever could (directly or indirectly) be drawn from their ideas, there would be no historical progress, and hence no History properly so-called’, continues Kojève, “if the Statesmen did not eventually actualize the philosophically based ‘advice’ by their day-to-day political action, there would be no philosophical progress (toward Wisdom or Truth)” (*OT*, 175).

discussion has ended with Hegel's "solution": "the outcome of the classical 'dialectic' of the 'dialogue', that is, the victory won in a purely *verbal* 'discussion' is not a sufficient criterion of the truth" (*OT*, 167). In other words, bookish and impotent pre-Hegelian philosophy has ended by the active orientation of intellectual mediators, those who translate *theoria* into *praxis* or vice versa. And as such, history ends in principle with (Hegel's) "the book" of wisdom, the new "bible," the book of political propaganda. The Napoleon-Hegel dyad achieved what the Hiero-Simonides could not accomplish; and this would transform the world in accordance with the model appeared in the power-wisdom dyad, as Kojève argues, in the post-revolutionary world order.

How does Strauss respond to Kojève's account? Strauss' reply within the debate does not suggest anything except for some minor attacks on Kojève based on personal matters. Strauss cannot answer even to Kojève's elaboration of the Epicurean garden as the haven of political indoctrination. Suffice it note in this context even Strauss' notorious disciple, Stanley Rosen, admits Strauss' failure in view of Kojève's account, which is a rare and unique intellectual instance indeed. "Strauss has no effective reply to Kojève's criticism" and above all, as Rosen notes, "if...the philosophers practice extreme esotericism, or communicate to one another only by hints and the various devices of Aesopic speech, the dangers of madness or solipsism are not averted, because hints can be misunderstood, just as is the case with hinted responses to hints" (243, 1998).<sup>47</sup> Rosen not only admits, perhaps hesitantly, the mistake of Strauss' political project based on esoteric tradition, but also, he indirectly testifies to the theses on romantic blindness ("solipsism") and madness ("hints can be misunderstood"). Romantic-theosophy stands

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<sup>47</sup> Rosen, Stanley. "Kojève". *A Companion to Continental Philosophy*. Edited by Simon Critchley and William R. Schroeder. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998. 237-244.

and falls with its so-called secret, concealed and hidden messages. That “Strauss has no effective reply to Kojève” had in fact been replied, not in *On Tyranny*, but three years later in Strauss’ *The City and Man*, a book which is centered on the interpretation of Plato and Aristotle as well as on a direct critique of a Kojèvean world-state and Hegelianism. Let us listen to Strauss, bearing in mind Kojève’s and our critique: “it is not self-forgetting and pain-loving antiquarianism nor self-forgetting and intoxicating romanticism which induces us to turn with passionate interest, with unqualified willingness to learn, toward the political thought of classical antiquity. We are impelled to do so by the crisis of our time, the crisis of West” (*CM*, 1). It is not a coincidence that the first lines of his book are filled with such precautionary statements —that Strauss must have learned from Kojève’s critique how his belief system is overtly romantic and historically erroneous. Such precautionary statements nevertheless do not constitute the content of Strauss’ political trajectory embodied in the philosophical —that those are only passing remarks.

Strauss does not and cannot suggest convincing, satisfactory and reasonable arguments in the debate—he repeats himself (chapter three). In place of a restatement of the third chapter, it is worth noting what he thinks concerning the relation of philosophy to politics. He believes, as Kojève explicitly shows, that the philosopher is in constant need of competent friends, those who are either potential or actual philosophers and above all, those who are members of the natural “elite” (*OT*, 194). The essential criteria from which ‘elitism based on nature’ emanates have been clarified in the previous chapter. But does this particular elitism really take place in pure hedonistic isolationism as Kojève presents it? Not at all. Strauss rather authenticates and substantiates the

argument expressed in the third chapter that, in defense of preserving nature, “the philosopher is... forced to defend the cause of philosophy” that “he must therefore act upon the city or upon the ruler” (*OT*, 205). Although he denies it, the implication is crystal clear: Hiero must listen to Simonides. The tyrant is in need of the philosopher’s advice, implying further that the philosopher must desire to determine or codetermine the politics of the city or of the rulers. And in order not to contradict his defense of classical philosophy, he coins a term, controversial and unnecessary in nature, to connote political orientation of philosophy —“philosophic politics”. The term explicitly attests to the relation between the rare, the few and the many in a way that has never been this clear in the writings of Strauss. The philosophical precedes the political and above all, it sets forth the parameters of the latter (see chapter three).

Based on an interpretation of Xenophon’s dialogue in general and on the notion of silence in particular, the Kojève-Strauss debate restates Strauss’ elitism based on nature —the philosophic politics— and signals the political trajectory of Kojève’s Hegelian system. In addition to the conclusions we arrived at in the third chapter, Kojève successfully proves how sectarian and indoctrination-laden that philosophy is. Strauss’ notes concerning the natural superiority of the Greek thinking and way of life are only passing theosophical remarks to justify the superiority of his Epicurean garden; and as such, his central thesis —the immutability of being— is only a hybridization of classical and medieval philosophies intended both to prevent change and to preserve hierarchical nature. Even Schmitt, in his *Nomos of the Earth*, would later note that “when Herodotus, Xenophon, and Plato speak of tyranny, and characterize these as *a-nomia*, the intent is somewhat propagandist, because these friends of Laconia [Sparta] mean, above all, that

the tyrant has destroyed a specific *nomos*” (*NOE*, 338). Strauss follows precisely and perfectly this ancient tradition; that is to say, when Strauss speaks of tyranny —that is, Kojève’s system— as *anomia*, Strauss and his competent friends, those who live in the hedonistic-entertainment garden, mean that the tyrant (here, the Napoleon-Hegel dyad) destroyed a specific *nomos* —the *nomos* of ancient militarist-elitist democracy— in favor of a new world *nomos*, i.e., the conquest of nature.

Yet, accepting Kojève’s critique of Strauss does not necessarily imply that we accept his Hegelian political trajectory. Kojève’s justification of a somewhat benevolent tyranny, like Schmitt’s approval of a sovereign dictatorship, is unacceptable. We need to examine that which is unsaid in Kojève’s Hegelianism and to which Strauss cannot give an account, the historical foundations of the system. And this takes us unsurprisingly to Schmitt.

## -II-

### **Kojève before Kojève: Schmitt uncovers the foundations of Hegelianism**

In his *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, Schmitt examines Marxism and liberalism under the rubric of manifest forms of political romanticism (see chapter two). What interests us here is Schmitt’s observation concerning the theoretical foundations of Marxism at the turn of 19<sup>th</sup> century —an observation made roughly eleven years before Kojève’s Lectures on Hegel. The critical year in question is 1848, which manifests for Schmitt the moment of transition from the utopian to the scientific Marxism; that is to say, 1848 expresses the acquisition of scientific certainty of Marxist socialism through a peculiar appropriation of the Hegelian science (different from the trajectory of Marx’s writings). Let us immediately note what Schmitt writes with respect to this particular moment in history,

[a] long tradition lay at hand: the Enlightenment's educational dictatorship, philosophical Jacobinism, the tyranny of reason, a formal unity springing from the rationalist and classical spirit, "the alliance of philosophy and the sword." With Napoleon's defeat this tradition appeared to be finished, overcome theoretically and morally by a newly awakening historical sense. But the possibility of a rationalist dictatorship remained in a historical-philosophical form and lived on as a political idea. Its upholder was radical Marxist socialism, whose ultimate metaphysical proof was built on the basis of Hegel's historical logic (*PC*, 52).

A summary of Kojève's Hegelian project and its historical pedigree is at stake. Schmitt suggests that it is the strength of the Hegelian "philosophy of history" disseminated at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century which transfigured the Marxist utopia into an ideal, into a metaphysical belief system governed by the alliance of modern science and modern political economy. Regarded as a belief system or a probable ideal, the truthfulness of this shift in question lies, according to Schmitt, in notion of the absolute moment in history in and through which "humanity" reaches the level of absolute consciousness, "the correct knowledge" of the existing reality. Schmitt's observation interestingly intersects with Kojève's outline of Hegel. The absolute moment to which Schmitt refers is what Kojève calls the Napoleon-Hegel dyad. And this is more than explicit particularly when Schmitt argues, in regard to the activistic-futurology of Hegelianism, that "the world soul [*Weltgeist*] that Hegel saw riding by in Jena in 1806 was a soldier, not a Hegelian," rather, "it was the representative of the alliance between philosophy and the saber but only from the side of the saber" (*PC*, 58).

In our introduction to the second chapter, we have mapped some of the surprising, however thoroughly intelligible, textual and thematic similarities between Kojève and Schmitt. However, this aforesaid observation on the Hegelian appropriation of Marxism is both integral and complementary to an understanding of the Kojèvean Hegelianism.

The Napoleon-Hegel dyad implies pure violence (“the alliance between philosophy and the saber but only from the side of the saber”). Alternatively, the power-wisdom dyad which is believed to be taken place in 1848 radicalizes the dimension of power, precisely, the tyrannical power of Napoleon. Or, to elucidate, the truthfulness of that moment under examination depends substantially on a violent, totalitarian movement fiercely forcing those non-believers of Hegel (recall that Kojève calls Hegel’s *Phenomenology* “the Bible”) to accept or to converse into that metaphysical system. To actualize ‘that which is incomplete’ within the dyad is to expand the system through violence and political propaganda. Let us note what that incompleteness is and how Kojève admits, however scarcely transparent without Schmitt’s notes, the Hegelian invitation of violence and power: “this [the complete dyad] could be done (and still!) if Napoleon ‘recognized’ Hegel, as Hegel ‘recognized’ Napoleon” (*I* [fr.], 154). More explicitly, in the same passage, Kojève goes on to ask whether Hegel expected an invitation from Napoleon in 1806 to become “the philosopher” of the universal and homogeneous state and to make Napoleon’s violent action justifiable: “the text of the *Phenomenology* relating to this is (intentionally?) obscure” (*I*, [fr.], 154). And that “obscurity,” which connotes incompleteness, cancels itself once the dyad’s coming-into-being is fueled by power and violence.

If Schmitt’s account possesses veracity on this particular subject, as it seems so, Kojève’s system in the final analysis is a “romantic fiction” or a truthful fiction fueled by pure violence. The real question is then, as Schmitt directly asks, what happens if that romanticized Hegelian idea is taken “seriously”? Schmitt’s answer outlines a justification for what we may well call ‘Kojève before Kojève,’ which would also clear up the doubts

cast upon the tales telling us that Kojève was referring to Schmitt during his lectures simply to increase motivation and to augment the level of comprehension. Identical to Kojève's "political intellectuals," those who lead and expand the Hegelian political propaganda, Schmitt refers to the "active thinkers," those who do away with the contemplative aspect of Hegel's philosophy and who take "seriously" the active aspect of evolved consciousness (*PC*, 57). Or, more explicitly, Schmitt argues, in regard to the activist Hegelianism, that "those who have higher consciousness and who believes themselves to be representative of this great force will shake off the constraints of a narrow outlook, and will enforce the 'objectively necessary'" and accordingly "their will forces the unfree to be free," which is, practically, a permanent rationalist "educational dictatorship" (*PC*, 57-8).<sup>48</sup> Everything Schmitt observes seems to fit with Kojève's Hegelianism. One needs to recall the historical course of anthropocentric phenomenology with its particular telos: the objective necessity of the coming-into-being of a benevolent tyranny making the unfree, on the surface, the free through an activistic metaphysics of technology and modern science, that is, in and through the permanency of a mediated rationalism. And not only that. We shall see how Kojève would outline his quadruple structure of Hegelian authority, within which the education system constitutes a pivotal dimension of Hegelianism.

Given Schmitt's observation concerning the grand transformation of the traditional Marxist thought fueled by scientific Hegelianism, which is integral to understand Kojève, we need to gaze at their agreements and disagreements, which would

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<sup>48</sup> In concluding his assessment, Schmitt draws a parallel between the Jacobin dictatorship of 1793 and the Soviet system with regards to the tyranny of reason since the entire administrative and educative systems of the Soviets were based on "*Proletkult*."

provide a significant and pivotal question for our investigation. Both Schmitt and Kojève accept that the aspects of the abstract concept and the concrete existence have been successfully resolved by Hegel; and, both are in perfect agreement on the idea that Hegel's success could not be grasped by the Romantics. And interestingly they both share the idea that "the liberal political economy and tolerance" has its pedigree in the Romantic Movement. These agreements transform into a complete disagreement concerning whether 'humanity as a political category' is a ramification of political romanticism. For Schmitt, the idea of the unity of humanity is the manifest outcome of the romanticization of humanity brought about by both liberalism and Marxism (see chapter two). However, in a diametrical contrast, Kojève thinks that the Romantics could not understand the idea of humanity elaborated by Hegel and above all, the romantic-bourgeois pose as we shall assess a radical political non-conformity against the idea and model of the universal and homogeneous state.

The question turns out to be, it seems, whether Hegel or the Romantics possess the idea of humanity, which is complicated further by their agreement concerning the occurrence, concretely (Schmitt) or in principle (Kojève), of the end of history. An inquiry concerning these questions takes us once again to the year 1848; for both Kojève and Schmitt regards 1848, though with different interpretation and narration, as the critical turning point (of the Hegelian *Geist*). For Schmitt, 1848 is the determinate birth of political romanticism.

Each time the word 'value' is used knowingly or unknowingly by the two opposing camps, they unfailingly steer it into the economic sphere. Both capitalism and the anti-capitalist socialism do it, even if the latter is more polemical though no less effective. The same thing happens, almost automatically, whenever one adopts a third stand, apparently quite different from the other two. Since 1848, there has been a synchronism as

remarkable as it is shocking, a simultaneity, an osmosis and symbiosis between philosophy of values and the philosophy of life. This should not be regarded as an academic event, belonging exclusively to the history of philosophy... (TV, 6)

What is that shocking simultaneity, osmosis, symbiosis between liberalism (“philosophy of values”) and socialism (“philosophy of life”) which planted its seed and showed us its germ after 1848? It seems that Schmitt’s twin brothers confront, only, to unite progressively their metaphysical and sociological dimensions. This, we shall examine with Kojève’s narration of 1848, which would portray that osmosis. But before we can penetrate Schmitt’s writings with Strauss or what we may well call the early Strauss.

### -III-

#### **Strauss reads Schmitt**

“You’ve got to read that. He saw through me and x-rayed me as nobody else has” notes Meier in conveying the words of Schmitt from the mouth of Schmitt’s former assistant, Krauss (xvii).<sup>49</sup> Schmitt was referring to Strauss’ critical review of *The Concept of the Political*. Strauss’ *Notes* on Schmitt is integral to our investigation for two immediate reasons: he unfolds the core premises of Schmitt’s project and to a lesser extent he maps the future direction of Schmitt’s writings. Now, Strauss makes a significant contention at the very end of his review, to which we need to call attention.

Schmitt undertakes the critique of liberalism in a liberal world; and we meant thereby that his critique of liberalism occurs *in the horizon of liberalism*; his unliberal tendency is restrained by the still unvanquished “systematics of liberal thought.” The critique of liberalism can therefore be completed only if one succeeds in gaining a horizon beyond liberalism. (*Notes*, 107) [Italics added]

Strauss arrives at this conclusion by assuming that Schmitt’s treatise offers an investigation of “the order of human things” and as such “the affirmation of the political”

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<sup>49</sup> Heinrich, Meier. *Carl Schmitt and Leo Strauss: The Hidden Dialogue*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006.

is not his underlying message. It is true that, later in his *The Nomos of the Earth*, Schmitt would directly refer to ‘the order of the human things’ (or *nomos*) as his overarching concern; for the 20<sup>th</sup> century expresses, according to Schmitt, “the end” of the four hundred years old historical process (see also chapter two). The order of the human things has been turned upside down, as Strauss interprets Schmitt, by a “depoliticization” process—an emergence which is neither an accidental nor a necessary result of modernity but “its original and authentic goal” (*Notes*, 84). And it is “the understanding” of the political which has been done away with, not its essence which remains “hidden”—that is, forgotten. The neutralization process did not, Strauss contends, bring about an absolute negation or nullification of the political—that that process has culminated in a psychic effect causing forgetfulness.<sup>50</sup> Strauss’ remarks on Schmitt’s treatise seem thus far to be valid. We arrived at the same conclusions by examining the course and trajectory of political romanticism as well as by giving a comprehensive account to how Schmitt meets Hegel, viz., that how Schmitt utilizes Hegel’s notion of *Aufheben* in mapping the movement of modernity in general and neutralization-depoliticization process in particular.

The question how Strauss “sees through” Schmitt is still unanswered that it rests rather on how Strauss reads Schmitt’s ‘the political’. In affirming the political, Schmitt affirms, “the authoritative,” the orientation towards “dire emergency” and “fighting,” which necessarily entails a conflictual dichotomy between anthropological optimism and seriousness. This affirmation emanates, Strauss contends, precisely from liberal horizon

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<sup>50</sup> In addition to Strauss’ reading, Kojève provides a reason for this psychic effect experienced in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For him, as he writes in a letter to Schmitt, “enmity is...only a “moment” of the “Logic,” i.e., of human speech.” In other words, at the end of history, the wise man speaks about the “past enmity,” that is, “the wise man never speaks *out of* enmity, not *to* enemies.”

and not from an illiberal or un-liberal form of politics; and this, Strauss thinks, is “that which is concealed” in Schmitt’s treatise.

He who affirms the political as such comports himself *neutrally* toward all groupings into friends and enemies... [he] does not have the *will* to neutralization, to the avoidance of decision at all costs, but in fact is eager for decision; as eagerness for *any* decision *regardless of content*, this neutrality makes use of the possibility—which originally was made accessible for the sake of neutralization— of something that is beyond all decision. He who affirms the political as such respects all who want to fight; he is just as tolerant as the liberals—but with the opposite intention: whereas the liberal respects and tolerates all “*honest*” convictions so long as they merely acknowledge the legal order, peace as sacrosanct, he who affirms the political as such respects and tolerates all “*serious*” convictions, that is, all decisions oriented to the real possibility of *war*. Thus the affirmation of the political as such proves to be a liberalism with the opposite polarity (*Notes*, 105).

Let us translate what Strauss means here: Schmitt is trapped within the horizon of liberalism. Yet, if Schmitt remains in a liberal horizon as Strauss claims, what then that incessant support of a violent, authoritarian political means in the early writings of Schmitt (see chapter two). This would be a curious question, which could only be understood by viewing Strauss’ interpretation of Schmitt as a critique. Precisely, this particular critique must be the root of Strauss’ political orientation expressed in a desire to return to a militaristic appropriation of classical philosophy (see chapter three)—that it is manifest and transparent with what he calls “a liberalism with opposite polarity”. Does Schmitt have in mind a form of “ancient liberalism” like Strauss? The answer is both yes and no. The governing and regulating dynamics of the political and the system of democracy portrayed in Schmitt are derived essentially from classical philosophy: the notion of *hostis*, utilized exclusively in Plato’s *Republic*, is transfigured into the political (*CP*, 28-29) and the concept of natural inequality—or precisely, equality out of

inequality— is taken from Aristotle’s *Politics* (*PC*, 8). These however do not truly or sufficiently capture that Schmitt has in mind a form of ancient liberalism. Only through an assessment of the concept of progress we can grasp the difference between Strauss and Schmitt and the meaning of that “liberalism with opposite polarity”.

In defending the ancient form of liberalism, in its depth, Strauss accuses Schmitt of presenting such an understanding of progress as tentative, provisional and mutable in nature. Schmitt’s *Neutralization* essay, which was published originally as an addendum to *The Concept of the Political*, would provide a textual substance and philosophical ground for Strauss to argue that the notion of progress is trapped within historicism (i.e., political realism proper). For each “central sphere”, while dialectically and metaphysically shifting, forges a different understanding of progress, i.e., for instance, the 18<sup>th</sup> century humanitarian progress is substantially different, however complementary, from that of the 19<sup>th</sup> century economic progress (*N*, 135). In a diametrical contrast, Strauss believes that modernity unfolds as the ideology of progressivism; and that is why, the notion of progress possesses, according to him, a trans-historical nature. Indeed, Strauss regards ‘progress’ as an event, which is coeval with the birth of a society, a society with its evilness and immorality unleashed and thus uncontrolled by the few wise men (see chapter three). Now, whereas in Schmitt the notion of progress can alter its content and course depending on changing material circumstances that progress is probable and should be allowed, in Strauss the notion of progress is extremely limited — that only the members of the garden could experience and decide upon what constitutes progress. Thus, even though we perceive Schmitt’s writings as a radical and violent confrontation against modernity, Strauss thinks them to be a mild, moderate reaction to

modernity; that is why, in Schmitt's political Strauss finds "a liberalism with opposite polarity" trapped in the 20<sup>th</sup> liberal horizon. The degree of extremism in Strauss, with his defense of an ancient liberalism, should be clear.

The disagreement in the above sense also reveals another disagreement, which is highly significant and central to our thesis. Strauss asserts that "Schmitt —while recognizing the possibility in principle of the 'world state' as a wholly apolitical 'partnership in consumption and production' of humanity united— finally asks 'upon which men will the terrible power devolve that a global economic and technical centralization entails'; in other words, which men will *rule* in the world state" (*Notes*, 98). Now, in line with the previous frame of analysis we developed in chapter two, Strauss' reading of Schmitt explicitly suggests that Schmitt recognizes "the possibility" of *the* world-state, implying further that the world-picture of political romanticism is not fictional at all. The reason why Strauss stresses Schmitt's question "who the ruler will be" reveals another way of recognizing that possibility. Schmitt in this context comes closer to Kojève's position in regard to the world-state thesis; whereas the former revolts against its coming-into-being, the latter fervently defends and supports the progression towards the world-state. And as for Strauss, that "...while recognizing..." part in his note reveals (once more) that Strauss does not recognize the possibility of a world state at all: the world-state is both impossible and improbable. In other words, the "...while..." in Strauss' phrase "...while recognizing..." reveals a thorough critique of Schmitt in separating him from that of classical tradition, to which Strauss subscribes. Let us leave aside Strauss' notes for the moment and assess, with our own emphasis, the position of a

world-state portrayed in Schmitt's treaties, *The Concept of the Political*. Schmitt asserts that

The political entity cannot by its very nature be universal in the sense of embracing all of humanity and the entire world. If different states, religions, classes, and other human groupings on earth should be so unified that a conflict among them is impossible and even inconceivable and if civil war should forever be foreclosed in a realm which embraces the globe, then the distinction of friend and enemy would also cease. What remains is neither politics nor state, but culture, civilization, economics, morality, law, art, entertainment, etc. If and when this condition will appear, I do not know. At the moment, this is not the case (*CP*, 53-4).

And then in the following pages Schmitt goes on to claim that,

The acute question to pose is upon whom will fall the frightening power implied in a world-embracing economic and technical organization. This question can by no means be dismissed in the belief that everything would function automatically, that things would administer themselves, and that a government by people over people would be superfluous because human beings would then be absolutely free. For what they would be free? This can be answered by optimistic or pessimistic conjectures, all of which finally lead to an anthropological profession of faith (*CP*, 57-8).

That “anthropological profession of faith” reminds us of Kojève's exposition of anthropocentric phenomenology, which posits an “optimistic conjecture” while projecting “absolute freedom” within a condition where “everything would function automatically.” This coincidence should not be surprising; we shall provide a detailed account of what is at stake with respect to Kojève's notion of authority. But the two passages quoted at length suggest more than thematic and theoretical coincidences. In Schmitt, there is a clear, however hesitant, shift from an uncertain position (“I do not know”) concerning the possibilities of a world-state to a certainty—the latter particularly expressed with questions concerning the governing dynamics of the world-state, e.g., pure entertainment and absolute freedom. It is Schmitt's historicism or rather, his

political realism (“at the moment this is not the case”) that prevents him from resorting to a form of futurology; and this is what Strauss calls Schmitt’s entrapment in liberal horizon, which is in fact a grand mistake. Strauss’s mistake in other words rests on his inability to read the difference between a hesitant tone (Schmitt) and an overtly vulgar tone (Strauss) concerning the analysis of the 20<sup>th</sup> century spirit.

Indeed, on this particular issue, Strauss is in a severe contradiction with his main line of argumentation; on the one hand, he suggests an entrapment and on the other, he claims that Schmitt’s emphasis is on the metaphysics of “entertainment,” which is not liberalism proper but an ‘osmosis and symbioses’ of liberalism and socialism. More explicitly, concerning the first long quote above [CP, 53-4], Strauss “emphasizes” that Schmitt’s placement of “entertainment” right before the “etc.” proves that it is “really the ultimate term in the series, its *finis ultimus*” (Notes, 100). And if it is “finis ultimus,” then, Schmitt is apparently not trapped within the liberal dimension at all. Entertainment implies the active neutralization of seriousness (i.e., anthropological contingency); and as such it also implies the domination of an optimistic “anthropological profession of faith” which is possible and probable, in this context, only under a world-state. Strauss admits his mistake accidentally: “politics and the state are the only *guarantee* against the world’s becoming a world of entertainment; therefore, what the opponents of the political want is ultimately tantamount to the establishment of a world of entertainment, a world of amusement, a world without *seriousness*” (Notes, 101). And it is precisely within this context, in order to reverse the metaphysics of entertainment and to suppress political romanticism Schmitt introduces the concept of the political —to restore anthropological contingency. Schmitt does not, all in all, seem to remain in a liberal horizon. Strauss finds

Schmitt's scholarly tone thoroughly mild and his confrontation moderate. Let us elucidate this particular contention from a different dimension.

Strauss argues that "the affirmation of the political is ultimately nothing other than the affirmation of the moral" (*Notes*, 101) and yet, he also notes, "the affirmation of the political is the affirmation of the state of nature" (*Notes*, 103). Strauss remains thoroughly neutral toward Schmitt's text on this particular conception of the political — he merely describes what that political is. Perhaps, as we assessed in the third chapter, he has in mind 'a better' conceptualization of violence. Let us elucidate why we should not be neutral about Schmitt's 'the political'. The affirmation of the moral is the affirmation of the state of nature. And that state of nature in question is the Hobbesian state of nature or as Strauss calls it "a liberalism with opposite polarity" (even though it barely expresses any liberal form). In Schmitt's account, the return to the Hobbesian state of nature is juxtaposed as a counter-hegemonical block against "a pacified globe," that is, against a world which "might contain many very interesting antithesis and contrasts, competitions and intrigues of every kind," that is, a world where "there would not be a meaningful antithesis whereby men could be required to sacrifice life, authorized to shed blood, and kill other human beings" (*CP*, 35). It is curious that Strauss remains neutral to these "meaningful antithesis" regulated by killing, shedding blood and violence. That "interesting antithesis and contrasts" alludes to the Kojèvean model of the world order; but more important for us is the underlying parameter of "the moral" characterized with self-sacrifice and killing. In addition, although the affirmation of such a violent morality explicitly renders the affirmation of war *in concreto*, Strauss erroneously claims the

contrary; that is to say, for Strauss, Schmitt's concern is not revitalizing warlike nature of man but "the relinquishment of the security of the status quo" (*Notes*, 103-4).

Although it provides a certain guiding thread in understanding Schmitt and his world-picture, Strauss's reading of Schmitt substantially lacks exactly what Schmitt is against and what he defends. Indeed, Strauss remains uncertain as to what that coming political entity is. Strauss' note not only reveals the content of his uncertainty but also Schmitt's hesitancy: "the opposite spirit and faith, which, as it seems, still has no name" (*Notes*, 106; also 85). Contrary to what Strauss thinks, that "the opposite spirit and faith...still has no name" has a name, which Schmitt not coincidentally does not want to put forth clearly. For 'naming' means, as we shall see later, both *nomos* itself and accepting the legality of that particular *nomos*. In other words, Schmitt does not name the opposite spirit immediately since he was well aware of the fact that once he has named it, he would have ironically put himself in the same category of political romantics. For such terms and concepts as the world-unity, the world-state and the unity of humanity belongs, in his account, to the lexicon of political romanticism. What comes to light is that Schmitt does not really regard the world-state as a romantic-fiction or fantasy; he rather chooses to conceal that reality, whilst pursuing political propaganda, in order to restore the violent counter-energy against that particular coming-into-being.

But let us name "that which has still no name." And, unsurprisingly, this pursuit is possible only through assessing Kojève's elaboration of the new authority. What follows shall articulate, in a transparent and concrete fashion, the political configuration of what Schmitt calls a new symbiosis and osmosis born out of the exchange between liberalism and socialism. In addition, what follows with Kojève shall clarify and elaborate in great

detail both the political aspect of the quantitative total state and the approaching world-state.

-IV-

**A prelude to the new nomos of the world**

“Curious thing, the problem and the notion of the authority have been studied very little” so begins the first lines of Kojève’s work *La Notion de L’Autorité*. At the centre of his work lies a quest to define, however “provisionally” and “generally,” the notion of authority, which would in principle encompass all particular cases and which would articulate its unshakeable premise in-itself (*Begriff*): “there is Authority only where there is movement, change, action (real or at least possible); there is authority only on what can “react,” that is to say, to change according to this or that that the authority represents (incarnates, realizes, exerts)” (NA, 56-57). A thoroughly obscure definition is at stake; we shall try to unfold its essence. Authority expresses essentially a social, human “relation” represented by an “agent” who possesses the possibility to “act” against the others; and, in Kojève, authority takes the form of an “order,” which must not provoke a “discussion” and which must not lead to a “compromise” —because where there is compromise or “reaction” there is no authority.

Now, the portrayal above is not a new formulation. In defining the notion of authority, albeit provisionally, such qualifying terms Kojève uses as “order,” “movement,” “non-compromise,” etc. are almost identical to (the preliminary) notes on authority outlined in chapter two. An investigation concerning the degree and intensity of how Schmitt and Kojève utilize these terms would nevertheless be obsolete; for these two already assume an authoritarian authority. However, what remains in the grey domain of obscurity above is the articulation of “authority-as-movement,” which immediately takes

us back to Schmitt again, to his work, *State, Movement, People: The Triadic Structure of the Political Unity* (1933), written roughly nine years before Kojève's work *La Notion de L'Autorité*. In his work, Schmitt formulates a new theory of authority, which surprises us to the extent that Kojève's detailed exposition and formulation of authority would exactly be the same as what Schmitt suggests; thus, it is central to understand how authority is constructed in Schmitt to grasp the essence of Kojève's formulation of the universal and homogeneous state. Schmitt articulates and in fact prescribes the authority of a totalitarian state, the Nazi State —a theory of authority “radically different from the liberal-democratic State schema that has come to us from the nineteenth century, and not only with respect to its ideological presuppositions and its general principles, but also in the essential structural and organizational lines of the concrete edifice of the State” (*SMP*, 11). Schmitt looks beyond the 20<sup>th</sup> century —the abyss of strange emergences— and consequently devises another abyss, which testifies, in perfect clarity, that Schmitt has never been trapped in a liberal horizon. Let us see the map — “a first clean draft”— of Schmitt's theory of authority,

The new state structure is marked by the fact that the political unity of the people, and thereby, all the regulation of its public life appear to be ordered into three distinct series. The three series do not run parallel one to the other, but one of them, the Movement, which carries the State and the People, penetrates and leads the other two...Each one of the three words: State, Movement, People, may be used alone to denote the whole of the political unity. At the same time, however, it indicates yet another particular aspect and a specific element of this whole. In this way, the State may be regarded strictly as the political static part; the Movement, as the dynamic political element, and the People, as the apolitical side, growing under the protection and in the shade of the political decisions (*SMP*, 11-2).

The practical-historical manifestation of this authority structure is the Nazi state —a state, Schmitt admits, which possesses the same structure as both the Soviet state and the Italian Fascist state, except for the differences of their “political manners”. As to its governing-regulating dynamics, this is the formula of total authority —not “absolute authority”— which precedes the existence of the state and which spontaneously transforms the state into a qualitative total state (see chapter two). Authority here belongs exclusively to one party (in theory) and to one leader (in practice) —that authority is the authority of the Führer. And herein the authority-as-movement in question finds its specificity, dynamics and manifestation in-and-through “the Party”. The state as such is the march of God through the world (Hegel). And the people, within this triadic-organic structure of authority, exist (“bare existence”) in a public sphere governed and regulated by “auto-administration,” that is, in a public domain structured without a liberal binary schema based upon such several dualities as law-politics, law-force, intellect-state and so forth (*SMP*, 24-25). Authority consumes and exploits, so to speak, the perfect, total intertwining of all existing strata with the primacy of movement.

Yet, in the same passage Schmitt calls the people “as the apolitical side, growing under the protection and in the shade of the political decisions.” By that term “apolitical”, he intends to design neither neutralization nor depoliticalization —but rather pure obedience. Apoliticalization in this sense is coeval with the birth of the qualitative total state where ‘the people as bare existences’ submit (consciously) to the secrecy (“the shade”) and the hierarchy (“the protection”) of that totalitarian authority. It is in the final analysis the complete and irreversible transfer of decisionism to the leader (contextually, this is Hitler) —that the leader is the decision incarnate in man. And as such authority

exists as long as there is no longer any “reaction”, implying the perfect and total submission. Recalling our earlier suggestions concerning Schmitt’s Hegelianism, which stands for a defense of the movement of the Hegelian content and at the same time, which seeks to justify a sovereign dictatorship intervening in the *Zeitgeist* (see chapter two), once this triadic authority is put into practice by the Führer, on 30 January 1933, Schmitt writes “on that day, one could say: ‘Hegel died’” (*SMP*, 35). The world-clock ceases. In and through the total state, the total revolution and the total war Hegel died and yet, Schmitt also notes that “the triadic structure becomes apparent not only wherever one seeks to surmount the liberal-democratic system and proceed to a new State, corresponding to the social and political realities of the twentieth century. It also corresponds to the great traditions of the German theory of the state, initiated by Hegel” (*SMP*, 13). Hegel dies for the sake of his people to be resurrected once again—that it would suffice to recall how Schmitt justifies a dictatorial intervention into the movement of Hegelian *Weltgeist* (see chapter two).

Aesthetization of political action, mystification of authority, seduction of unreason, degradation of humanly existence, praise of violence, mythicalization of the state, etc., constitute, determine and characterize, as Schmitt presents it, the nature of that new triadic authority. All these characteristics and qualities of authority should be kept in mind in turning to where we started our investigation of authority in Kojève. For the Hegelian universal and homogeneous state, as Kojève introduces it, substantially assumes these traits—yet under the disguise of emancipation and liberation.

-V-

### **The notion of authority**

What is authority in Kojève? A restatement gathering together Schmitt and Kojève views on authority is possible: “if I throw someone from the window, the fact that he falls has nothing to do with my authority,” Kojève continues, “but, I exert a manifest authority over him, if he throws himself from the window upon an order that I give to him and that he could not have materially carried out” (NA, 58). Here, the simplicity of definition is deceptive and manifestly subtle. Authority presupposes an uncontested submission to (an arbitrary) decisionism, order and command, which must not provoke a condition of compromise or discussion. And as such the portrayal of death in relation to authority is not coincidental at all. Kojève projects the dependence of existence on the finality of the decision, i.e., the readiness-to-die for authority. Everything seems to accord Schmitt’s triadic structure. Yet, this definition does not explain or imply the element of movement we are investigating, within which lies perhaps the most striking similarity between Schmitt and Kojève. Recalling Schmitt’s note on the critical turning point in history—a symbiosis and an osmosis of liberalism and socialism occurred in 1848, which has created the new movement in the 20<sup>th</sup> century—Kojève’s understanding of “movement” also lies in his interpretation of 1848. It seems that an assessment of Kojève is integral and relevant in order to comprehend what Schmitt calls the symbiosis and the osmosis of the two systems—the new *nomos* of the earth.

Kojève challenges, to begin with, a “widely-held argument” that Marx and his 20<sup>th</sup> century followers had a doctrine of authority: “the most important continuator of Hegel—Marx— completely neglected the problem of authority” (NA, 51). The premise and the task of Kojève seem to be co-determinant: Marx was a Hegelian and yet, he

neglected the notion of authority —that neglect must be overcome. Kojève would later criticize the political form based on this gigantic neglect, Soviet Russia; for the moment we shall nevertheless call into question the Western horizon of that negligence. For Schmitt, the world-clock in 1848 stamped the birth of political romanticism; for Kojève too the events in 1848 signified a decisive turning point, which culminated in the “bourgeois domination” and which would endure between 1848 and 1940.<sup>51</sup> Yet, unlike Schmitt’s delineation, the bourgeois domination does not necessarily entail political authority or political power of any sort. In denying the struggle that took place at that time —the project of 1848— the bourgeois rather enclosed himself within the present — that they were deprived of all the essential characteristics of an “active” life. Kojève’s remarks intersect once again with those of Schmitt, for both think that the Western 1848 has signified the renunciation of the active content and life. Kojève arrives even at the same conclusion as Schmitt presented in his assessment on political romanticism: “the domination of the Bourgeoisie as such is thus nothing but a progressive disappearance of

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<sup>51</sup> Let us directly quote a long passage from Kojève to clarify his observation. “*Note on the events of 1848 (France)*. The “bourgeois” period can symbolically be placed between 1789 and 1940. 1789/1848: it is the “bourgeois revolution”; 1848/1940, the “bourgeois domination.” In the “revolutionary” period the Bourgeoisie turned against the Past and towards the Future...But in 48, the Future is claimed by another “class”: more exactly, the Future intervening in the Present under the form of a “revolutionary project” other than that of 89. The bourgeoisie, [who] created political Authority by the “project” of 89, did not accept the “project” of 48 and the combat. They thus turned, starting from this fateful date, not only against the Past, but still against the Future: they are contained in the Present...But (a) Present without Future and without Past is therefore nothing but a “natural” Present, [that is] not human, not historical, not political. The domination of the Bourgeoisie as such is thus nothing but a progressive disappearance of the *political* reality, i.e., of Power or the Authority of the State: the life is dominated by its *animal* aspect, by the questions of food and of sexuality. The human still persists insofar as there is a remainder of transcendence of the Present either by the Past or by the Future; but the Past and the Future implied in the Present no longer has *active* value, they are no longer “in action”: it is their “virtual,” “idéelle” or “ideal,” i.e., purely “aesthetic” or “artistic.” Tradition vegetating under the form of “Romanticism” and the Revolution of the “futurism”; the Present “classicist,” being deprived of his proper element, which is effective action, is deprived of all life. There is therefore no *bourgeois* “Classicism”” (NA, 144-145).

the *political* reality, i.e., of Power or the Authority of the State: the life is dominated by its *animal* aspect, by the questions of food and of sexuality” (NA, 145). We cannot here treat the breadth of such a view in comparison to chapter two; however, one must recognize that Schmitt’s notion of political romanticism is identical to Kojève’s sketch of post-revolutionary romanticism. Why then are we reading Kojève?

The answer lies in the link Kojève seeks to establish between “the domination of the animal aspect” and the so-called post-revolutionary romantic stage. In his lectures on Hegel, that is, roughly three years before his work on authority, he had already noted what that “animal aspect” would signify. The end of history would be the advent of “the disappearance of Man” and thus re-animalization of human existence,

Man remains alive as animal in harmony with Nature or given Being. What disappears is Man properly so-called —that is, Action negating the given, and Error, or in general, the Subject *opposed* to the Object. In point of fact, the end of human Time or History —that is, the definitive annihilation of Man properly so-called or of the free and historical Individual —means quite simply the cessation of Action in the full sense of the term. Practically, this means: the disappearance of Philosophy; for since Man himself no longer changes essentially...But all the rest can be preserved indefinitely; art, love, play, etc., etc.; in short everything that makes man *happy* (I, 158-[ft.6])

In Kojève everything seems to function in a way to complete what is lacking in Schmitt. The above quote suggests that the citizen of the quantitative total state is the post-revolutionary romantic man, who possesses only the animal aspects of existence and who is devoid of political authority. Kojève translates the triadic structure of the Nazi state (authority-as-movement) into the authority of the quantitative total state. Ironically, Schmitt becomes the victim of his own laws, weapons and maneuvers. The desire for neutrality, the passive posture, the striving after universal happiness and above all,

contentlessness and blindness—in short, the traits of the romantic-bourgeois man—surprisingly intersect with what Kojève calls the disappearance of man, entailing further that the post-revolutionary romantic man has no political authority, his presence is purely “virtual,” “ideal,” “artistic” and “aesthetic.” Recalling the aspect of bare existence and the implications of the Hegelian intervention to the *Weltgeist* in Schmitt—i.e., the world-clock pause—this particular man, according to Kojève, lives in “a Present without Future or Past” which is “nothing but a ‘natural’ Present, [that is] not human, not historical, not political” (NA, 145). Both Schmitt and Kojève project a totalitarian authority; and yet, figuratively speaking, whereas in the former, the state is the movement of Apollo on earth, in the latter, the state is the march of Dionysus.

Despite the similarities and differences examined thus far, there is an “ambiguity” (this is ironically Kojève’s own comment to his work) in regard to his note in 1942 (NA) and his footnote in 1939 (I). The post-revolutionary romantic man is still a man (human) and not a post-historical animal (inhuman). To elucidate, the man in question is animal to the extent that: (1) he is depoliticized; (2) he is not a negating-nothingness in-himself, that is, he does not change anymore, for he lives in the eternity of the present without a past (or a future); (3) he has no “tradition,” that is, he has no link with the past; (4) and finally, of a particular significance, his orientation is towards the satisfaction of mere biological necessities e.g., food, sex, unsophisticated pleasures. And yet, the post-revolutionary man is human to the extent that his art is a human art—viz., that aesthetic values are attributes of humanness.

The elaboration of humanness and inhumanness in the above sense presupposes the veracity, legitimacy and truthfulness of the anthropocentric phenomenological vision

of history outlined in the first chapter. In other words, Kojève interprets and narrates particularities and specificities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century *Zeitgeist* by “up-dating” the Hegelian system (*Geist*), implying that history has yet to end and that man must become animal (the re-animalization project) once again, i.e., the true premise and the dictate of the anthropocentric Hegelianism. Kojève’s world-picture has been appropriated by Strauss and Schmitt, though by different means, that these two perceived and conceived what is at stake here as the ultimate end, the final condition of humanness. The political extremities of both Schmitt and Strauss exhibited respectively in the second and third chapter belong to this romantic misconceptualization of the notion of ‘the end’. They believed in the facticity of the end in question, ironically, more than Kojève. Thus, they have professed a double-error: the romanticization (which projects pure violence and anachronistic turns) and the misconceptualization (which provokes a sense of urgency and anxiety out of that ‘end’ in question). And, perhaps, worst of all, both Schmitt and Strauss inaugurated and disseminated, in pragmatic and unacceptable ways, a discourse, which in turn unlocked the romantic-phronetic action orientations. They both initiated a discourse based on an interpretation of that end and on taking action in accord with that interpretation —this we call the double-error orientation to pure violence.

Indeed, Schmitt’s and Strauss’ understanding and appropriation of ‘the end’ is actually the most crucial obstacle to ‘the end’ that Kojève presents. The transitory stage that occurs between the post-revolutionary and the post-historical periods is not the end proper —but the dominance of the romantic-bourgeois. And it is in this sense that Kojève is more radical than Schmitt and Strauss. For it is the Hegelian authority which is designed to generate the pre-destined totalitarian end —the universal and homogenous

state— either through the exercise of pure violence or through the masses’ docile and submissive conversion to the idea of the Hegelian movement. Authority is the regulative, governing and totalizing movement of ‘the idea’ embodied and articulated with the Napoleon-Hegel dyad.

-VI-

**The matrix of authority**

Now, an attempt to penetrate into a detailed account of Kojève’s authority —a triadic authority which acts into the future— seems to be unavoidable. He meticulously identifies four “distinct,” “essentially different,” “irreducible” and “mutually exclusive” theories of authority —in short, “pure” theories of authority: the theological (theocratic) theory, Plato’s theory, Aristotle’s theory and finally, of course, Hegel’s theory. At a phenomenological dimension, for Kojève, each of these authorities irreducibly express “pure,” “spontaneous” and “conditioned” authorities having their own particular genesis in (human) time, while projecting towards becoming “the total authority” in themselves. Let us now summarize, schematically, how Kojève positions these four,

HEGEL	Scholastic(theological) theory of Authority	ARISTOTLE	PLATO
Authority: MASTER [M]	Authority: FATHER [F]	Authority: the CHIEF (of <i>Führer, of Chef</i> ) [C]	Authority: JUDGE [J]
Military authority exerted over the civilians	Traditional/ hereditary authority exerted over the young; the authority of the “Author” over his book	Authority of the Wise and of the Technician (exerted over the flock)	Authority of the just and honest man (of the Arbiter)
Orientation: PRESENT	Orientation: PAST	Orientation: FUTURE	Orientation: ETERNITY
Representation: RISK	Representation: CAUSE	Representation: PROJECT/ ANTICIPATION ( <i>prévoir</i> )	Representation: EQUITY/JUSTICE

(NA, 67-70; see also, OPR, 160)

The above scheme outlines the matrix of authority designed for and accorded to the anthropocentric Hegelianism, which should be assessed carefully. Let us first briefly assess the diagram from within itself. For Kojève, bearing in mind the Hegelian scientific logic elaborated in chapter one, among these four theories, “unfortunately,” only Hegel’s theory has received a complete philosophical elaboration —that “the rest did not go beyond the level of the phenomenology” (NA, 50). The rest, in other words, are superseded, overcome and sublated within the dialectics of the real. Plato’s theory of authority excluded all other authorities as “illegitimate” forms of authority; for the competing alternatives were regarded as not based on “equity and justice”. The “exclusivity” aspect together with its desire to become total authority marks its political “instability,” that is, its historical demise. As Schmitt would also agree with Kojève, except for what that Platonic circle of friends thought to be the true order, everything was relegated to a form of meaninglessness and of anomaly —of tyranny. Yet, at the heart of the matter lies Kojève’s idea that “for Plato the Concept is (1) *eternal*, and (2) it is *related* to Eternity, which (3) is *outside* of Time...Just as the Concept is not related to the temporal reality in which *doxa* reigns, so the free act, too, is impossible in *this* reality” (I, 111), implying the “impossibility” of Plato’s authority. It is that “impossibility” and its political content which Strauss seeks, unlike Schmitt and Kojève, to establish *in concreto* —yet through a romanticization of that content. That this refutation of Plato’s authority and Strauss’ position in regard to classical philosophy has already been clarified, one should rather examine perhaps the most important constituent dimension of our scheme above, Aristotle’s theory of authority; for it is exactly Aristotle who attracts these three intellectuals in constructing the image of the leader (of the movement).

For Kojève, “Aristotle saw Plato’s difficulties. And at the same time he made a great discovery...Aristotle saw what Plato seems not to have seen; namely, that Eternity is *not* outside of Time, but *in* Time” (*I*, 113). Schmitt utilizes the same words in discrediting Plato and appropriating Aristotle’s philosophy; in the difference between Plato and Aristotle, Schmitt finds Plato’s utopian leadership (and *nomos*) and the truth and the matter-of-factness of Aristotle’s political content and its substance. Aristotelian leadership would be, as we shall see, the core premise of Schmitt’s notion of *nomos*; for therein lies the foundation of an art of governing based on rigid, hierarchical parameters of ruling and being ruled (see also chapter two). Strauss would, while guarding his category of the rare (the Platonic competent friends) behind the curtain, utilize the Aristotelian understanding of authority as well. Indeed, the gentlemen are supposed to be cultivated by Aristotle’s *Politics* both to suppress the citizens and to intervene into the affairs of ‘the country’ (see chapter three). But, Kojève’s Aristotle is truly different from the common clichés of philosophical traditions expressed by Strauss and Schmitt. That “the great discovery” he refers to is rather the revolutionary discovery in the pagan world—it is the revolutionary transition from “geometry” (Plato) to “biology” (Aristotle), which would later culminate in the emergence of mathematical-physics within the Judea-Christian tradition. Here, it is impossible to sketch the place of mathematical-physics in history and in anthropocentric phenomenology (see chapter one); in brief, the concrete, the true and the real content Kojève finds in Aristotle is the precursor of modern science—the engine of the dialectics of the real and its futurology. The leader or the Führer of the triadic-authority is the technicians, scientific-specialists and experts governing the course of movement. And this Aristotelian authority is “justified by the Wisdom, the

knowledge, the possibility of *anticipation* [*prévoir*], of transcending the immediate present” (NA, 50). With the authority of the experts, the traditional border separating *techne* and *phronesis* vanish; in a phenomenological mediateness and determinateness, *techne* subsequently conquers the substance of *phronesis*. Anticipation incarnates in the technician-leader and in the expert-leader while transcending the immediacies of the present —that it is the true foundation of the art of governance. Science acts into the present and decides upon the future, which in turn seeks activist-futuristic ways of completing the incompleteness of the dyad and movement under examination. The intellectual-experts, like Kojève, all in all, narrate the present at a molecular level to project and anticipate the future. Let us summarize what has been assessed thus far in view of the scheme provided earlier and in a way to hint at what would follow in this chapter.

In Schmitt, the Aristotelian leadership implies the perfection of prudence which orients or intervenes in the *hic et nunc* aspect of time, whereas Kojève envisions an Aristotelian leader who would read and narrate the coming-into-being of events (thus, the future). And although in both cases the leader possesses an art of governing, for instance, whereas Hitler’s orientation and order nexus was thoroughly anachronistic (Present → Past → Future), Napoleon’s pre-vision and governmentality was based on futurism (Future → Past → Present [→ Future]). Strauss’ leader, in diametrical contrast to these two, derives its prudence from the eternal present that the leader’s prudence blocks arbitrarily anything going beyond the present (Present → Eternal → Eternity → Present). That transition or for the lack of a better word, translation of the trans-historical authority (Present → Eternal → Eternity) occurs as a theosophical necessity, which always tends to

preserve the transcendental. Strauss' view is thus utopian, particularly when compared to Schmitt and Kojève, which does not however imply a harmless non-realizable form (see chapter three).

Does Kojève opt for one separate authority over another? Not at all. The schema we provided is truly a matrix in the real sense of the term since it potentially embodies, according to Kojève, all “combinations” and “permutations” of “every” type of authority, depending on the given “primacy” and “spatio-temporal disposition.” The combination of FM, for instance, is substantially different from MF as these two are altogether different from CFM or for instance, FCMJ. So, there are mathematically sixty-four combinations politically and sociologically different from one another. And out of these possibilities Kojève seeks the golden combination which would render possible the expansion of “the Napoleonic code” in a global-spatial dimension, i.e., the actualization of the Napoleon-Hegel dyad (or, the unity of power and wisdom). He seeks the authority code of the universal and homogeneous state. What would the date 1806 signify in this context?

Kojève thinks that the history has ended in principle, in 1806; and therein he observes the historically-culminated existence of the four constituent elements: (1) Hegel, the writer of *Phenomenology*, the book (“the true Bible”) which contains every possible question of philosophy (“circularity”) —thus, Hegel signifies the father [F] representing the “cause” and “tradition”; (2) the French Revolution, the final bloody struggle, which resulted in the cancellation of the master and slave dialectic through military means (“the final risk”) —thus, the justification of the existence of masters [M] at the end of history (i.e., power, militarism); (3) Napoleon as the chief [C] (“the dictator-Napoleon”) possessing the future project —thus, the justification of the realization of power and the

conscious plan for the universal and homogeneous state, (“the movement”); (4) and finally, legal positivism (*Droit* proper) representing the arbiter, the judge [**J**] (i.e., the tribunal and police).

There are sixty-four different and distinct combinations possible and probable in this matrix. According to Kojève, the correct and in fact “the must be” combination could be verified through an examination of what does not constitute that golden combination. He assumes the task of an interpreter and narrates accordingly the 20<sup>th</sup> century *Zeitgeist* in order to falsify the trajectory of the existing systems (*NA*, 148-152).

<b>C</b> → Revolutionary authority	<b>MCJ</b> → Hitler or German imperialism
<b>CMJ</b> → Lenin	<b>MJC</b> → Anglo-Saxon Imperialism (Bourgeois)
<b>CJM</b> → Social-democracy	<b>C</b> → Permanent Revolution
<b>M</b> → Military authority	<b>JMC</b> → Bourgeois Conservatism

One could well pursue an in-depth debate and assessment concerning on the basis of each of these gives ‘error’ in the Kojèvean system and in Hegelian (anthropo-) logicism. And likewise, one could assess, if necessary, the dynamics of each in order to position Schmitt and Strauss in the falsification scheme above. We do not have enough space to treat such questions. In all combinations above, the lacking germ is **F** (the father or the tradition). And, as Kojève argues, “the destruction of the authority of the Father is deadly [*funeste*] to political authority in general” (*NA*, 131). For rejection or denial of tradition is at the same time the denial or rejection of the anthropo-morphology embodied in Kojève’s Hegelian phenomenology, the tradition. To elucidate, the tradition implies an active-conscious coming-into-being of atheism in that that “a-” in “atheism” expresses the content of the tradition under examination. In regard to this aspect of authority, earlier in chapter one, we provided a guiding thread explicating the shift from the Judeo-Christian tradition to the Hegelian tradition: the cleric becomes the father (Hegel), the holy bible

becomes *Phenomenology* (“the new bible”), the Christian faith becomes the anthropotheistic faith (recall Schmitt’s notes), the church becomes the universal and homogenous state, and finally “sin” becomes error. At the risk of crudely summarizing the Hegelian tradition implies a scientific faith and the finality of the dialectics in and through Hegel. And yet, as mentioned earlier, the tradition as well as the authority elaborated in and through the Napoleon-Hegel dyad has not been actualized; bourgeois domination that took place in 1848-1940 (having no political authority) opposed the actualization of the Hegelian idea activated by the active-elite intellectuals. In regard to this observation, Kojève’s note on tradition is significant.

All Tradition proper, that is to say, having a value and a *political* reality, is necessarily *oral* or spectacular, that is to say, direct. Writing is, by its nature, *detached* from its material support —from its author who fixes it in time. The presented past only by writing is not, for me, my past: I “ignore” it very easily; exposed in a *book*, the past of my country does not differ noticeably from the past of China, for example; I tend towards putting all the *writings* on the same project and discussing the theories which are exposed there as if they were conceived outside the time. Thus, the events of 48, by destroying the *political* bond [*le lien*] with the Past, had to touch above all the *oral* tradition: this [tradition] is which must be lacking in the period of bourgeois *domination* (NA, 145-6).

That “I ignore” and “the past of my country does not differ noticeably from the past of...” in relation to the widening of the author-text split and in relation to the disappearance of the historical-contextuality of the text have already been assessed in the first section of the second chapter: Schmitt had already formulated the spread of political romanticism in the West and its “abrupt jump” to the East by assessing romantic-rhetorical movement vis-à-vis literature pieces, poems, aesthetic myths, etc. And yet, whereas in Schmitt such a metaphysical movement takes place without necessitating any level of consciousness (that is why, the movement in question is regarded as an abrupt

conversion to an idea and as an un-cultural event), in Kojève that “I ignore” presumes both a level of consciousness and a mediated acceptance of ‘the idea’ (“I tend towards putting all the writings on the same project and discussing the theories...as if they were conceived outside the time”). Kojève’s task in general and the path of authority as a movement in particular projects a universal rhetoric cancelling all the particular aspects of both time and space (thus, existence). Hegel becomes quasi-transcendentalized and thus relevant and extra-historical both in Turkey and in Canada regardless of particularities of these two countries —that that “I ignore” is the key. And, it is precisely such essence of the movement, which moves towards the actualization of the substance and the content of the Hegelian idea, is the theoretical-practical foundation which discredits and prevents a resort to (political) romanticism in any form. The Hegelian slaves do not skip the intermediary stages of history. Nor do they remain entrapped in un-wisdom, for they are wise to the extent that modern science constitutes wisdom. This is the message of Kojève against Schmitt and Strauss.

Does the movement of authority generate the project in a determinate immediateness? Is it really a symbiosis and osmosis with spontaneity and simultaneity in its becoming, as Schmitt claims? We indicated earlier that political romanticism — bourgeois domination— signifies the socio-political obstacle with respect to the movement in question (“tradition is which must be lacking in the period of bourgeois *domination*”). Like Strauss’ liberal education system, which is essentially an institutionalized form of indoctrination, Kojève proposes “psychological application,” *ergo* “incontestably” practical, instillation of authority in order completely to disseminate and spread the Napoleonic code. Thus, the authority as a movement has a pedagogical-

transformative aspect which primarily seeks to cancel the bourgeois dimension of the *Zeitgeist*.

Kojève's system of education addresses "the youth," "the man of tomorrow," and "the man of future" in whom the future project incarnates and which enable them to derive authority "spontaneously" from the given moment (*NA*, 119). He proposes the necessity of a shift within the institutions of education from purely theoretical (*theoria* and *sophia*) sciences to practical-theoretical sciences (*techne* and *phronesis*), through which future candidates for authority —the future leaders ("C") proper— could become acquainted with both "the sources" and "the causes" of authority. Active Hegelianism is the content of the Kojèvean education system, i.e., the "F" aspect of tradition. He therefore thinks that current educative-transformative institutions are institutionalized errors. Cambridge, Oxford and Ordensburg have always aimed to create "leader schools" in accordance with a political project; and yet, these schools followed hereditary leadership regulations or at times they tried to recruit and select leaders by creating new youth movements. The new education however "must serve the hearth of all 'propaganda' or rational 'demagogy', that is to say, [it must serve] true efficiency" (*NA*, 183), which would expand progressively and universally the Napoleonic code. And in fact this is exactly what Kojève professes —a political propaganda striving to objectively convince the people that the Hegelian system is the truth, i.e., the final teaching.

Let us penetrate into the core dynamics constituting the essential link between the Hegelian education system and the leader's authority. The genesis of the leader rests, as noted earlier, on Aristotle's philosophy and his "successful correction" of Plato. The cardinal rationale here in Kojève's mind is this: after Aristotle, the master acquired a

right (*droit*) to exert authority on the slave based upon anticipation and project, namely, a right to exercise authority over the future. Kojève's note in this context is integral to an understanding of the world-state and its movement: "it is thus...the authority of the 'intelligent' on the 'beast' [*la bête*], of the 'civilized' on the 'barbarian', of the 'ant' on the 'cicada', of the 'clairvoyant' on the 'blind'" (*NA*, 73). Here, each Aesopic metaphor is carefully selected to characterize both the authority and its subjects/objects. It is the authority and the pedagogy of the technicians (i.e., the schooling aspect) which transform the cicada (laziness) into an ant (energy and work), the blind (romanticism) into the clairvoyant (prudence), the barbarian (resistance) into the civilized (docility) and the beast (irrationality) into the intelligent (scientific rationality). And yet, the project of transformation represents only one side of this peculiar movement under examination that upon the denial of or resistance against authority, the movement appears as the exertion of pure violence terminating those "errors". The triadic structure in other words seeks manifold ways to cancel, eradicate and even terminate the errors. The orientation of authority is towards the total rationalization and the expansion of a universal-technical political form. Strauss' response to Kojève in regard to the world-picture outlined hitherto is perhaps fitting.

To retain his [the Chief] power, he will be forced to suppress every activity which might lead people into doubt of the essential soundness of the universal and homogeneous state: he must suppress philosophy as an attempt to corrupt young. In particular he must in the interest of his homogeneity of his universal state forbid every teaching, every suggestion, that there are politically relevant natural differences among men which cannot be abolished or neutralized by progressive scientific technology (*OT*, 211)

It is truly ironic that Strauss, the messianic myth-maker, accuses Kojève of corrupting the youth. Indeed the debate itself is ironic to the extent that it compels their audience or reader to choose one of these competing claims: either anachronistic authoritarianism (Strauss) or futuristic totalitarianism (Kojève). By looking at the internal dynamics of their debate, including Schmitt's position, we should not deceive ourselves with the trappings of the discourse. None of them suggests, even if we consider Kojève's so-called emancipative project, politically and humanly viable contentions. Schmitt and Strauss are anxious about modernity and they defend anachronistic forms of power to re-discipline the people, though with different means; and sharing the same world-picture with these two, Kojève defends the automatic or mediated acceptance of the given.

The debate between Strauss and Kojève could well be extended by reference to Kojève's notion of justice expressed as the Plato's theory ("J") in the system. According to Kojève, in Plato every authority should be founded upon 'justice' or 'equity,' which in turn discredits the rest as "illegitimate". Like Schmitt, in the Platonic substance of authority Kojève finds an historical error: "there is no doubt that this theory is false in its exclusivity" (*NA*, 77). Plato's error was not realizing that "power politics" rarely takes "justice" as a definitive source of authority; that is to say, justice positions itself only if it is "accompanied" by the others (F, M or C) and to a greater extent, only if it is "dominated" by the other sources of authority. "Eternity" in brief does not and cannot manifest itself directly in "time" through an authority—justice by itself is not and cannot be an authority (*NA*, 124). This view concerning the possibility of justice-in-time constitutes a crucial disagreement between Strauss and Kojève; and whereas the former defends trans-historicism and the impossibility of justice in-real-time, the latter

introduces the ways through which the gap between time and eternity can be bridged (i.e., justice as an event), entailing another dimension of the refutation of classical philosophy.

The bridge in question —“the penetration of eternity in time”— occurs in and through the authority of the judge, who is an “impartial” and “disinterested” citizen and “who does not act but, satisfied with ‘contemplating’ —or ‘judging’— the acts of the others” (NA, 130). The occurrence of “or” in Kojève’s statement “...contemplating or judging...” is the key, in that pure contemplation is essentially contradictory to a concrete application of justice; out of *vita contemplativa* judgment cannot spring. Thus, just judgment and justice are, at a phenomenological level, not identical but they are co-determinant constituent dimensions. Kojève categorizes the positive rule of law under the rubric of justice. Unlike Strauss (and Schmitt), it is of a theoretical necessity for Kojève to present justice as such, for there exists a permanent conflict with *hic et nunc* and the present, which constitutes a fundamental instability. Legal egalitarianism and legal positivism (legality proper) resolves this so-called “serious dilemma” —that impartiality and disinterestedness take justice down from eternity, a process which must be guarded by the other authorities.

The question here is nevertheless not how Kojève formulates justice; for it occurs as an automatic and to an extent, mediated extension of the authority as a whole. If you recall, such a legal dimension of the world-picture was positioned by Strauss and Schmitt as tyrannical, vulgar and decadent because it embodies legal egalitarianism and positivist rules, which destroy or neutralize natural hierarchy and secrecy; and despite their different appropriations of traditionalism, they both regard modern legality as an autonomous authority expressing the spirit of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, their views

cannot be contrasted with Kojève's project; for what Schmitt and Strauss thought does not really correspond to what Kojève defends. On the contrary. Kojève is in perfect agreement with these two (even though they do not realize) on the issue of tyranny and its relation with legal positivism, which implies that legality of a coming Hegelian world-state would not be tyrannical (from a legal dimension).

Earlier we argued that Schmitt and Strauss conceived the 20<sup>th</sup> century as the end stage of history whereas Kojève perceives it to be the transitory stage. Thus, it may well be argued that Schmitt and Strauss erroneously picture the diffusion of legality as the autonomous authority of a coming world state. Legality however is accompanied and in fact controlled by the rest of the authorities. The period of bourgeois domination, which is the stage of transition, is tyrannical since it expresses 'justice standing without any support of authority,' with which we also arrive at the same conclusion that this domination does not imply possession of political authority (*NA*, 150). For Kojève, this particular period is essentially the period of tyranny —the birth of absolute *Droit*— since the bourgeoisie, having rejected the project of 1848, turned back to the state of 1789, i.e., the period of absolute freedom (see chapter one). Here, the governing principle is *Droit* to the extent that 'the people' pronounce "I have *Droit* for something when I can do it without encountering *opposition* (reaction)," a human condition which Kojève thinks "in principle possible" (*NA*, 59). This is precisely the moment and condition to which Schmitt calls "individualistically disintegrated society" and to which Strauss calls "tyranny of the unwise." And both Schmitt and Strauss formulated accordingly radical ways of intervention into the system in order successfully 'to save mankind' from the apocalyptic end. In Kojève, unlike these two, there is no such occurrence to which we

could call ‘the end’; rather, the end must progressively be brought forth through the multifarious interventions of the Hegelian authority. To restate, political romanticism (Schmitt) or the rise of the unwise people (Strauss) are false perceptions of Zeitgeist to the extent that they do not grasp the true end —an end that is hindered by romantic-bourgeois period. This takes us directly to the ‘how of’ an intervention in Kojève.

Considering the similarities in the writings of Schmitt and Kojève, it would not be surprising to observe that the intervention of Kojève’s authorities is almost identical to the one we described in the second chapter. Schmitt’s total state, as we noted earlier, is comprised of “state, movement and people” intertwined with the concept of the political. In view of Kojève’s depiction of total authority, which encompasses the leader (project), the master (military), the father (tradition), the judge (justice), one constituent dimension is lacking in Schmitt’s formulation —the element of the father, that is, the tradition. We wrote “lacking” but in its depth it is truly hidden. In formulating the total state, Schmitt concealed a crucial assumption: the German “generation” is politically “up-to-date” (*SMP*, 18), implying that the Germans did not “skip the intermediary stages” and that they are, unlike the romantics, in the stream of that German Hegelian tradition. Indeed, Schmitt is utterly convinced that the total state, recalling his discourse on dictatorship, is the necessary extension of the German tradition inaugurated with Hegel. Now, we do not know exactly whether Kojève directly replies to Schmitt’s formulation (though it seems so), but his *Outline of a Doctrine of French Policy (DOF)* provides, interestingly, a direct corrective-critique of the Nazi qualitative total state.

During the late middle ages due to an “anachronistic,” “premature” and “utopian” imperial project, Kojève argues, the Germans were “never able to or having wanted to

skip stages with a *revolutionary* act” and thus, they could not attain the level of historical movement. The same “error” repeats itself in the 20<sup>th</sup> century Nazi state as well. “‘The Führer’ is but a German Robespierre, which is to say an anachronistic one, who —having known how to master his Thermidor— was able to undertake the execution of the Napoleonic plan himself” (*DOF*). In narrating these Kojève’s tone by no means reflect any concern for the atrocities and violence done through the Nazi state apparatuses; his account suggests explicitly the rightfulness of that (terrifying) intervention, except only for its trajectory and content. He takes into account only the error and the failure of “the superhuman political and military effort” of “80 million politically ‘perfect’ citizens” (*DOF*) —the Germans. And, even, while stressing this failure Kojève tacitly approves the success of the total state: Hitler’s dictatorship transformed “the individually disintegrated society” —in short, the bourgeois domination as the bourgeois-animal aspect of existence— into the so-called “perfect citizens”. Or, more explicitly, Schmitt’s practical-theory provides the essence and the content of the transformation that Kojève desires to happen, which would transform the individuals into citizens. Kojève takes the model of totalitarian revolution directly from Schmitt’s formulations of the Nazi state. Indeed, this remark should have already been expected in our earlier assessment of Kojève’s appropriation of the triadic structure of Schmitt’s total state.

However, Kojève at the same time recognizes the problems associated with the nature of Schmittian intervention. In addition to the error of anachronism embedded in the Nazi intervention, the exclusion of humanity, Kojève believes, is “the fatal error” of being entrapped within an already negated political form —the nation-state. There is no need here to give an account that Schmitt and Kojève (and even Strauss) have already

assumed the decline of the nation-state as a political form. We need to penetrate further into the textual implications of Kojève's work. In addition to the anachronism and the exclusion of humanity as the two deadly errors of the Nazi state, for Kojève, one of the fundamental dimensions was lacking or better, was misconceived —the meditative aspect of intervention. Schmitt's theory and Hitler's dictatorship were not mediated by *Phenomenology* but *Mein Kampf*, which entails the cancellation of the Hegelian tradition —did not Schmitt declare Hegel's death, as indicated earlier, with the rise of Nazism?

In this context, the title, *Outline of a Doctrine of French Policy*, is not random. If we consider Schmitt's work, *Total State, Total War, Total Revolution*, as the Hitler-Schmitt dyad parallel to the Napoleon-Hegel dyad, Kojève's work here should be seen as the Kojève-De Gaulle dyad. And all these dyads should be seen as an effective refutation and reply to Strauss' reading of Simonides and Hiero since we witness a perfect collaboration and in fact total unity of power and wisdom.

Already in his *La Notion de l'Autorité*, Kojève informed us about the period of the bourgeois domination which occurred between 1848 and 1940. And in the appendix of this work, where he pursues a thoroughly *hic et nunc* application of Hegelian system, he celebrates the advent of de Gaulle. "We can...say that in 1940 there is a spontaneous genesis...of *total* political authority, the Maréchal having served the (individual) support for the other four "pure" types of authority (under a political form)" (NA, 189).<sup>52</sup> The

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<sup>52</sup> One must immediately recall that, in Kojève, all those four authorities schematized as well as noted earlier tended to become "total authority" in history through an irreducible "spontaneity" in time. The dates 1806 (Napoleon), 1933 (Hitler) and here 1940 (de Gaulle) are the dates of a total authority rising from a "spontaneous genesis". Considering the incompleteness of the Napoleon-Hegel dyad as well as the error of the Hitler-Schmitt dyad, Kojève finds the possibility of uniting all those four authorities in the events of 1940 in France. As we shall see, nothing occurs haphazardly in the writings of Kojève that there is a unique reason why he offers political advices to de Gaulle.

historical moment to which Kojève refers here is the period of the national revolution in France. Having outlined the nature of a revolution earlier in the first chapter (i.e., the active transformation of the present) he concludes that in 1940 “the French soldier did not give his all,” in other words, “the average Frenchman obviously refuses to die, and even to discipline himself and to ‘restrain’ himself, for the sake of France” (*ODF*). Or, more explicitly, “in May 1942, France no longer has revolutionary *idea*” although it has accepted the “topos” of the national revolution (*NA*, 196). But, did he not assert that the end of history remarks “the disappearance of wars and bloody revolutions” (*I*, 159)? And if a revolution is none other than the active negation of the spatio-temporal dimension of the given present of the world, does not Kojève’s welcome the Maréchal —the total revolutionary authority— constitute a grand concession in his theory?

#### -VII-

#### Kojève’s Empire

With the Hegelian intervention: a simulacra or pretension? —we encounter a subtle situation. Given the notes on France, Kojève’s *advice* to de Gaulle that during a political situation, which possesses a revolutionary ‘potential’ but has no revolutionary idea, one can “exploit” the situation by bringing “*un simulacre d’idée*” which can generate “*un simulacre d’action révolutionnaire*” (*NA*, 198). This advice, as a historical fact, is perhaps Kojève’s most witty theoretical-practical maneuver aiming to overcome the problem of political romanticism. One should bear in mind what political romanticism is to understand what follows. In order not to generate a public “apathy”, Kojève advises de Gaulle to mask the events with an “impression of action” —an impression “which must produce the presence of a pretension of the idea” (*NA*, 198). The idea is the Hegelian idea and the cardinal rationale behind the advice is the vital necessity

to fill the gap of “intermediary stages of history,” that is, the stages which have been skipped by the romantic-bourgeoisie. The difference between Schmitt and Kojève should hereby be crystal clear: unlike Schmitt’s *a priori* assumption that the Germans have realized and experienced the intermediate stages of history, Kojève presents —and thus advises— a strategic condition of a revolutionary simulation (or parody) whereby ‘the people’ could mediate realize the intermediary stages. And this —the Hegelian political propaganda in the form of an advice to de Gaulle— Kojève calls “the automatic extension” of the Napoleonic codes.

Everything seems to be a Hegelian up-date of Schmitt’s work and thought. In Kojève, both the justification and the mode of intervention are parallel to Schmitt’s Weimar period writings, except for the fact that the intervention takes place now in France. Kojève justifies, like Schmitt, his attempt by claiming that “the modern Frenchman lives as a ‘bourgeois’ and not as a ‘citizen’” (*ODF*). And in a diametrical contrast to Schmitt’s exclusively German qualitative total state formulation, Kojève does not exclude humanity; he rather aims to collapse the movement towards the universal and homogenous state of Europe as a whole —under the political form of an “empire”. Thus the citizen is not solely the Frenchmen but the Europeans as a whole. It is in this context we see a surprising intersection between Schmitt’s quantitative total state and Kojève’s empire. Both political forms aim to expand its volume vis-à-vis disseminating the psychic-effect of technical efficiency, the mental-effect of universal happiness and the anthropo-theic idea of atheism. Recalling our emphasis on the socio-political implications of the ants and cicadas metaphors, Kojève’s remarks the mental trajectory of his theory of intervention.

It seems that this mentality is specifically characterized by that art of leisure which is the source of art in general, by the aptitude for creating this “sweetness of living” which has nothing to do with material comfort, by that “*dolce far niente*” itself which degenerates into pure laziness only if it does not follow a productive and fertile labor... This shared mentality — which entails a profound sense of beauty generally (and especially in France) associated with a very distinct sense of proportion and which thus permits the transformation of simple “bourgeois” well-being into aristocratic “sweetness” of living and the frequent elevation to *delight* of pleasures which, in another setting, would be (and are, in most cases) “vulgar” pleasures... (ODF)

Kojève’s projection of this new mentality marks a series of transformation: from bourgeois-individuality to citizenship, from “individualistically disintegrated society” (Schmitt) to a community based on “familial kinship” (Kojève) and more importantly, from the cicada-existence to the ant-existence, that is, from a lonely, lazy, vulgar animality to a hardworking model of animality. And this is not the imposition of *Proletkult* (Schmitt) or the Soviet “barbaric-statism” (Kojève). Nor does it dictate a bourgeois-liberal business competition (Schmitt) or a harsh business cartel (Kojève). The transformation in question is what he calls “the Stakhanovite emulation” (OT, 138-9), an emulation of ‘the model worker’, who mined hundred tons of coal in only five hours. Schmitt would call this, as we shall see, the horizon of “the final grazing,” which moves towards its total actualization through incorporating the total rationality and the technical efficiency (or, loosely called, technology). And recalling Schmitt’s hymn to Kojève (see chapter two), this transformation projects the coming-into-being of the re-animalization of man, that is, in the final analysis, the coming-into-being of an “automaton” properly so-called. Kojève’s “miracle” is the synthesis, symbiosis and osmosis of liberalism and communism which takes a shape utterly different and distinct from its constituent systems. And this is what Schmitt was hesitant to “name” earlier and what Strauss could not answer, “the unknown opposite faith”.

Now, the transformation we scrutinize thus far did not fall from the sky. In the writings of Kojève, the heaven has already collapsed into the earth. The Hegelian idea incarnates in flesh through the meditative advice of the philosopher; and as such, it is the leader who orders “I lead you, follow me!” in perfect accordance with a “program” and “project.” The flock follows the shepherd. We are immediately thrown back to our initial notes on power and wisdom, which we assessed in the Kojève-Strauss debate. We have examined two competing claims concerning the possibility of bridging the gap between *theoria* and *praxis*. And now, we need to clarify what we meant by the Kojève-de Gaulle dyad as the automatic expansion of the Napoleonic code, which justifies the Kojèvean perspective as opposed to that of classical philosophy.

Kojève’s advice materialized with de Gaulle is this: “the era where all of *humanity* together will be a political reality still remains in the distant future. The period of *national* political realities is over. This is the epoch of Empires, which is to say of *transnational* political unities, but formed by *affiliated* nations” (*DOF*). To translate, Kojève gives, as a philosopher, *the* advice to the political leader, de Gaulle, to initiate and actualize *the* decision (in Schmitt’s sense) of moving beyond the limited category of “the modern state” and therewith to plant the germs of “empire.”<sup>53</sup> The transition from the nation-state to the stage of empires constitutes the veracity of the dyad in question; and it

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<sup>53</sup> Howse informs us that this decisive statement “appears in a memorandum of advice to Charles de Gaulle written in 1945, at the end of the Second World War” (Howse, 2004). In addition, Stanley Rosen informs us that “Andre Philip and Raymond Aron both confirmed independently to me [Rosen] that he was second only to de Gaulle in the decision-making process of the French government” (Rosen, 1998). And besides, Kojève is publicly known as a double-agent working both as a Soviet spy and as a spy of the French government. After the World War II, Kojève started to work in the French Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations traveling, as an official, all across Europe and conducting political relations to form a European community based on Napoleonic imperial-civil codes—in the final analysis to actualize what he calls “an empire.” He was notoriously known as an architect of what we have today, the European Union.

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is the very same transition which cancels the obscurity of the term “in principle” attached to the end of history thesis. Consistent with his Hegelian system, which requires only acceptance of or conversion to the given reality —the pre-designed and predetermined idea— Kojève notes that “‘conversion’ to the idea of the Latin Empire” is “a conversion which could result only from a series of prolonged dialogues, conducted in isolation from public rumors” (*DOF*).

Xenophon’s dialogue, that between Simonides and Hiero, takes place in isolation from the public. And after Simonides’ advice to Hiero, which is given “spontaneously”, the dialogue unexpectedly, and yet intentionally, ends with Hiero’s silence. This situation, truly esoteric in nature, does not necessarily imply that Hiero would not act in accordance with the advice. Nor does it imply that Hiero immediately translates Simonides’ advice into action. From a Hegelian perspective, the dialogue must end with Hiero’s realization that he cannot act, for the historical-material conditions are not mature. If we listen to Kojève, the historical-material obstacles hindering the active participation of an advice in the real has ended with and after Hegel. Kojève’s advice to de Gaulle should thus be read as the Hiero-Simonides dyad up-dated with the Hegelian idea. Almost identical to the parameters of Xenophon’s dialogue, interestingly, Kojève’s advice did not take place immediately because de Gaulle was not in power at that time: “there is nothing to suggest that such dialogues are currently possible” and therefore, “a foundation which would ensure the stability, or perhaps the return, of General de Gaulle’s power by allowing him to embody in his person an already-constituted political ‘general will’. This enlarged foundation would, moreover, be necessary even in the case where a

de Gaulle converted to the idea of the Empire had to apply himself to its political realization from the outset” (*DOF*). These are not passing remarks.

The world-clock shows 1959. De Gaulle comes to power and in the concrete sense of the term Kojève’s Hegelian “conversion” to the idea of empire takes place. An attempt to chronicle the matter-of-factness of what took place is not the task here. But, what we observe is the inauguration of the Franco-German cooperation initiating the European Economic Community, today’s European Union. And this happens in and through the critique of Schmitt’s twin brothers, which unfolds the new world-picture: “liberalism is wrong not to perceive any political entity beyond that of Nations...[and] internationalism’s sin is the fact that it sees nothing politically viable short of Humanity” (*DOF*). De Gaulle (power) and Kojève (wisdom), we could well argue, initiated the new horizon: “before being embodied in Humanity, the Hegelian *Weltgeist*, which has abandoned the Nations, inhabits Empires” (*DOF*). Let us also listen to what De Gaulle says in the same year as the leader of that movement: “*Oui, c’est l’Europe, depuis l’Atlantique jusqu’à l’Oural, c’est tout l’Europe, qui décidera du destin du monde.*”

The portrayal of this new horizon together with our examination of three thinkers thus far proves that an analysis of the 20<sup>th</sup> century world-picture should recognize the relevance of the writings of Kojève, Strauss and Schmitt, which does not necessarily imply that we defend the thesis of one over the other. If we particularly take Kojève’s trajectory into closer consideration, what we encounter is more than a grand, romantic-theoretical narrative. One should attend to the writings of Kojève as we pay attention to the historical facticity of terrifying violence that took place in Germany which was intellectually supported by thinkers like Schmitt and Heidegger. The historical-

philosophical pedigree of the anthropocentric Hegelianism and its invisible political propaganda striving to erect the regulating-governing idea and the totalizing aspects should not be forgotten or dismissed while assessing the implications of the Kojève-de Gaulle dyad. It was not a haphazard historical coincidence or “the work of a magic hand of chance” which enabled the realization of Kojève’s political advice to de Gaulle. And nor was it a scholarly event.

### **-VIII-**

#### **The Empire: authority-as-the-movement**

The intervening authority is total as it comprises the four main constituent and supporting elements. The leader (decision), the master (military), the father (tradition) and the judge (legality) aspects of authority intertwine, Kojève argues, in a proper combination of “CMFJ (or maybe CMJF)” (NA, 192) with a proper trajectory of Future → Past → Present (→Future). This is in brief the exact matrix of authority embedded in both the germ of the E.U. and the coming universal and homogenous state. In regard to the leadership, in Kojève, there is a constant reference to “the will to autonomy” conditioned by and vitally dependent on the creation of a “political elite,” “technicians,” “young managers” and “administrators,” upon whom the success of political and economic “expansion” falls. To this must be added the militaristic aspect, which would later signify a turning point according to Schmitt. The master dimension is highlighted in simple terms that the empire would possess “an army —of earth, of the sea, and of the air” (DOF). And, that “an army of air” means (visible once we cancel our contemporary lens of analysis and unconceal contention’s simplicity) the appropriation of space —an appropriation which negates the term ‘and’ taking place in the traditional phrase ‘man and nature.’ In other words, the militarization of space, in its infinity, would mean a colonization and

domination of human existence which takes place beyond nature —not through the conquest of nature, for that has been already accomplished. We shall turn to the conquest of space later with Schmitt. Suffice it to note, for the moment, that what stands before us is the empire expressing and verifying a transitional phase moving towards the universal and homogeneous state, that is to say, a provisional “habitat” of the Hegelian *Weltgeist* (humanity) and the Napoleonic code —further juxtaposed as a “neutral” and essentially “ever-expanding” spirit against two other empires, the Anglo-Saxon empire (Americans) and the Soviet Union. A compression of time, space and existence in the Idea as well as in the transitory stage of empires is at stake.

Kojève presents a new empire governed by technology, administered by the elite-technical experts, expanded by political propaganda and fueled by the automatons. Then, is the project of empire limited to Europe? “All roads lead to Rome!” writes Kojève in a letter to Strauss and then he goes on to assert a truthful scenario.

If the Westerners remain capitalist (that is to say, also nationalist), they will be defeated by Russia, and that is how the End-State will come about. If, however, they “integrate” their economies and policies (they are on the way to doing so), then they can defeat Russia. And that is how the End-State will be reached (the same universal and homogeneous state). But in the first case it will be spoken about in “Russian”..., and in the second case —in “European” (*OT*, 256) [September 1950]

This remark is no more than an “up-to-date” Heideggerian standpoint, which nevertheless intrigues a certain sense of curiosity as to whether the so-called new horizon intersects with a new world order. And it is the same question concerning the new world-picture which immediately brings us to Schmitt’s seminal work, *The Nomos of the Earth*. In this work, Schmitt examines the collapse of the old world order and the rise of a new horizon, with which we also encounter a significant shift concerning the trajectory of his writings

— a shift from an inquiry about the eclipse of the modern-state to an assessment of the termination of the old world order. Schmitt still maintains the content of ‘the political’ mapped in his *The Concept of the Political*; but the shift would remind us of Strauss’ earlier note: “the affirmation of the political as such is not his last word. His last word is “the order of the human things” (*Notes*, 106).

-IX-

**The Ascend: the new nomos of the earth**

The meaning of *nomos*, “the first measure of all subsequent measures,” constitutes our cardinal concern, which necessarily requires a philological insight as to what the term signifies and how it unfolds itself. Finding its “concrete” representation and hence existence in Aristotle’s political philosophy, Schmitt notes that “the Greek noun *nomos* comes from the Greek verb *nemein*” and above all, “such a noun is a *nomen actionis*, i.e., it indicates an action as a process whose content is defined by the verb,” that is, “the action and the process of *nemein*” (*NOE*, 326). The orientation of *nomos* is then determined by the very form that *nemein* bears, implying further that the change of *nemein* is the change of the *nomos*.

For Schmitt, *nemein* further embodies “appropriation (*nehmen*), distribution (*teilen*) and production (*weiden*)”; to paraphrase *nemein*, it signifies and connotes a triadic action and process: taking, dividing and grazing. And, the vital message that Schmitt tries to call attention to is the idea that “no man can give, divide and distribute without taking,” that is to say, the aspect of appropriation necessarily precedes the other two processes, distribution and production (*NOE*, 345). Schmitt’s utilization of the term explicitly suggests that each and every change of the orientation of appropriation (this we call, progress) culminates in a different *nomos* of the earth; for appropriation is the

primary source of an order. Taking its roots from ancient Greece and unfolding into the “technical-industrial-economic” global order or more precisely, from Aristotle to *Grossraumwirtschaft*, the history of mankind has experienced the change of “what is appropriated” together with its affiliated (yet not determinant) changes in division and production. Thus, the genesis of this gigantic historical process starts, expectedly, with the “land-appropriations,” which ruled the earth until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, during the time “when men as yet had no global concept of their planet and the great oceans of the world were inaccessible to human power.” And it was the Europeans who subsequently surpassed the limits of the land and expanded the possibilities of the order vis-à-vis “sea-appropriations,” which nevertheless did not destroy the old order and which was rather based on “a dual balance...of land and sea” (*NOE*, 352). This account of history—in perfect accord with the theory of the shifting central spheres (see chapter two)—Schmitt calls the old world order. Appropriations that is to say express the dialectical turns and moments of the world-order determining the *Zeitgeist* within unfolding *Weltgeist*.

Recalling our notes in the second chapter concerning the socio-political implications of political romanticism (e.g., electrification of the world, the end of history thesis, the domination of technicity, etc.), it would not be surprising to observe the very same essence in Schmitt’s writings concerning the end of the old world order with reference to the notion of *nomos*. For him, the total decline of the old order (starting with “industry-appropriations” of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) took place after the World War I, with the “air-appropriations.” And this—the air-appropriation—have *neutralized* the old world order; as Schmitt notes in his *Foreword* (1950), “the earth has been promised to the

peacemakers” and “the idea of a new *nomos* of the earth belongs only to them” (*NOE*, 39). Schmitt’s remark should not and cannot be seen as a departure from his earlier writings. The neutralization process, the depoliticization project and political romanticism constitute the *sine quo non* theoretical-practical foundations of his thought. In addition, rather than seeking radical ways to confront ‘the given’ here Schmitt resorts to a more scholarly narration of the 20<sup>th</sup> century spirit. Air-appropriations express the content of the end sphere —namely, technology— vis-à-vis the changing nature of “efficacy and velocity of the means of human power,” “information,” “the content of this effectivity,” “human spatial consciousness,” “boundlessness,” “nothingness hostile to *nomos*” (*NOE*, 48, 355). Thus, it is precisely the notion of appropriation in general and 20<sup>th</sup> century air-appropriations in particular which establish the essential link between Schmitt and Kojève’s project of the universal and homogenous state.

Moreover, it is exactly the same narration of 20<sup>th</sup> century air-appropriations which proves the continuity of Schmitt’s earlier concerns about how to revitalize violent and authoritarian the political. The end of the shifting central spheres (the traditional elitist movement of history) had compelled Schmitt to conclude that ‘the political’ has been neutralized and forgotten, entailing an arbitrary intervention into the system with the political. Besides, his self-assured tone was clearly expressed in such contentions as “nothing can escape this logical conclusion of the political” (*CP*, 39) —the specificity of that logic of the friend and enemy distinction. When we scrutinize his later writings, of course, we observe significant shifts; for instance, earlier his political intention was shaped by concerns upon “protection and obedience” and now, with his reception of the analysis of *nomos*, this particular concern shifts towards a curiosity about how to restore

“order and orientation”. In addition, as we highlighted earlier, there was a clear hesitancy or better, an indecision concerning what is at stake in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Instead of asking “what might be the new nomos,” now he considers examining the question “what is the new nomos”.

But nevertheless, despite such visible shifts, the line of argumentation is still maintained through the same old concept of ‘the political’. In the second chapter, we observed that the hopelessness and helplessness of the romantic-bourgeois intellectuals—the existential anxiety—had stemmed from the end of the shifting of the central spheres, i.e., technology and technicity. Schmitt observes the same psyche and anxiety emanating from air-appropriations in the 1950s: “some believe that they are experiencing the end of the world” (*NOE*, 355). And hence the same lines of the political are utilized, yet with different words: “I want to restore to the word *nomos* its energy and majesty” (*NOE*, 67). And his earlier note (1923), “if a world history is also the world court, then it is a process without a last instance and without a definitive, disjunctive judgment” (*PC*, 56), occurs in different terms in 1950: “as long as world history remains open and fluid, as long as conditions are not fixed and ossified; as long as human beings and peoples have not only a past but also a future, a new *nomos* will arise in the perpetually new manifestations of world historical events” (*NEO*, 78). Schmitt up-dates (in the Hegelian meta-narrative sense of the term) only the content and the trajectory of the concept of the political in accordance with changing material conditions.

Once we take into consideration the strength of Kojève’s exposition of the movement towards the universal and homogenous state, that is, in the final analysis, the expansion of what Schmitt constantly confronts—the quantitative total state—it would

not be surprising to witness the impact of the failure of the qualitative total state in the writings of Schmitt. Explicitly, it is the theoretical-practical as well as the historical failure of the total state which leads Schmitt to reconsider and then elaborate what he earlier suggested during the late 1930s and 1940s, the *Grossraum*<sup>54</sup> principle. Rather than defending ‘a stately political’ Schmitt would, as we shall see, reformulate, while preserving the essence of the political, ‘that which could stand against’ the universalistic tendencies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; and this, he would find in the *Grossraum* principle —a principle of “geo-nomy” which could oppose “the monopolization of the world”. Or, alternatively, the title of his works from this period reveals the nature of such a shift in question, *Grossraum against Universalism* (1939), where he seeks both different ways of mapping the new nomos and counter-measures to that new becoming. In brief, the global spatial-consciousness has changed —this is what Schmitt intellectually admits without resorting to hesitancy. What then is the new nomos of the earth?

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<sup>54</sup> Earlier in this chapter, we noted Kojève’s manifesto declaring the end of the nation-states and the emergence of the empires, implying a transitory stage of history maturing towards the actualization of the universal and homogenous state. The concept of *Grossraum* possess a parallel meaning to what Kojève calls an empire, which explicitly manifests the progressive end of the modern nation-state and its parameters. Yet, whereas Kojève’s empire is the stage of depoliticization and neutralization, *Grossraum* and its substance maintain and in essence are designed to sustain the political. “These larger political groupings, i.e., *Grossraume*,” Ulmen notes, “would also arrange themselves as friends or enemies” (*NOE*, 19). Moreover, of a particular significance, in his *Grossraumordnung* (1939), Schmitt indicates that the term “Gross” has a meaning of qualitative “expansion” rather than a quantitative one; that is to say, *Grossraum* is neither the physical-mathematical negation nor an expansion of a *Kleinraum* (*VE*, 75-76). Thus, *Grossraum* signifies only a larger ‘sphere of influence’ within which both states and empires can co-exist; and, as Ulmen notes, “relations among nations or empires within a *Grossraum* would be different from relations among *Grossraume*” (*NOE*, 24). The *Grossraum* principle, all in all, implies an up-date of the qualitative total state and as such, it entails the spatial-psychic expansion of the political. Kojève’s account of empire, as the contexts reveals, is integral and relevant to an understanding of *Grossraum* principle at stake —that Schmitt directly confronts the ever-expanding political medium of universalism, namely, Kojève’s empire.

“There are three possibilities,” Schmitt claims, concerning the political form of the new *nomos* of the earth. The first possibility is, expectedly, the total appropriation of the world, namely, “the complete unity of the world”. And the next possibility is “to retain the balance structure of the previous *nomos* and to maintain it in a way consistent with contemporary technical means and dimensions...which only the United States is capable of doing” (*NEO*, 355). Finally, according to Schmitt, the last possibility is based on “the concept of a balance” embodying “a combination of several independent *Grossraume* or blocs” which could further “precipitate a new order of the earth” (*NEO*, 355). Now, these three possibilities should be unfolded.

The total appropriation of the planet is coeval with grasping and appropriating the world as picture (Heidegger), viz., that it connotes essentially what we mean by the world-picture. And this possibility, which also is a probability, is exactly what Kojève elaborates and stands for that the total appropriation of the planet is the sine quo non of the coming-into-being of the Hegelian world-state —precisely, the universal and homogenous state. For Schmitt, “given the effectiveness of modern technology, the complete unity of the world appears to be a foregone conclusion” (*NEO*, 354). Recalling his philosophical guiding thread substantiated in and through political romanticism, Schmitt’s note expresses a grand shift in his perception of 20<sup>th</sup> century progress. There is, in other words, a profound distinction between regarding “the world-unity,” “a world-state,” “humanity as a political category” as “fictional,” “utopian,” “fantastic” romantic dreams, and conceiving the world-unity as an anticipated possibility. Indeed, what Schmitt calls a possibility is not a possibility proper —it is ‘the given spirit’ (Kojève) against which he juxtaposes the other two possibilities of *nomos*. For he deduces and sees

something inherently threatening and destructive embedded in the total appropriation of the world. Let us see, for the moment, the shift from the world-unity as a categorical possibility (1950) to the world-unity as the progressive matter-of-factness of the spirit (1957) with a note starting with “allegedly, no longer is anything taken, but only divided and developed” and then continuing,

Everything on earth based on progress and development, in both East and West, now contains at its core a concrete and precise creed, whose principles of belief proclaim that the industrial revolution leads to an immensurable increase in production. As a consequence, appropriation becomes outmoded, even criminal, and division is no longer a problem, given the abundance. There is only production, only the problem-less fortune of pure consumption. No longer are there wars and cries, because unchained production no longer is partial and unilateral, but has become total and global. In other words, like the bees, mankind finally has found its formula in the beehive. Things govern themselves; man confronts himself; wandering in the wilderness of alienation has ended. In a world created by man for himself —a world of men for men (and unfortunately sometimes against man) — man can *give* without *taking* (NOE, 347)

Appropriation or bloody struggle, and in the final analysis, “taking” —thus, the political and hence violence— is progressively and irreversibly vanishing —this is Schmitt’s message at stake. And, the world-picture as such is not new to us in that it takes us back to where we left our assessment with Kojève: the unlimited expansion of technology, the authority of technicians, the dissemination of technical-scientific rationality, the conquest of human nature by the dictates of instrumental rationality and the coming-into-being of automata —in short, hardworking “ants”. The disappearance of man and his re-animalization as “a bee” and the consequent transfiguration of the world into “a beehive,” which only produces and divides under the protection of “an army of earth, of sea and of air” is what makes the reading Kojève relevant and central to understand Schmitt. We need to further our examination of Kojève’s brief note Schmitt. In 1955, Kojève wrote a

letter to Schmitt highlighting three contentions with respect to the *Nomos* essay: 1) since Napoleon there is “no longer any ‘taking’”; 2) “there is now only producing”; 3) “the goal is —unfortunately!— *homogeneous* distribution.”<sup>55</sup> In addition, only fourteen days later, in another letter to Schmitt, Kojève writes “...thanks to this mutual ‘neutralization’ of the political, the administration could carry out its work unencumbered, i.e., [could] rather ‘administer’ (= organize the “grazing,”).”<sup>56</sup> These notes clearly manifest not only the peculiar intellectual collaboration between Schmitt and Kojève but also, how they listen to one another.

Kojève advances and expands the breadth of the quantitative total state. And his self-assured tone and unhesitant certainty in his notes to Schmitt reveals not that the world-state is present in a *hic et nunc* temporality but rather that he professes his task to be one of political propaganda (i.e., the objective Hegelian conviction) in precision and perfection. His outline of authority should be seen as a deterministic roadmap of the expansion of the Napoleonic code, to which he firmly subscribes and which, he thinks, should be followed by the policy makers and by those who possess the finality of political decision. And it is in this particular context he claims that there is essentially no difference between Russia, America and China—that “all roads lead to Rome!” Kojève’s futurology emanates particularly from the constant narration of the Hegelian *Weltgeist*, which is ceaseless to the extent that the present moves towards the absolute substance of ‘that which has yet to come’. Schmitt’s standpoint changes, by contrast, through mirroring the ‘here and now’ aspect of a particular given moment in time and above all, his phronetic-narration derives its counter-position particularly from exploiting the

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<sup>55</sup> Alexandre Kojève and Carl Schmitt. *Correspondence*. Interpretation: A Journal of Political Philosophy. (Fall 2001, Vol. 29). p.94-5

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 98-99

possibilities of a given moment: “the existence of modern technology should neither make us drunk nor lead us to despair” (*NOE*, 355). For instance, in mirroring the configuration of the Cold War (the dualism of the East and the West) Schmitt immediately concludes that the political has not vanished and that configuration as such proves and will always verify the ever present possibility of a friend-and-enemy grouping—that Soviet Russia and America justify the so-called inescapable logic of the political. In view of Schmitt’s account, Kojève nevertheless seems to be more convincing. The division between the Soviets and America is not of a friend and enemy grouping; rather, if there is a division, it exists between “the clients”: “poor clients are bad clients, and if the majority of a firm’s clients are poor, i.e., bad, then the firm itself is a bad firm—in any case, not a sound one, but particularly not when the firm, in order to avoid going bankrupt.”<sup>57</sup>

We argued that the total appropriation of the world is in its depth not a possibility but a progressive elaboration and manifestation of the totalizing Hegelian idea and that Schmitt juxtaposes the other two possibilities to maintain “the hope” of revitalizing traditional politics. The political position of America has a pivotal position in this context. The capability of the United States to retain the previous nomos of the earth or to prepare a political vacuum which would pave the way for the re-erection of the traditional mode of appropriation is based on Schmitt’s observation that “the new West, America, would supersede the old West, would reorient the old world historical, would become the center of the earth...the center of civilization shifted further west, to America” (*NOE*, 290). Schmitt preserves his conservative Hegelianism. One should recall Hegel’s lines spelled in his *Philosophy of Right* to grasp Schmitt’s logical line of argumentation:

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<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

“America is... the land of the future, where, in the ages that lie before us, the burden of the World's history shall reveal itself. It is a land of desire for all those who are weary of the historical lumber-room of Old Europe.” The silence of the old continent after 1848 — the turning point— is Schmitt’s rationale seeking novel ways to restore the majesty and the energy of that “age old drama” —the political and its inherent substance, appropriation. Thus, it is the very same expectation which prevails in the late writings of Schmitt; rather than an ultra-nationalistic praise of the state, he expects the United States to create the material conditions which would rejuvenate the creative, however violent, inner-contradictions of *nomos* (recall the Hegelian central sphere thesis outlined in chapter two). Schmitt aims to establish “a geo-nomy,” a concept which occurs in his letter to Kojève (1955): “the contemporary world-dualism (of east and west, or land and sea) is not the final dash for unity, i.e., the end of history. It is, rather, the bottleneck through which the road to new “up-to-date” *magni homines* leads. I am thus looking for the new *nomos* of the earth, a geo-nomy...it arises from a tremendous, reciprocal ‘match of powers.’”<sup>58</sup>

That “‘up-to-date’ *magni homines*” together with the *Grossraum* principle is central to understanding Schmitt’s lust for conservative Hegelianism (see chapter two; footnotes 10&11). In view of such a contention, there are two possibilities in Schmitt’s mind: the United States would either choose to return to the previous *nomos* or would create the conditions for the appearance of a new *nomos*. This issue takes us back to what Kojève argues concerning the total appropriation of the world since Schmitt does not (or did not want to) have one last possibility —what if the total appropriation is guided by

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<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 102

Kojèvean *magni homines* in America. We should complete the world picture and locate the process and project of the end of history thesis.

-X-

#### **Ethos of the new nomos**

In his *Note to the second edition in Introduction*, Kojève puts forth what the end of history would bring about: the return to animality, that is, the re-animalization of man.

If one accepts “the *disappearance* of Man at the end of History,” if one asserts that “Man remains alive as *animal*,” with the specification that “what *disappears* is Man *properly so-called*” one cannot say that “all the rest can be preserved indefinitely: art, love, play, etc.” If man becomes animal again, his arts, his loves, and his play must also become purely natural. Hence it would have to be admitted that after the end of History, men would construct their edifices and works of art as birds build their nests and spiders spin their webs, would perform musical concerts after the fashion of frogs and cicadas, would play like young animals, and would indulge in love like adult beasts (*I*, 159)

Given Kojève’s somewhat obscure political orientation, the above portrayal could well be situated in orthodox Marxism, which left its teleological aspect open-ended, that is, the question as to what a universal-communistic society would be like. And this demanding quest requires an in-depth examination of Kojève in the light of, perhaps, Marx’s critique of Hegel, Marx’s *German Ideology* and the writings of Nietzsche. It is unfortunately not the task here, for we have limited space. The portrayal of the end stage of history in the above sense reflects an interesting coincidence —that it seems Kojève does not haphazardly select and utilize the animal figures. He might have had in mind Aesop’s *Fables* (i.e., the Hegelian narration) and thus, the Aesopic rhetoric (recall the task of a Hegelian interpreter, political propaganda). Earlier in his *La Notion de L’Autorité*, the metaphoric usage of animals was, as we indicated, clearly exhibited: ants expressed both the educative-transformative authority of labour and in contrast, cicadas the passivity

([joyful] laziness) of the romantic-bourgeois individuality. Now in his note we catch the same essence and perhaps, the Kojèvean irony.

Two versions of the fables, with reference to ants and cicadas, are available to us: Aesop and La Fontaine. Recalling how Aristotle identifies rhetoric with direct reference to Aesop —“invention of the facts by the speaker”— the two versions of fables explicitly embody a pedagogical dimension (i.e., schooling aspect) designed to cultivate the youth (*Bildung als Bewegung*), which is almost identical to the task of “the man of the future” in Kojève, who submits to the pedagogical (i.e., psychic) authority of the leader. There is on the other hand a curious difference in these two fables, which again links Aesopic fables to Kojève’s task. The two versions are different with respect to how they end their pedagogic stories. Aesop’s fable, the original version, ends with the cicada learning that “it is best to prepare for the days of necessity”. In contrast, La Fontaine does not finalize the fable; it rather ends with an open-ended dialogue between the ant and the cicada: “For everyone to enjoy, I was singing I hope you were not bothered,” ““So you sang!’ the ant replied to cicada ‘I’m so glad to hear that. Well then, now dance!’”. In Aesop, work excludes playfulness, whereas in La Fontaine work and playfulness co-exist that the latter manifests, in a Marxist context, a transition from *Reich der Notwendigkeit* to *Reich der Freiheit*, while preserving (*Aufheben*) the existential aspects of both work and leisure (Marx) and while cancelling “boredom” of the eternal recurrence of the same (Nietzsche). Kojève’s notes on the end of history require hermeneutical suspicion to excavate his overarching concerns —rather than erroneously utilizing the term in completely different and irrelevant contexts devoid of any content as well as in the service of pragmatic purposes.

Indeed, we could well have prolonged the hermeneutical reading of the significant quote above in its relation to Aesopic fables and politics of rhetoric: the fatal mistake of complaining about the authority, while possessing ‘perfect comfortableness’, which results in termination of existence (the story of frogs and king teaching to rest satisfied with the given and schooling not to resist), the reduction of subjectivity to an animal posture (“work of art as birds build their nests”), the reductive pursuit of contentment in the form of pure sexuality and so forth. All these suggest and imply ‘the how of’ returning to animality while concealing ‘the why’ aspect, which amounts to the regulative-governing acceptance (i.e., docility and submissiveness) of the Kojèvean total idea.

At an anthropocentric phenomenological dimension, the end of history implies the beginning of history. The completion of the Hegelian system finalizes itself where it begins, for the Hegelian system itself is circular (see figure 16, [I, 119]). Recalling from our theoretical account concerning the dynamics of anthropocentrism, the end as such implies atheistic-anthropocentrism, that is, anthropotheism. Thus, at the end of history while superseding the human aspects of existence and remaining in the eternal present (without a future), the post-historical man would annihilate *his* humanliness and then radicalize *its* primordial animal aspects by becoming god on earth—that it would be the Dionysian attainment of “contentment” rather than “happiness”. Playful, artistic, erotic and yet, docile, technical, non-transformable contentment—contentment as happiness without any antithetical counterpart— would constitute the mentality of the post-historical animal; and the radical belief of/in the self (that these are true, factual and scientific) would provide the theo-scientific content of godmanhood. This Kojève calls

the free historical individuality emancipated from the burden of history, that is, of humanhood. And this Kojève calls the free, rational and content “citizen” of the universal and homogenous state.

Let us descend to a more practical level via the above portrayal. We argued that the (European) empire in the writings of Kojève is the first concrete model and in fact the seed planted for the concrete spatial elaboration of the Napoleonic code, that is, the appearance of the universal and homogeneous state. And we exhibited accordingly the similarities and differences of such an emergence with Schmitt’s theory of the total state; and later, we assessed Schmitt’s rendering of three possible *nomos* configurations by noting his emphasis on the leadership shift towards America. Now, in Kojève we observe an identical shift of emphasis. He regards the expansion of the Hegelian movement as “more advanced” in America than Europe. Kojève finds the post-historical stage of existence in America.

[I]f the Americans give the appearance of rich Sino-Soviets, it is because the Russians and the Chinese are only Americans who are still poor but are rapidly proceeding to get richer. I was led to conclude from this that the “American way of life” was the type of life specific to the post-historical period, the actual presence of the United States in the World prefiguring the “eternal present” future of all humanity. Thus the Man’s return to animality appeared no longer as a possibility that was yet to come, but as a certainty that was already present (*I*, 161).

It seems that all these three thinkers are concerned with America’s position with respect to the new world order. Schmitt expects a re-orientation and hence a new (or balanced) *nomos*; similarly, in America Strauss finds the possibilities of revitalizing the ancient Greek way of living; and in contrast to these two, Kojève observes an extension of the already emerged model of Hegelianism and thus the source of a leading authority to

“prefigure” the world —an authority which “englobes” the world based on a universal good and bad client grouping. But, of a particular significance, Kojève claims that the American way of life expresses the disappearance of man and therewith the actual occurrence of the re-animalization process. Earlier we examined what that re-animalization amounts to: pure and bare existence being devoid of such human aspects as thinking, negating and creativity. The American way of life expressed here is the concrete coming-into-being of the automata —that there remains only production and consumption. Schmitt perfectly pictures (*Bilden als Bildung*) and articulates what is at stake: “today, many believe that the whole world, our planet, is now only a landing field or an airport, a storehouse of raw materials, and a mother ship for travel in outer space and that certainly is fantastic” (*NOE*, 354).

This particular discourse under examination produces its counter-discourse as well —yet, surprisingly, in the writings of Kojève. The logic of the counter-measure against the emergence at stake emanates particularly from a simple question: would there be “human-beings,” who would oppose the so-called irreversible and irresistible Hegelian movement? In his *Note to the Second Edition*, Kojève turns upside down (though at first glance) his Hegelian authority-system. In regard to the re-animalization and the American way of life theses, he writes that “it was following a recent voyage to Japan (1959) that I had a radical change of opinion on this point” and goes on to suggest that “the ‘post-historical’ Japanese civilization developed in ways diametrically opposed to the ‘American way’”. Therein he finds a society that “has for almost three centuries experienced life at the end of history” living in accordance with “the totally formalized values,” which are devoid of “historical human content”. Let us translate what Kojève

writes. The East and Japan in particular did not partake in anthropocentric phenomenological movement; and that “three hundred years,” that is, the process of the radicalization of *techne* over *phronesis* (loosely called, modernity) —thus, the conquest of human nature and nature— did not take place in the East, if not, in a romantic form (see chapter two). And these imply one conclusion which should not be skipped. That the East did not partake in the dialectics of the real as in the case of the West implies necessarily, irrefutably and irreducibly that Hegel and thus Hegelian *Weltgeist* did not enter into the Eastern domain of thought, entailing the idea that the East did not appropriate the final thought, the end teaching, that is, the culmination of all thoughts possible (i.e., the cyclical absolute knowledge) —and that is, again, Hegel. In Kojève, the post-historical stage explicitly renders a conflict-laden dichotomy between thinking-humans (the East) and automata (the West).

Moreover, in Japan, Kojève observes a society which embodies neither morals nor politics or religion in “the European or historical sense” but only “disciplines” created exclusively by “snobbery”. And it is precisely from this fact that, he concludes, those members of this purely snobbish society are “in principle, capable of committing a perfectly gratuitous suicide” and he notes accordingly that “since no animal can be a snob every ‘japanized’ post-historical period would be specifically human.” Japanization thus signifies not only a human existence but also a reaction against the Hegelian meta-narrative and its authority —in short, against Americanization. Given the ‘how’ of Americanization, we need to scrutinize what that snobbish-human form of existence is, which apparently constitutes a serious world-tension.

One needs to be precise about such matters. Claiming that Kojève's addendum to his *Lectures* in the form of up-dated notes about the aforementioned dichotomous world-form would be deceptive and in fact erroneous. In his *La Notion de L'Autorité*, that is almost twenty-five years before the occurrence of his notes on Japanization, Kojève had already elaborated the issue of snobbery.

Recalling his concerns about bourgeois domination —that they did not recognize Hegel and its authority— snobbism here essentially poses the same problem: it does not conform to the authority of the universal homogeneous state; yet, unlike the romantic-bourgeois domination, snobbism possesses authority —namely, the authority of the minority. That the total population of the world cannot be in agreement —i.e., in conformity— with the project of the universal and homogeneous state, as a logical outcome of the Kojèvean meta-narrative, there will always be a (“deviant”) minority: “all the citizens” condition as a limited case (*NA*, 171). And yet, for Kojève, “there is also universally spread phenomenon that we call the ‘snobbism’” which is utterly different from geo-logical and geo-nomical minorities. Once again Strauss welcomes us into his elitist Epicurean garden. The competent friends of philosophy, those who believe in the dignity and authority of the philosophical circle, are exactly what Kojève calls the snobs. For “the snob is the man who imagine himself to be ‘original’, ‘personal’, etc., but who, in fact, is the slave of the Authority (no less than ‘petit-bourgeois’)...he recognizes only the Authority of what he believes to be ‘the elite’, in supposing tacitly that the latter is necessarily a Minority” (*NA*, 101). Each and every word, with its mocking tone, seems to be fitting Strauss' standpoint and the Epicurean circle, particularly that “the man who imagine himself to be original” and that belief in being elite and hence a minority. Did

Strauss not regard himself as a rare, unique personality who preserves the ancient way of thinking? Did not Strauss shy away from ‘the many’, for he thinks that the many may persecute him? Kojève’s passage seems to be denser than what it signifies at a glance. What interests us here is rather the authority of this minority—the authority *sui generis*.

In each case portrayed above violence is at stake preceded by the violence of the Hegelian system; and yet, whereas the former—the East, upon its reception as a minority— posits a reactionary, that is, defensive violence, the latter—the romantic elitism— explicitly projects an offensive violence, which is in fact manifest in the writings of both Strauss and Schmitt. And indeed, both testify to the notion of snobbish minority authority thesis of Kojève. On the one hand, because Strauss firmly subscribes to the Kojèvean world-picture that “the state through which man is said to become reasonably satisfied is, then, the state in which man loses his humanity” (*OT*, 208), in alluding to his political project, he concludes that “there will always be men (*Andres*) who will revolt against a state which is destructive of humanity or in which there is no longer a possibility of noble action and of great deeds” (*OT*, 209). And on the other, Schmitt thinks that the total appropriation of the world in the Kojèvean sense would culminate in “the last round, the final step...in the terrible rings” between the East and the West and “the victor” would “divide and manage” the world in accordance “with his plans and ideas” (*NOE*, 354) and he seeks accordingly to reestablish an elitist authority monopolizing decision mechanisms.

In view of Kojève’s account, both Schmitt and Strauss reveal and articulate the snobbish elitist minority. Whereas Schmitt’s elitism is self-revelatory in his elaboration of the political, Strauss’ snobbishness is much more disguised, particularly with respect

to his quixotic defense of the philosophical. That there is no fundamental distinction between the aristocratic garden and the bourgeois intellectual's Republic of Letters in Kojève's view, the second definition of snobbism thoroughly unfolds Strauss' reactionary political agenda that emanated from an authority *sui generis*. The elect or the initiated member of the hedonistic garden, in seeking to overtake the authority and in claiming to be original, would according to Kojève "sometimes mimic madness only in order to appear original" (*OT*, 154), which would in turn "attract the youth" and recreate that philosophical circle, i.e., the snobbish minority. Strauss' imagination, particularly transparent in his esoteric techniques, compels him to think that he is the chosen one.

The concept of Japanization emanates exclusively from a theoretical-practical accord of the meta-narrative Hegelianism to the narrative Hegelianism; and this a unique and in fact rare instance in the writings of Kojève. Unlike all the other deductions, reflections, conclusions—in short, interpretations—which have been derived from the metaphysical image of the Hegelian spirit and their (forced) adaptation, incorporation and accord to the given reality, here, the event determines the emergence (or the episode). *Zeitgeist* determines *Weltgeist* to arrive at the concept of Japanization. Kojève's visit to Japan changes his interpretation of the Hegelian system. Now, in this context, it would be unwise to overlook what that visit means. In 1960, the same year Kojève visited Japan, Eisenhower had, in an attempt to expand the military power of America and to ensure Japanese alignment to America, scheduled a visit to Japan. Under the guise of the U.S.-Japan Security Alliance Treaty, which was mapped and advised by the strategists and military technicians, Eisenhower's visit was projected to expand the psychological, physical and military American sphere of influence in Japan (that is, in the Far East)—a

project which unsurprisingly summarizes the anatomy, ethos and topos of authority in Kojève. And yet, the Japanese public, which was referred to as ‘the mob’ by the journalists of the time, reacted and rioted against such an imposition of the American way of life. The early-60s in Japan marks the years of resistance, dissent and confrontation with America. Eisenhower cancelled his trip and above all he has been regarded as the paragon of the gravest setback of the imperial foreign policy. In brief, American desire to posit a new “orientation and order” failed.

Kojève’s visit to Japan in 1960 and his conceptualization of Japanization as opposed to Americanization stem from the above historical fact rather than a vulgar portrayal of a culture and civilization tension. Japanization process refers both to resistance and revolt, that is, to the existential-material qualities which are absent in the American way of life; and as such, Japanization signifies a self-sacrificial posture and the traditional thinking-act (*theoria*), which are substantially lacking in that docile, submissive and non-human form of existence. Japanization and Americanization in the context of the post-historical world stage signifies, all in all, a co-existence of the two dichotomous forms of existence. And this co-existence implies, according to Kojève, an acute tension between humans (the East) and inhumans (the West). Figuratively speaking, thinking activity itself becomes an error in a particular space and time compressed by the Hegelian spirit and authority; and the Hegelian diktat seeks to eliminate that error. But above all the co-existence in question implies violent and competing claims upon defining what and who human is. And it is precisely in this regard that the Japanization as snobbism differs from the second type of snobbery.

Strauss' snobbism, which claims to possess authenticity and originality, is violent and militaristic to the extent that it unleashes manifold domains of authority to re-orient and rule over the people (see chapter three; the doctrine of the gentlemen). The elect or the so-called "initiated" excludes everything and everyone who do not fit into the frame of nature that is defined again by the elect. Everyone and every-thing become a potential threat—in fact, tyrannical—in the eyes of the elect-snob (*OT*, 22-23). For Strauss—the self-proclaimed Christ—no one knows what constitutes tyranny except for the competent naturally-fit philosophical circles. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century everything and everyone is haunted by the multiplicity of values, opinions and scientific judgments—in brief, the classical tradition is forgotten. It would be a serious mistake to consider Strauss' snobbism as an authority which rejects the Kojèvean world-picture narrative. Unlike Kojève who still sees, though ironically, a possibility of exchange between two separate forms of existence (as Heidegger does) and unlike Schmitt who seeks to re-establish power politics *primus inter pares*, Strauss' snobbism possesses a lust to re-orient the total appropriation of the world through an undisputed desire to rule and govern. Both the West and the East (if there is such a vulgar distinction) are accused of rejecting that Epicurean hedonistic classical philosophy that, as he argues, "an absolute rule of unwise men who control half of the globe, the other half being ruled by other unwise men" (*OT*, 193). The reading of Kojève thus seems to be integral to an effective refutation of such a pathetic and mystically seductive reception of the snobbish notion of wisdom, which only separates, excludes and then terminates the difference. We examined how that refutation and falsification occurs in the writings of Kojève; and we need now to scrutinize and call into

question the dynamics of the first type of snobbery, which creates a tension between humans and inhumans (in theory).

Questions concerning “humanity as a political category” distinguishing humans from inhumans are preceded necessarily by questions concerning the orientation of nomos. In Schmitt, the dimension of appropriation is, as outlined earlier, the core determinant of nomos without which this particular dimension of nomos ceases to exist. Seen in this way, the universal and homogenous state expresses the last appropriation; for the world itself becomes its own sphere of influence in-and-of-itself without necessitating a *Grossraum* principle. The appearance of humanity cancels the three possibilities of *Grossraum* formation. Schmitt’s confrontation with this image dates back to early 1930s; even then he was concerned about the implications of both the end of the political and the eclipse of the nomos (the two traditional parameters of violence): “humanity as such cannot wage war because it has no enemy, *at least not on this planet*” (CP, 54). To this view Kojève responded in a letter to Schmitt in 1955: “after 10-20 years, even a ‘non-Hegelian’ will notice that East and West not only want the same thing (in fact, since Napoleon), but do. Then ‘alignment’ will be easy”. Here “the same thing” and “alignment” refer to the unity of humanity under the governance and administration of the universal and homogeneous state. And as a response to Kojève, earlier we have observed a series of shifts in the writings of Schmitt, particularly his concerns about the reorientation of the world-order through the *Grossraum* principle. There is no need to restate and repeat these changes. However, in 1978, that is, twenty-three years later, in his *The Legal World Revolution* article, there occurs an unprecedented alteration in Schmitt’s reception of the world-picture: “today the theory and practice of a world

revolution are legitimized by ideologies of progress”. It is a rare instance —almost like an accident— that Schmitt qualifies the world-picture as a “legitimized” entity. What he regarded earlier as a mere fiction here becomes not a reality but a legitimized reality.

Moreover, Schmitt goes beyond his conceptualization of land-, sea- and air-appropriations, and he calls what is at stake “the global appropriation” [*Weltraumnahme*]: “it is possible to conceive of the political unity of humanity through the victory of one industrial superpower over the other or through the union of both with the goal of politically subjugating the total industrial power of the earth. That would be a *planetary appropriation of industry*” (*LWR*, 80). That “it is possible to conceive” in line with the aforesaid the “legitimized” political unity of humanity reveals the quadruple structure of the total appropriation of the world. This he calls “a dubious unity” and not a “fictional unity”, which takes us to the so-called potential threat embedded in the notion of humanity. Schmitt thinks, similarly to Kojève, that the global-spatial movement entails an “asymmetrical” force within the notion of humanity. Upon noting a set of such antithetical-existences as “Greek and barbarian, Christian and heathen, human and inhuman, superman and subhuman”, Schmitt goes on to argue that

Humanity as such and as a whole has no enemies. Everyone belongs to humanity. Even the murderer, at least as long as he lives, must be treated as a human being. If he is as dead as his victim, then he no longer exists. However, until then he remains, good or evil, a human being, i.e., a bearer of human rights. “Humanity” thus becomes an asymmetrical counter-concept. If one discriminates within humanity and thereby denies the quality of being human to a disturber or destroyer, then the negatively-valued person becomes unperson and his life is no longer the highest value: it becomes worthless and must be destroyed. Concepts such as “human being” thus contain the possibility of the deepest inequality and become thereby “asymmetrical” (*LWR*, 88)

Legal, sociological, political, existential, anthropological and in fact without exaggeration all aspects of the notion of humanity are, obliquely and explicitly, yet intelligibly, embodied in this brief passage. But, that “a disturber or destroyer” in relation to Kojève’s notion of snobbery should be called into question. A disturber is not the snob proper and the disturbed is not the total system but rather the smooth functioning of that “planetary appropriation of industry”. And recalling the relation of “disturbance” to the quantitative total state (see chapter two), the disturber is regarded only as “worthless” and (legally) “unperson” —that he is a criminal, which does not presuppose a termination of existence but which presumes a legal, thus, existential, non-existence. He who commits a criminal act against the authority in question is, in brief, reduced to a bare existence. The “or” in the phrase “a disturber or destroyer” explains a distinction between internal and external relation towards the authority. A disturber is born from within the system i.e., Kojève’s second type of snobbery; and a destroyer is the true snob, an active counter-agent, the resistance and the difference incarnate in man and in short, he who denies the fixed identity of ‘being human’ as well as the *diktat* of the Hegelian spirit. He is therefore both the essence and the content of the true and real negativity —that the snob is (still) a negating-negativity. Thus, a disturber expresses worthlessness and contentlessness, whereas the authority regards the destroyer as nothingness. For the authority knows what that nothingness amounts to —negating-negativity, that is, creative-thinking human. Discriminations against this particularity takes the form of a termination —the death proper. As an automatic extension of the notion of humanity, which possesses, legally and existentially, *the* definition of ‘being human,’ the authority has to kill ‘that which

claims to be the real human'. A destroyer is thus not reduced to a bare existence but to a mere thingishness and hence an error; for there is no-thing that is human.

Both Schmitt and Kojève think that if there is such an immediate occurrence as the world-unity, which takes place exclusively in the West, the Eastern sphere would, although it aligns its political economy with the West, give rise to the severe conflict outlined above. Japanization and Americanization imply a permanent, irresolvable and irreversible tension between what/who is human and what is sub-human/inhuman —that it is the final existential grouping brought forth by the Hegelian absolute resolution. This world-picture Schmitt calls “the world revolution” governed by “the patriotism of the species”, implying further a transformation from the brute force of an authority and the political into a police power: “the day *world politics* comes to the earth; it will be transformed into a *world police power*” (*LWR*, 80). The king or precisely, the visible ruler dissolves into an invisible matrix of administration of things that the schooling aspect of authority conflates with the policing aspect. The totalitarian Hegelian spirit descends upon earth and its power (power-as-movement) disseminates into both being and becoming. The world revolution as such necessarily presupposes the patriotism of the species that, on the one hand, there would be those who believe that being is completed and that the true coming-into-being of *homo sapiens* has been achieved (recall Kojève’s presentation of re-animalization and Americanization at the post-historical stage); and, on the other hand, there would be those who reject, deny, and confront such a totalitarian belief and faith in the movement, the movement towards a fixed, regulated and governed unfolding of being —that they would preserve the human aspect of thinking and becoming (recall Kojève’s notion of Japanization). The tension which would unfold

accordingly is this: both sides would claim that they are humans and accuse the other of being inhuman.

The world revolution and in fact, the total appropriation of the world as a picture entailing the emergence of the world police power and the resurrection of a permanent struggle are the anticipated results of Hegelianism and Hegel's philosophy in particular, to which both Schmitt and Kojève subscribe. Conservative or anthropological, indeed, any form of Hegelianism necessarily presupposes a violent end outlined above—that it is the work of Hegel's *Science of Logic* and not really his *Phenomenology*, for the latter only describes. The science of logic rather projects the means for the actualization of the absolute idea, entity, form and substance demonstrated in phenomenology, which is in essence paradoxical to the extent that 'each and all', those which partake and participate in the process of sublation, must produce antithetical horizons—that there is no end at all. In other words, an entity partaking in a dialectical movement, even if it projects its final emergence as the essence-entity, has to produce its antithetical dimension as in the case of the humanity and inhumanity dichotomy. However, such a paradox ceases to exist and thus expresses the real end of that entity only when 'how of' governing and administering—thus, advancing—'the end' become knowable, which entails the science of logic becoming the policing and schooling (science of) logic.

The world revolution in the above sense is the world becoming a gigantic prison to be scrutinized, regulated, controlled and manipulated. The total must be preserved and advanced under the guise of technical progress—that the dimension of that finality, the constituent essence marching on earth, must be concealed in manifold ways to suppress resistance. In the compressed space and time—that is, at the end of history—not the

Leviathan's iron hand nor the King's head rules but the technicians, experts, managers and specialists administer the things —the things that are the constituents of that total world-picture— in order technically to discipline and to lead the flock. In the horizon of the compressed time and space —at the end of history— not the grand episodes, the great phenomena, the inaccessible dialectical turns, the visible invisibles but the un-mathed relations of math, the non-science content of science and the unknown plateau of human psyche express the facet of authority. In brief, the world-police power controls and regulates 'the present without a future'.

The world-picture is the work of Kojève's authority —authority *als Bewegung und Bildung*. And the emancipated masses (the slaves) who pretend to possess autonomy are the prisoners of the total world: their bodies are regulated, thoughts controlled, creativity tamed, beings encapsulated, life legalized, domains militarized, eyes scanned and so forth —this emancipation is the obliteration of the future through policing the final moment. In addition, the slave is disciplined to be content in the immediate present without a future and is seduced by the one-dimensional animal desire for a mere biological existence; as such, the slave society is the society of gods existing in the eternal recurrence of the same. For the Idea is the idea of godmanhood (see chapter one). Kojève offers them, while preserving Marxist ontological categories, the aspect of working in and through which the emancipated slave could reveal his *given* subjectivity in order successfully to cancel the only enemy to the total world —boredom (recall the Aesopic rhetoric). Thus, the existential attitude of bare existence is to overcome boredom, which necessarily entails never-ending subjective archaeologies of leisure and endless quests for exploiting the immediate —the present— within the parameters of

leisure (recall the aristocratic sweetness of living). The total authority diffuses its monitoring and regulating power into the subjective psyche of bare existence in and through screening and policing the leisure in order successfully to administer the things; for the work of subjectivity reveals, unfolds and unleashes the molecular particularities of existence in leisure and work. And it is precisely this revealing subjectivity and subject which empower the monitoring and regulating power of authority —thus, the policing power over the finality of that end under examination. The Hegelian system and its authority reproduce itself *ad infinitum*; one must investigate further the quadruple matrix of authority outlined in Kojève to grasp the essence of such an authority. Foreseeing the illusionary-creative task of subjectivity, to which the slave gives an exclusive hallucinated consent, did not Schmitt point out (long before than Kojève) that history has ended (in principle) simply because the total world-picture renders obsolete the struggle-laden content of work as well as the creativity-laden content of leisure —that at the end of history would remain only “interesting”, yet “contentless”, contradictions?

The Hegelian masters also participate and contribute to the end of history doctrine as well as to the creation of the world unity. Schmitt’s masterly confrontation and his incessant desire to normalize violence and violent struggle are unique traits of his contribution. Throughout this chapter and in essence, in the preceding chapters, we observed and verified that the Kojèvean model of the world-unity owes an irrefutable and irreducible intellectual debt to Schmitt’s assessments of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in general and his counter-formulations against the *Zeitgeist* in particular. His scholarly exchange with Kojève testifies to the breadth and the depth of this strange collaboration between these two diametrically opposed thinkers and their world-models. And yet, although their

exchange could well be regarded as a vital resource to discern what they were striving to witness or achieve, there is a certain risk inherent in such an analysis. The true and noteworthy exchange between these two rest on their critique of political romanticism and particularly Schmitt's extremism on such state theories as the genuine-state, the qualitative total state and the Grossraum principle, in brief, those theories which are adopted by Kojève with reverse intentions. An inquiry concerning the world-state (which should in fact include Kantian cosmopolitanism, Herder's notes on humanity, Schelling's formulations on subjective productivity, Hegel's phenomenology, Marx's views on coming-into-being of species and so forth) must recognize, for instance, Kojève's world-state as an expansion of Schmitt's total state; and as such, one must recognize that the world-state is not an emergence which can be seen in a world-atlas that it is rather a gigantic existential, sociological and political sphere of influence (recall Schmitt's Grossraum principle).

In referring to the world-revolution and thus the coming-into-being of the world-state, when Schmitt argues "no one can deny that fascism both aided and accelerated technical progress, even if one considers its political motives, methods and goals reactionary and atavistic" (*LWR*, 81), he must have in mind, ironically, the ways with which his formulations of a totalitarian state contributed to what we observe in Kojève's writings. In addition, under the sub-title *humanity as a political subject*, he claims "in order to create the political unity of humanity, a legal world revolution would have to presuppose... 'a patriotism of the species'" (*LWR*, 86) and then links this contention with that of Marx's understanding of human species in relation to the philosophy of death and immortality of species is truly unsurprising particularly after an examination of Kojève's

project.<sup>59</sup> What comes to light is this: the aforesaid tension and potential conflict inherent in the political unity of humanity is essentially a by-product of a totalitarian (Nazi) discourse —or particularly, an organic-synarchist discourse— which sought to instill a fixed, rigid, non-expandable definition of being human.

And unfortunately it seems to be a tradition demonstrated throughout the visible history available to us thus far: ancient Greeks' regarded Greekness as being human and regarded the rest, the non-Greeks, as barbarian and in fact non-human; as such, the same has occurred and occurring with the rigid separation of Christians and non-Christians; and again, for instance, the whole 19<sup>th</sup> century German Idealism which radicalized and lionized being German —Nietzsche's perspective on superhuman, subhuman and inhuman would be sufficient to grasp this contention. The tendency to define what is human comes from a tendency to define what is inhuman. And this particular, historical discourse should not be neglected and underestimated, if one wants to position Schmitt, Kojève and even Strauss. And perhaps one should seek the multiple and amorphous disciplining, governing, schooling and regulating aspects of authority therein, in the architects of a totalitarian discourse. And perhaps one should seek and scrutinize not the details, scratched parchments, sacred texts but the most absurd, simple and ignored details of life to understand what that discourse amounts to.

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<sup>59</sup> For the sake of clarity, quoting Schmitt's passage is vital: "In Karl Marx' 1844 work on "Political Economy and Philosophy," he hesitantly poses the question of death and immortality and answers it with a reference to the *human species*: 'Death appears to be a harsher victory of species over the individual and to contradict the unity of the species; but the particular individual is only a part of the general species and as such is immortal'" (*LWR*, 86). And, recalling our notes on godmanhood and immortality projected for a true, historical individuality, that "hesitantly" posed question (of Marx) has been, audaciously and in an unprecedented fashion, formulated by Kojève.

And, it is worth noting, there will always be some quixotic and non-sense inclinations of messianic caricatures voicing talmudic sacred tablets —to save mankind— through ruthlessly exploiting the immediacy of moments. And these gravediggers do not even know the difference between ἰδιώτης and φιλοσοφία, even though they profess a meticulous and seductive digging. Heaven on earth would nevertheless be boring and monotonous without these soothsayers; one should let them remain content with their happy science (*die fröhliche Wissenschaft*) in their Epicurean gardens. There is fortunately nothing to suggest more than these brief lines concerning Strauss and his circle of initiated competent friends. Kojève’s critique of Strauss should be seen as an effective refutation of Strauss’ misappropriation of classical philosophy; and as such, one should think of why even Schmitt called that Platonic-friendship circle and its classical tradition respectively a tyrannical circle and a “somewhat propagandist” tradition. In brief, there will always be some pragmatist tendencies to exploit the given material conditions in a way to erect that unacceptable ‘ought to be’.

Concluding this thesis seems, at least for me, not to be an easy task; for the world-picture —the world grasped as a total picture— calls into question an infinite number of dimensions of human existence, which entail further unlimited ways of interpretative and decentralizing quests to give meaning to that total picture. To avoid this difficulty, throughout the chapters, I have provided brief conclusions on each specific theme and on debates passing between these three intellectuals, which I think would be sufficient and adequate to grasp the essence and the trajectory of the discourse in question. And also, it should already be transparent that these three thinkers are still relevant to an inquiry concerning the course of Geist in general and the 20<sup>th</sup> century Zeitgeist in particular; thus,

I think, this thesis can contribute to the current literature in manifold ways, particularly to ones which strive to produce sources of alternative resistance and struggle. The total world-picture elaborated in this thesis, from its pedigree to its maturation, could well be seen as a scholarly source for further genealogical as well as historical materialist assessments concerning the constituent dimensions of the world-as-picture thesis.

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