CARL SCHMITT'S CONCEPT OF THE POLITICAL: THOMAS HOBBES AND THE POLITICAL THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

by

Nathan Andrew McCune

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Department of Political Science, University of Toronto

© Copyright by Nathan Andrew McCune, 2001
The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author’s permission.
Abstract

*Carl Schmitt's Concept of the Political: Thomas Hobbes and the Political Theological Critique of Liberal Democracy*

Doctor of Philosophy 2001
Nathan Andrew McCune
Department of Political Science
University of Toronto

This thesis examines Carl Schmitt's political theorizing. Carl Schmitt was one of modern Germany's most influential political theorists. He is most well-known for his work *The Concept of the Political* which explicated his understanding of politics; the political is most clearly revealed in the distinction between friends and enemies. However, exactly how Schmitt conceived of the decision regarding friend and enemy as paradigmatic for an understanding of healthy politics is problematic. Schmitt presented the friend-enemy distinction in a rhetorically forceful but conceptually unclear manner. This thesis investigates whether one can coherently make sense of Schmitt's "concept of the political" and whether Schmitt's teaching regarding the political can be understood as forming a coherent whole; is there an identifiable basis or perspective which consistently informs Schmitt's thinking about what "the political" is.

While there is much to be learned from previous efforts to comprehend Carl Schmitt, for the most part, these efforts have not taken into account his serious moral and theological concerns. Schmitt should be understood primarily as a political theologian; he conceived of history and politics as a field of providential struggle. Schmitt particularly viewed liberalism from such a perspective; he found in liberalism the most extensive rejection of the sovereign status of God in human affairs. In turn, the best way to investigate Schmitt's theorizing is to examine his understanding of Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes' political philosophy is central to Schmitt's theorizing. Schmitt sought to
rehabilitate Hobbes as the philosopher who could be employed in comprehending the modern world. However, Schmitt, who originally thought of Hobbes as the philosopher best suited to his own project, was forced to return to Hobbes’ positions which seem impious. Ultimately, Schmitt attempted to rescue Hobbes the *vir probus* whose thinking was devout from the image of Hobbes as the creator of a new “mortal god.” The consistency of Schmitt’s own theorizing is reflected directly in his thinking about Hobbes. Hobbes’ political philosophy is the key to understanding Schmitt’s criticisms of modernity and his explication of the political and is the most important test case for investigating the political theological nature of his thought.
Carl Schmitt's Concept of the Political: Thomas Hobbes and the Political Theological Critique of Liberal Democracy

Table of Contents

Abstract i
Acknowledgments v
Abbreviations for Citations to Carl Schmitt’s Works vi

Chapter One: An Introduction to Carl Schmitt’s Political Thought

An Introduction to Carl Schmitt’s Concept of the Political 1
Critics and Apologists: An Overview of the Scholarly Reception of Carl Schmitt 5
Two Alternatives: Political Nihilist or Revisionist Hobbesian? 11
Chapter One Endnotes 27

Chapter Two: Political Theology in Carl Schmitt’s Early Writings

Interpreting Carl Schmitt’s Early Writings 50
Nordlicht, Political Romanticism, and the “Moral Meaning of the Age” 59
Political Theology and the Question of Sovereign Decision 99
Chapter Two Endnotes 128

Chapter Three: The Concept of the Political

Introduction to Carl Schmitt’s Der Begriff des Politischen 147
The Concept of the Political 155
Neutralizations and Depoliticizations 195
Chapter Three Endnotes 203
Acknowledgments

Any undertaking on the scale of a Ph.D. thesis owes its seeing the light of day to more than simply the author's improvident persistence. I have been very fortunate in the top rate guidance and support provided by my thesis committee and to their questions, advice, encouragement and wise counsel. Professors Ed Andrew, Ron Beiner, David Dyzenhaus and Thomas Pangle have proven to be immensely helpful in their suggestions and tolerant of my foibles while reminding me of the ultimate goal. Ed Andrew, as the chair of my committee, must be mentioned specifically for his tireless attention to detail, innumerable conversations on Schmitt and modern philosophy in general, and for the copious notes, editorial suggestions and remonstrations against the evils of demonstrative pronouns which accompanied every draft of the thesis. As well, David Dyzenhaus led two seminars on Carl Schmitt which greatly aided my research and directed my attention to issues and questions in legal theory.

In addition, I would also like to thank the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (German Academic Exchange Service) for providing a one-year graduate fellowship to study in Konstanz and Munich, Germany. Without their assistance and generous support, this thesis would not have been completed let alone completed with any competence or excellence. While in Munich, Heinrich Meier not only proved himself to be a source of incomparable wisdom, especially on the topic of Carl Schmitt, but also generous with his time and immensely helpful in his suggestions; Dr. Meier went beyond his duty as an academic Betreuer and was a gracious host who made my stay in Munich not only profitable but also enjoyable. The DAAD and Dr. Meier also made possible my attendance at a conference in Prague (originally suggested and arranged for by Ron Beiner back in Toronto) where I presented a paper on Schmitt which has found its way into parts of Chapter Three and the Conclusion of the following thesis. In addition to my participation in the Czech Academy of Sciences' Colloquium on Philosophy and the Social Sciences I also must thank the Council for European Studies, the Southwestern Political Science Association and the Learned Society of the Canadian Political Science Association for supporting my participation in conferences where earlier drafts of parts of this thesis were presented. I profited greatly and unexpectedly from the criticisms and discussions that took place.

Finally, I must thank my friends and family whose love, support and patience has seen me through the grim absurdities of a Ph.D. candidate's life. Bryan Frost especially proved himself to be a great friend; contra Schmitt, not all powerful criticisms and reproaches are professions of enmity, but the very stuff of friendship. My parents supported me unconditionally even after hearing more than they needed to about the potentially nefarious nature of Carl Schmitt's theorizing. My sister, Nina McCune, whose knowledge of German is far greater than mine, helped me immensely when I was first learning (to use Mark Twain's felicitous expression) "the awful German language." Last but certainly not least, I must mention Cathie Gilbert who not only believed in me during the most trying times but also foolishly (or wisely) agreed to marry me before the thesis was completed; I do not know how we did it, but we did — thankfully, some debts can only be repaid over a lifetime.
Abbreviations for Citations to Carl Schmitt’s Works

Abbreviations for Works cited in German:

BP Der Begriff des Politischen: Text von 1932 mit einem Vorwort und drei Collationen
BP (1927) “Der Begriff des Politischen” (1927 edition)
BP (1933) Der Begriff des Politischen (1933 edition)
DD Die Diktatur: Von den Anfängen des modernen Souveränitätsgedankens bis zum proletarischen Klassenkampf
ECS Ex Captivitate Salus: Erfahrungen der Zeit 1945/1947
G Glossarium: Aufzeichnungen der Jahre 1947 - 1951
L (1938) Der Leviathan in der Staatslehre des Thomas Hobbes: Sinn und Fehlschlag eines politischen Symbols
LL Legalität und Legitimität
TDN Nordlicht: Drei Studieren über die Elemente, den Geist und die Aktualität des Werkes
PB Positionen und Begriffe: im Kampf mit Weimar — Genf — Versailles; 1923 - 1939
PR (1919) Politische Romantik (1919 edition)
PT (1922) Politische Theologie: Vier Kapitel zur Lehre von der Souveränität (1922 edition)
PT (1934) Politische Theologie: Vier Kapitel zur Lehre von der Souveränität (1934 edition)
PT II Politische Theologie II: Die Legende von der Erledigung jeder Politischen Theologie
RK Romischer Katholizismus und Politische Form
V Verfassungslehre
VA Verfassungsrechtliche Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1924-54
WS Der Wert des Staates und die Bedeutung des Einzelnen
Abbreviations for Works cited in English:

AND "The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations"

CP The Concept of the Political (English translation of the 1932 edition)

CPD The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy

L The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes: Meaning and Failure of a Political Symbol.

PR Political Romanticism (English translation of the 1925 edition)

PT Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty (English translation of the 1934 edition)

RC Roman Catholicism and Political Form
Chapter One: An Introduction to Carl Schmitt's Political Thought

Socrates: And what about the just man, in what action and with respect to what work is he most able to help friends and harm enemies?

Polemarchus: In my opinion it is in making war and being an ally in battle.

The Republic, 332 e

An Introduction to Carl Schmitt's Concept of the Political

This thesis examines Carl Schmitt's decisionistic theory of sovereignty and its implications for challenging traditional ideas of political authority, legitimacy and order. Carl Schmitt (1888-1985) conceived of the essence of politics as residing in a distinction between friends and enemies. As the grounding condition of politics, Schmitt's "friend-enemy" distinction provided the basis for a theory of political decisionism, the intellectual lineage of which Schmitt traced back to Thomas Hobbes' claim in Leviathan that authority, not truth, is the basis for legitimate rule (PT, 33). In turn, Schmitt's idiosyncratic understanding of Hobbes provided the unifying vision to his polemical works of the 1920s and found its fuller expression in his 1938 study of Hobbes' political thought proper. While Schmitt argued that modern liberal democratic thought fostered a dangerously confused and impoverished understanding of politics, he regarded his own thought not simply as a corrective to a particular type of politics at a particular time but also as a recovery of the fundamental understanding of politics and of the relationship between ruler and ruled. What I propose to investigate in this thesis is whether Schmitt's interpretation and usage of Hobbes' political
philosophy is sufficient to the task he sets out for himself, and more important, whether it is true to Hobbes own account of the "mutuell relation between Protection and Obedience."

The main body of the study which I propose to undertake is threefold. The core of this thesis consists of an investigation of Schmitt's understanding and retrieval of Thomas Hobbes. This chapter of the thesis will introduce us to what is problematic in Carl Schmitt's political thought. The second chapter of the thesis will examine Schmitt's primary polemical works of the 1920s. We shall undertake this investigation with a view toward clarifying the unity of purpose that animates his critique of liberal democracy. The investigation of these works is essential to determine the consistency and veracity of Schmitt's later claims about his works and also to understand how Schmitt elaborated, reworked and refined his earliest conceptions, especially in light of his changing use of Hobbesian ideas.

The third chapter of this thesis examines how Schmitt employed his reformulated Hobbesian understanding of politics and human nature. Of special significance in this respect is Schmitt's most well-known and most important work, The Concept of the Political. The Concept of the Political comprises one of the two most important "test cases" of Schmitt's usage of Thomas Hobbes's political thought. We must not only take note of the changes between the first edition of 1927, the second edition of 1932 and the definitive, but largely ignored third edition of 1933 but also we must make note of the chief impetus behind Schmitt's five year devotion to that work and his repeated return to Leo Strauss's critique of his work. With regard to this work, we also will consider Schmitt's provocative essay from 1932, "The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations" which seeks to unite and make more explicit his earlier analysis of modernity's intellectual and historical antecedents from his works of the 1920s with the deepening analysis of the "political" made in The
The fourth chapter of this thesis analyzes Schmitt’s 1938 work, *Der Leviathan in der Staatslehre des Thomas Hobbes*. Not only does this work represent the most detailed analysis Schmitt devoted to one thinker but it also refines Schmitt’s earlier explication of the “political.” The important question which frames this section is whether one can effectively use Hobbes’ thought as the touchstone of a critique of liberal democracy while remaining true to Hobbes’ insights. Likewise, the significant corollary of this line of inquiry is the question of the extent to which one can privilege certain features of the Hobbesian account of politics while circumventing other aspects of Hobbes’ thought that Schmitt thought dubious or faulty. Our analysis of Schmitt’s most significant political writings also shall consider later writings of Schmitt’s from the 1940s to the 1970s, including the posthumous publication of Schmitt’s *Glossarium: Aufzeichnungen der Jahre 1947-51*. It must be stated at the outset that Schmitt is not a “Hobbesian” in any straightforward or easily recognizable manner, as many of his critics and defenders would make him out to be. At the same time, Hobbes’ political theorizing is the touchstone which consistently guides Schmitt’s own efforts. Indeed, while Hobbes represents the chief focus of Schmitt’s theorizing, his basic understanding of Hobbes stands or falls with what we might tentatively identify at the outset as a willful, even brazen, misunderstanding of Hobbes’ piety and the relationship of religious belief to political philosophy.

The concluding chapter of this thesis considers the significance of Schmitt as the locus of modern anti-liberalism. This chapter shall be framed by two radically different, competing assessments of Schmitt which accurately capture the essence of the two most extreme reactions to his political thought. Leo Strauss, in assessing Schmitt’s *Der Begriff des Politischen* in 1932,
concluded his remarks by indicating that Schmitt’s efforts to break free of liberalism were preliminary, but as such remained trapped within the liberal horizon, in large part due to his incompletely articulated understanding of Hobbes. On the other hand, Stephen Holmes, one of Schmitt’s (and Strauss’) fiercest critics, while recognizing the “brilliance” of Schmitt’s anti-liberalism, has more recently concluded that Schmitt simply is the “scourge of liberalism” and that he is a “theorist who consciously embraced evil and whose writings cannot be studied without moral revulsion and intellectual distress.” To Holmes, Schmitt’s works represent a dangerously seductive and intellectually flawed project. The ultimate questions which this thesis sets for itself can thus be expressed as follows: For all of Schmitt’s polemics, critiques and heuristic twists and turns, does his thought culminate merely in a profound discontent, both contradictory and atavistic in character? Is it a discontent which arises from misunderstanding the origins of liberalism? Or does Schmitt’s discontent with modern liberal societies arise from a genuine and proper understanding of their origins and directions? Is there a legitimate challenge to liberal democracy’s self-understanding of political life? In addressing these questions, we also will consider the relevance of Schmitt’s project to the practice of modern political science.

In making the case for taking Carl Schmitt seriously, we should make some remarks regarding the man himself, not because he suffers so much from obscurity, but as Stephen Holmes’ remarks intimate, from controversy. It is important to mention some of the important issues and controversies which have surrounded Schmitt’s contributions to political science as well as to begin to sketch out the key concepts which shall be addressed throughout the thesis. In no small way, the controversies which envelope Schmitt’s thought are what make him such a captivating and troublesome figure. For present purposes, it is important to discuss briefly why Carl Schmitt
represents such an enigma for most students of modern political philosophy and legal theory in North America. At first glance, it is easy to dismiss Schmitt as a minor ideologue who eagerly welcomed the rise of National Socialism and as such is interesting only as an anachronism; his writings capture the perverse and desperate spirit of the times but they are dangerous if taken seriously. Indeed, given Schmitt’s mercurial reputation, the circumstances of both his theoretical orientation and political affinities, and, after the fact, his intransigent, lachrymose apologetics, bewilderment in assessing his works is understandable as is evidenced by even the briefest of recapitulations.

**Critics and Apologists: An Overview of the Scholarly Reception of Carl Schmitt**

In this section of the introduction, we will lay the groundwork for understanding the scholarly reception of Schmitt’s works. Carl Schmitt was academically active from 1912 (with the publication of his work *Gesetz und Urteil — Eine Untersuchung zum Problem der Rechtspraxis*) to 1970 (with the publication of *Politische Theologie II: Die Legende von der Erledigung jeder Politischen Theologie*) and since his death in 1985, his notebooks from the period of 1947 to 1951 have been published posthumously. In light of both the extent of Schmitt’s writings and the nature of his political and juridical undertakings, scholarly reaction to Schmitt has been divided on many points. Schmitt has been associated with the propagation of *völkisches Denken* in Weimar Germany and the oxymoronic “conservative revolutionary movement.” However, he has also been recognized as one of the foremost critics of political romanticism. He has been accused of contributing to the downfall of Weimar Germany and deploying his considerable talents in service of the Prussian State Council’s legal articulation of the *Führerprinzip* as part of the Nazi *Gleichschaltung*. However, he is also praised as one of the most thoughtful defenders of the Weimar
Constitution. Along with Martin Heidegger and Ernst Jünger, he has been viewed as a standard-bearer of political nihilism while also being defended as one of the few thinkers capable of confronting the question of political order and authority in the face of catastrophic circumstances. 

Finally, Schmitt has been charged with the most heinous political opportunism; he has been branded as a man who willingly forsook both friendships and a distinguished academic reputation for a series of ingratiating anti-Semitic tracts which failed to convince even the Schutzstaffel (SS) or Sicherheitsdienst (SD) of his credentials in the new order.

Not surprisingly, suspicion falls on Schmitt precisely because of his association with Nazism. It is especially not surprising that the dramatic antitheses which surround his reputation should contribute equally to the efforts of both vehement critics and eager-to-forgive defenders. Exhibiting a fascinated horror and repugnance at Schmitt's murky associations and reputation, most studies which have appeared in English have been as prosecutorial or apologetic as they have been investigative or interpretive. As we shall see, Schmitt himself often had difficulty in veiling his own moral outrage and contempt for his perceived enemies. Likewise, many of those who write about Schmitt find it hard to refrain from expressing their own indignation or puzzlement. Schmitt's treatment seems to be divided primarily between those who, while acknowledging his insight and broad learning, vilify him for his Nazi ties and for fostering a political nihilism of "brute facticity" and, on the other hand, those who, while acknowledging the ugliness of his "opportunism," view his choices as regrettable aberrations, and not as an essential feature of his political teaching.

In addition to being the subject of vitriolic attacks or detoxifying apologetics, Schmitt is also now dismissed as simply unoriginal in his critique of liberal democracy. Richard Thoma was the first of Schmitt's critics to charge him with these "intellectual misdeeds." Reviewing Schmitt's The
Spin-tual-Historical Situation of Modern Parliamentarism in 1925, Thoma wrote that Schmitt had ignored those authors and theorists whose arguments address areas of Schmitt’s critique and are “intellectually and in real political terms still very much alive.” In place of these thinkers [viz, Max Weber, Hugo Preuss and Friedrich Naumann] he has targeted “in fact [a] completely ‘moldy,’ ‘intellectual basis of modern parliamentarism’ and ignored all the rest” (Thoma, “On the Ideology of Parliamentarism,” 1925, reprinted in CPD, 79-80). More recently, Robert Howse has concluded with respect to The Concept of the Political that Schmitt’s criticisms “are really just versions of attacks on liberalism by earlier thinkers such as Rousseau and Nietzsche .... Many of these criticisms were, as well, part of the ‘conservative ideology’ of Schmitt’s time—the discourse of a whole range of academics including Oswald Spengler and Ernst Junger [sic]....” (Howse, 1997, 81 and 81, Footnote 12). While Howse does nothing to substantiate his claims, we should note the following. First, Howse assumes a likeness or similarity between Rousseau and Nietzsche or that they are part and parcel of the same anti-liberal tradition on which Schmitt drew. As we shall see, Schmitt had no use for Rousseau and, in the case of Nietzsche, Schmitt is highly critical, if not apoplectic in his disregard (see G, 39, 91, 150-151). Second, even if Schmitt does incorporate aspects of previous criticisms of liberalism made by Rousseau or Nietzsche, is he very different in this respect from any other major thinker? Are not the issues and questions raised by thinkers of the stature of a Rousseau or a Nietzsche the very substance of philosophic inquiry? Third, Howse seems to assume incorrectly a direct correspondence between Schmitt and other “conservative revolutionaries.” To take up one instance of Schmitt’s relationship to his contemporary, the conservative Ernst Jünger, Schmitt explicitly criticized Jünger several times, particularly with regard to Jünger’s celebration of “war for the sake of war.” Finally, Howse dismisses Schmitt’s criticisms of modernity because
they have been repeated before and because they are “time bound” to the situation of Weimar. An approach which dismisses Schmitt’s importance for the reasons elucidated above does not begin to address the seriousness or validity of Schmitt’s criticisms, original or not.

As misleading as such assessments are, they are helpful as signposts which direct us toward the true nature of Schmitt’s undertakings. Schmitt does seem to fulfill the role of the modern autodidact par excellence: he quotes disparate sources without any sort of apparent detailed analysis supporting their assumed connections, he extracts arguments from their intended context if they seem to support his position, he refrains from engaging the philosophic and intellectual sources of liberal democracy in any sustained or meaningful way and his polished phrasings and pointed attacks often are employed for their rhetorical or polemical effect alone; he seemingly strives to compel and overpower rather than to convince and persuade. In short, Schmitt seems more eager to wage war against his own selected enemies than to engage in laborious philosophic analysis and his rhetorical style exacerbates this impression. Of course, intellectual warfare rather than philosophic analysis is what makes Schmitt’s works compelling and disturbing. Despite Schmitt’s denials, intellectual friend-enemy distinctions are part and parcel of his project. In order to intimate Schmitt’s style and intentions, we can quote from Schmitt himself on the “liberal values” of “openness and discussion:”

Just as liberalism discusses and negotiates every political detail, so it also wants to dissolve metaphysical truth in a discussion. The essence of liberalism is negotiation, a cautious half measure, in the hope that the definitive dispute, the decisive bloody battle, can be transformed into a parliamentary debate and permit the decision to be suspended forever in everlasting discussion (PT, 63).

Given Schmitt’s own admitted disdain for “discussion” and “openness,” and his desire for forcing definitive resolutions, he requires great care to unpack his meaning and establish his basic position.
While Schmitt has been justly reviled for his brief but nefarious political involvement, his thought nonetheless commands a limited and grudging respect from even his fiercest detractors. In Carl Schmitt's case, moral indignation serves as poor counsel; neither claims that he has been tragically misunderstood nor arguments *reductio ad Hitlerum* provide the clarity necessary to confront his works.¹⁴ In light of the disputes over how to understand and judge Carl Schmitt's value as a theorist, Stephen Holmes has noted alarmingly that "leftists continue to praise his debunking of parliamentary government, while conservatives still commend his belief that the humanistic universalism of the Enlightenment was bound to produce a 'sea of blood.'"¹⁵ Indeed, what is most captivating and troublesome in this additional respect is that Schmitt's thought continues as the touchstone of a relentless criticism of liberal democracy which appeals to both the left and right of the political spectrum regardless of whether they have properly understood the basis of Schmitt's political thought.

Schmitt's importance and relevance as a political theorist might be better gauged by the range of scholars, intellectuals and theorists who have been challenged by and profited from his writings. Walter Benjamin warmly acknowledged his debt to Schmitt's *Political Theology* in his own *Trauerspiel*.¹⁶ Raymond Aron, much to the consternation of friends and admirers, defended Carl Schmitt in his *Mémoires* as a "man of high culture" who could never have been a true Hitlerian and "never was one." Aron went on to portray Schmitt as "a jurist of exceptional talent recognized by all; he belonged as well to the great school of German savants who exceeded their specialization and took up all the problems of society and politics, and can be called a genuine *philosophe* — as Max Weber was in his own way" (Aron, 1983, 650-1).¹⁷ Of all of his books, studies, lectures and articles, Leo Strauss devoted detailed attention to few of his contemporaries. Yet among them, Carl
Schmitt received the same attention as Martin Heidegger and Alexander Kojève (see also Meier, 1995, 11). For his part, Alexander Kojève, after official business had taken him from Paris to Peking, and then Berlin, was asked what he was planning to do next. Kojève responded jokingly that he was going to the tiny Westphalian hamlet of Plettenburg because, "Carl Schmitt is after all the only one with whom it is worthwhile to talk." Despite Schmitt's anti-Semitism, the kabbalist scholar Jacob Taubes remembered Schmitt in a review article after his death in which he expressed his reverence for Schmitt's thought, even though Taubes realized that as a practicing Jew he "was marked by him as an 'enemy'." Finally, some scholars have made a connection between Hans Morgenthau's conception of international relations and Schmitt's friend-enemy distinction.

Given the range of critical attention devoted to Carl Schmitt, one must begin to suspect that relegating him to the dustbin as a "theorist who consciously embraced evil" or detoxifying his remarks so that he might be rehabilitated as a friend of the political left or right simply falls short of the mark. Current critical treatments do not fully help us to understand the genuine basis of Carl Schmitt's teaching about the "political." That figures as important and divergent in their philosophic, theological and political positions as Leo Strauss, Walter Benjamin, Alexander Kojève, Raymond Aron and Jacob Taubes found Schmitt helpful and important should point us to a more beneficial analysis of his significance. To begin to appreciate the full challenge Schmitt poses to defenders of liberal democracy and, in turn, indicate what issues this thesis will explore, we shall to turn to a brief overview of some key concepts which will be developed in the first chapter of this thesis as well as considering the reactions of two of Schmitt's earliest, and most alert critics, Leo Strauss and Karl Löwith. In many ways, their divergent assessments of Schmitt's The Concept of the Political continues to frame the debate over the meaning and intention of Schmitt's most well-known work.
Two Alternatives: Political Nihilist or Revisionist Hobbesian?

While Schmitt's turn to political questions of sovereignty and legitimacy did indeed arise because of his acute concern with the concrete problems confronting the Weimar Republic, his analysis and conclusions resulted from what he considered fundamental problems which transcended the milieu of 1920s Germany. Above all else, he hearkened back to Thomas Hobbes' assessment of the conflictual and dangerous quality of both politics and human beings. Schmitt opened Political Theology with one of his most well known formulations: "sovereign is he who decides on the exception" (PT, 5). By exception, Schmitt meant not merely a state of emergency, such as an economic crisis or civil disturbance, but a condition of "concrete indifference" which necessitated the exercise of sovereign authority for the preservation of the state, and above all, required theoretical and legal clarity as to what constituted legitimate authority. In coining the evocative phrase, "concrete indifference," Schmitt meant to suggest that the dramatic political confrontation of friend and enemy created a compelling set of circumstances which was at best "indifferent" to the neutral procedure or mechanism of governing. True political exception always cuts through the mere "formality" of governing mechanisms and raises the dramatic either/or proposition of deciding for a way of life which is most clearly embodied in the life-or-death ultimatum "are you with us or against us." A legitimate problem to work out within Schmitt's thought (and that is therefore an important element of the next chapter) is how non-rational decisions can provide the basis for both normative laws and procedures and political authority itself. Schmitt's claim, to be evaluated within the dissertation, is that decisions made at the "pinnacle of great politics, when the enemy emerges in concrete clarity as the enemy" cannot be circumscribed or anticipated by a constitutional order. Accordingly, what Schmitt means by these allusive phrases is itself the object of great scrutiny. To
begin to outline Schmitt's amazing claim regarding political authority, we should consider Schmitt's fundamental approach to the question.

In *Political Theology*, Schmitt devoted his attentions not to "abstract schemes" defining sovereignty as the "highest power of the state" but to the question of its "concrete application," which meant for him addressing "who decides in a situation of conflict what constitutes the public interest or interest of the state, public safety and order, *le salut public*, and so on" (*PT*, 5). Sovereignty, according to Schmitt, is indivisible; liberal constitutions which rely on formal checks and balances or (as was the case of the Weimar Constitution) ambiguously set up a tug-of-war between the parliament and presidency courted disaster (*PT*, 6-8). In appealing to the ultimate authority of Hobbes, Schmitt defended and elaborated on the centrality of sovereignty to the question of political legitimacy and public order as follows:

Everyone agrees that whenever antagonisms appear within a state, every party wants the general good — therein resides after all the *bellum omnium contra omnes*. But sovereignty (and thus the state itself) resides in deciding this controversy, that is, in determining definitively what constitutes public order and security, in determining when they are disturbed, and so on. Like every other order, the legal order rests on a decision and not on a norm (*PT*, 9-10).

By drawing attention to the question of sovereignty and the problem of authority, Schmitt specifically distinguished between a state of emergency, which presumes an operational legal framework for adjudicating disputes and a state of exception, which entails the *bellum omnium contra omnes*. Schmitt makes this contrast purposefully as a means of reintroducing the Hobbesian account of the state of nature and all that it implies. Of course, emergency powers are hardly unknown to the liberal tradition which Schmitt attacks (see Locke, 1963, 421-27). However, while Locke's prerogative and other emergency powers are recognized as necessary for the preservation
of political society when “the laws are silent” or even “without the prescription of law,” they are powers exercised only to maintain or reestablish legitimate liberal democratic government. From Schmitt’s perspective, such powers presume unquestioningly the legitimacy of liberal democracy. As we shall see, the legitimacy of liberal democracy is very much an open question for Schmitt, because he will claim that liberalism thwarts democracy and corrupts its political expression. In turn, Schmitt attacks the very basis of the theoretical legitimacy of liberalism as deficient and self-deceiving.

The difficulties which Schmitt raises in *Political Theology* give way to his fuller, more precise understanding of the relationship between sovereign authority, the state, and politics. In turn, it is in *The Concept of the Political* that Schmitt’s most characteristic formulation of the conflictual nature of politics is articulated in his development of the friend-enemy distinction. Schmitt argued that all modern theories of the state and politics have failed to understand the nature of their relationship. Schmitt ironically noted that “the state thus appears as something political, the political as something pertaining to the state — obviously an unsatisfactory circle” (*CP*, 20). The alternative, Schmitt suggests, is to identify the political as the opposite of economic, religious, moral or legal doctrines (*CP*, 20). One might surmise, tongue in cheek, that when one has subtracted the “purely” economic, social, moral, religious and legal elements from the sum total of “life,” what is left over is “political.” Because of this dilemma, Schmitt didactically proposed that “the concept of the state presupposes the concept of the political.” As a result of the obscuring of the traditional understanding of the political with religious, cultural, economic and legal domains, Schmitt argued that a definition of the political must be wholly independent of all other antitheses (for example, of rich and poor, beneficial and harmful, profitable and unprofitable, good and evil, beautiful and ugly)
with which it had become associated. By such a distinction Schmitt meant that "a definition of the political can be obtained only by discovering and defining the specifically political categories" (CP, 25). Schmitt's clarification and regrounding of politics and the concept of the political amounts to a unique retrieval and understanding of the Hobbesian state of nature. According to Schmitt, "the specific political distinction to which political actions and motives can be reduced is that between friend and enemy" (CP, 26). Lest one too hastily lump Schmitt in with a lesser host of early twentieth century propagandists, we should carefully consider what Schmitt himself means by this distinction as the grounding condition of politics:

Insofar as it is not derived from other criteria, the antithesis of friend and enemy corresponds to the relatively independent criteria of other antitheses: good and evil in the moral sphere, beautiful and ugly in the aesthetic sphere, and so on. In any event, it is independent, not in the sense of a distinct new domain, but in that it can neither be based on any one antithesis or any combination of other antitheses, nor can it be traced to these. If the antithesis of good and evil is not simply identical with that of beautiful and ugly, profitable and unprofitable, and cannot be directly reduced to the others, then the antithesis of friend and enemy must even less be confused or mistaken for the others. The distinction of friend and enemy denotes the utmost degree of intensity of a union or separation, of an association or dissociation. It can exist theoretically and practically, without having simultaneously to draw upon all those moral, aesthetic, economic or other distinctions (CP, 26-7)."²⁴

Schmitt elaborates upon this distinction in two significant ways. First, by the friend-enemy distinction, he emphasizes not the primacy of warfare or the total mobilization of a state's resources but the recognition of concrete and existential collective meaning as realized by the state vis-à-vis other states.

What defines and sharpens the sense of the political is indeed conflict, but a form of conflict with the potential for the annihilation of one's self as well as the death of the enemy. Schmitt elaborated that "the definition of the political suggested here neither favors war nor militarism,
neither imperialism nor pacifism. Nor is it an attempt to idealize the victorious war or the successful revolution as a 'social ideal,' since neither war nor revolution is something social or ideal" (CP, 33).

By the same token, Schmitt is equally clear that it is the distinct possibility of open warfare which ultimately lends clarity and focus to the friend-enemy distinction. Because it involves "the real possibility of physical killing" and the "existential negation of the enemy" it remains the most important and meaningful of possibilities (CP, 33-7). As Leo Strauss has pointed out in his response to Schmitt,

If it is true that the final self-consciousness of liberalism is the philosophy of culture, then we may sum up as follows: liberalism, sheltered by a world of culture and unable to see beyond it, forgets the foundation of culture, the state of nature, i.e., human nature as dangerous and endangered. Schmitt goes back against liberalism to its originator, Hobbes, in order to strike the root of liberalism in Hobbes' explicit negation of the state of nature. Whereas Hobbes living in an illiberal world, lays the foundation of liberalism, Schmitt, living in a liberal world, undertakes the critique of liberalism.

As Leo Strauss has pointed out in his response to Schmitt, Schmitt seems to attempt to employ Hobbes' negation of the state of nature as a conceptual tool for comprehending and criticizing liberal political dynamics.

While we shall turn to Schmitt's critique of liberalism which is made in the latter part of The Concept of the Political shortly, we should first examine the transposition Schmitt effects of Hobbes' war of all against all from the state of nature to the political understanding at the level of the state in light of Strauss' claim that Schmitt seemingly attempts to employ Hobbes' negation of the state of nature as a conceptual tool for comprehending and criticizing liberal political dynamics.

As we noted above, Schmitt specifically conceived of the bellum omnium contra omnes as arising not simply from civil unrest but from competing conceptions of what constituted civil order and the general good. Schmitt's transposing of the Hobbesian state of nature to the level of the modern state's political activity is purposeful and not simply the result of misunderstanding what Hobbes meant by distinguishing between man's natural condition and civil society. Schmitt makes it evidently clear that "a world in which the possibility of war is utterly eliminated, a completely
pacified globe, would be a world without the distinction of friend and enemy and hence a world without politics” (CP, 35). Two additional observations are in order which help us to see the manner in which Schmitt’s observations and arguments can be apprehended from the standpoint of political philosophy. First, Schmitt’s remark regarding warfare not only intimates an extension of Hobbes’ insight but also conveys or reminds of a dilemma left unresolved in Hegel’s discussion of the state.27 Hegel’s treatment of the status of war and foreign policy in his Philosophy of Right is ambiguous and potentially at odds with the notion that his thought represents the fullest self-conscious realization of the modern state, let alone the end of the amorphous concept of “history.”

On the surface of Hegel’s discussion of the state in Philosophy of Right, there seems to be an incongruity between the coherence of the state’s domestic policy towards civil society on the one hand, as articulated by the principle of mediation, and the state’s foreign policy towards other states, as embodied in the struggle for recognition. In a sense, this struggle recasts the master-slave dialectic on a higher level. The fully rational state according to Hegel negatively affirms its sovereignty by universal recognition of its particularity in opposition to other nations. This specific awareness of the state’s sovereignty vis-à-vis foreign states embodies “mind’s actual awareness of itself as a unit and hence it is the most fundamental freedom which a people possesses as well as its highest dignity” (Hegel, 1967, 208). Hegel seems to indicate that true politics will continue to be guided not merely by the realization of right and objective freedom but also by opposition and conflict.28 Indeed, in criticizing Kant’s Perpetual Peace, Hegel went so far as to conjecture that “even if a number of states make themselves into a family, this group as an individual must engender an opposite and create an enemy” (Hegel, 1967, 209-10).
Practically, of course, at the international level there can be no mediation of several particular sovereign wills; adjudication would require a higher authority whose judgment and will is binding. Yet, Hegel rejects the notion of "world government" and even goes so far as to assert that the potential calamities and insecurities engendered by war purify the "moral health of peoples" (Hegel, 1967, 209-10). The very goods which the agency of the state secures for society "cannot possibly be obtained by the sacrifice of what is to be secured—on the contrary" (Hegel, 1967, 210). The question can legitimately be raised, but if and when all states become free commercial liberal democratic republics, what will there be over which to fight? First, this objection significantly ignores Hegel's criteria and arguments. Second, (and of importance to the second chapter of this thesis) there are the remarks made by one of Hegel's most astute interpreters. In an address which Alexander Kojève delivered in Berlin at Schmitt's invitation, Kojève referred to Schmitt's authoritative understanding of the "concept of the political" which Kojève accepted as true and without need of correction.

One of the significant reasons which necessitates the possibility of war for Hegel is found in the very reasons Hobbes' illiberal man abandoned the state of nature: Hegel argues that a continuously peaceful society becomes self-satisfied and indolent, its "idiosyncracies become ossified" and humanity itself stagnates (Hegel, 1967, 295-6). While Hegel's thought has been hailed as having anticipated the triumph of liberalism as realized by the universal homogenous state, this final state (which Hegel identifies as the fully rational state) seemingly can only confirm its individual sovereignty, collective moral identity and communal sense through the potential for conflict and even warfare. Schmitt himself is far less reticent about drawing out the implications of Hegel's troublesome formulation of the final state:
It is conceivable that [a completely pacified] world might contain many very interesting antitheses and contrasts, competitions and intrigues of every kind, but there would not be a meaningful antithesis whereby men could be required to sacrifice life, authorized to shed blood and kill other human beings. For the definition of the political, it is here irrelevant whether such a world without politics is desirable as an ideal situation. The phenomenon of the political can be understood only in the context of the ever present possibility of the friend-enemy grouping, regardless of the aspects which this possibility implies for morality, aesthetics and economics (CP, 35).

There is a second dimension to Schmitt's articulation of the friend-enemy grouping which has puzzled both his detractors and admirers and which we can articulate from the perspective of modern philosophy as well. Schmitt, throughout The Concept of the Political, refers to the political enemy as "the other," "the stranger" and as someone who "is existentially something different and alien" (CP, 27-9). In perhaps the strongest usage of these peculiarly modern turns of phrase, Schmitt declares that "war, the readiness of combatants to die, the physical killing of human beings who belong on the side of the enemy — all this has no normative meaning, but an existential meaning only" (CP, 49). What I will suggest is that one of the two possibilities which must be explored more carefully in Schmitt's presentation in The Concept of the Political is that his choice of terminology can be construed as conveying a deliberate and distinct affinity for Heideggerian "existentialism." In turn, the political link between Hobbes and Heideggerian "existentialism" is Schmitt's theory of political decisionism.

While ascribing Heideggerian existentialist causes to Schmitt is a highly speculative line of thought, there is nonetheless a suggestive correspondence between the two thinkers which merits our attention. Specifically, there is a substantial correspondence between Schmitt’s explicitly non-rational decisionism and Heidegger’s conception of authenticity and resoluteness. Indeed, Heidegger seemingly provides the philosophic counterweight to Schmitt’s non-rational decisionism. Heidegger
characterizes the life-affirming qualities of Dasein’s authentic resoluteness as a result of its “ownmost distinctive possibility ... only by the anticipation of death is every accidental and provisional possibility driven out” (Heidegger, 1962, 435). Heidegger explicitly compares the insight provided by grasping one’s own-most possibility towards death with the ascribed bourgeois concerns “of comfortableness, shirking and taking things lightly” (Heidegger, 1962, 435).

Moreover, Heidegger allows to flash to the surface a distinctly Schmittian theme in his discussion of a people’s “choosing its hero” which is grounded existentially in anticipatory resoluteness (Heidegger, 1962, 436-7). While the presence of these thematic and terminological similarities might merely reflect general intellectual predilections of the time or even simple chance, there is a substantial enough correlation between Heideggerian resoluteness and Schmitt’s political decisionism that this area must be explored carefully.

In the sense that both Heidegger and Schmitt argue that there cannot be normatively rational standards for making political decisions, the authenticity of political action lies in resolutely choosing for one’s authentic self, which is understood by Schmitt to reside in the political capacities of the state. If this is the case, one might suspect that Schmitt himself is confusing highly non-political lines of thought with his own project. Such considerations are misleading for two important reasons. First, Schmitt insisted that “there exists no philosophy and no anthropology which is not politically relevant, just as there is no philosophically irrelevant politics” (CP, 60). Second, and perhaps more importantly, one must recall that Hobbes was the first modern philosopher to ground his political teaching in a form of moral skepticism and political hedonism. Within the new Hobbesian realm of politics, reason was relegated to the role of acting as the appetites’ “scouts and spies.” One may quite rightly argue against Hobbes’ repudiation of the status of reason in human
affairs, but once one has grasped the Hobbesian position, Schmitt’s manner of explication can seemingly be made consistent with his intentions. The first person to fully consider this possibility in Heidegger’s and Schmitt’s thought was Karl Löwith. Indeed, he claimed that there exists an overwhelming affinity between Heidegger’s efforts and Schmitt’s:

One need only abandon the still quasi-religious isolation and apply [the concept of] authentic “existence” — always particular to each individual — and the “duty” that follows therefrom to “specifically German existence” and its historical destiny in order thereby to introduce in to the general course of German existence the energetic but empty movement of existential categories and to proceed from there to “destruction” on the terrain of politics. It is not by chance if one finds in Carl Schmitt a political “decisionism” that corresponds to Heidegger’s existentialist philosophy, in which the “potentiality-for-Being-a-whole” of individual authentic existence is transposed to the “totality” of the authentic state, which is itself always particular. Corresponding to the preservation and affirmation of this authentic “Dasein” [in Heidegger] is the affirmation of political existence [in Schmitt]; to “freedom for death” [in Heidegger], the “sacrifice of life” in the political paramount case of war [in Schmitt]. The principle is the same in both cases: naked “facticity,” which is all that remains of life when one has suppressed all traditional living contents.³⁹

In this respect, there is a further question as to the nature of Schmitt’s own “metaphysics” which must be mentioned. Schmitt manifests a concern for political theology in the following manner which is somewhat antithetical to modern liberal presuppositions. Schmitt criticizes Hobbes’ own participation in creating a modern “soulless” form of political authority which is devoid of animating myth; the modern Leviathan is transformed from a mythical beast who holds all in obedience as “king of the proud,” to the artificial man who represents all, to a machine which runs itself. In returning to Hobbes, Schmitt raises the question of the status of reason in human affairs even more explicitly in the following manner: are human beings dangerous, but educable or are human beings dangerous, fundamentally uneducable, and hence in need of authoritative rule? Indeed, we can recast this question even more meaningfully: Are human beings to be understood as
fundamentally “good by nature” (and hence only in need of education) or are human beings fundamentally “evil by nature” (and hence not only dangerous but also sinful or fallen, and thus in the most crucial respect, “ineducable”)?

Heinrich Meier, in responding to Löwith’s challenging reading of Schmitt addresses the following aspects of his critique vis-à-vis Strauss’ non-existential reading of Schmitt. Meier has carefully reconstructed in Carl Schmitt and Leo Strauss: The Hidden Dialogue not only an analysis of Strauss’ and Schmitt’s interaction but also Löwith’s responses to Schmitt’s “minor” textual changes in The Concept of the Political, especially between the 1932 and 1933 editions. Meier observes that Löwith noticed three changes Schmitt had made, and ascribes the first two (for example, his removal of a comment about Marx and Lenin and the substitution of a remark about the “Jewish” author Friedrich Julius Stahl) to simply “the spirit of the times” (Löwith, 1996, 119) but is “puzzled” by a third change which suggests that Schmitt’s thought is moving in a direction opposite that explained by Löwith’s own emphasis on Schmitt’s “existential” decisionism (Löwith, 1996, 113 and Meier, 1995, 24, Footnote 25). Meier elaborates Schmitt’s “new direction” in terms of a disavowal of the direction ascribed to Schmitt by Löwith:

In the revised version of Concept of the Political, in the statement that war is “today ... probably neither something pious, nor something morally good, nor something profitable,” [Schmitt] replaces the term today, italicized by Strauss, with the modifier “in an age that veils its metaphysical oppositions in moral and economic terms”(III, 18 f.) (Meier, 1995, 24-5).

Meier notes immediately that Löwith had commented on this change but was unable to explain it sufficiently or understand it as a response to Strauss’ “Remarks” and Strauss’ suspicion that Schmitt was attempting to conceal his own “metaphysical oppositions.” Strauss suspected that Schmitt’s concerns were ultimately not “existential” but moral in nature and did not originate in an imitation
or celebration of "war for the sake of war" but a concealed metaphysical or theological stipulation (see Strauss, *CP*, 97-9). If Meier understands Schmitt and Schmitt's reaction to Strauss criticism, Löwith's understanding is divergent from Schmitt's aims in revealing what is for him the basis of the political, or in what exactly the friend - enemy distinction resides. On either count, we are confronted with two very alert readers of Schmitt in Strauss and Löwith whose appraisals will ultimately guide the theoretical analysis of his polemical works in the following chapters.

Despite the question of the basis of Schmitt's "concept of the political," we can consider how Schmitt deployed the foregoing in his critique of liberalism. Over and against his recognition of the problematic nature of the political, Schmitt detected an effort on behalf of liberalism to cover-up or obfuscate the difficulties engendered by true politics. Liberal democratic practice, according to Schmitt, effectively obscured the political nature of man by absorbing it in economic or moral issues, or by ignoring the political by means of positivistic, technical interpretations of formal political arrangements and law. Schmitt's basic critique is thus that liberalism conceals or "speaks dishonestly" of the political, but no political doctrine or teaching worthy of the name can deny the very phenomenon it attempts to elucidate and explain. Liberalism thus suppresses but cannot entirely eliminate the political. The attempted negation of the political by liberalism was nonetheless consistent with its emphasis on the autonomy of the private realm and individual rights. The difficulty is that liberal thought fails to provide a positive understanding of government or politics. As Schmitt noted, one can speak only of "a liberal policy in the form of a polemical antithesis against state, church or other institutions which restrict individual freedom."

According to Schmitt, the result of this antithetical and polemical doctrine was that there existed a series of positions opposed to usurpation of the private realm devoid of any positive
political significance. One could not speak of genuine liberal politics, “only a liberal critique of politics” (CP, 70). The liberal substitution for healthy politics was ethics and economics:

In a very systematic fashion liberal thought evades or ignores state and politics and moves instead in a typical always recurring polarity of two heterogenous spheres, namely ethics and economics, intellect and trade, education and property. The critical distrust of state and politics is easily explained by the principles of a system whereby the individual must remain terminus a quo and terminus ad quem. In case of need, the political entity must demand the sacrifice of life. Such a demand is in no way justifiable by the individualism of liberal thought (CP, 70).

What emerges as an ineluctable, unresolved tension in Hobbes’ thought undergoes a profound liberal transformation whereby the political becomes “competition in the domain of economics and discussion in the intellectual realm” (CP, 70-1). This neutralization of the political entails the predominance of economic calculation and utility on the one hand, and the elevation of resisting “repression” to the highest moral imperative, on the other (CP, 71). If this is the case however, is liberalism the “real” enemy Schmitt has in mind? Or is the attack on liberalism meant to sharpen or refine a different understanding of politics and political decisions?

Strauss, in commenting upon Schmitt’s work, noted that Schmitt himself ended The Concept of the Political by stating that “the system of liberal thought is today in Europe not yet replaced by any other system” (Strauss, CP, 83). Schmitt's polemical understanding of the political was intended as a corrective. Liberalism, taken both as an economic and technologizing mode of thought and as a morally imbued defense of individualism against the state was in fact an enemy of healthy politics. As such, Strauss forebodingly noted that “the polemic against liberalism can therefore have no meaning other than that of a subsidiary or preparatory action....it is undertaken only to clear the field for the decisive battle between the ‘spirit of technology,’ the ‘mass faith of an anti-religious, this-worldly activism,’ and the opposite spirit and faith, which, it seems, does not yet have a name”
Schmitt, of course, is correct in attributing the greatest significance to decisions made at critical times, since these are the most important decisions. Since the political sphere decides in the most extreme cases, Schmitt asserts, it should govern all other spheres. The ultimate claim to be assessed then is whether it is not enough to assert simply that it predominates only in the most compelling of instances — by Schmitt’s argument it should govern simply (Strauss, CP, 104). Such an argument only becomes necessary for Schmitt, accordingly, when the nature of politics has been depoliticized and neutralized. Liberalism relegates politics to institutionalized discussions, which Schmitt refers to as endless debate and competition; it is not “great politics.” While one might rightly accuse Schmitt of atavistic longings, as Strauss pointed out, such great politics is possible only beyond the horizon of liberalism. The question we are thus confronted with is whether, ironically enough according to Strauss, Schmitt was sufficiently consistent and rigorous or whether his own thought culminates merely in “liberalism with a minus sign” (Strauss, CP, 103). If Schmitt was not sufficiently consistent and rigorous, if his thought really was simply “liberalism with a minus sign,” then would not Schmitt be compelled to proceed further and perhaps even base his thought elsewhere than on a liberal (or potentially liberal) thinker such as Hobbes? Or is there an element of Hobbes’ political thought which has been overlooked or misunderstood?

These observations, however, only presuppose and lead into a bewildering array of questions: Is the “political” and its friend-enemy grouping merely “occasional,” in the sense that the decision regarding friends and enemies is “occasioned” by nothing more, ultimately, than the existential condition of “brute facticity,” or put more simply, by sheer chance? Or is there something more substantive to Schmitt’s understanding of the basis for this decision — something which not only
appears, but is, "metaphysical" or "theological?" And behind all this, what does he mean then, that the question of the enemy and its answer appear at the "pinnacle of great politics" when the enemy comes into concrete view as the "enemy?" How does Schmitt's concept of the political aid our vision and contribute to our own farsightedness?

We would do well for a moment to remember one of the first such discussions in the tradition of political philosophy. The first political definition of justice in Plato's Republic arose from the consideration of friends and enemies, of helping one's own and harming that which is foreign. In response to Socrates' queries, however, Socrates' interlocutor, Polemarchus, was forced to answer that harming one's enemies is no more just than helping those who appear to be but are not our friends. We can never know for sure whether our enemies appear to be, but are not actually our friends — what is required for understanding the most important political distinction is knowledge and not merely an autochthonous account of hostility in which the enemy is hated and "fended off" merely because he is foreign. Socrates raises the distinct possibility that our friends and fellow citizens may be "collectively selfish" while the enemy may be just despite being foreign to us. Socrates makes it clear that punishing or killing the just is unjust and that even punishing the unjust does not appear to make the unjust more virtuous or excellent (Plato, 1991, 11-12). Politics may well be many things to many people, but if we lose sight of the fact that politics above all else involves the promotion and fostering of human excellence, Socrates reminds us that we have lost our bearings.

Within Schmitt's writings we find no such transparent consideration, neither in terms of who is a friend nor even how we are to know truly what distinguishes friends from enemies. Indeed, such a dramatic and forceful concept is presented passively; "we" do not appear to the enemy, "the
enemy" always, it seems, appears to us. At the outset, it seems that our "being," our way of life, depends upon the appearance of an enemy because our identity coalesces only in opposition to forces which call the basis for our existence into question. But we cannot determine whether the enemy is a real or an imaginary one unless we have a stable sense of who we are, who our friends are and what makes our cause just before locking ourselves in enmity. Without articulating a "way of life" which is to be defended, Schmitt's concept of the enemy calls our "ownmost way of living" ("die eigene, seinsmäßige Art von Leben") into question (BP, 27). To begin with a question that cannot be answered immediately, what could have led Schmitt to such a radical reformulation? If determining the enemy is the essence and purpose of true politics, then the question of the status and certainty of knowing becomes of paramount importance. For Schmitt, the ultimate political distinction cleaves to the distinction inherent in the difference between the skepsis of philosophic knowledge and the certainty of theologically determined faith: how does Schmitt know what he claims to know about the political? What is the hidden basis of Schmitt's teaching about friends and enemies?
CHAPTER ONE ENDNOTES

1. In his aptly titled *Political Theology*, Schmitt referred specifically to the centrality of his retrieval of Hobbes in the following manner:

   "The classical representative of the decisionist type (if I may be permitted to coin this word) is Thomas Hobbes. The peculiar nature of this type explains why it, and not the other type, discovered the classic formulation of the antithesis: *auctoritas non veritas facit legem*. The contrast of *auctoritas* and *veritas* is more radical and precise than is Friedrich Julius Stahl's contrast: authority, not majority. Hobbes also advanced a decisive argument that connected this type of decisionism with personalism and rejected all attempts to substitute an abstractly valid order for a concrete sovereignty of state. (See *Leviathan*, Chapter XXVI)."

2. George Schwab, for example, makes the strongest repeated defense of Schmitt's "authoritarian" impulses in reference to its Hobbesian basis (see, for example, his latest effort in his "Introduction" to his translation of Schmitt's *Der Leviathan in der Staatslehre des Thomas Hobbes*, Schwab, 1996, xvii - xxi). For an alternative view of Schmitt's Hobbesian efforts, which provides a balanced but critical response to Schwab, see McCormick, 1994, 636 - 44. However, while McCormick does focus attention on the importance of Hobbes to Schmitt's Weimar efforts, it is almost exclusively devoted to a "politics of fear" in which he employs a somewhat skewed reading of Hobbes by Schmitt and Leo Strauss to support his claim that both participated in an effort to "promise the greatest terror and the least security." In addition, McCormick seems dismissive of the substantive differences which separate Schmitt's theorizing from Strauss'. Not surprisingly, this confusion over

27
how Schmitt understands Hobbes has provided ammunition to both critics and apologists; as Helmut Rumpf indicated in trying to carve out a "centrist" position vis-à-vis Schmitt's use of Hobbes, his writing can be construed both as a criticism of totalitarianism as well as a "totalitarian critique of Hobbes." (Rumpf, 1972, 68).

3. Holmes makes this initial charge in his article in the New Republic, 22 August 1988, (Holmes, 1988, 31) and somewhat modifies and tones down his remark in his book a few years later (Holmes, 1993, 37), but the effect of his remarks remains the same. As for his understanding of the relationship between Schmitt's and Strauss' thought, the following remark begins to indicate the manner in which he conflates the two thinkers: "Strauss' basic argument can be summarized quite simply: Schmitt may despise liberalism, but in the end his thinking remains shackled to liberal presuppositions. For Strauss, then, Schmitt fails to be antiliberal enough. He does not criticize liberalism from a thoroughly non-liberal point of view" (Holmes, 1993, 60). The weakness of Holmes' position is revealed in the fact that he both considers Schmitt one of, if not the greatest anti-liberals of the 20th Century, but he also takes Strauss' critique of Schmitt at face value (that for all of Schmitt's rancor, he remains "trapped within the liberal horizon"). As the reader learns, this position is premised in order to pursue an even deeper pathology of the anti-liberal Weltanschauung, which requires delving into "yet another dimension of the anti-liberal mind" (Holmes, 1993, 60); i.e., discovering Leo Strauss as the source of probity and philosophic counterweight behind Schmitt's flawed liberal excoriations (Holmes, 1993, 61-7). In other words, Holmes would seemingly like to sustain both propositions as long as he can. What Holmes ignores are the substantial differences which separate Schmitt from Strauss. Indeed, Holmes commits an egregious error in making this equivocation which is reminiscent of Holmes' (flawed) characterization of Schmitt's argumentation:
if an author criticizes liberal-democracy, that author is automatically an “enemy” of liberal-democracy. Strauss, in contrast, maintains that if we wish to be “friends” of liberal democracy, we must nonetheless not shy away from criticizing it. (Strauss, 1995c, 24). For an excellent review which traces out many of Holmes’ flawed interpretations of Strauss’ writings, see Berkowitz, 1994, 1363-82.

4. Not only was Schmitt long-lived, but his academic output was indeed prolific. Schmitt published over 250 works in his lifetime ranging from lengthy newspaper articles to “Gutachten” (legal opinions) to journal contributions to books. While the total list of his publications inevitably contains reissued works and essays and articles which appeared two (or even three) times in various forms and in various publications before ending up in book length essay collections, Schmitt also wrote 37 book length studies. Schmitt’s Glossarium: Aufzeichnungen der Jahre 1947-1951 [Glossarium: Recorded Sketches from the Years 1947-1951] was published in 1991 by Duncker & Humblot. For a full list of Schmitt’s works published between 1912 and 1958, see Tommissen, 1960, 273-330. For an updated bibliography inclusive of the years 1958-1982, see Bendersky, 1983, 299-304.

5. Gordon Craig and Franz Neumann were the first to charge Schmitt with being a “political romantic” and a “conservative revolutionary” (Craig, 1980, 493-5; Neumann, 1963, 43-7, 152-3). As these charges (and categories) are both important to understanding Schmitt and the “spirit” of Weimar Germany, some elaboration is necessary.

First, the term itself denotes a loose appellation which encompasses the intellectual vanguard and its followers who attacked the republic from the right and sought an authoritarian solution to Germany’s perceived problems.
Second, (and contrary to Jeffrey Herf's claims in Reactionary Modernism) Weimar's critics cannot be gathered together simply as "reactionaries" against liberal democracy or socialism because they sought both to create new political values from non-political cultural sources, and to "conserve" Germany's authoritarian past by non-monarchical modern means.

Third, while the movement drew its strength from the German political right, it is difficult to always strictly identify the adherents and activities of the conservative revolution with Germany's political right-wing because often members of Germany's identifiable left, such as Walter Benjamin, espoused concerns articulated by the right. Mark Lilla, in reassessing the case of Benjamin's open debt to Carl Schmitt's Political Theology, has noted that such developments are hardly surprising since "everyone — including the avant-garde — was drinking from the same murky waters in the interwar period" (Lilla, 1995, 40; see also Bredekamp, 1999, 250).

Given this radical situation, it is first and foremost necessary to identify the conservative revolution's overriding concerns with the "cultural" sources of politics. While most of Weimar's successful criticisms originated from the right, this movement's aims were far removed from the traditional conservative right of the Junkers, monarchists, the old civil service or Hindenburg. The distinction between "right" and "left" is therefore not always a meaningful or helpful one. For purposes of orientation, Fritz Stern has captured the paradoxical quality of this intellectual movement and its political implications:

"[Its] followers sought to destroy the despised present in order to recapture an idealized past in an imaginary future. They were the disinherited conservatives, who had nothing to conserve, because the spiritual values of the past had largely been buried and the material remnants of conservative power did not interest them. They
sought a breakthrough to the past, and they longed for a new community in which old ideas and institutions would once again command universal allegiance” (Stern, 1965, xvi)

The following themes begin to delineate the conservative revolutionaries’ nature and aims:

1) *Volkisch* Nationalism: Over and against the disruption and fragmentation of society by liberalism and socialism, Weimar’s conservatives idealized the *Volk* as a community solidified by cultural and historical tradition. In turn, the *Volk* was qualitatively superior in its emphasis upon collective identity and communal aspirations and destiny than the liberal or socialist societies with their base and misguided concerns for individual rights, material satisfaction and social equality.

2) An important corollary of *Volkisch* thought was the antimony created between *Gemeinschaft* (or *Volksgemeinschaft*; community or a people’s community) and *Gesellschaft* (or society). This distinction mirrored the purposeful contrast between *Kultur* and *Zivilisation* which elevated the German *Volk* as an entity that was substantive, vital, alive and soulful above the “soulless” and “bloodless” way of life engendered by liberalism, materialism, *Amerikanismus* and their chief institutions (especially parliament and commerce).

3) A second corollary of *Volkisch* thought was its emphasis on anti-Enlightenment, not anti-Semitic motifs. While a great number of German nationalists made the easy transition to official anti-Semitism after the Nazi seizure of power, the vast majority of thought was directed against the corrosive effects of Enlightenment rationality which undermined the supposed nobility and dignity of the German *Kulturnation*. 

31
4) Weimar’s right-wing critics demanded a return of the “primacy of politics” to serve as ballast against the Capitalism of the bourgeoisie and the Socialism of the working classes. They sought a new “Caesar” in place of the mediocrity and corruption of the party “Bonzen” who were the parliamentary system’s chief attributes. However, the emphasis was placed not just on an authoritarian solution, but a “political” response to the usurpation of politics by coarse economic and social questions (with regard to the above four general points, see Craig, 486-95; Gay, 1970, 70-85; Herf, 1984, 33-8; Mosse, 1964, pp. 98-160; Neumann, 1963, 23-75; Stern, 1965, 3-26; Wolin, 1992b, 83-149).

A crucial undercurrent to these themes was political romanticism. Particularly in Weimar Germany, this romanticism had dangerous effects. First, it attacked Enlightenment rationality as a reduction of all life and thought to means-end rationality. In this sense, liberalism was attacked as the embodiment of this project. In heaping scorn upon the day-to-day features of liberal democracy, it reduced liberal politics to the mercenary give and take of interest groups and party members. Following Weber’s distinction regarding “absolute ethics” and the “ethics of responsibility,” Jeffrey Herf has noted that “political romantics entered politics to save their souls, find a new identity, establish the authenticity of their commitment, or to reestablish a lost Gemeinschaft rather than to engage in the difficult and frustrating business of balancing means and ends.” It was this emphasis on what Weber termed a politics of “absolute ethics” which captures the spirit of the conservative revolution’s political agenda (Weber, 1958, 87-118; Herf, 1984, 14).

Second, political romanticism expressed itself most clearly in the irrational desire for strong and authoritative political leadership. The conservative revolution contrasted the “soulless”
rationality of parliamentary procedure and liberal democratic thought and action with the passion, commitment and action of its project. These commitments led them to appeal to the state to intercede against parliamentary obstruction and delay. Not only did it urge non-involvement with the parliamentary system, it purposefully called for a new authority to assert itself. Thomas Mann, one of the leading literary figures of Germany proudly distanced himself from Weimar, defended the concept of the “unpolitical German” who stood above the fray of democratic politics, and awaited a strong leader modeled on Frederick the Great who would embody the spirit of true German greatness. While Mann eventually sided with democracy and the Republic, he left an indelible impression on countless Germans when he greeted the Constitution with his famous remark, “I don’t want politics. I want impartiality, order and propriety.”

With regard to Schmitt’s involvement in “political romanticism” and “conservative revolutionary thought,” we can address the following points. While in broad relief, Schmitt might seem to fit the “conservative revolutionary” membership requirements perfectly, a closer inspection (which this thesis provides) precludes such an assessment. The “source” of Schmitt’s thought was not simply “German Kultur.” Nor did Schmitt “romanticize” *das Volk* or subscribe to biological theories of the superiority of the Aryan race. We must ultimately search elsewhere for the source of Schmitt’s most important theorizing. Nonetheless, given the depth and hold of “conservative revolutionary” thinking on many of Weimar’s intellectuals, theorists and jurists, we must take note of how varied and persistent the phenomenon was.

6. While this particular contrast, as well as its related set of concerns (viz, Schmitt as a staunch defender of the Weimar Constitution or as a “political nihilist”) will be addressed in considering Karl Löwith’s assessment of Schmitt later in this introduction, it is important to note that on the one hand,
Schmitt's first book-length study was *Political Romanticism* in which he attacked "romanticism" as a precursor to liberalism's "never ending discussion" and avoidance of decision. On the other hand, many critics have impugned to Schmitt's over-arching motives, a specifically romantic impulse to re-establish the hierarchy and authority of the Roman Catholic Church, as witnessed by his *Römischer Katholizimus und Politische Form* (1923). Schwab, although he aggressively combats any ideas save that of Schmitt's "realism," somewhat unwittingly promotes this idea in his "Introduction" to Schmitt's *Concept of the Political*. While at first glance a very strong case can be made linking Schmitt to conservatives, such as Oswald Spengler, Ernst Jünger, Gottfried Benn and Martin Heidegger, several difficulties preclude a quick "conviction" of Schmitt. To examine his relationship with Heidegger (which is Löwith's special concern), there is record of there having been an exchange of at least one letter with each other in 1933. In this letter, Heidegger expresses a striking admiration for and agreement with Schmitt's *The Concept of the Political* (Heidegger, 1987, 132), and expresses his hope that Schmitt will join him in re-organizing German law faculties in accordance with the new "scientific and educational program" of National Socialism. However, there is only this one letter and Schmitt was a prolific letter writer and self-promoter. In addition, there is Schmitt's later assessment of Heidegger (who he inevitably, scathingly refers to as Martin "the" Heidegger): "I know the Psalm and read in the Bible: 'the Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want;' I know modern philosophy and read in Heidegger: 'Man is the Shepherd of Being'" (G, 232).


8. See Joseph Bendersky's *Carl Schmitt: Theorist for the Reich*, and George Schwab's *The Challenge*
of the Exception which give the fullest consideration yet available to the previously mentioned issues and archival material documenting Schmitt's public life. Two reviews which reveal as much about the continuing debate over Schmitt's reputation as they do about the quality of Bendersky's scholarship are G.L. Ulmen's review in Telos (Ulmen, 1997, 201-12) and Stephen Holmes' review in APSR, Vol. 77, 1067; also see, Wolin, 1992a, 424-447. Wolin expands on the themes he addressed here in his The Terms of Cultural Criticism. Three recent works which challenge Bendersky's and Schwab's account of Schmitt's activities, especially in terms of his jurisprudence and constitutional theory, are David Dyzenhaus' Legality and Legitimacy: Carl Schmitt, Hans Kelsen and Herman Heller in Weimar, Bill Scheuerman's Between the Norm and the Exception and Peter Caldwell's Popular Sovereignty and the Crisis of German Constitutional Law. Dyzenhaus' work specifically focuses on Schmitt's role in Prussia contra Reich, the watershed German federal case which handed the mechanism of the Prussian State Government over to Papen, and eventually Hitler. Schmitt had argued for the enlargement of Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution to provide for a commissarial dictatorship in place of the vaguely defined "presidential emergency powers" for which it provided. Schmitt did distinguish between a "sovereign dictatorship" and a constitutionally provided for commissarial dictatorship which could restore public order and safety, a pre-requisite to any attempts to revise the constitution. The possibility which neither Bendersky nor Schwab seriously entertain in terms of Schmitt's active participation in enlarging the legal understanding of Article 48, creating a so-called "Baron's Cabinet" or even re-writing the constitution is first and foremost whether or not he actually hoped that such a distinction could be maintained in any meaningful way. On this point see also Dyzenhaus, 1997b, 121-134; Scheuerman, 1996b, 571 - 590; and Caldwell, 1997, 40-63, 85-120.
9. See Löwith, 1935, 101-116; 1993, 167-85 and Wolin, 1992a and 1992b, 92-9; Bielefeldt, 1994; 1997. We shall investigate Löwith's "existential" reading of Carl Schmitt below, which forms the basis of many recent efforts to understand Schmitt as a compatriot of Heidegger and Jünger. The reasons why Schmitt has been considered a "nihilist" and an "existentialist" will also be discussed later in this chapter and such considerations also form the basis of important points of discussion in Chapters Two and Three below. Bendersky has responded to the specific charge that Schmitt was a nihilist with the judgment that such charges originated in the need to vilify Schmitt and not to understand his significant scholarly contributions (Bendersky, 1983, 275-6).

10. See Schwab's "Introduction" to his translation of Schmitt's _The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes_, xvii - xviii for a summary of Schmitt's fall from grace with Nazi party; his membership officially lasted from 1933 - 1936. Essentially, three factors contributed toward his downfall: 1) His previous opposition to the Nazi seizure of power, 2) His Catholic past and friendship with Jews, and 3) His association with General Kurt von Schleicher and Schleicher's political efforts to divide the Nazi party by striking power sharing arrangements with party members to the exclusion of Hitler. Schmitt's efforts to organize anti-Semitic legal conferences to expunge Jewish influences from German law faculties failed to convince either the _SD_ or the _SS_ of his sincerity because he was viewed as a latecomer to the party and insincere and opportunistic in his anti-Semitism. It would seem that Schmitt served as intellectual adornment at a time when the Nazis desperately needed the veneer of respectability but that they never considered Schmitt helpful or reliable as a political theorist or jurist (see Bendersky, 1983, 219-242; and 1978b; 1979). Dyzenhaus provides a much more careful consideration of Schmitt's involvement with Nazism, especially with regard to Schmitt's ignomious article "_Die deutsche Rechtswissenschaft im Kampf gegen den_
"jüdischen Geist" ["German Legal Science in the Struggle against Jewish Spirit"] which was published in Deutsche Juristen-Zeitung in 1936 (see Dyzenhaus, 1997, 92-101).

11. See Thoma, CPD, 77-83; also see Wolin, 1992a and 1992b, 92-99 and Holmes, below.

12. Schmitt himself self-consciously has propagated confusion with regard to this issue with his claim that he is not an adept at intellectual warfare. Writing in a “contemplative spirit” in 1945, Schmitt analyzed himself in the following terms:

But I am also weak at defense. I have too little practical interest in myself and too much theoretical interest in the ideas of my opponents, even when they come forward as accusers. I am too curious about the intellectual presuppositions of every reproach, every accusation, every accuser. This is why I am no good either as a defendant or as an accuser. And yet I always prefer to be the defendant rather than the accuser. The j'accuse types may have their role to play on the world stage. For me, the prosecutorial role is even more uncomfortable than the inquisitorial. (ECS, 10-11.)

Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. What makes the above even more interesting is that during the same period Schmitt informed his Russian interrogators that “he had drank from the Nazi bacillus but had not been infected,” and then later “reminded” his American interrogators in response to the question of how he reacted to the Holocaust that Christianity too, during the Crusades, had resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands, but so far no one had apologized to the Saracens or the Jews. In addition, Schmitt’s self-appraisal from this period contrasts sharply with another, more recently published self-appraisal from only a few years later (see Bendersky, 1983, 268-73; see also Endnote No. 14 below).
13. Schmitt formulates this critique even more sharply when he writes scornfully of parliament, that it was “possible to answer the question: ‘Christ or Barabbas?’ with a proposal to adjourn or appoint a commission of investigation. Such a position was not accidental but was based on liberal metaphysics” (PT, 62).

14. Perhaps not surprisingly, Schmitt has done the most to encourage the detoxification of his own remarks and writings. Stephen Holmes has commented that after the War, Schmitt’s “pose was adroit but not equally convincing” (Holmes, 1993, 60). In commenting on the publication of Schmitt’s *Glossarium*, Heinrich Meier has more richly captured the perverse irony of Schmitt’s mournful self-indulgences and his attempt to rehabilitate his image as a political and legal theorist:

“We are informed by Schmitt that ‘he has all the licences and certificates of exemption of the world spirit, and whoever does not grant me that without further ado cannot be my friend.’ Time and again, we encounter the shameless self-pity of a man who complains that ‘ideicide’ is the ‘crime attempted’ against him for ‘the past twenty years,’ thus roughly since the publication of his *Concept of the Political* (1927). The seemingly intrepid theoretician of the political, who knew the *correct* distinction between friend and enemy to be the political task par excellence, sees himself persecuted by ‘Christ’s murderers’ as soon as he is confronted with enmity.” (Meier, 1994b, 328). [Contrast this with Schmitt’s previous remarks that he was too engrossed by the intellectual basis of his adversaries’ remarks to know how to even begin to respond. (See above, Endnote 12).]

Meier’s approach to Schmitt, as developed first in his *Carl Schmitt and Leo Strauss: The Hidden Dialogue*, and later in his *Die Lehre Carl Schmitts: Vier Kapitel zur Unterscheidung Politischer*
Theologie und Politischer Philosophie has provided an helpful model for my own research on Schmitt. Meier has confronted Schmitt’s anti-Semitism and apologetics, and without attempting to make these loathsome aspects to Schmitt’s writings disappear, he has proceeded without losing sight of the substance and troubling but important questions Schmitt’s works pose to political theory.

15. Holmes, 1988, 31. In this vein, it is of more than puerile interest to recognize that the most influential writers sustaining serious interest in Schmitt among North Americans have ranged from Leo Strauss to the contributors of Telos. With respect to the sudden fascination developed by the political Left in both North America and Europe for Schmitt, Stephen Holmes noted in the same article that they have endeavored to “learn from Schmitt, but not about Schmitt.” It is my belief in undertaking this thesis that it is possible to do both.

16. Walter Benjamin’s tribute to Schmitt’s Political Theology has now been re-included in his collected works (see Benjamin, 1989, 1:3, 887) after all references to Schmitt were originally deleted in 1955 by the Adornos who acted as Benjamin’s literary executors. Benjamin not only dedicated a copy of his Trauerspiel to Schmitt, but listed him as an “inspiration” on his curriculum vitae (Unseld, 1989, 46-7). For greater detail on Benjamin’s strange fascination with and indebtedness to Schmitt’s Political Theology, as well as the Adornos’ dishonest actions, see Lilla, 1995, 37-42

17. François Bondy has expressed dismay at Aron’s naivety, insisting that he “was in error [as to Schmitt’s Nazism]” (Bondy, 1985, 40). However, had Bondy paid more attention to Aron’s Mémoires, he would have noticed that Aron explicitly mentions reading and analyzing Schmitt’s ominous 1934 article “Der Führer schützt das Recht” [“The Führer protects the Law”] which Schmitt published prominently in defense of Hitler’s “Night of the Long Knives.” In this article,
Schmitt ascribed to Hitler *ex post facto* the highest powers of the State vis-à-vis his actions and involvement in the gangland executions of Ernst Röhm and potentially intransigent SA members as well as the murder of General Kurt von Schleicher (a friend of Schmitt’s) and other vengeful political murders carried out in June, 1934. While Schmitt expressed support for Hitler’s actions with regard to the SA, he remained conspicuously silent with regard to the murder of Schleicher and others not associated with the supposed revolt about to be carried out by the SA. Given Aron’s impeccable liberal credentials and what he claims in his own *Mémoires* is his detailed awareness of Schmitt’s engagement with Nazism as indicated by Schmitt’s *volte face* in 1934, there must simply be more to his assessment of Schmitt than meets the eyes of such puzzled readers as Bondy. Curiously, Aron’s defense of Schmitt was excised from the abridged English edition of his *Memoirs*, but see the unabridged French original. (Aron, 1983, 650-1). Schmitt’s ignoble “*Der Führerschützt das Recht*” is now included in a collection of his pre-war essays; see *PB*, 227-32.


19. This connection was first explored by George Schwab in his translation of Schmitt’s *The Concept of the Political*, (CP, 26) where Schwab states that Schmitt’s influence on Morgenthau’s work can be detected as early as Morgenthau’s 1933 “*La Notion du ‘politique’ et la théorie des différends internationaux.*” More recently, Alfons Söllner (Söllner, 1987, 161-172) and John McCormick (McCormick, 1993b, 110-11) have made the case for a direct connection between
Morgenthau’s “political realism” and Schmitt’s “concept of the political,” and indirectly, for a connection between Schmitt and Samuel Huntington via Morgenthau’s “realistic” school of thought. While this connection does seem to be stretching the argument a bit, it is worth examining the thought behind Huntington’s thesis in his *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. While he quotes from Michael Dibdin’s novel *Dead Lagoon*, rather than from Carl Schmitt’s *The Concept of the Political* in order to state the friend-enemy distinction, he summarizes its importance to his project as follows: “The unfortunate truths in these old truths cannot be ignored by statesmen and scholars. For peoples seeking identity and reinventing ethnicity, enemies are essential, and the potentially most dangerous enmities occur across the fault lines between the world’s civilizations” (Huntington, 1993, 23). For the lead-up to his book, and its attendant controversy, see Huntington, 1993, 22-49. Also, see the responses to Huntington’s “*The Clash of Civilizations?*” by Fouad Ajami, Kishore Mahbubani, Robert L. Bartley, Liu Binyan, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, et al. in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No 4 (September/October 1993), 2-26. We shall take up this thread again in considering Schmitt’s relevance to political science in our conclusion.

20. Some explanation of Schmitt’s concept of the exception is necessary here. The German Schmitt employs here is *Ernstfall*. The emphasis of this term is on its root, *Ernst*, which means serious, but in the context Schmitt implies, it takes on the added meaning of seriousness or urgency in the sense of a life and death struggle.

21. For Löwith, the constant emphasis upon the “concrete” and “specific” within Schmitt’s *Political Theology* and *The Concept of the Political* is what betrays or begins to indicate the open-ended and groundless nature of his “occasionalis.” In other words, it is the ambiguous or non-specific nature of what Schmitt means by the “concrete application” of sovereignty that contributes a great deal to
Löwith's concern with Schmitt's occasionalism. For Löwith's appraisal of this subject, see Wolin, 1993, 137-9, 149.

22. It is helpful to bear in mind Stroup's distinction regarding Schmitt's decisionism and theory of dictatorship. Stroup, following Schwab's and Bendersky's analysis, cautions that "though it is true that Schmitt's decisionism culminated in a legitimation of the emergent right-wing tendency toward dictatorship, one must be very careful regarding Schmitt's own understanding of dictatorship; he plainly distinguished between more than one type of dictatorship in his system and his own efforts before Hitler assumed power were directed toward saving the Weimar state by strengthening the powers of the president and by severely limiting the chances of a legal assumption of power by extremist parties who avowedly aimed at an irreversible subversion of the Weimar constitution." (Stroup, 1987, 332.) Also, see Schwab, 1989, 30-132; Bendersky, 1978b and 1983. Over and against this distinction, the question must be raised (again) whether in the end, such a distinction (between a limited constitutional dictatorship and a totalitarian or unconstitutional form of government) can be maintained (see McCormick, 1997a).

23. The terminology of the "friend-enemy" distinction is even more interesting etymologically in German. The friend-enemy distinction is "Freund-Feind." Etymologically, both in English and in German, "Feind" evokes (unlike the more neutral sounding " foe," "adversary" or "opponent") the sense of something or someone who is by nature "fiendish" or "devilish."

24. While Schmitt's concept of the enemy and the nature of conflict and war are important points which shall require greater elaboration in the second and third chapters, it is important to understand that Schmitt made changes to this passage (as well as others) and elaborated on them in the third edition of Begriff des Politischen (1933). As Heinrich Meier has pointed out in his Carl Schmitt and
Leo Strauss: The Hidden Dialogue, Schmitt added "here Ernst Jünger held the view of the agonal principle ('man is not designed for peace') whereas Paul Adams saw the meaning of war in the establishment of dominion, order and peace." Meier's comment on this change is important: "in the controversy between Ernst Jünger and Paul Adams, Schmitt sides not with the 'bellicose' nationalist but with the 'authoritarian' Catholic" (Meier, 1995, 65). Why he did not include this change in re-issuing the 1932 edition of Concept of the Political in 1963 is an open question. But it is certainly curious that in 1933, when one would expect Schmitt to have become more daring or at least less cautious in his elaborations on the friend-enemy distinction as it relates to war, that he would include this remark as clarification.

21. Despite the bellicose nature of Schmitt's pronouncement and the overtones of a reckless theorist glorifying warfare, his elaboration of the friend-enemy distinction in conflict and potential organized violence is consistent with Hobbes' appraisal of the state of nature as a state of war, "since the nature of warre consisteth not in actual fighting, but in the known disposition thereto" (Hobbes, 1994, 76).

26. Leo Strauss, "Comments on Carl Schmitt's Der Begriff des Politischen," in The Concept of the Political, 90. Hereinafter, as Strauss’ essay has been included with Schwab's translation of Schmitt's The Concept of the Political, this citation shall be made within the text as Strauss, CP, and the appropriate page number.

27. A detailed consideration of the relationship between Hobbes' political thought and Hegel's is obviously beyond the scope of this introduction. What is suggested by the following analysis, however, is that Schmitt's formulation of the friend-enemy distinction is made in full knowledge of the relationship of Hobbes and Hegel in several areas which are crucial to the direction of his own thought and that it represents a potentially significant avenue of inquiry. Strauss, for example, in his
own study of Hobbes made reference to his and Alexander Kojève's planned study of the two. (Strauss, 1984, 44-107; especially 58.)

28. Schmitt, in reminding his readers that, "Hegel...remains everywhere political in the decisive sense," was particularly virulent in protesting this ignored aspect of Hegel’s thought. In accordance with his own research, Schmitt argued that “Hegel has also advanced a definition of the enemy which in general has been evaded by modern philosophers. The enemy is a negated otherness. But this negation is mutual and this mutuality of negations has its own concrete existence, as a relation between enemies; this relation of two nothingnesses on both sides bears the danger of war” (CP, 62-3).

29. Schmitt, in a similar vein, dismisses the notion of a unified, pacified globe. In a manner which critically anticipates Francis Fukayama’s popularized rendition of the “end of history,” Schmitt declares that “were a world state to embrace the entire globe and humanity, then it would be no political entity and could only loosely be called a state. If, in fact, all humanity and the entire world were to become a unified entity based exclusively on economics and on technically regulating traffic, then it would still not be more of a social entity than a social entity of tenants in a tenement house, customers purchasing gas from the same utility company, passengers traveling on the same bus. An interest group concerned exclusively with economics or traffic cannot become more than that, in the absence of an adversary” (CP, 57).

30. Michael Doyle has elaborated the general pacific nature of liberal democratic foreign policy towards other liberal democratic states and the status of this phenomenon in relation to the tradition of liberal democratic theories (see Doyle, 1983, 301-53 and 1986, 1151-69; see also Kaysen, 1990, 42-64). Despite the “historical fact” that liberal democratic states do not wage war with each other,
non-liberal democratic states still wage war with one another, and liberal democratic states wage war against non-liberal democratic states.

31. Also, see Michael Roth's *Knowing and History*. To date, neither the text of Kojève's address nor Kojève's and Schmitt's correspondence has appeared in English. However, an incomplete version of Kojève's address did appear in the French journal *Commentaire* (9) 1990; 135-7 and in German in *Schmittiana: Beiträge zu Leben und Werk Carl Schmitts* (6) 1998; 75-94. We shall examine Schmitt's and Kojève's exchange of opinion regarding Hegel at the end of Chapter Three below.

32. One of the severe difficulties to John McCormick's otherwise provocative analysis of Schmitt's understanding of Hobbes is his claim that Schmitt overdetermines the role of fear in Hobbes' political philosophy. In support of this position, for example, McCormick dismisses Schmitt's concept of war as the determining feature of foreign policy with a only a quick footnoted reference to international relations' "balance of power" concepts. Such an observation misses Schmitt's point entirely (see McCormick, 1994, Footnote 6; also see above, Endnote 21). Nor does he ever address Schmitt's usage of Hegel to derive greater meaning from Hobbes' formulation of the state of nature, especially in terms of how it relates to the state of war.

33. Both Charles Frye and John Herz have drawn attention to the seemingly haphazard and ominous choice of terminology chosen by Schmitt. (Frye, 1986, 818-30 and Herz, 1992, 307-14)

34. Richard Wolin in particular has seized upon this aspect of Schmitt's thought, but seemingly to the exclusion of all other considerations (see both Wolin, 1992a and 1992b). Wolin, in emphasizing Schmitt's purported "existential" emphasis on the "brute facticity" of the political, claims that Schmitt's fundamental position is one of nihilism because he primarily aestheticizes violence, warfare and death. In this respect, Wolin follows Habermas' judgment "that above all it is the
aesthetics of violence that fascinates [Schmitt]" (Habermas, 1988, 137) quoted in McCormick, 1994, 645. McCormick’s argument, which is reinforced by Meier’s observation (see above, Endnote 27), is that Schmitt in this instance is not simply glorifying war for the sake of war. On this count then, Habermas and Wolin seem far off the mark. In turn, one must distinguish Habermas’ and Wolin’s basis for claiming that Schmitt was a nihilist from other claims and arguments such as those advanced by Karl Löwith, the author who is seemingly the inspiration of their concerns.

35. The term “Dasein” is a neologism of Heidegger’s. In order to stress the revolutionary and radical nature of his undertaking, Heidegger does not refer to “human beings” or “man” as the originating subject and object of philosophic or ontological enquiry, but the “Dasein” (literally, the “Being-There” or “Being-Here”) of human existence.

36. In following this line of thought, one must not hastily jump to the conclusion that Heidegger’s “freedom for death” is the same as or tantamount to Schmitt’s “willing sacrifice of life” or that both can be reduced simply to the valorization or aestheticization of death, “war for the sake of war,” etc. While perhaps in the final analysis, such distinctions can and do become blurred, at the minimum, we should take heed to the distinctions which Heidegger and Schmitt make themselves.

37. Heidegger had prepared his discussion of Dasein’s “choosing its hero” with the following statement on Dasein’s “co-historicizing with its ‘generation:’”

Our fates have already been guided in advance, in our Being with one another in the same world and in our resoluteness for definite possibilities. Only in communicating and in struggling does the power of destiny become free. Dasein's fateful destiny in and with its 'generation' goes to make up the full authentic historicizing of Dasein (Heidegger, 1962, 436) (My emphasis on struggling).
38. See Thomas Hobbes, 1994, 27-38. While it is not a particularly new argument, it is helpful to re-state that the major premise of Hobbes’ “new political science” is an absolute form of relativism; even our most certain solutions to the questions of what is good or just are radically dependent on our needs and wants, or on our “appetites and aversions.” Since reason is supplanted by and subservient to the passions, man can no longer be considered simply as the “rational animal” whose reason governs his thumotic and erotic elements, for example.

39. Karl Löwith, 1993, 40. This line of analysis was developed by Löwith in an article entitled “Carl Schmitt’s Occasional Decisionism” (originally published as “Politischer Dezisionismus,” in Revue Internationale de la Théorie du Droit, Vol. X (1935)). It is an indication of the times that Löwith was forced to publish under a pseudonym (“Hugo Fiala, von Madrid”) because of the pressure the newly formed Nazi state was exerting on Italy to expel Jews who had fled from Germany after being stripped of their civil rights and citizenship. Of crucial importance here is Löwith’s emphasis on the basis of Schmitt’s “decisionism” — despite the similarity of conclusions drawn by Habermas and Wolin, Löwith emphasizes not “violence for the sake of violence” but “preservation and affirmation” of Dasein and “authentic political existence” — even if this non-rational decision is willed from sheer “facticity” and expresses itself [for Schmitt] in the friend-enemy distinction.

40. Given the central nature of this disagreement and misunderstanding, it is important to quote from both Meier, and from Löwith, specifically on this point: This is how Meier characterizes the impasse:

Karl Löwith noticed the change but did not understand that it is an answer to Strauss’ question. Thus he sees only an inconsistency, an odd contrast to his imaginary
picture of Schmitt’s political decisionism, and he does not take the contradiction as an opportunity to examine whether the image is correct. “The possible meaning of war,” Löwith comments in the new wording of 1933, “is thus referred to here — in reference to our time, also — to metaphysical oppositions, although all Schmitt’s arguments have their specifically polemical note precisely in the denial of the theological, the metaphysical, the moral, and the economic as authoritative for the properly political (Meier, 1995, 61, and Footnote 64; Löwith, 1935, 113)

The question of the basis of Schmitt’s polemic against liberalism gives rise to the chief conflict in interpretations of Schmitt that will ground the latter part of Chapter Three’s analytical section devoted to Schmitt’s *The Concept of the Political* and the resolution of this dispute. If we can ascertain the theological or metaphysical basis for Schmitt’s emphasis on the “veiled metaphysical oppositions” of his own time, then as illuminating and provocative as Löwith’s reading of Schmitt is, it is not entirely satisfactory.

41. Schmitt notes that “the word ‘repression’ is utilized in liberal theory as a reproach against state and politics. This would have been nothing more than a powerless curse word of political debate if it had not been integrated into a larger metaphysical and historical system. It gained thereby a broader horizon and a stronger moral conviction.”

This remark captures something of the tension within Hobbes’ thought which is forgotten after Locke; indeed, Schmitt’s words seem to perfectly echo Hobbes’ judgement that “if wee take Liberty in the proper sense, for corporall Liberty; that is to say, freedome from chains, and prison, it were very absurd for men to clamor as they doe, for the Liberty they so manifestly enjoy.” (Hobbes, 1994, 138). The ambiguous, but crucial question of the status of morality and politics
within Schmitt's own thought shall of course be of great importance in both Chapters Two and Three below.

42. Strauss' assessment of Schmitt's larger purpose resonates superficially but strongly of Heidegger's now infamous explanation of his involvement with National Socialism which he made in 1935 and let stand in the 1959 edition of *Introduction to Metaphysics*: "The works that are being peddled about nowadays as the philosophy of National Socialism but have nothing to do with the inner truth and greatness of this movement (namely the encounter between global technology and modern man) — have all been written by men fishing in the troubled waters of 'values' and 'totalities.'" (Heidegger, 1959, 199).

43. Hence, for example, it is important to examine whether or not Schmitt's conception of a constitutionally-provided for "commissarial dictatorship" ultimately is distinguishable from dictatorship simply. Schmitt's apologists, such as Bendersky, seem to ignore this possibility, let alone the possibility that Schmitt might have very well welcomed the obscuring of the difference between the two or that he significantly recast his thinking on the subject after the publication of *Die Diktatur* in 1928 (in addition, see McCormick, 1997a, 163-88).
Chapter Two: Political Theology in Carl Schmitt’s Early Writings

"And because by the Enemy, the Accuser, and Destroyer, is meant the enemy of them that shall be in the kingdom of God, therefore, if the kingdom of God after the resurrection be upon the earth..., the Enemy and his kingdom must be on earth also. For so also was it in the time before the Jews had deposed God. For God’s kingdom was in Palestine, and the Nations round about were the kingdoms of the Enemy; and consequently, by Satan, is meant any earthly enemy of the Church."

Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, Chapter 38

Interpreting Carl Schmitt’s Early Writings

How can we best understand Carl Schmitt’s friend-enemy distinction which grounds his concept of the “political” and his decisionism which is its most fundamental expression? Is Schmitt’s decisionism epistemologically groundless, or is his effort indeed guided by the quest for a “pure and whole knowledge” ("eines integren Wissens") of the “order of human things” ("die Ordnung der menschlichen Dinge") (BP, 95; see Strauss, CP, 104-5)? As we saw in our introduction to Carl Schmitt’s political thought in the preceding chapter, most of the ways in which Schmitt has been interpreted do not answer these questions and provide incomplete or one-sided descriptions of Schmitt’s life work. Schmitt has been branded a totalitarian or romantic nationalist despite the fact that both his sources and role models (especially Tertullian, Augustine, Hobbes, Cromwell, de Maistre and Donoso Cortés) as well as his defenders are as often as not found outside Germany. Likewise, Schmitt has been described as an historicist (despite the friend-enemy distinction providing a recurring and transhistorical character to his thought), an existentialist and
even a nihilist in the tradition of Heidegger and Nietzsche (despite, as we shall see, sharp differences with them on the subject of Christianity and theology). Schmitt has been portrayed as a conservative critic of bourgeois culture, again, without acknowledging the sharp differences that separate him from other conservative cultural critics ranging from Burckhardt to Jünger. Finally, commentators who have seized upon Schmitt’s own later self-description as a theorist of “pure politics” or as a mere “juridical thinker” or seek to understand him primarily as a legal scholar and jurist have failed to come to terms with Schmitt’s own demonstrably serious moral and theological purposes.¹ I contend, with Heinrich Meier, that the most satisfactory way to interpret Schmitt’s writings is to understand them as works of political theology. To state my claim simply, such an interpretive approach explains the most, and it explains most consistently why the above issues appear as they do: Schmitt conceives of the “political” theologically, or in constant view of the eschatological struggles between Christ and Antichrist, and he conceives of the “theological” politically, or in light of the distinction between the friends of true faith and its enemies — those who have strayed from revelation and those who deny revelation. Fundamentally, the distinction between obedience to faith and rebellion against faith captures the essence of Schmitt’s decisionism with respect to friend and enemy (G, 111 and 192).

To set forth on the path we shall follow in this chapter and what follows, we must enquire into what is entailed by considering Schmitt’s earliest conceptions of the “dilemmas” of the age and how these dilemmas endured for him in the problems posed by Thomas Hobbes’ political thought. What I want to accomplish in this chapter of the thesis, beginning with an examination of Schmitt’s early Weimar writings, including his lengthy essay on Theodor Daubler’s Nordlicht (1916) and Political Romanticism (1919/1925), and proceeding to Political Theology (1922/1934), Roman
Catholicism and Political Form (1923), and The Spiritual-Historical Situation of Contemporary Parliamentarism (1923/1926), is to sketch out the core of Schmitt’s concerns; namely, how he conceives of political theology. In light of what emerges from considering Schmitt’s early writings, I believe that we will have constructed a solid foundation for keeping sight of “the one case that matters” for Schmitt (TDN, 77). Bearing in mind the one case that matters for Schmitt shall allow us to follow this construction consistently and chronologically through Schmitt’s “mature writings” and beyond.

In taking this approach and building upon the political-theological edifice Schmitt himself creates, we can develop more robustly Schmitt’s The Concept of the Political, both in terms of the changes he makes to his most famous articulation of politics, especially between the second and third editions of that work, and the elaboration he gives to it in his famous essay “The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations.” The peak of this investigation will reside in considering Schmitt’s book on Hobbes and its aftermath. We must take heed not only of Schmitt’s return to Hobbes’ theory of sovereignty but also of how Schmitt persisted in his treatment of Hobbes beyond the 1930s. Hobbes serves as the touchstone of Schmitt’s repeated articulation and return to what the “political” is. Indeed, Hobbes is of particular importance to understand Schmitt’s thought: given Schmitt’s barely concealed contempt for thinkers who would substitute philosophic argument and insight for the morally demanding decision regarding friend and enemy, Schmitt’s lifetime preoccupation with Hobbes indicates that the latter fills a lacuna within Schmitt’s own political thinking which also proves to be the exception to Schmitt’s refusal to give philosophers due consideration.
I shall demonstrate that the only conclusion that can be drawn from examining Schmitt’s path of thought is that it is political theological in character and intent. The political theological core of Schmitt’s thought is somewhat difficult to stipulate clearly in advance. His position, which crudely and provisionally could be characterized in manichean fashion as a battle between the divine and the satanic, is developed in the vast corpus of his thought. Schmitt’s various writings are marked by a series of mercurial advances against the enemy, furtive evasions of his counter-attack, frenetic maneuvering and splenetic moral outrage paraded as critical analysis. Indeed, in places, everything seems possible (i.e., that Schmitt is a right wing critic of bourgeois culture, a nihilist of Heideggerian or Nietzschean proportions, or a dangerous “totalitarian” juridical thinker) because seemingly all manner of sources and arguments are drawn on. Schmitt never openly and transparently states what the substantive core of the friend-enemy distinction is nor how he deploys his own obedience to faith in revelation; rather, he challenges us to follow him around, as it were, in order to capture him in flagrante delicto (Shell, 1991, 221).

However, Schmitt’s efforts at concealing and revealing his core positions, and enticing us to take them up, are always undertaken by Schmitt with a view towards one thing — forcing the decisive question and hastening “the bloody battle.” In turn, this battle can only be explicated fully as one waged against the “Antichrist” and the “satanic” in modern politics. And it is this distinction between divine and satanic, and hence, between good and evil, which undergirds Schmitt’s decisionism and his deciding between friend and enemy. It is also why, when confronted by Leo Strauss’ criticism of his political theological aims, eleven years after he first published The Concept of the Political, and despite his changing perception and evaluation of Hobbes, Schmitt could write in his 1938 study of the “lonely philosopher of Malmesbury” that Hobbes is redeemed as a pious
Christian and a vir probus by his supposed affirmation that “Jesus is the Christ” (L, 83). In short, the claim we must begin to assess is that if the concept of the political is based on the concept of the enemy, this in turn can only be understood in terms of Schmitt’s political-theological concerns. Schmitt is to be understood as a self-styled Christian-Epimetheus or Katechon, a holder back of the Antichrist (G, 63, 70, 83, 159, 164-5). Schmitt ultimately conceives of history and politics as a great field of providential struggle between those who hasten the realm of the Antichrist and those who restrain him.

Likewise, the political theologian’s purpose cannot be confused with the aims of metaphysics or political philosophy. Schmitt is hardly ignorant of the traditional claims and arguments of political philosophy regarding justice, legitimacy and sovereignty. Yet, his familiarity with philosophy, and political philosophy specifically, is born of his contempt for his perceived enemy: philosophy, in seeking to make human reason sovereign in human affairs, dethrones God’s place in the metaphysical universe and in human politics. Schmitt’s contempt for purely philosophic argument, of course, does not preclude his analysis of such arguments in his own works. However, just as Schmitt’s constitutional and legal writings “played havoc with the positivist style of legal interpretation” and “pushed the boundary between theory and practice” (Caldwell, 1997, 61), so Schmitt’s usage of philosophy is unphilosophic. To echo appraisals of Burke’s or Bonald’s style of argument, Schmitt is “theoretically anti-theoretical.” A passage from Martin Heidegger’s Phänomenologie und Theologie helps us to appreciate what is at stake for Schmitt in confronting philosophy and asserting political theology. Heidegger wrote: “faith in its innermost core remains as a specific possibility of existence the mortal enemy of the form of existence which belongs essentially to philosophy and which is factually quite alterable. So absolutely that philosophy does
not even begin to want to fight that mortal enemy in any way! This existential opposition between
faithfulness and one’s freely taking one’s entire existence upon oneself ... must bear within itself
precisely the possible community of theology and philosophy as sciences if this communication is
to be able to remain a genuine communication, free of every illusion and frail attempt at mediation.
Thus there is no such thing as a Christian philosophy, that is a ‘wooden iron’ pure and simple”
(Heidegger, 1970, 32; see Meier, 1994a, 84-6). Schmitt accepted Heidegger’s antithesis between
philosophy and theology, of the life of free thought and obedient faith, but from the standpoint of
political theology. Schmitt sought neither community nor mediation between philosophy and
teology. Nor did he attempt to make his faith scientific or systematic; he sought neither a rationally
demonstrable divine law nor a *Summa Theologica*.

It is not a simple matter to provide a preliminary sketch of how Schmitt conceived political
theology and how his political theological conceptions ground his criticisms of modernity and
brought coherence to his understanding of the relation between politics, history and morality.
However, we can begin to make the case negatively through a quick critical analysis of some of the
most common academic misunderstandings of Schmitt’s thought regarding the specific question of
Schmitt’s political theology, and positively we can further our exploration by energetically
explicating the most important and common themes of Schmitt’s earliest writings. Overwhelmingly,
most Schmitt scholars have ignored the importance of political theological issues within his thought;
at the most they have taken this as a sign of his “youthful Catholicism” before the break with the
Church in the late 1920s (see Bendersky, 1983 and McCormick, 1997b) or, much later, as either the
adroit posing of someone not quite willing to account for his decision of 1933 or as the posturing of
an unrepentant arch-conservative seeking more respectable cover for his withering invectives

55
(Holmes, 1993). As we have seen from the introduction, in the case of Schmitt’s post-war apologetics, there are certainly elements of such posturing in his more lachrymose, self-exculpating statements. However, the vast majority of scholars have not attempted to separate the wheat from the chaff, and this inability has led them to miss the point entirely on Schmitt. First and foremost, by endeavoring to understand Schmitt as a political theologian, we should not strive to reconstruct Schmitt simply as a “Catholic thinker” or intuit a “basic Catholic position” in his thought. Despite the fact that Schmitt lauds the Church as a complexio oppositorum (RC, 8) and describes his own thought as being directed at a “specific Catholic sharpening” (G, 145 and 164-5), he is most concerned with the broad contours and demands of the intractable battle waged between faith and the forces which deny faith and God’s place in the metaphysical and moral universe.

To take up the most recent and significant example, John McCormick, while picking up on the resonances of the “Antichrist” in Schmitt’s writings, finds them to be of Nietzschean provenance (without really fully explaining what that means). At his most revealing, in claiming that Schmitt, with Leo Strauss’s assistance, sought the “aestheticizing of the fear-evoking quality of domination by a deliberated Hobbesian state,” McCormick writes dismissively of the role of theological thinking in Schmitt’s work: “This seems to be an unlikely possibility in Schmitt’s case at this particular point given the diminished role of religion in his thought after his excommunication in 1926, something of which Meier [in his Leo Strauss and Carl Schmitt] makes no note” (McCormick, 1997b, 263, Footnote 26).2 There are two highly significant problems which detract from McCormick’s assessment and point us towards a proper appreciation of the source of Schmitt’s thinking. First, nowhere does McCormick actually demonstrate that “religion” played a diminished role in Schmitt’s thinking; in fact, McCormick even indicates that it did continue to play a significant
role in his thought after 1926 (McCormick, 1996b, 112-114). Second, McCormick’s criticism of Heinrich Meier’s work Carl Schmitt and Leo Strauss: the Hidden Dialogue is groundless. As Meier indicates in the preface to this work, Carl Schmitt and Leo Strauss was intended as an introduction and companion piece to his Die Lehre Carl Schmitts. Die Lehre Carl Schmitts is exclusively devoted to the issue of Schmitt’s political theology and was published three years before McCormick’s Against Politics as Technology. Yet McCormick mostly ignores what Meier writes in his Carl Schmitt and Leo Strauss, and does not even mention Die Lehre Carl Schmitts once in the text of his book or even cite it in his extensive bibliography (McCormick, 1996b, 332). McCormick’s ignorance of Meier’s aims and arguments is surprising given what seems to be his extensive research of German secondary sources, particularly those of recent publication.

While McCormick’s position on the status of political theology and myth within Schmitt’s work is provocative, it is highly misleading in ascribing Nietzschean motifs to Schmitt’s thinking. McCormick’s mistaken reading of Schmitt is nonetheless helpful because it allows us to make note of the most general but important differences which separate Nietzsche from Schmitt and how these differences detract from portraying Schmitt in the same vein as Nietzsche. In lumping Schmitt and Nietzsche together as “critics of modernity” and “critics of technology,” McCormick ignores Nietzsche’s complete critique and rejection of Christianity, and thus what separates Nietzsche from Schmitt on the most fundamental level.

Given the fact that Nietzsche repeatedly criticizes Christianity (even when granting that it has profoundly deepened European consciousness, he repeatedly refers to himself and his serious readers as “we Anti-Christ.” In addition to the aptly titled Antichrist, see Nietzsche, 1966, 2-3, 60-76, especially 74-6 and 197-8), it would seem to be the case that if he turns to “myth” (for example,
in urging the imitation of Cesare Borgia’s impious ruthlessness) and the creation of a new hierarchy of values, he does so because he sees no promise held out by Christianity for Europe’s further development. Nietzsche explicitly comments upon the end result of Christianity for Europe in *The Will to Power*: “Religions are destroyed by belief in morality. The Christian moral God is not tenable: hence atheism — as if there could be no other kinds of god” (Nietzsche, 1968, 95). As Ronald Beiner has pointed out with regard to this point specifically, “far from celebrating the end of Western theism, Nietzsche blames Christianity for having driven us into the dead-end of atheism! According to Nietzsche, it is the greatest argument against Christianity that it has undermined our capacity as a civilization to ‘retain our own gods.’” As nuanced and as subtle as Nietzsche’s destructive efforts may be, the conclusion that he seeks to replace Christianity because faith in the Christian God has driven us to atheism seems inescapable.

While we shall more fully consider Schmitt’s political theological aims, particularly in contrast to his open hostility to Nietzsche and other philosophers, here it should suffice to mention the following. Whereas Nietzsche speaks of the “death of God,” Schmitt writes of the historically demonstrable truth of God’s existence and His becoming human in the person of Christ. Nowhere does Schmitt speak of the “myth” of Christ; he writes of the historically demonstrable truth of Christ (*RC*, p 19). For Schmitt, to acknowledge the “existence” of God is to answer a providential call to confront those who deny His existence, especially those who would proclaim His death. Likewise, one finds in Schmitt’s writings not a call to Heideggerian “anticipatory resoluteness” ("eine vorlaufende Entschlossenheit") but an “anticipatory obedience” ("ein Vorgebot") (Heidegger, 1962, 352-58; see especially G, 23, 83 and 274, and Meier, 1994, 175).
In turn, even Schmitt’s most obdurate critics concede that he was somehow “morally concerned” with the events of his day. For example, Stephen Holmes writes that “arguably, a burning fear of moral skepticism lies at the center of his thought” (Holmes, 1993, 47).7 Nowhere, however, do Holmes or others actually examine the basis and implications of Schmitt’s moral concerns. Schmitt is even clearer as to his intention in choosing the title for the chapter which originates the discussion of the moral meaning of the age in Nordlicht, the first work examined below. He begins his analysis of the age in a chapter entitled “Das geistige Problem Europas” (“The Spiritual Problem of Europe”). As a general reminder of one of the ambiguities of German, we should note that within Schmitt’s works, we must pay attention to the word Geist and its adjectival and adverbial forms. The word can mean both intellect or spirit and intellectual or spiritual. Given what I believe is demonstrable within Schmitt’s thought, we must remain aware of the two meanings of the word.8 Most often it is translated into English simply as “intellect” or “intellectual” and “intellectually” when used as an adjective or adverb. However, as is clear from the intent and polemic of Nordlicht, Schmitt has above all else the moral and spiritual condition of Europe in mind, in contrast to the “intellectual” milieu which has created and maintained liberalism.

**Nordlicht, Political Romanticism, and the “Moral Meaning of the Age”**

Schmitt’s first coherent effort to address “the moral meaning of the age” (“die moralische Bedeutung der Zeit”) came in his commentary on Theodor Daubler’s Nordlicht in 1916 (TDN, 68). It is important to quote from two passages in Schmitt’s appraisal, as they contain almost all of the various themes to which he will return throughout his life:

Men have become poor devils: “they know everything and believe nothing.” They are interested in everything and are enthusiastic about nothing. They understand everything; their scholars register in history, in nature, even in men’s own souls.
They are judges of character, psychologists, and sociologists, and in the end they write a sociology of sociology. Wherever something does not go completely smoothly, an astute and deft analysis or a purposive organization is able to remedy the incommmodity. Even the poor of this age, the wretched multitude, which is nothing but a “shadow that hobbles off to work,” millions who yearn for freedom, prove themselves to be children of this spirit, which reduces everything to a formula of its consciousness and admits of no mysteries and no exuberance of the soul. They wanted heaven on earth, heaven as the result of trade and industry, a heaven in which the Bible is replaced by the time-table. They did not want a God of love and grace; they had “made” so much that was astonishing; why should they not “make” the tower of an earthly heaven? After all, the most important and last things had already been secularized. Right had become might; loyalty, calculability; truth, generally recognized correctness; beauty, good taste; Christianity, a pacifist organization. A general substitution and forgery of values dominated their souls. A sublimely differentiated usefulness and harmfulness took the place of the distinction between good and evil. The confounding was horrific (TDN, 64-65; emphasis added; also see Bendersky, 1983, 17-8 and Meier, 1998, 2-5).

Schmitt’s assessment of the “moral meaning of the age” resonates clearly in practically every theme that is to guide his work and frame his enquiries for the rest of his life. Unlike Nietzsche, Schmitt detects not the death of God but a continuing flight from God or a wilful incapacity to recognize the necessity of obedience: “everything has been secularized.” Man wants heaven on earth, but a heaven in which the Bible is replaced by the time-table. Indeed, we should ask, what was Christianity before it became a “pacifist organization?” Likewise, does “secularization” mean the death of God, the abandonment of God, or rebellion? The confusion, the horror and the “substitution and forgery of values” arises from the modern project which turns away from a “God of grace and love” to an entirely man-made world in which the conquest of nature for “the relief of man’s estate” takes on a total form. Relief and redemption come from “purposive organizations” and yearly vacations. Schmitt scornfully writes of these developments a few pages later, in mocking the equivocation of “success” with achieving greater security and comfort: “big cities, luxury liners, and hygiene; the
prison of the soul has become a cozy summer residence” (TDN, 67). Indeed, in Schmitt’s Glossarium: Aufzeichnungen der Jahre 1947-1951, a collection of his notebooks from that period which were published posthumously in 1991, he writes in almost the exact same fashion 33 years later: “You are not like God, you are like a worm who has been endowed with sensual pleasures. The powers of this world and their regimes are indeed in service to you, to provide you with a liter of schnaps” (G, 233).

It is the embrace of the promise of modern politics and science, and the joyless striving after this “ideal,” this “heaven on earth,” which of course most clearly reveals the technical thinking and technique pervasive in politics, economics and society and which unmask the greatest source of spiritual deprivation. “Everything must go smoothly and without any needless friction” (TDN, 64). It is this devotion to comfort and compromise and the conviction that all serious issues are merely technical problems susceptible of technical solution that above all else marks the time. Our age, in Schmitt’s view, has “characterized itself as the capitalistic, mechanistic, relativistic age, as the age of transport, of technology, of organization” (TDN, 64). Schmitt’s lengthy condemnation, as John McCormick among others has pointed out (with general regard to the following contrast, see also, Herf, 1984, Holmes, 1988 and 1993, and Howse, 1997), nonetheless sounds very familiar to the complaints, laments and accusations of Martin Heidegger, Ernst Jünger and Max Weber, to name but a few of Schmitt’s contemporaries and immediate predecessors. From a distance, Schmitt seems to be cut from the same cloth. Upon closer inspection, however, Schmitt differs sharply from the above mentioned in his single-minded attention to the underlying cause and effect of “the moral situation of the age.” Whereas Heidegger (Heidegger, 1962, 71-7) will speak of the “forgetfulness of Being” while insisting that one cannot arrive at moral or anthropological meaning without first
apprehending "Dasein's ontological structure," Schmitt speaks of the secularization of the "most important and last things" and what secularization means morally. Whereas Weber (Weber, 1958, 153-6) claims that "all theology represents an intellectual rationalization of the possession of sacred values" and urges his colleagues to "grasp their innermost demons" and be intellectually honest, Schmitt writes of a humanity that does "not want a God of love and grace" which is the only source of salvation upon which we can reckon. Indeed, for our present purposes, that such a God continues to exist and has demonstrated His existence historically is Schmitt's "article of faith" upon which all rests. While we shall consider Schmitt's Politische Theologie II: die Legende von der Erledigung jeder Politischen Theologie [Political Theology II: the Legend of the Disposal of every Political Theology] later in this thesis, in 1970, as in 1916, Schmitt makes practically the same assessment in the epilogue to his last work: "everything in the world is an entirely human affair" (PT II, 124).

In an ever-increasing world of technical and scientific production and consumption, a rational process with neither rhyme nor reason, with neither moral purpose, end nor goal, Schmitt detects a "new theology" which is based on nothing more than an "anti-divine self-deification" (PT II, 125).

If the first lengthy extract from Schmitt's observations in his Nordlicht indicate a recurring set of concerns, it is the "secularization" of the age, the empty and morally-bankrupting promise of "making" a "heaven on this earth" which leads men to flee from their first and foremost duty (obedience to God), and to seek their happiness and redemption in "purposive organizations," in "technical considerations" and to carry through on the calculated optimism of an age of business, technology and "the vast accumulation of material wealth" (TDN, 64). However, this "joyless quest for joy," to employ Leo Strauss' evocative phrase (Strauss, 1960, 251), masks a far deeper threat. In an age capable of making anything, of producing the means of creating seemingly infinite new
wants, and of producing the means of satisfying those wants, can one still meaningfully distinguish between good and evil? Schmitt’s answer is a fervent “no.” With the turning away from God, man has surrendered the one sure source of appeal for distinguishing between Christ and Antichrist, and thus of recognizing the Antichrist’s appearance:

He knows how to imitate Christ and so makes himself resemble Christ, and thus tricks everyone out of their souls. He presents himself as friendly, correct, incorruptible, and reasonable. All praise him as a blessing to mankind and say: what a great and righteous man! “Erit omnibus subdole placidus, munera non suscipiens, personam non praeponeas, amabilis omnibus, quietas universis, xenia non appetens, affabilis apparens in proximos, ita ut beatificent cum homines dicentes: justus homo hic est.” So he is described in the Pseudo-Ephraem, in which “dictis sancti Effrem, de fine mundi et consummatio saeculi et conturbatio gentium.” [The Antichrist will be peaceful towards all; neither accepting tributes nor taking precedence over others. He will seem amiable to all and calm towards everyone, and not seem covetous of foreign things/ways. He will give an affable/friendly impression to his neighbors, so much so that people will praise him and say: this is a righteous man. These are the things said by Saint Effrem about the end of the world, the consummation of the age, and the agitation of the peoples.] His concealed power lies in his imitation of God. God created the world; the Antichrist renders it a forgery. Christ was born as the son of a virgin; ancient authorities say the same of the Antichrist. The uncanny enchanter recreates the world in order to change the face of the earth and make nature submissive. It serves him for whatever reason, for any satisfaction — artistic whim, luxury, comfort. Those who allow themselves to be deceived by him see only the fabulous effects. Nature appears overcome; the age of security begins; all are provided for. A clever foresight and planning replaces Providence, indeed, he “makes” Providence as if it were some kind of institution (TDN, 65-6; also see McCormick, 1997b, 87-9 and Meier, 1998, 5-7).11

In light of the above passage, it is highly difficult to ascribe “myth-making” to Schmitt’s basic position. And in light of his emphasis on the replacement of “providence” with human instrumentality, technique and technology, it would seem impossible. Indeed, given Schmitt’s linkage of the Antichrist’s remaking of the world for the sake of rendering nature submissive for the relief of man’s estate, we should take heed of a very powerful source which illuminates the final predicate of Schmitt’s above-quoted statement. In 1 Thessalonians the Apostle Paul writes: “For
when they shall say Peace and Security, then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (1 Thessalonians 5:3). While Schmitt contends that most people have been rendered powerless to perceive the workings of a providential struggle and recognize modernity’s conquest of nature for the forces it represents, he himself makes us aware of his awareness of what is at stake and what is necessary.

The connection between the Antichrist’s deceptive promises, and the specific promise of peace and security, leads us ultimately into the problem of Thomas Hobbes. Indeed, what other modern political theorist so concerned himself with the task of creating “a mortal god” whose sole reason for existence is to provide for peace and security, for overcoming the “state of nature” which is a “state of war” and for promising “quietude” and “commodious living?” And what other philosopher so mechanistically conceived of the state as a machina machinarum or the sovereign authority as a “great man” (a “makros anthropos”) who is actually a hybrid of a great machine inscribed with the soul of a man (or as Schmitt, without explicitly naming Hobbes, already in Nordlicht makes reference to, “Mechanistik und Seele” (“mechanism and soul”) (TDN, 76))? These observations will lead us, in the following chapters, into the heart of Schmitt’s dilemma — Hobbes’ Leviathan. However, let us now more carefully examine Schmitt’s concerns in the manner in which he presented them.

Two additional remarks about Schmitt’s Nordlicht should begin to indicate the care with which we must assess his works from this period. If Schmitt, who as George Schwab indicates (following Schmitt’s efforts in the late 60s and early 70s at sanitizing his own works), was above all concerned with the realm of “pure politics” or “a juridical understanding of the sociology of concepts,” why the emphasis on “the moral meaning of the age?” In this respect, Schmitt’s chosen
quote for the introduction to his meditation on Daubler’s *Nordlicht* is revealing. Schmitt quietly cites *Luke* 12:56 opposite the title page to his work, without actually quoting from the passage itself. If one turns to this passage in the *Gospel of Luke*, however, one finds the following explicit challenge of Christ: “Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?”\(^{13}\) If we are to take *Nordlicht* as Schmitt’s first effort to grapple with the *moral* meaning of the age, then we cannot help but observe that the intention and meaning of Schmitt’s meditation inspired by Daubler’s *Nordlicht* is the beginning of an answer to just such a challenge. Likewise, this “historical commandment” provides us with an important insight into Schmitt’s putative historicism, which supports the argument that Schmitt was a relativist, and thus viewed sovereign decision as sheer willing. If one’s first duty as a political theologian is to “recognize the age,” one must understand this call as a call to historical action and bear in mind how others have met the unique historical challenge of their times. History itself is a field of providential activity and struggle.\(^{14}\) Within this field, one must recognize those forces which battle on behalf of the teachings of Christ, and those who oppose Christ and enlist under the colors of his adversaries. Second, if Schmitt’s concerns are genuinely moral in nature or origin, the basis of his concerns and the manner in which he articulates them would begin to intimate that political criteria must be derived from something more substantive than sheer chance, “brute facticity” or romantic “occasionalism” which is the object of Schmitt’s analysis in *Political Romanticism*. Likewise, if Schmitt is guided by moral considerations, whatever their location within the economy of his thought, ought we not be on the lookout for the one tell-tale sign of moral concern which is outrage and anger, or in the context of Schmitt’s silently chosen motto and rallying cry, righteous indignation?\(^{15}\) And should we not more specifically recognize the impetus for Schmitt’s moral
concerns as originating in Christ’s challenge to “recognize the age?”

Schmitt’s motto from his Nordlicht is a key to interpret the intent of Schmitt’s second major work, Political Romanticism. In this work, Schmitt deepens his diagnosis or “recognition” of our times. He characterizes modernity in terms of what he calls the romantic basis of the bourgeoisie, in order to illuminate the “moral and metaphysical basis” of modern liberal democratic existence. As was the case with Schmitt’s Nordlicht, Political Romanticism has been largely ignored by scholars, despite its initial favourable reception in Germany and its appearance in English translation in 1986. What I would like to focus on in drawing attention to Political Romanticism is not Schmitt’s “moral and metaphysical concerns” in terms of moral theory, but how Schmitt deploys these “concerns” critically and polemically in diagnosing a pathology — the character of modern liberal democracy as embodied in its archetypical product — the bourgeoisie.

Political Romanticism first appeared in 1919 and was republished in 1925. In his new preface to the second edition of that work, Schmitt wrote that it is perhaps too easy to deduce romanticism from “everything that can be psychologically or sociologically derived from the belief in the bonté natural — in other words, the thesis that man is by nature good” (PR, 1). While the effort to equate romanticism with the natural goodness of man is important for Schmitt, this kind of approach suffers from reducing the “romantic” to a formula. Nonetheless, if equating the romantic with “the thesis of the natural goodness of man” is not sufficiently rigorous, it is revealing for Schmitt and also for his position. As Schmitt writes, “it is precisely the doctrine of the natural goodness of the human being that has proven to be an appropriate criterion for numerous movements, especially when they are linked, as is easily understandable in these cases, with the denial of Original Sin” (PR, 3). Indeed, the denial of Original Sin is the crucial major premise
which underpins liberal democracy’s theoretical success and makes possible the unfettering of modern natural science. In turn, it is this major premise which will be the object of both Schmitt’s analysis and contempt no matter how silently or cautiously Schmitt focuses his attention on it.

This particular aspect of the romantic “problem” is important as well, because as Schmitt indicates, it is not merely evident in the “the so-called Rousseauean tendencies — among sentimental anarchists and devotees of humanitarianism,” but also among “potent radical movements” and a “fanaticism whose anarchical force” arises most clearly and precisely in the violent rejection of the doctrine of Original Sin (PR, 3). This force will of course reveal itself to be manifest especially in the person of Bakunin, upon whom Schmitt will dwell in detail in later works, and on whom we shall focus our attention later in this chapter. For present purposes, however, we shall note the following. Behind Schmitt’s innocent-seeming academic observation, and the seemingly arbitrary starting point of his own polemic, the “enemy” has been already singled out. Schmitt moves to advance beyond the reductionist aspect of his appraisal with the following observation which reinforces this disposition:

In comparison with the foregoing, that definition based on the thesis of the natural goodness of the human being is a commendable and valuable achievement. But it still does not constitute historical knowledge. Its defect is that, as a result of a dogmatic and moralistic abstraction, it fails to recognize the historical distinctiveness of the movement and reduces it, along with numerous historical processes, to one and the same general thesis. This leads to an unfair rejection of congenial and valuable phenomena and achievements. In this way, harmless romantics are represented in a demonic fashion and placed on the same footing as fanatical sectarians. We have to take every intellectual movement seriously, both metaphysically and morally, not as an instance of an abstract thesis, but as a concrete historical reality in the context of the historical process (PR, 5).

What would it mean to ascertain “metaphysically and morally” the “historical reality” of romanticism in the “context of the historical process” and thus to grasp it as “historical knowledge?”
Likewise, to take up Schmitt's example, upon what sure historical basis can we distinguish "fanatical sectarians" from "harmless romantics?" It would seem we can only answer these questions when we have ascertained the "metaphysical and moral basis" of the "intellectual movement" in question. The truth of these metaphysical and moral matters can only be grasped historically.

For the moment, let us follow Schmitt. Schmitt begins by describing how highly amorphous romanticism appears: it seemingly pervades, defines and embraces to varying degrees liberal, conservative, radical-anarchist, socialist and communist political movements and positions and persists through a variety of corresponding artistic and literary movements as well. All aspects of romanticism seem interrelated and yet opposed to each other; they are seemingly incapable of being clearly or decisively articulated. The phenomenon appears both as revolutionary ardour, the "love of humanity," the advocacy of the rights of man and the principle of toleration, and at the same time, they emerge as a "flight into the past," in "conservative principles" or a "return to tradition" and "royalism," or an obsession with the Middle Ages, chivalry, the feudal aristocracy or even scenic pastoral vistas and old castles. It seems ascertainable only as a series of antitheses in which the phenomenon itself recedes and disappears before the contrasts that are made. Hence, for example, we encounter the antitheses of "romanticism and classicism" or "romanticism and rationalism," which mean one thing for the French, and something completely different for the Germans (PR, 5 - 9).

To cut through this haze, Schmitt posits an intriguing, even Socratic solution: to define and understand romanticism "metaphysically and morally," we must determine not artistic, intellectual or political movements, antitheses and contrasts, but the romantic type. The romantic type, accordingly, is brought forth and examined in the type of human represented by the "new
bourgeoisie” (PR, 12). However, Schmitt brings the “bourgeois type” forward not to interrogate him dialectically, but to ascertain the truth of his historical existence and its basis, that is, Schmitt’s intentions are polemical and not ultimately philosophic. He strives to recognize the age in terms of its most revealing inhabitant. To state it differently, Schmitt’s strives to grasp the subject historically; he “historicizes” the object of enquiry. Indeed, as we learn, the reason for the indeterminate quality and inchoate diffuseness of romanticism is traceable to the unstable and contradictory character of the liberal bourgeoisie itself (PR, 13). The “new bourgeoisie” seems fated forever to waver between dabbling in “humanitarian,” socialist or liberal causes, and retreating into the protection of the law, the court or the royalty when danger or instability threatens its own most private realm (PR, 13). Obviously, Schmitt’s understanding of the bourgeoisie is highly problematic, because the bourgeoisie is actually highly stable in its predilections and dispositions, especially with regard to private property. What particularly would seem to gall Schmitt at first glance is not the romantic basis of the bourgeoisie itself, but its commercial relationship to the world, which produces the romantic reaction against bourgeois and liberal-democratic sensibilities. It is in this sense that Schmitt attacks the new bourgeoisie, which in his estimation, is both corrosive of traditional culture, and produces nothing truly new or grand. The bourgeoisie is only capable of many “interesting” and “novel” ("romanisch") attributes and approaches.

Indeed, it is “aesthetically” in the realm of art that the new bourgeoisie as the “bearer of the romantic movement,” (PR, 12) begins to reveal itself most profoundly for Schmitt. Just as the bourgeoisie withdraws from the seriousness of life into more and more private realms of “interest” and emotion in order to reinject life with “meaning,” the bourgeoisie demands the same of art: “what at first glance seems to be such a tremendous intensification remains in the sphere of irresponsible
private feeling, and the finest achievements of romanticism lie in the intimacy of emotions” (PR, 15). In the case of romanticism, art becomes “art for art’s sake,” or is caught up in the polarity of “snobbery and Bohemianism” or worst of all, succumbs to that most characteristic of bourgeois relationships, the business exchange transacted between “private producers of art” and “privately interested art consumers” (PR, 15). Art no longer represents a “grand style” but appears as one of many investment opportunities. It is within this new realm that the “hierarchy of the intellectual sphere disintegrates” and “the nature of everything that is intellectual, including art itself,” is changed and “falsified.”

Herein lies the first and most simple explanation of the plethora of romantic contradictions that seem so complicated. Religious, moral, political and scientific matters appear in fantastical draperies and in strange colors and hues because, consciously or unconsciously, they are treated by the romantics as a theme for artistic or art-critical productivity. Neither religious, moral or 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 [“Roman”], and they can be aesthetically incorporated into the total effect of a work of art. In that case, the contradictions and complexities are profound and mysterious only as long as they are regarded with objective seriousness in the domain to which the romantic object belongs; whereas we should allow them to have only an aesthetic effect on us (PR, 16, emphasis and emendation added to text).

This passage is particularly revealing and important. First, it begins to elaborate and more fully articulate the source of the “general substitution and forgery of values” that Schmitt had begun to describe in Nordlicht. Schmitt indicates that “all substantive oppositions and differences” can and have become the source of “aesthetic consumption” which reduces such oppositions and differences to mere contemplation or even entertainment. By obscuring the relationship between art (which had been capable of a “grand style” because it was linked to the portrayal of friend and enemy, good
and evil, Christ and Antichrist) and mere aesthetics, romanticism disregards or abolishes the most "profound and mysterious" of questions and decisions which are the proper objects of "objective seriousness." The bourgeois as romantic, in Schmitt's view, sees all of life's experiences to be reflections or expressions of "values" or matters of taste.

Second, we must also draw attention to the fact that here Schmitt explicitly states what is stripped from the "intellectual center of life" when the most "substantive oppositions and differences" are transformed into mere "aesthetic consumption:" the distinction between friend and enemy, good and evil, Christ and Antichrist. What Schmitt implies is not that these distinctions cease altogether but that they become objects of "aesthetic consumption" or merely entertaining contemplation. They are no longer to be treated decisively as questions whose answers determine how we are to live. Just as the bourgeois manufacturer sees all of nature as only so much standing reserve for the purposes of production and consumption, so the bourgeois romantic sees all of life's experiences and questions as so much material for discussion, analysis and entertainment. Life itself becomes a grand novel, but "for entertainment purposes only." In short, the question of deciding between Christ and Antichrist, good and evil and friend and enemy are no longer to be taken seriously. Indeed, what Schmitt seems to imply is that beyond the lack of intellectual capacity to distinguish between divine and satanic and friend and enemy, there is in evidence a failure of will or of courage — a virtue which is abandoned at the outer door as the bourgeois type retreats into his inner sanctum of privacy, comfort and ease. Schmitt presents us with a dual assessment which we must nonetheless complete ourselves. If we follow his own claim that, even in denying metaphysics and morals, the romantic is still necessarily involved with them, if the "intellectual sphere disintegrates" before the onslaught of the romanticism of the bourgeoisie, must we not conclude that
this intellectual disintegration also indicates a corresponding moral failure? If the bourgeoisie shirks the “objective seriousness” of the most important decisions, is this “intellectual” failing not also a moral failing? Particularly if one is to apprehend the call to “historical action” (within the process of an historical movement) which Schmitt explicitly had made reference to only a few pages previously, is courage in confronting one’s task not indispensable? If so, then the first and foremost specific moral virtue required by the type of decision Schmitt claims is necessary, is eclipsed by the bourgeoisie.11

Here we also initially must stress that for all of Schmitt’s provocative insight, his analysis of the bourgeoisie seems deeply flawed and his thinly-veiled outrage overpowers his insight and analysis to the detriment of the latter. What should be apparent is that the bourgeoisie does indeed have a solid basis — private property. However, while property may well be the solid core of bourgeois existence, the bourgeoisie nonetheless operates on a romantic basis of understanding the world. While the bourgeois spirit may well share similar “values” with, and even find its origins in the intellectual ferment which gives rise to romanticism, as well, an equal object of Schmitt’s contempt is the “conservative” romantic reaction to the bourgeoisie, especially from the standpoint of the putative right wing cultural critique of the bourgeoisie. Poetically from Blake to Baudelaire to Byron, and intellectually from Burkhardt to Nietzsche to Heidegger, Schmitt saves his greatest scorn for figures with whom one would imagine (from a distance) he would have greater sympathy.

Yet, Schmitt detects the inexorable effects of the bourgeoisie’s re-making of the world in the “individualistic” and self-justifying formation of “values:”

It is only in an individualistically disintegrated society that the aesthetically productive subject could shift the intellectual center into itself, only in a bourgeois world that isolates the individual in the domain of the intellectual, makes the

72
individual its own point of reference, and imposes upon it the entire burden that otherwise was hierarchically distributed among different functions in the social order. In this society it is left to the private individual to be his own priest. But not only that. Because of the central significance and consistency of the religious, it is also left to him to be his own poet, his own philosopher, his own king, and his own master builder in the cathedral of his own personality. The ultimate roots of romanticism and the romantic phenomenon lie in the private priesthood. If we consider the situation from aspects such as these, then we should not always focus only on the good-natured pastoralists. On the contrary, we must also see the despair that lies behind the romantic movement — regardless of whether this despair becomes lyrically enraptured with God and the world on a sweet, moonlit night, utters a lament at the world-weariness and the sickness of the century, pessimistically lacerates itself or frenetically plunges into the abyss of instinct and life. *We must see the three persons whose deformed visages penetrate the colorful romantic veil: Byron, Baudelaire, and Nietzsche, the three high priests, and at the same time the three sacrificial victims, of this private priesthood*” (PR, 20; emphasis added).

Several immense difficulties immediately leap to mind in terms of what Schmitt would like to draw attention to, and what he rather silently and curiously omits. First, outside of Schmitt’s *Glossarium*, where he drops all academic civility, nowhere does he treat Nietzsche with greater contempt. Nietzsche is but *one of three* figures who are central to a diagnosis of the romantic pathology. If Nietzsche is but one of three figures, anyone attempting to make the case for Schmitt’s secret indebtedness to Nietzsche would also have to account for why Baudelaire and Byron are insignificant. Second, they are not only the “three high priests” of an ultimately privatized and “individualized” priesthood, they are its “three sacrificial victims.” Nietzsche *et al* may well be madmen, but they have seen through romanticism and the romantic basis of the bourgeois conception of life. However, their various observations on the age and their solutions and alternative perspectives only serve to heighten the effects of romanticism. They become grist for the mill. Does Schmitt express regret or sympathy for their fates? No. Their poetic and philosophic undertakings deepen the crisis. Does Schmitt hold them up as tragic objects of admiration or as
worthy of noble imitation? No. To admire them and imitate them only furthers endless contemplation and discussion. While much is to be learned and intuited from their fates, Byron, Baudelaire and Nietzsche are the symbolic figures and touchstones of an “individualistically disintegrated society.” Indeed, to whom are they “high priests?” Certainly not to Schmitt. They are the poets and philosophers of a new realm that “isolates the individual in the domain of the intellectual.” It is this threesome who act as “high priests” to every individual who must become “his own priest, his own poet, his own philosopher, his own king, and his own master builder in the cathedral of his personality.” To emphasize what shall follow in our analysis of *Political Romanticism*, the figure of Nietzsche is relevant to Schmitt only in so far as he is an element of his diagnosis of a pathology. We now have a better understanding of why Schmitt nonetheless singles out the bourgeoisie for blame; it is their utter dullness and moribund concentration on the “self,” in conjunction with the doctrines of toleration and the “privatization” of judgment, which leads to the extreme reaction as described above. The bourgeoisie indeed seem to become prosaic Übermenschen after a fashion; they merely reject the new hierarchical values of Nietzsche and substitute for them the “forging” of new values socially (via the conservation of property, commercial activity and business) and individually (via contemplation, “self-actualization” or other banal forms of “self-improvement”).

The basis for the romanticization of the world and the creation of the “private priesthood” is captured for Schmitt in “subjective occasionalism.” As this aspect of Schmitt’s thought has confused both careful and less than careful readers, let us examine this characterization a bit more closely. In noting that every historical movement is based on a “characteristic attitude towards the world” and on a “specific idea, even if it is not always conscious, of an ultimate authority, an
absolute center,” Schmitt claims that the characteristic attitude and central idea of romanticism is “the occasio.” Again, the occasio can only first be grasped as an antithesis, but for Schmitt it is the only antithesis which matters, it is the only antithesis before which romanticism does not recede into an amorphous, intellectually unclear phenomenon. The occasio “negates the concept of causa,” it denies the “force of a calculable causality, and thus every binding norm.” The concept of the occasio is a “disintegrative concept” (PR, 17). The reason that the occasio is such a disintegrative force, and why it is the most important antithesis for Schmitt, is revealed in the following. Schmitt writes that “this characteristically occasional attitude can persist at the same time that something else — the state, perhaps, or the people, or even the individual subject — takes the place of God as the ultimate authority and the decisive factor.” As such, he identifies and defines Romanticism as subjectified occasionalism: “In other words, in the romantic, the romantic subject treats the world as an occasion and an opportunity for romantic productivity” (PR, 17). In terms which distinctly and directly remind us of Nordlicht’s first assessment of the “moral meaning of the age,” Schmitt wrote almost 10 years later:

Today, many varieties of metaphysical attitude exist in a secularized form. To a great extent, it holds true that different, and indeed, mundane factors have taken the place of God: humanity, the nation, the individual, historical development, or even life as life for its own sake, in its complete spiritual emptiness and mere dynamic. This does not mean that the attitude is no longer metaphysical. The thought and feeling of every person always retain a certain metaphysical character. Metaphysics is something that is unavoidable, and — as Otto von Gierke has aptly remarked — we cannot escape it by relinquishing our awareness of it. What human beings regard as the ultimate, absolute authority, however, certainly can change, and God can be replaced by mundane and worldly factors (PR, 17).

This process is what Schmitt means when he describes both the romantic basis of the bourgeoisie and the mechanization of the age as a process of secularization. Again, we must emphasize that
Schmitt does not and cannot comprehend "occasionalism" philosophically; after all, by his reckoning, it is a nefarious by-product of modern philosophy; the cure is not be found in administering more of the disease. Indeed, Schmitt's analysis of romanticism and occasionalism make no sense unless one apprehends Schmitt's fuller development of the historical-intellectual forces which created it. In turn, Schmitt's analysis of the development of the forces of secularization is not fully elaborated until his essay "The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations" in 1932. If Schmitt cannot account for why secularization is so pervasive, we might hold Political Romanticism to be a failure insofar as Schmitt's construction of romanticism as the basis of the bourgeois world view is very tenuous. Schmitt seems to lament rather than explain secularization; yet he consistently held this process to be central to modern history. As in 1916 in his interpretation of Daubler's Nordlicht, as in both the 1919 and 1925 editions of Political Romanticism, and 1929 when he wrote the preliminary essay "Die europäische Kultur in Zwischenstadien der Neutralisierung" ("European Culture in the Intermediary Stages of Neutralization"), in 1932 Schmitt writes that the most important and significant development of European thinking is the process and effect of secularization: "I consider the strongest and most consequential of all intellectual shifts of European history to be the one in the 17th century from traditional Christian theology to 'natural' science. Until now this shift has determined the direction of all further development" (AND, 137).

Schmitt indicated in the passage above from Political Romanticism, when one can no longer speak openly of the theological basis of metaphysics, one can only write of the "many varieties of metaphysical attitude." This acknowledgment on Schmitt's behalf in turn might begin to explain his easy movement from describing metaphysics in the plural and describing the "many varieties of
metaphysical attitude" to adopting the awkward terminology of "existentialism" and "existentialist attitudes" in his later works. Stripped of its core, of "an ultimate authority" or of "an absolute center," do such distinctions warrant serious attention outside of recognizing them for the forces that they represent? Or to pick up on another theme from Daubler's poetry which was very important to Schmitt, are we not compelled strategically to understand bourgeois romanticism and modern science and technology so that, following Schmitt's urging, we may courageously "hunt them to their end?" If there are no longer divinely ordained limits to human politics, everything is literally possible — this is what most frightens, appalls, and motivates Schmitt.

The reason that romanticism is subjectified occasionalism for Schmitt is most clearly revealed by the "occasional relationship to the world which is essential to it" (PR, 18). As Schmitt emphasizes repeatedly, "instead of God, the romantic subject occupies the central position and makes the world and everything that occurs in it into a mere occasion" (PR, 18). Everything in the world is now merely "an occasion." Nothing is ever "obtrusively experienced as a thing or an object" but is treated "as a mere starting point" (PR, 20). For the liberal bourgeois romantic, "everything becomes the 'beginning of an endless novel ('Roman')" (PR, 20). As we shall see in turning to Schmitt's Political Theology and The Spiritual-Historical Situation of Contemporary Parliamentarism, this romantic attitude towards the world is responsible for and undergirds the emphasis on openness and discussion in the political realm of the liberal-democratic bourgeoisie and is revealed by and determined in its most characteristic political institution, parliament. For the moment, however, let us concentrate on Schmitt's development of the theme of the romantic-bourgeois's conception of the world as secularization.
In returning to the anthropological thesis of the natural goodness of man, Schmitt notes with regard to the historical development initiated by Rousseau that “romanticism becomes the synonym of mysticism.” The one historical qualification to this is that it is a “mysticism which has set itself free from the shackles of ecclesiastical Christianity” (PR, 26). In this sense, the “romantic” appears as a “profound impulse of human nature” which is just as compelling as self-preservation. In counteracting the thesis of man’s natural goodness, Schmitt argues that,

Man, “by nature evil,” is always ready to transgress the narrow limits of what is reasonable — in other words, the limits of the accumulated experience of generations — to create for himself a god as a metaphysical ally, and to subjugate others with the help of this illusion. In aesthetic mysticism, the romantic, who believes himself to be the chosen instrument of a higher power, becomes the artistic genius. As a genius, he finds in himself the only standard of his art. In the mysticism of passion, he declares his lust to be the voice of God. In the mystical religion of the socialist class movement, the proletarian becomes the sole producer of economic values. Finally, a mystical romanticism of race serves the chosen race as the basis for its claim to world domination. Delusion becomes an enormous source of energy and drives the individual as well as entire peoples to extravagant hopes and deeds. All of this signifies “romanticism” (PR, 26-7).

Of importance here is Schmitt’s emphasis on the multiple possibilities held out by the romantic impulse. While romanticism is acknowledged as the chief attribute and characteristic expression of the manner in which the bourgeoisie shapes and recreates the world, the bourgeoisie is not the only possible expression or bearer of the romantic attitude. As we shall see in Schmitt’s The Concept of the Political, at first glance it is unclear exactly why liberalism is worthy of enmity — is it the enemy because of its implicit atheism, or is it only an enemy of healthy politics or does it merely attempt to do away with or obscure enmity via its doctrine of toleration, and thus “gets in the way” of confronting real enemies? Schmitt is not clear about the connection of romanticism and liberalism, other than that they are both doctrines that deny God’s place in creating our moral world,
and he does not immediately specify the dangers or evils of both romanticism and liberalism as bourgeois ideologies. As well, Schmitt seems far more contemptuous of the poetic-philosophic reaction to the bourgeois world of liberal democracy than he does the bourgeoisie per se. While the bourgeoisie is the bearer of romanticism in the modern world, the bourgeoisie does not "create a god as an ally" in the manner that other movements do; it ordains that one live as one sees fit, and that one tolerate the beliefs of others. However, even this ascription must be emended: the bourgeoisie confers divine "self-creation" or "self-authorization" on itself individually. What is important to follow momentarily is the idea that the romantic impulse is also capable of creating such gods, and they have found their expression above all in the socialist class movement and völkisches Denken. Likewise, if the touchstone of Schmitt's thought is faith in revelation, is it not oxymoronic to speak of Schmitt's endorsing or even fostering a Sorelian political mythology, since already in the description of such an undertaking the truth of the most important matters is denied by the conscious ascription of "myth?" However diffuse or inchoate Schmitt's analysis of these various forces is, they symbolize for him a confrontation between the hydra-like offspring of secularization and a providentially decreed steadfastness.

For the revolutionary and the liberal-bourgeois alike, whether trapped in the purely inactive realm of contemplation, irony and intrigue or whether "romanticizing" history or humanity for revolutionary purposes, it is subjectified occasionalism which admits of no "obtrusive," "external reality" which remains the shared basis for thinking and conceiving of the world. As such, Schmitt traces the growth of romanticism and its attendant emphasis on the "natural goodness of man" to an intellectual and philosophic mistake. Here, we finally, seemingly come to Schmitt's long sought after antagonist. It is not sufficient simply to allude to the displacement of God from traditional
metaphysics; one must delve into the heritage of this rebellion and its significance. As Schmitt remarks, romanticism shares an important affinity with all other "important situations of modern intellectual history." It begins with Descartes' splitting of the world into two realms (PR, 52). Just as the Copernican planetary system was overthrown by Galileo, and modern science ceased to be geocentric, "philosophy became egocentric and sought its focal point in itself" (PR, 52). As such, modern thought, whatever its permutations and differences, "is governed by a schism between thought and being, concept and reality, mind and nature, subject and object, that was not eliminated even by Kant's transcendental solution" (PR, 52).

Here we can begin to make the "metaphysical and moral" connection between romanticism, liberal-democracy and the bourgeoisie which is centered on the "solid core" of private property. The romantic celebrates creativity because he rejects Original Sin. The romantic is also indecisive; he has rejected the seriousness of the demands of religion and faith and replaced it with "aesthetic" sensibilities and a myth of individual self-creation and the self-formation of "values." He "forges" new values in the double sense of the word; he both "creates" new values, and he renders them a "forgery," a sham and a pale imitation. The bourgeoisie bases its "world view" in romantic creativity rather than simply the conservation of property; it wants to re-create the world in its own image but it is indecisive. It especially does not want to wage war with its class enemies and thus wallows in a romantic world of infinite possibilities, nor does it want to admit that it had enemies (for example, the Church) because such an admission would mean that its preferred doctrine — liberalism — made a "metaphysical and moral" choice. At the same time, in the metaphysical and moral sense, the bourgeoisie can only have private property in one's person and estate if it does not consider itself a steward of God's property. We might say that the bourgeoisie is romantic because
its members think their life is their own, not God's. Neither the conquest of nature for the relief of man's estate, nor the "creative re-making of the world," nor the "creation" of values is possible if God has forbidden it or has other plans for His "creatures." Romanticism and the romantic basis of the bourgeois recasting of the world is only possible if God's sovereign status is rejected. Romanticism is simply not an ambiguous, contentless phenomenon which pervades bourgeois existence. Private property anchors the bourgeois Weltanschauung, but private property can only succeed as the basis of bourgeois existence if the bourgeoisie's vision is limited to creating peace, security and comfort. The prosaic simplicity of the bourgeoisie's inactive and meaningless sense of God is as offensive to Schmitt as the nihilist's claim of the death of God and the anarchist's rejection of the existence of God. Indeed, we can push this insight one step further. The socialist view is merely the flip-side of the liberal-democratic coin; whether one creates value through labour (by socialist reckoning) or one creates value by carrying the "spirit of commercialism" into the world and thus creating and sustaining "infinite possibilities" (by bourgeois reckoning), one operates in the same spiritually deficient universe.

In light of Stephen Holmes' charge that Schmitt's scholarship represents a compellingly written but ultimately breezy and intellectually flawed rendition of the conservative-revolutionary theme of "history as a great error," we should step back and examine the structure of Schmitt's recounting of the development of the "romantic spirit" and his argument. Is it meant as a definitive intellectual history of western rationalism since Descartes? No. Is it intended as a set of preliminary observations which will serve as the basis of an alternative philosophy of history? No. While Schmitt will build upon and elaborate the "historical constructions" he makes in Political Romanticism, he is not interested in constructing a philosophic alternative to Kant's "universal
history with a cosmopolitan intent" or to Hegel or to Marx. While Schmitt will indeed counter the efforts of Kant, Hegel and Marx, it will not be in the same sphere of intellectual or philosophic activity or the creation of an alternative "philosophy of history." If this is the case, then we must enquire after Schmitt's purpose.

To anticipate the answer, one might see that Schmitt's argument proceeds in the manner of laying out a grand struggle in which he detects the movements, reactions to, and embrace of the historical forces put into play by the "Cartesian and Hobbesian" conception of the world. Within this intellectual-historical milieu, Schmitt first elaborates the thematic and problematic considerations to which he will return throughout his writings for the next fifty years which are embodied by the problem of Hobbes. In turning to Hobbes, Schmitt first and foremost seeks to expand the "recognition of the age" that began with Nordlicht. But it is from the standpoint of laying out a particular struggle. It is worth noting here that Hobbes also first seemingly emerges in a "negative" manner — he is the source of the mechanistic forces unleashed on the world. Hence, Political Romanticism lays out the "historical movements" to which Schmitt will return in Political Theology, Concept of the Political and his essay "The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations."

For purposes of laying out the set of charges brought forth in Political Romanticism, we shall concentrate on the following. Significantly, for Schmitt's view of the history of the "structure of the romantic spirit," Hobbes is redeemed by what Schmitt takes as a crucial element in Hobbes' thought which transcends his "mechanistic world view," his "phenomenalism," his "pure perception" of the world, and his "unqualified materialism" (PR, 54). Hobbes' thought may touch on many issues which are important to Schmitt, but Hobbes is not romantic. Hobbes is redeemed for Schmitt by something which is not directly elaborated by his analysis but by his noting a reaction to Hobbes'
thinking — the romantic repudiation of Hobbes: "lyrically and sentimentally, it perceives the systematic rationalism of the political philosophy of Hobbes as particularly hostile. In the first place, the anti-idyllic idea of a person who is 'evil by nature,' a struggle of all against all, and free competition are repellent to this feeling" (PR, 56).

Here Schmitt does not elaborate on how he understands Hobbes's "confession of faith" regarding man's inherent goodness or evil, or whether it is even anthropological or theological in nature. This question shall become of greater importance when Schmitt is confronted with Leo Strauss' criticisms of his understanding of Hobbes. What is important for Schmitt at this point is understanding the two historical reactions which manifest themselves in the movements away from "rationalism" and the anti-theological secularism that undergirds the new metaphysics. As Schmitt writes,

The highest and most certain reality of traditional metaphysics, the transcendent God, was eliminated. More important than the controversy of the philosophers was the question of who assumed his functions as the highest and most certain reality, and thus as the ultimate point of legitimation in historical reality. Two new world realities appeared and carried through a new ontology without waiting for the conclusion of the epistemological discussion: humanity and history. Completely irrational when considered in terms of the logic of the rationalistic philosophy of the eighteenth century, but objective and evident in the superindividual validity, in reality they dominated thought as the two new demiurges (PR, 58-9).

What emerges from Schmitt's historical characterization are two "demiurges" which erroneously replace God. "Humanity" becomes the "revolutionary demiurge," and "history" becomes the "conservative demiurge." Likewise, it is again important to note here the politicized conception of humanity which Schmitt will again turn to and demonize in his The Concept of the Political. But it is a peculiar conception and appropriation of the term which Schmitt has in mind. It is "humanity" understood as the revolutionary liberal-democratic conception of "humanity" as a universal,
undifferentiated mass which, from Schmitt's perspective, strips the conception of anything uniquely human. As such, we must bear in mind this point as well when we turn to The Concept of the Political in the next chapter, that here Schmitt opposes and attacks the liberal moral conception of “humanity” in the name of what Schmitt implies is its “inhumanity,” i.e., its inhumane portrayal of human beings. In this sense, Schmitt’s concerns are meant, after a highly peculiar fashion, to address restoring “humanity” to its proper conception and place. Schmitt’s opposition to “humanitarian morality” implies, however, that Schmitt has in mind a “moral” meaning and intention to his own works.

Likewise, the first “heroes” to emerge from Schmitt’s treatment of the romantic structure take their place on the side of the “historical demiurge”: Burke, Bonald and de Maistre. While Burke, as Schmitt acknowledges, “contains romantic elements himself,” he, Bonald and de Maistre opposed the “eruption of the atheistic philosophy of Jacobinism” (PR, 58, 60; also see DD, 116-124). Their saving power, so to speak, comes from their realization of what the “objective reality” of the situation is. What all three have in common is that they repeatedly emphasize “the individual person can create nothing, but can only ‘fabricate’ something, whereas law, constitutions, and language are products of human society. The Nation is, of course, a creation of God” (PR, 60-1). Politics, to these three figures, have limits, and these limits are God given. However, even with the restoration in France, the interaction of these two demiurges has changed the intellectual make-up of Europe: “The voluntas Dei in ipso facto (“the will of God in the very fact itself”), which earlier could justify everything, had to give way to historical justification ex ipso facto (“from the very fact itself”).” Henceforward, “time as history becomes a creative power” (PR, 62). With the references to Burke, Bonald and de Maistre, we also have a sense of the character and quality of Schmitt’s political
theology. It is "theoretically anti-theoretical" and "philosophically un-philosophic" or non-contemplative.

With the advent of history as the standard of all legitimation vis-à-vis its "creative power," this process "carries peoples and families to world-historical greatness" (PR, 63). The effects Schmitt detects in this sweeping analysis are the following. Within all historical enquiry, the people or humanity "becomes the objective reality" and historical development, "which produces the Volksgeist, becomes the superhuman creator" (PR, 63). The first person to recognize the full philosophic significance of this historical spirit was Hegel. Hegel, according to Schmitt, brought "the two realities into one synthesis," and thereby completed what had been begun by Descartes and Rousseau, he "dethroned the God of traditional metaphysics" (PR, 64).

The dangers of this new "synthesis," which is capable of fostering both an humanitarian revolutionary force and an historically reactionary tendency, lies not in either of these force's actual trajectories, but that in itself it elevates contemplation to the highest activity in terms of constantly opposing "reality" with "possibility," and always seeks reconciliation in synthesis, or as Schmitt will write, in some "higher third" (PR, 64-6, 85-88). As Schmitt remarks:

Even in the articulation of Hegel's system, human society remained the revolutionary ferment. In the revolutionary development of this system, in Marxism, the people in the form of the proletariat again appeared as the bearer of the true revolutionary movement, which identifies itself with humanity and understands itself as the master of history. Otherwise Marxism would be a philosophy of history like others, without the revolutionary force and the power to form a party following (PR, 64).

While revolution and reaction are two possibilities held out by the elevation of "history" and "humanity" to the status of demiurges or effective agents in politics, Schmitt draws out in all of these movements the underlying "structure of the romantic spirit" which is the romanticization of

85
humanity or history. Undergirding this romanticization is the conceptualization of history or humanity or the “people” as susceptible of an almost infinite number of possibilities (PR, 68-70). To anticipate how this precise point will be made palpable in Schmitt’s later efforts, we can make the following elaboration. While Schmitt views revolutionary Marxism, especially its “Soviet-Slavic” version as made actual in Russia, with both enmity and moral outrage, he respects revolutionary Marxists as enemies because they recognize the necessity of dictatorship (DD, 205) and because of their courage (“Mut”) in seeing through Western “neutrality” and “depoliticizations” (see AND, especially 130-1 and BP, 80). On the contrary, German socialists, who are too intellectually and morally close to liberalism and hence, too close to the effects of romanticism, are enervated by the spirit of always seeking “reconciliation through some higher third.” Schmitt himself takes great pleasure in reminding his readers of Trotsky’s quip aimed at the liberal-minded Kautsky that “the awareness of relative truths never gives one the courage to use force and spill blood” (CPD, 64; emphasis on courage added; see as well, Wagner, 1997, 229 and Golo Mann, 1968, 217).

Against this romantic backdrop, Schmitt separates out Burke, Bonald and de Maistre from this predicament by noting that as “founders of the counterrevolutionary theory ... they were active politicians, each with his own responsibility .... As de Maistre expresses himself, history is only God’s prime minister in the department of this world. In the case of Burke as well, the pathos that dominated him in the face of the Revolution is never the aesthetic feeling of the romantics, who saw the Revolution as a grandiose drama or an event of nature. For Burke, the Revolution is a shocking violation of divine and human right. We need only compare the effeminate raptures that those two bourgeois literati Schlegel and Müller summoned up on behalf of the aristocracy with Burke’s
obstinate defense of the emigrants in order to see the great difference between them” (PR, 116-7). Even though Burke is touched by a “romanticized conception of history,” the seriousness of his responsibilities sets apart and elevates his thought. In Schmitt’s view, the seriousness of Burke’s understanding of his political responsibilities result directly from his understanding of a theologically determined moral sensibility. Burke’s importance is uniquely elucidated by, but historically limited to, the concrete situation of his struggle against the French Revolution. Burke was someone who rose to the challenge of the Gospel of Luke. What unites all three actors is that their sense of theological commitments tempered their expectations and hopes of what was possible in the political realm.

The preceding illustrations should indicate also in a very simple and direct sense why Schmitt cannot be considered ultimately philosophic. For philosophers, contemplation may well rank among the highest goods; for Schmitt, contemplation by itself cannot be considered “metaphysical or moral” because it cannot produce politics. Contemplation is merely romantic. Any body of thought which remains trapped in sheer contemplation cannot be taken seriously. It is in this sense that “humanity” and “history” become mere figures which can be “manipulated” by the romantic temperament (PR, 75). In turn, Schmitt attempts to return “humanity” and “history” to their proper conceptual place. Neither philosophic analysis nor “ideal programs” properly illuminate and bring coherence to our understanding of human history. In Political Theology, Schmitt will return to the “dark sense of history” in contrasting de Maistre, Cortés and Bonald with Schelling’s “philosophy of nature,” Müller’s “mixture of opposites” and Hegel’s “belief in history.” With Bonald especially in mind, Schmitt writes: “What a contrast there is to each of those three Germans in the horrifying picture that depicts the course of humanity in history: a herd of blind men led by a blind man, who gropes his
way forward with a cane!” (PT, 54). Schmitt invokes this same image two pages later in turning to Cortés’ contempt for philosophic efforts to comprehend history. In Cortés’ anger, which “often bordered on insanity,” he perceived that “the victory of evil is self-evident and natural, and only a miracle by God can avert it. The pictures in which his impressions of human history were objectified were full of dread and horror: Humanity reels blindly through a labyrinth that we call history, whose entrance, exit and shape nobody knows” (PT, 58-9).

In turn, Schmitt’s own contempt for not recognizing the “God given” limits to comprehending history, humanity and politics (which figures such as Burke and Bonald recognized as their controlling feature) leads him to excoriate the romantic attitudes that intermingle with the “serious” world of politics:

If this general disintegration, this playful sorcery of the imagination, remained in its own sphere, it would be irrefutable within the confines of its orbit. But it intermixes with the world of commonplace reality in a capricious and arbitrary fashion. In a general exchange and confusion of concepts, an enormous promiscuity of words, everything becomes explicable and inexplicable, identical and antithetical, and everything can be substituted for everything else .... Only this is not the world and the universe, but rather a small figure of art. The will to reality ended up in the will to appearance. The romantics had attempted to grasp the reality of the world, the entire world at once, the totality of the cosmos. Instead they obtained projections and reabsorptions, elongations and abbreviations .... They managed to escape the reality of things, and in turn things had also escaped them (PR, 78).

In Schmitt’s choleric estimation, the romantic’s rootlessness, indeterminancy, moral weakness and indecision all return to the point that its “subjectified occasionalism” always seeks resolution in some “higher third.” In attempting to grasp the “world and the universe whole,” and thus to comprehend all of history and humanity, the romantic is devoid of commitment and seriousness in grasping his own position or the distinctions which give meaning to political classifications and divisions. Hence, whether “ironically” positing an endless series of antitheses and contrasts in “romanticizing” history
or humanity, or within themselves, trying to reconcile "internal and external, soul and body, res cogitans and res extensa," the romantic is incapable of deciding. As Schmitt indicates repeatedly, this inability to decide takes place because God has ceased to function as a final arbiter, "an ultimate authority" or "an absolute center,”

a higher third factor suspends the oppositions, and in such a way that the antithetically grouped things disappear in the "higher third" and the opposition becomes the occasion for this "higher third." The opposition between the sexes is suspended in the "total human being"; the opposition between individuals in the higher organism, the "state," or the people; the discord between states in the higher organization, the Church. Whatever has the power to employ the opposition as the occasion for its higher and exclusive efficacy is the true and higher reality (PR, 88).32

As Schmitt points out, "this higher third," is not even really a higher or third element to the synthesis or reconciliation of opposites, but merely a way out of deciding. As Schmitt notes in following through on this characterization, and which will be relevant to The Concept of the Political's initial characterization of the Enemy as something existentially other, different, strange and alien, "this occasionalism ... which occasionalistically, necessarily includes something that is remote, alien and other — shifts to the other or the alien as such in the continual deflection to another domain. And finally, when the traditional idea of God collapses, the other and the alien become one with the true and the higher" (PR, 91; see CP, 27). The greatest harm, nay, the greatest evil, engendered by the romantic spirit is manifested not simply in its moral softness, its intellectually repugnant failures, its aesthetically insipid sensibilities or its political indecisiveness, it resides above all in the obscuring and attempted abolition of the very basis of the friend-enemy distinction, and hence politics. In turn, this development can only happen when God has ceased to be of any relevance to metaphysical and moral distinctions. In short, all of the things which outrage and offend Schmitt and shine through his "academic" analysis are in evidence here; but even these factors pale in
comparison to the banishing and obscuring of decision and the metaphysical and moral basis of deciding.

If Schmitt champions a "concept of the political" that requires deciding on friend and enemy, a final point of arbitration which does not permit of synthesizing "the other and the alien" with "the true and the higher" must be recognized as sovereign. The assertion of political theology is the only alternative. Rhetorically, of course, Schmitt cannot state this assertion explicitly — the "evidence" of God's supremacy can hardly depend on His existence being an integral premise of an argument's proof. At the minimum, such a statement is merely tautological and without intellectual appeal ("God is supremely sovereign because God is God"), at its worst, it is hubris to presume the necessity of God's existence as a requirement of one's own logical consistency. As Schmitt will emphasize in *The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations*, "God has ceased to be a Being and is now merely a conception (eine Vorstellung)" (*BP*, 81). From Schmitt's perspective, would not such a "conception" already admit of lapsing back into the mistakes of the past (that the traditional conception of God ceased to be of relevance to metaphysics)? If Schmitt's political theological aims are to succeed in finding purchase in the modern political consciousness, must he not take a different path, both strategically and substantively?

If *Political Romanticism* provides us with our first full appreciation of how Schmitt links the intellectual and moral failings of his time, it also provides us with our second insight or set of clues as to how Schmitt conceives of political theology and why it is so important to his undertaking. As we have seen so far, and as we shall see in turning to Schmitt's other works, he rarely cites the authorities one would imagine necessary to the endeavors of a political theologian. If political theology for Schmitt is not simply identical with or derived from the doctrines and positions of the
Catholic Church or Natural Law tradition, or theologians such as Augustine or Aquinas, or Calvin or Luther, from where does it come? Schmitt can only understand modern philosophy, beginning with Descartes, as a revolt against the divine and the theological. It is a result he abhors and opposes. In remarking upon the history of the philosophic revolt against God, Schmitt constructs the following dialogue which indicates that for which we must be on the lookout:

How does it happen, Fénelon asked, that the philosophers want to limit God’s authority? It is true that in this way God is subjected to a general order, and that the authoritative command and all activity become impossible. Here there is an analogy with the thinking of political revolutionaries who attempted to subject the monarch to the general will. It is the ancient opposition for which Tertullian found the classic formulation: audaciam existimo de bono divi praecepti disputare, neque enim quia bonum est, idcirco auscultare debemus, sed quia deus praecepit. [I consider it presumptuous to dispute the goodness of a divine precept. We should obey it, not because it is good, but because God has ordered it.] (PR, 96; Latin translation emended from textual translation).  

In his study of Daubler’s *Nordlicht* in 1916, Schmitt had made passing reference to this opposition, specifically the “Tertullian outburst” (“ein tertullianischer Ausfall”) in opposition to the “Rousseaeuan sermon on the return to nature” and the “Rathenau-esque criticism of the age” (“that today, the economy, and not politics, is fate”) (*TDN*, 69). Here he is even more explicit and cites “Tertullian’s classic formulation” in full. Hans Blumenberg has provided a valuable commentary on the central importance of Tertullian’s thinking to any theological effort to combat both the secularization of the age and philosophy’s sacrilegious use of scripture in its efforts to surpass that knowledge attained through faith in revelation:

Tertullian, two centuries earlier [than Augustine], had linked the category of legitimacy to the question of truth even more radically. Regarding the nature of the soul, he says, it is not a question of the truth of a proposition as such but of the evidence of its origin. It would be better to remain ignorant about such a question if God did not choose to reveal anything about it rather than to learn anything about it from men who presumed to be able to grasp it unaided and in that way succeeded
in taking possession of the truth. Evidence of legitimate ownership of the truth is demanded because the assertion of a religious revelation at the same time implies that the revelation is the sole component authority for the realm to which it applies, since a God Who reveals something that men know in any case, or could know, puts in question the necessity of His revelation and thus its exclusive value for His believers. For this reason alone it cannot be the case that philosophy at any time brought to light authentically and by its own means anything that had ever been ascribed to revelation. Thus there must be secularization—both the anticipatory secularization that is ancient philosophy's sacrilegious use of the contents of the Bible and the posthumous secularization that is German Idealism and the materialism that grows up under its influence (Blumenberg, 1986, 71; emphasis added).

While Blumenberg's work as a whole is devoted to disputing the claims of the "secularization thesis," Blumenberg himself is sympathetic to Schmitt's account of the correlation and analog between secularization and the decline of absolute rule. Indeed, Blumenberg reissued his *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* in response to Schmitt's criticisms of the first edition of his work in Schmitt's *Politische Theologie II: die Legende von der Erledigung jeder Politischen Theologie*. However, Blumenberg's critique of Schmitt is limited by his acceptance of Schmitt's own later, disingenuous self-descriptions as "a mere legal scholar" who sought to reveal "a systematic structural kinship between theological and juristic concepts" (Blumenberg, 1986, 94; see *PT II*, 101). Hence, Blumenberg does not go beyond what Schmitt himself suggests superficially, and, as such, Blumenberg states that "this formulation reduces the secularization thesis to the concept of a structural analogy .... but it no longer implies any assertion about the derivation of the one structure from the other or of both from a common prototype" (Blumenberg, 1986, 94).

In a very important sense, we can learn more from Blumenberg about Schmitt not from Blumenberg's criticism of and response to Schmitt, nor from Schmitt's response to Blumenberg, but from what Schmitt singles out in Blumenberg's work as the most important passages to him personally (*PT II*, 115). When one turns to this designated section of Blumenberg's work, one finds
a lengthy and provocative discussion of Tertullian’s reproach to and repudiation of all philosophers who succumb to human curiosity and wonder: “to the restlessness of seeking it holds open one chance of finding after another, whereas Tertullian localizes the end of seeking and the totality of having found in the single act of accepting faith” (Blumenberg, 1986, 300). Hence, for Tertullian, “truth as such is not unconditionally worth striving for, but only the truth that refers explicitly to its divine derivation and foundation and is represented in relation to that origin” (Blumenberg, 1986, 302). Schmitt himself reveals what is “to him personally” the most important passage of Blumenberg’s work if we follow him carefully. What is most important to Schmitt is the theological repudiation of intellectual or philosophic insight which does not grasp all essential knowledge as having been derived from faith in revelation. Schmitt is not simply an intellectual or juristic historian who traces out the decline of absolute rule.

Following Schmitt’s reference to Blumenberg’s discussion of Tertullian yields valuable insight into Schmitt’s core thinking. The contrast between the epistemological sources of knowledge found in philosophy and theology emerges nowhere more strongly than in Blumenberg’s discussion of Tertullian’s criticism of Socrates and the Socratic conception of philosophizing: “but only what one receives from God is the obligatory and beneficial truth for man, and it is so only because one receives it from Him. Hence, Socrates’ daimonion [genius, guiding spirit] could not convey any truth, no matter what it said, because its essence was praesumptio, not revelatio [presumption, not revelation]: “Cui enim veritas comperta sine deo?” [For to whom is truth revealed without the aid of God?] What it is necessary for man to know is shown to him only by its source; all ‘knowledge’ consists in knowing what one does not need to know and should not strive after” (Blumenberg, 1986, 303; Blumenberg’s emphasis retained). This question of the status of knowledge within Schmitt’s
thought, especially in terms of correctly knowing who the enemy is, is not fully explicable without reference to the knowledge derived from faith in revelation. For Schmitt, demonstrable proof of divine law's efficacy, or its reconciliation or compatibility with natural law is not what is crucial; what is crucial for Schmitt is obedience.

In light of Bishop Fénelon's question answered by Schmitt's imposition of Tertullian's precept, we can discern one of the most important reasons for Schmitt's historical sketch of the romantic movement — it provides us with a "pantheon" of heroes who answered the historical call to "recognize the age" and rightly determine and confront the "satanic" in politics. Again, this "historical" line of argument comes to prominence in Political Theology in Schmitt's discussion of the "Counterrevolutionary Philosophy of the State" (PT, 53 - 56). In the above context, the reason that this forced dialogue is all the more striking is that in 1919, Schmitt does not even mention Fénelon's question. Only in rewriting and reissuing Political Romanticism in 1925 does Schmitt make this significant change in order to draw out more radically and clearly the importance of Tertullian's precept as the answer to his specific set of problems and questions. In 1919, Schmitt's reference to Tertullian is made after a rhetorical discussion of Malebranche's problematic understanding of order which descends into mockery ("Why did Christ found a church? The order wants it this way. Why are devout prayers answered? The order wants them to be carried out. Why is the sinner not granted a favourable hearing? The order does not desire it" (PR (1919), 84; PR, 95). Thus, in 1925, when Schmitt inserts Fénelon's question before "the classical formulation of Tertullian," it changes and deepens the meaning of the statement by updating Tertullian's formulation as the answer to a question raised more than 1500 years after its initial formulation.14
Even if, as Schmitt emphasizes, "every historical truth is true only once,"\textsuperscript{35} we can begin to ascertain how others answered the providential call of that which is to be obeyed ("ein Vorgabe") without disputation or debate. In turn, we are allowed a glimpse of how Schmitt perceives the reactions of other pivotal figures to the moral situation of their times. Likewise, given the scorn Schmitt heaps on those who would turn the question of faith into an academic debate, philosophic argument or learned disputation, let alone take it as "the starting point of an endless novel" or a "neverending discussion," we must begin to suspect that the lodestar of Schmitt’s thought is an arcanum which is never really fully revealed because it is not meant to be and cannot become subject to the intellectual and philosophic practices which he most despises. Schmitt’s decisionism derives from his listening to a divine command, not from philosophic argument.

Schmitt was not deterred from discussing, criticizing or adopting philosophic arguments, but his faith in revelation is present as a command that the faithful anticipate beforehand and understand as something which is to obeyed without question. In turn, modernity’s revolt against God and this revolt’s subsequent efforts to confine the "miraculous" or the exception ("Ausnahmestand") to liberal-democratic positivistic legal interpretation is the theme of Schmitt’s \textit{Political Theology} and a subsequent essay, \textit{Roman Catholicism and Political Form}. Modern science and modern rationalism do not permit of miracles or "exceptions" to the generally determined order of things. Likewise, romanticism, especially the romantic nature of the bourgeoisie, does not permit of any "exception" which requires addressing the unavoidable decision regarding the eschatological struggle between Christ and Antichrist. The romantic attitude thus gives birth to and forms liberal democratic juridical science. Such a science attempts to eradicate both miracles and exceptions by erecting a system of "unswerving objectivity" as embodied in positivistic legal interpretation which
equates all legally determined norms with absolute uniformity. Legal positivism seeks to emancipate all legal order from "value judgments," or issues of political and moral enquiry regarding justice and legitimacy. Such issues, from the standpoint of legal positivism, were treated as unanswerable and divisive. In opposition to this modern tendency, let us briefly examine a passage from Schmitt's essay in order to stress the "silent" core of Schmitt's faith and the manner in which he "hints" at it:

the humanitarian philosophers of the eighteenth century preached enlightened despotism and the dictatorship of reason. They are self-assured aristocrats. Thus they base their authority and secret societies (i.e., strictly esoteric associations) on the claim that they represent the idea of humanity. In this, as in every esoteric construct, lies an inhuman superiority over the uninitiated, the common man, and mass democracy. Who today has such courage of conviction? ... In a society that no longer has such courage, there can be no more "arcana," no more hierarchy, no more secret diplomacy; in fact no more politics. To every great politics belongs the "arcanum" (RC, 33-4).

Here we must address the most basic points which shall be developed. If liberal democrats, Marxist socialists, "anarchist-syndicalist revolutionaries," "American financiers" and "pacifists" (who are all progeny of the same philosophic mistake and are all guided by the same romantic conception of the world according to Schmitt) all seek the same thing, i.e., the abolition of politics, the friend-enemy distinction and "decisionism" in the name of "economics," the bureaucratic administration of the "rule of law" or "economic-sociological tasks," (PT, 51, 59, 61-3, 65; RC, 13-6, 18, 22) and if Schmitt seeks to rehabilitate the political and wrest the justificatory appellation of "humanity" back from the "depoliticizations" and "neutralizations" of his adversaries, then he has already answered the rhetorical question he poses to his readers above. Schmitt himself "courageously" answers those who would deny the political, and his answer and his courage draw their strength and certainty from the store of his own arcanum. If, as Schmitt writes in The Concept of the Political, that the "pinnacle of great politics is simultaneously the moment in which the enemy
is recognized in concrete clarity as the enemy" (BP, 67; CP, 67), and if, as Schmitt elaborates and qualifies his concept of “great politics” above, that “to great politics belongs the arcanum,” then Schmitt’s answer, indeed the heart of his undertaking and the substance of the friend-enemy distinction, can only be understood as being derived from his own secretive, “esoteric” and aristocratic sources and arcanum. In turn, this arcanum is revealed strongly in Schmitt’s first employments of Tertullian.

Schmitt’s reference to his own secret store of knowledge indicates what “idea of humanity” he himself will champion in fighting against modernity’s vast “depoliticizations” and “neutralizations.” As we have already noted, we would be greatly misled if we held fast to the belief that Schmitt’s vitriolic contempt for the so-called morality behind “liberal humanitarians” meant that Schmitt himself abandons all moral claims or does not seek to champion his own true insight into “humanity.” To demonstrate the consistency of Schmitt’s thinking on this matter, let us again turn momentarily to his Glossarium. In 1949, following a period of reflection which finds him meditating on the importance of reading Daubler in order to understand his “little writing,” Der Begriff des Politischen, attacking philosophy as “anti-life” and the “enemy of humanity” (G, 213), and mulling over his role in defending the Constitution during the Preußenschlag in 1932 (G, 214), Schmitt writes the following: “In essence, should enmity be out of the question for mankind? Man; should that word signify peace, harmony and accord? Should brothers be eternal friends? And should Christians or Jews believe this? Then must they not further believe that they are the descendants of our common father, Adam, the first man? Adam had two sons, Cain and Abel — beautiful origins of a universal affirmation of friendship!” (G, 215). What Schmitt perceives at the beginnings of human history, indeed what sets human history in motion, is not fraternity but
fratricide — a decision between friend and enemy, which is also a decision for and against God and God’s commandments. For Schmitt, the origin of human history reveals the core of what makes us truly human — or as he aphoristically repeats only a few pages later, linking Daubler’s poetry and the origins of our humanity: “The enemy is our own question as figure. That means concretely: only my brother can call me into question and only my brother can be my enemy. Adam and Eve had two sons: Cain and Abel” (G, 217).

To further Schmitt’s insight, a very revealing contrast can be made between what separates Schmitt from the liberal tradition. John Locke, in justifying man’s fundamental right to execute the “Law of Nature” also cites the story of Cain and Abel. But he does so in such a way as to make his readers forget the most important insight of the story. Locke writes, “Who so sheddeth Mans Blood, by Man shall his Blood be shed. And Cain was so fully convinced, that every one had a Right to destroy such a Criminal, that after the Murder of his Brother, he cries out, Every one that findeth me, shall slay me; so plain was it writ in the Hearts of all Mankind” (Locke, 1963, 315; Locke’s original emphasis retained). Locke would lead the careless to believe that man operates entirely alone and that he is sole arbiter of judging and punishing. From the inherent difficulties of executing the “Law of Nature” in the “State of Nature,” Locke derives man’s right to self-government which means the right of “making Laws with Penalties of Death, and consequently all less Penalties, for the Regulating and Preserving of Property, and of employing the force of the Community, in the Execution of such Laws....” (Locke, 1963, 308). What Locke leaves out of the story is that God intervenes directly in the world. In response to Cain’s anguished outcry, God answers “‘Not so! If any one slays Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.’ And the Lord put a mark on Cain, lest any who came upon him should kill him” (Genesis, 4:13-17). God spares Cain so that all who
encounter him will bear witness to man’s fallen state and God’s intervention in our world. Cain bears the mark placed upon him so that all who encounter him will not slay him but will bear witness to the terrible condition of divinely ordained enmity. Cain is spared and any who punish him will in turn be punished “seven fold;” man is not sole arbiter of judging and punishing. Only those who correctly grasp what is at stake in the eschatological struggle between faithfulness and those who turn away from God can begin to fully grasp our “humanity” according to Schmitt. From this perspective, to the extent that liberal democratic thought finds its origins in Locke’s theorizing, liberal democracy literally begins with an outrageous lie. In turn, our humanity, what most deeply and profoundly makes us what we are, is found to reside in our answering the question regarding friend and enemy which is inseparably linked to our individually deciding whether we are hasteners or restrainers of the Antichrist.

Political Theology, Roman Catholicism and Political Form, and the Question of Decision

As Schmitt noted in Political Romanticism, the typical romantic attitude and “worldview” characteristic of the bourgeoisie is constitutionally incapable of deciding in the most serious and demanding of cases between friend and enemy, good and evil, Christ and Antichrist. This inability to decide is a direct result of (in language which is exactly replicated in The Concept of the Political) the liberal individual subject remaining “both the terminus a quo and the terminus ad quem, regardless of whether a lyrical poem, literary criticism, or a philosophical argument was at stake” (PR (1919), 90; PR, 98; see CP, 70-1). It is not surprising then, that by Schmitt’s account, modern natural science becomes paradigmatic for legal science and in turn seeks to banish any exceptional circumstances which would require serious decision, i.e., could not be sublated into a series of normative understandings, rigidly codified “scientific” legal schemas or legal positivism. In
dramatically and diametrically opposed fashion, Schmitt opens his *Political Theology* with the spirit and intent which counteracts both the romantic attitude and the dictates of modern rationalism and its "faith" in prescribed rational norms: "Sovereign is he who decides on the exception" (*PT*, 5). As Schmitt notes, this ascription has the status of a "borderline concept."

In this section, we will consider both Schmitt’s *Political Theology* (1922/1934) and *Roman Catholicism and Political Form* (1923). There are good reasons for considering both works in light of each other. Most importantly, not only do both works share significant thematic and substantive similarities, but Schmitt himself indicated in the 1922 edition of *Political Theology* that *Roman Catholicism and Political Form* was intended as a counterpart to *Political Theology*37. In a very important sense, *Roman Catholicism* continues and complements the critique begun by *Political Theology* and indicates most clearly what form of solution can succeed in counteracting the debilities of the liberalism created by the confluence of Enlightenment rationality and the Reformation’s privatization of conscience and judgment. In turn, both works can be construed as the basis for Schmitt’s architectonic discussion of sovereignty, representation, legitimacy and decision which are ultimately grounded by his conception of the political and his analysis of Thomas Hobbes’ political thought. Schmitt’s arguments in these two works also form the basis of his critique of modern political constitutionalism and parliamentary practice which he makes subsequently in *The Spiritual-Historical Situation of Contemporary Parliamentarianism*.

*Political Theology* begins to bring together the themes of Schmitt’s variegated earlier critiques of the age: here Schmitt’s previous discussions of the metaphysical, intellectual, political, moral and aesthetic sensibilities of his time come together in his theological discussion of the "political" and his political discussion of the "theological." In short, *Political Theology* represents
Schmitt's first effort to comprehend what is responsible for the historical contingencies of his own time. In order to understand the most important elements of human concourse one must determine the basic conceptual building blocks by which it is elaborated, explained and justified. Schmitt starts out to trace this relationship as it is represented in the problematic understanding of the relationship between the state, sovereignty, constitutional legal form and decision. However, here we must also make the following caveat: the "state" which is Schmitt's focus throughout his writings is itself an ambiguous term; the word does not identify a specific political scope or distinct nature or enterprise. For example, the word "state" does not convey the definitive meaning which "city state," "empire," "republic," or "democracy," "aristocracy" and "monarchy" do. As is the case with much of Schmitt's polemics, a purposeful ambiguity initially pervades his attacks; what we must make clear here is that a specific type of state and constitutional regime is, in fact, Schmitt's focus. This state or Rechtsstaat is embodied in the constitutional law and practice of liberal democracy.

Two sets of questions will guide our development of these works. First, how are we to understand sovereignty? Schmitt indicates that "all significant concepts of the modern theory of state are secularized theological concepts" (PT, 36). Are we to understand the interpenetration of theology by philosophy only by means of an analog? Is the "historical development" by which modern philosophy triumphs over theological demands only revealing of a "systematic structure" which explains "a sociological consideration of these concepts" but is otherwise devoid of any greater animating moral and metaphysical meaning? (PT, 36). Or should we not wonder that Schmitt's statement that "the exception in jurisprudence is analogous to the miracle in theology" conveys something substantially more meaningful than just an intellectual construct or set of analogs which explains the development of modern theories of the state? To wit, as our discussion of
Blumenberg’s analysis above began to indicate, if the exception is not simply analogous to the miraculous, but indeed reflects a deeper set of moral and metaphysical considerations, what are they? Second, Schmitt’s statement that “he who decides on the exception is sovereign” should further refine the first set of questions. Does the act of deciding by the person or persons of legal competence define sovereign authority, or does the act of deciding in and of itself determine sovereignty, or is a decision only truly a decision when it addresses not only the “concrete indifference” created by the exceptional circumstances not anticipated by a legal or constitutional order but also when it reestablishes or affirms a legal and political form and substance which was previously lacking? (see also Dyzenhaus, 1997, 42-4).

These two sets of questions coalesce around the following theme: does “political theology” suggest for Schmitt merely a set of analogs or metaphors which explains and lends legitimacy to sovereign authority beyond the mere legality of command, or is there a type of decision which refers to a durable content with which the correct type of decision is always concerned? Blumenberg had indicated that Schmitt’s “political theology” was really more of a Machiavellian “theology as politics” and as such resembled a bag of tricks. (Blumenberg, 1984, 94 and 101). In an age in which the predominant religion, the “Christian sphere,” had been eclipsed, one could not seriously invoke outmoded forms of political legitimation. As Blumenberg elaborated, the political theologian invokes the weight, form and patina of divine commandment only as a deceptive simulacrum. Such an effort is reminiscent of the manner in which Machiavelli’s Romans interpreted the auspices in accordance with their military or political needs: “the enviable position in which the political theologian finds himself by means of his assertion of secularization consists in the fact that he finds his stock of images ready at hand and thus avoids the cynicism of an open ‘theological politics.’”
Put simply, one uses religion but does not believe in it. On the other hand, as we have indicated above, the nomenclature of political theology invoked by Schmitt indicates something which goes beyond an analog or sum of metaphors by which we are to understand sovereignty, sovereign decision and the exception.

The position by which we can and should begin to understand Schmitt's concept of sovereignty is as follows. While Schmitt does indeed veil his intent, his eagerness to move beyond "academic" positions in describing the historical development of various "theories of state" when considered in conjunction with his underlying metaphysical and moral concerns moves his analysis and polemics toward his unstated goals. Political theology is to be understood not as a strategy to imbue the sovereign authority with a quasi-divine legitimacy but as a reminder of the significance and importance of decision. The type of decision that is inevitably tied to sovereignty, in turn, is meant to invoke the utmost seriousness and gravity of deciding between friend and enemy. Schmitt proceeds along this path with his first chapter entitled "Definition of Sovereignty." The fact that it is not so much a rigorous and thorough definition, but a dramatic set of either/or propositions and disjunctions is confirmed by the title of the second chapter, "The Problem of Sovereignty."

In terms of the second set of questions above, Schmitt makes clear both the target of his polemic and his answer to the range of possible meanings inherent in his statement that "sovereign is he who decides on the exception." Schmitt notes that the "decision on the exception is a decision in the true sense of the word" (PT, 6). Contrary to liberal constitutions which at most recognize the need for executive prerogative, and in fact even seek to abolish the need to recognize such an extraordinary competence, Schmitt seeks to investigate and rehabilitate the "jurisdictional competence" which "must necessarily be unlimited" (PT, 7). For liberal constitutionalists, the only
relevant question is when can the constitution function under normal circumstances; the basic constitutional apparatus is taken as the set of norms which is to be restored. To elaborate on what Schmitt means by the exception, and contrary to the spirit of liberal constitutionalism, let us follow up on the quote in which Schmitt introduced the *bellum omnium contra omnes* from the introductory chapter above.

But sovereignty (and thus the state itself) resides in deciding this controversy, that is, in determining definitively what constitutes public order and security, in determining when they are disturbed, and so on. Public order and security manifest themselves very differently in reality, depending on whether a militaristic bureaucracy, a self-governing body controlled by the spirit of commercialism, or a radical party organization decides when there is order and security and when it is threatened or disturbed. After all, every legal order is based on a decision, and also the concept of the legal order, which is applied as something self-evident, contains within it the contrast of the two distinct elements of the juristic — norm and decision. Like every other order, the legal order rests on a decision and not on a norm (*PT*, 9-10).

As Schmitt notes, “the development and practice of the liberal constitutional state” attempts to “repress the question of sovereignty by a division and mutual control of competences” (*PT*, 11). However, liberal constitutionalism commits a dangerously arrogant mistake in assuming its paramount “normative” status. In reality, one is confronted first with deciding for a specific type of regime. As Schmitt indicates at the time of writing *Political Theology*, this includes deciding for or against a form of fascism or national-socialism, or a form of liberal democracy “controlled by the spirit of commercialism” or a communist dictatorship. In stating that one cannot assume the paramount legitimacy of liberal democracy, Schmitt quietly brings to the forefront the basis for questioning its legitimacy by first invoking alternatives which would use the “mechanism” of liberal democratic government and law to subvert the very basis of liberal democratic constitutions.
Liberal democracy, or at the minimum, liberal constitutionalism, is blind to inimical alternatives and the decision against liberal constitutionalism itself. Here again, Schmitt’s scorn for liberalism emerges very clearly. In noting that “the exception is that which cannot be subsumed” and that “it defies general codification,” Schmitt drives home the incommensurable situation created by true exception in constitutional jurisprudence: “There exists no norm that is applicable to chaos. For a legal order to make sense, a normal situation must exist, and he is sovereign who definitely decides whether this normal situation exists” (PT, 13). Of course, creating order from chaos invokes the strongest imagery from The Book of Genesis and implies “god-like” abilities. Liberal constitutionalism presumes that the only legitimate “normal situation” is one that guarantees a liberal order of checks and balances on governmental authority and the preservation of individual rights, private property and economic activity in the private and social spheres. In a more general sense, we might begin to summarize that liberal constitutional orders for Schmitt are predicated on a political decision to do away with the need to either recognize or decide on political matters entirely.

Liberalism, as Schmitt will emphasize in The Concept of the Political, seeks to banish the friend-enemy decision and thus banish politics, sovereign decision and the challenge of the exception by declaring itself in times of crisis the enemy of enmity.

However, surreptitiously attempting to expunge the miraculous and the theological from both jurisprudence and sovereign decision is to ignore “concrete life.” In one of Schmitt’s more striking formulations, he emphasizes the legitimizing force represented by decision and exception: “The exception is more interesting than the rule. The rule proves nothing; the exception proves everything: It confirms not only the rule but also its existence, which derives only from the exception. In the exception the power of real life breaks through the crust of a mechanism that has
become torpid by repetition" (*PT*, 15). Lest we think that Schmitt seeks to emphasize merely the sheer nothingness or "aesthetic thrill" of deciding or view the decision as sheer willing (see as well, *PT*, 17, 28, 30-2, 62, 66), he immediately follows the above statement with *theological* clarification. Schmitt quotes from a "Protestant theologian who demonstrated the vital intensity possible in theological reflection," Søren Kierkegaard (whom he nonetheless does not identify by name), that the "exception explains the general and itself." The exception explains both the normal situation and the exceptional situation because the exception "thinks the general with intense passion" (*PT*, 15). With this immediate qualification to his remarks on the status of the exception and decision and with the invocation of an anonymous "Protestant theologian," Schmitt means to clarify what the decision about the exception entails theologically. The importance of the decision is revealed not simply in that it is first and foremost a decision about what form of governing will determine when the normal situation obtains, when peace and order is restored and so on. It is not even a decision about the survival of the state when "the law recedes." It is first and foremost an intense and serious thinking through of what decision is. A decision is only truly a decision when it is fully conscious of the exception which "breaks through the crust of a mechanism that has become torpid by repetition." Such an effort also implies the highest self-consciousness of intensity and seriousness. But can we more precisely know what the substance of this intense and serious decisionism is?

For Schmitt, the liberal tradition and its German spokesmen, such as Hans Kelsen, held that "the basis for the validity of a norm can only be a norm; in juristic terms the state is therefore identical with its constitution, with the uniform basic norm" (*PT*, 19). In essence, this equivalency means for liberal constitutionalism that the law, and not the state, is sovereign: "this is in fact the old liberal negation of the state vis-à-vis law" (*PT*, 21). Schmitt seeks to counter this dangerous liberal
position, as we noted in our first chapter, by returning to Hobbes in order to link both the form and substance of decision with an unlimited juridical competence. As Schmitt noted in returning to Hobbes, who he described as “the classical representative of the decisionist type,” the contrast of “auctoritas and veritas is more radical and precise” because Hobbes linked decisionism with “personalism” and thus “rejected all attempts to substitute an abstractly valid order for a concrete sovereignty of the state” (PT, 33). Hobbes, as a “juristic thinker,” wanted to “grasp the reality of social life just as much as he, as a philosopher and natural scientist, wanted to grasp the reality of nature” (PT, 34). In bringing together decision and sovereignty in the person of Hobbes, Schmitt seeks to lay the basis for properly understanding “political theology” which is the title of Political Theology’s penultimate chapter. In leading up to that chapter directly, Schmitt summarizes the significance of Hobbes as a juristic thinker:

In the independent meaning of the decision, the subject of the decision has an independent meaning, apart from the question of content. What matters for the reality of legal life is who decides. Alongside the question of substantive correctness stands the question of competence. In the contrast between the subject and the content of a decision and in the proper meaning of the subject lies the problem of juristic form. It does not have the a priori emptiness of the transcendental form because it arises precisely from the juristically concrete. The juristic form is also not the form of technical precision because the latter has a goal-oriented interest that is essentially material and impersonal” (PT, 34-5).

One can only know the “concrete situation” of the challenge of the exception, and one can only make a “concrete decision” when one knows the particulars of one’s enemy and the “theology and metaphysics” upon which they draw. One can only know one’s own situation when one has answered the historical and providential call “to recognize the age.” In turn, one can only encounter enemies in specific, actual circumstances, whether they be historical or present. One cannot encounter enemies “in general” or “in theory.” A Cromwell will necessarily be concerned with far
different legal questions and political problems than the "Catholic philosophers of the counterrevolution." However, a durable content does guide their decisions. What defines their decisions is the recognition of the preordained guiding force of enmity.

In moving from the "definition" of sovereignty and exploring its problematic features to hoisting the banner of "political theology" to a place of central importance, we might rightly suspect that Schmitt seeks to signal his direct engagement with his own adversaries. Our suspicions are confirmed by the opening salvoes of the chapter. Schmitt stakes out his own position vis-à-vis the modern liberal state by arguing that it triumphed by banishing the miracle from the modern world.

In order to secure this triumph, the modern liberal constitutional state required a "theology and metaphysics" which "rejected not only the transgression of the laws of nature through an exception brought about by direct intervention, as is found in the idea of a miracle, but also the sovereign's direct intervention in a valid legal order. The rationalism of the Enlightenment rejected the exception in every form" (PT, 36-7). Here, a few observations are in order. First, Schmitt explicitly links the miraculous with the exception; their eclipse by Enlightenment rationalism is part and parcel of the same project. Second, in identifying the source of their rejection, Schmitt indicates that as he seeks to rehabilitate the status of the exception in juristic decisionism, it is explicitly linked in reference to the "miracle in theology" and that he invokes both in combat against the spirit of "Enlightenment rationalism."

In this vein, Schmitt grants preeminent status to Bakunin in his pantheon of enemies who must be confronted polemically and "theologically." Schmitt views Bakunin as belonging to the "radicals who opposed all existing order" and who "directed, with heightened awareness, their ideological efforts against the belief in God altogether, fighting that belief as if it were the most
fundamental expression of the belief in any authority and unity" (PT, 50). We can gain immediate insight into both the practical implications (both politically and juridically) and the theoretical basis for Schmitt's friend-enemy distinction by examining his critique of the anarchist Mikhail Bakunin and the opposition he creates between himself and Bakunin in Political Theology. Schmitt's attacks on Bakunin are especially insightful because he draws the inspiration for the title to his own work from Bakunin's attack on the nationalist republican Guisippe Mazzini in Bakunin's La Theologie politique de Mazzini (see Meier, 1998, 8, Footnote 19).

Bakunin serves as a touchstone for a wide variety of Schmitt's analysis as well in works prior to and after Political Theology. We shall look momentarily at remarks Schmitt makes in Political Romanticism, Roman Catholicism and Political Form and The Spiritual-Historical Situation of Contemporary Parliamentarism. In these works and others, the focus of Schmitt's attack is Bakunin's anarchistic and nihilistic claims that there is no God and that all political authority is tyrannical and dictatorial, hence unnatural and unjust. Whereas Bakunin invoked the image of political theology in order to attack Mazzini as ignorant and susceptible of falling prey to the dark forces of religious superstition and myth, Schmitt makes the concept his own as a means of characterizing his own position and also in order to turn the concept against Bakunin. Schmitt's first and foremost aim is to legitimize political theological claims in an age which "veils its metaphysical oppositions in moral or economic terms" and in which all matters seem to reflect a this-worldly, anti-divine self-deification. In Bakunin, Schmitt detects a denial of everything that is important to him metaphysically, morally and politically — in Bakunin, Schmitt detects and exposes the "open rebellion against all traditional concepts of European culture," the denial of revelation and the denial of the existence of God. Bakunin would do away not only with the state and human
authority but also with the divine authority which Schmitt claims is at the heart of the most important political distinction.

According to Schmitt, all anarchist theories, especially Bakunin’s, revolve around the thesis that “the people are good, but the magistrate is corruptible” (*PT*, 55). This statement, for Schmitt, represents “the clearest antithesis in the entire history of political ideas” (*PT*, 55). Because of anarchism’s clarity, it openly declares a hostility and enmity from which liberalism seeks to hide even when it requires such an ambition in eradicating the exception, the miracle and sovereign decision. For the likes of anarchists there are no radical disjunctions posited to human beings such as “the contrast between good and evil, God and the devil” in the sense that these distinctions imply taking up a life or death struggle. Anarchists are willing to sacrifice life for their struggle and are willing to kill for their cause; however, they commit themselves in this manner to do away with theology and demanding moral decisions. For anarchists, there is only the “evil” of revelation and religion which corrupts man’s “natural goodness” and renders him subservient before unjust political authority. Let us examine a few of Schmitt’s statements on Bakunin more closely. Schmitt makes two dramatic assessments of Bakunin in *Political Theology*

First, Schmitt states that “Bakunin’s intellectual significance rests, nevertheless, on his conception of life, which on the basis of its natural rightness produces the correct forms by itself from itself. For him, therefore, there was nothing negative and evil except for the theological doctrine of God and sin, which stamps man as a villain in order to provide a pretext for domination and the hunger for power. All moral valuations lead to theology and to an authority that artificially imposes an alien or extrinsic “ought” on the natural and intrinsic truth and beauty of human life” (*PT*, 64). Schmitt invokes the Spanish counterrevolutionary Donoso Cortés’ outline of the
implications of anarchism to indicate what is placed in peril by Bakunin’s assault. In light of the angry and militant assertion of a truly natural way of life, Schmitt attributes to Cortés’ assessment of anarchism a position which is actually his own: In Schmitt’s view, Cortés saw that “the moral vanished with the theological, the political idea with the moral, and all moral and political decisions are thus paralyzed in a paradisiacal worldliness of immediate natural life and unproblematic correctness” (PT, 65). According to Schmitt, the anarchist’s reduction of the moral and the political to the natural evades, rather than solves man’s fundamental political problem, of rightly deciding between friend and enemy. As Schmitt remarks, “nothing is more modern than the onslaught against the political” (PT, 65). Second, in assessing the revolutions of 1848, Schmitt weighs in with the counter-revolutionaries who recognized that the “core political idea” was the “demanding moral decision (“die anspruchsvolle moralische Entscheidung”).” In turn, the confrontation which Bakunin seeks between authority and anarchy represents for Schmitt a moment of absolute decisiveness: “all governments must be opposed for the reason that every government is a dictatorship. Every claim of a decision must be evil for the anarchist, because right emerges by itself if the immanence of life is not disturbed by such claims. This radical antithesis forces him of course to decide against the decision; and this results in the odd paradox whereby Bakunin, the greatest anarchist of the nineteenth century, had to become in theory the theologian of the antitheological and in practice the dictator of an antidictatorship” (PT, 66). Anarchists embrace “decisionism,” but only in order to decide against the need for “demanding moral decisions.” Anarchists become “theological,” but only in order to debunk theology as groundless, meaningless and inimical to human happiness. It should be clear from this passage that Schmitt himself will oppose Bakunin in this field by asserting faith in revelation and the necessity of political theology. Nowhere does the
enmity against the absolute sovereignty of God manifest itself more clearly for Schmitt than in Bakunin; nowhere does an “enemy” declare itself or its rebellion against authority and the highest authority with, in Schmitt’s phrase “Scythian fury,” than in the person of Bakunin (PT, 50). And almost nowhere does Schmitt reveal his own position so clearly.

The question justifiably might be raised again, in opposing Bakunin and defending what anarchism attacks, does Schmitt elaborate or give proof that what the Bible presents or faith demands is verifiable? The answer is no. To attempt to prove scientifically or rationally what is at stake for Schmitt is to play into the hands of the “system of unswerving objectivity” of his enemies and thus, undermine the authority of revelation. In this sense, Hobbes is specially important to the sustenance of Schmitt’s position because Hobbes’ scholastic-sounding auctoritas, non veritas is a model for political theology; political theology elucidates revelation by asserting its authority, but it does not “prove” or establish rigorously the “truth” of revelation in either the sense that it is scientifically explicable or logically susceptible of proof. Such a position is hardly foreign to the Christian theological tradition. One need only look at Thomas Aquinas’ defense of theology as a science in his Summa Theologica to find the origins of such thinking. To the question of whether theology is a practical science which elucidates the existence of God, Aquinas replies affirmatively that it is; we know it is a science because God commands it. How do we know that God exists and commands us so? Because Aquinas makes God a witness to his argument — in response to those who would claim that God does not exist, Aquinas’ first and most important response is to state “on the contrary, It is said in the person of God: I am Who I am (Exodus 3:14)” (Aquinas, 1990, 61; also see 35-9; 53-61).
To complete the criticism and polemic against Bakunin which Schmitt launches in *Political Theology*, we need to consider two additional sets of remarks on Bakunin which Schmitt makes. In discussing “irrationalist theories of the direct use of force” in *The Spiritual-Historical Situation of Contemporary Parliamentarism*, Schmitt states that Bakunin drew the “antistatist and anti-theological philosophy of revolution to its logical conclusion”: “Bakunin gave this struggle against God and the state the character of a struggle against intellectualism and against traditional forms of education altogether. With good reason he sees a new authority in the reliance on reason, a pretension to be the chief, the head, the mind of a movement. Even science does not have the right to rule. It is not life, it creates nothing, it constructs and receives, but it understands only the general and abstract and sacrifices the individual fullness of life on the altar of its abstraction” (*CPD*, 67). From this perspective, Bakunin would seem to target for criticism, not to say destruction, the same liberal-democratic *Weltanschauung* and faith in parliamentary practice which Schmitt himself excoriates.

Yet Schmitt’s attacks on Bakunin are not a case of *les extrêmes se touchent*. Such an assessment is indeed inaccurate when we consider the deepening of Schmitt’s position regarding Bakunin in *Roman Catholicism and Political Form*. Here, Schmitt writes that Bakunin’s attack on Mazzini (in Bakunin’s *Le Theologie politique de Mazzini*) is like “the symbolic border skirmish of a vast world-historical upheaval which has greater proportions than the migration of the Germanic peoples in the late Roman Empire. For Bakunin, the Free Mason Mazzini’s faith in God was, like all faith in God, only proof of slavery and the true root of all evil, of all government and political authority; it was metaphysical centralism” (*RC*, 75). For the moment, let us emphasize the phrase “metaphysical centralism.” Bakunin’s destruction of the reliance on God and state is meant to be an act of liberation; it is meant to free man from all dependence on metaphysical and theological
truths which require his acknowledgment of the supremacy of reason or God, and frees him from surrendering his faith and obedience to political demands or "demanding moral decisions." Yet, Schmitt pulls an interesting about face on the location of Bakunin's importance and significance with regard to Mazzini, liberal-democratic rationality and "faith in God." Far from "defeating" liberalism, Enlightenment rationalism and economic-technical thinking, Bakunin paves the way for the triumph of the bourgeoisie!

Again, let us turn our attention to the above characterization. Bakunin, whom Schmitt characterized as possessing a "Scythian fury," now appears in his account as a "naïve berserker." Schmitt's choice of words is particularly interesting given his description of Bakunin's battle with Mazzini under the colors of political theology as "a symbolic border skirmish of a vast world-historical upheaval." The efficiency of Bakunin's nihilistic fury actually pales in comparison to the pusillanimous cunning of liberal-democratic toleration and economic calculation. The new bourgeoisie eliminates God and the state by means of "economic rationalism" and the creation of a private sphere devoid of public intrusion and thus succeeds beyond Bakunin's wildest expectations. Let us listen to how, in Schmitt's estimation, Bakunin seemingly joins the ranks of his opponents in forming a new foe worthy of Schmitt's enmity: "Today nothing is more modern than the onslaught against the political. American financiers, industrial technicians, Marxist socialists and anarchic-syndicalist revolutionaries unite in demanding that the unbiased rule of politics over unbiased economic management be done away with. There must no longer be political problems, only organizational-technical and economic-sociological tasks. The kind of economic-technical thinking that prevails today is no longer capable of perceiving a political idea...." (PT, 65). As Heinrich Meier has commented, "the most outspoken rebellion need not be the most threatening, nor
the most conspicuous enmity the most decisive.... Measured by the consistency with which economic rationalism, having erected the 'system of unswerving objectivity,' cultivates and furthers such objectivity to the point where every government proves to be superfluous since 'things govern themselves;' and compared with the disposal of theology and politics on the path of techno-political progress, Bakunin's battle looks indeed like that of a 'naïve berserker'” (Meier, 1998, 9).

Schmitt's political thought is not so much concerned with creating or fostering a certain type of regime as it is concerned with creating room for a certain type of decision – the truly binding "normativity" of deciding between friend and enemy which can only be made by a sovereign authority of unlimited competence. Hence, Schmitt's defense of the "enlarged" understanding of Article 48 of the Weimar Constitution (which provided "carte blanche" powers to the President) and his role in defending the so-called "Baron's Cabinet" can only be understood in terms of his attempting to reinfuse politics with true meaning. Schmitt is most concerned with critique and going on the attack, thus exposing the juridical, and above all, political weakness of liberal-democracy and the sustenance of the bourgeois mentality that "everything is an entirely human, private affair." What is astonishing is that Schmitt detects the political "un-political" decision of liberalism as having been prefigured in and succored by Bakunin's nihilism and atheism.

A significant shared target of both Schmitt and Bakunin is Enlightenment rationality. However, whereas Bakunin attacks rationality as a "new god" which divides human beings against themselves, Schmitt attacks rationality for usurping the role of God and sovereign simply. For Schmitt, Enlightenment rationality does not reign supreme in the sense that the world is now governed wisely by the equivalent of Platonic philosopher kings, but that all phenomena can now be calculated, explained, codified and "normalized." Rationality and "mathematical natural-
scientific thinking” mean for Schmitt remaking the world so that from the standpoint of “juristic cognition” there is only “regularity, an evenness, derived from repeated practice and professional reasoning.” As Schmitt notes, the “evenness and calculability” and “regularity” of all natural phenomena passes over to the “rationalistic.” It emerges as technical refinement and is “oriented toward calculability and governed by the ideal of frictionless functioning” (PT, 28, see also 23-7; 31, 32). The question of “whether God alone is sovereign” or acts through “his acknowledged representative on earth” (PT, 10) ceases to be relevant in the face of modern rational forms of legitimation. Decision and the authentic basis of deciding cease to be compelling. As such, Schmitt notes that “democracy is the expression of a political relativism and a scientific orientation that are liberated from miracles and dogmas and based on human understanding and critical doubt” (PT, 42).

Schmitt's understanding of this democratic “expression of political relativism” and “scientific orientation” is elaborated in his criticism of parliamentary democracy in The Spiritual-Historical Situation of Contemporary Parliamntarism. Schmitt argues that parliamentary democracy, which is the chief “political” expressions of liberalism, is based on “openness and discussion.” This basis means first and foremost “an exchange of opinion that is governed by the purpose of persuading one's opponent through argument of the truth or justice of something, or allowing oneself to persuaded of something as true and just” (CPD, 5-7). That what is ultimately “true and just” is something which can be arrived at, let alone articulated and defended, through debate is highly suspect in light of Schmitt’s invocation of a hidden arcum derived from faith in revelation. However, on the surface, Schmitt's chief criticism is that liberalism contradicts democracy in a fundamental way and thus corrupts democracy. Schmitt holds that liberalism's “openness” and “discussion” constitute ultimate, romantic values in themselves and as such are the
political embodiment of neverending chatter. Democracy, as a political form, can express itself resolutely and definitively based on what makes individual citizens equal; i.e., a citizen’s equality, as we will see, resides in their “homogeneity” and the common, shared purposes and convictions which unite them. While Schmitt acknowledges that there is a great deal of “common sense” most of the time to openness and discussion (as he notes, there has always been deliberation and compromise in human affairs, even between “Christian and Turk” and that “it is better to tolerate one another than to quarrel and that a thin settlement is better than a thick lawsuit”), they do not actually constitute principles “of a specific kind of state or form of government” (CPD, 6).

Schmitt implies that parliament is open in two senses. It deliberates and acts free of external compulsion (for example, members of parliament are to act only in accordance with the strictures of their conscience and duty) and its activities are publicly open and transparent. Practically, the “business” of parliament is endangered in that various social, economic and business interests do dominate it externally, and theoretically, parliamentary speeches do not constitute authority or legitimacy. In addition, socialist labour unions, large business concerns and cartels, “special interests” or even Marxist or National Socialists can “capture” the state, and thus render the state as a function of society or competing social interests (CPD, 2-4; 9, 14, 28-9). Theoretically (and much closer to the heart of Schmitt’s concerns), openness, discussion and debate do not produce a genuine “collective will,” nor do they produce genuine elites (CPD, 28-30, 47).

Beyond these immediate, stock-in-trade difficulties and complaints, however, Schmitt detects a far greater misunderstanding which complicates liberalism’s political claims to legitimacy. As Schmitt writes, “the belief in parliamentarism, in government by discussion, belongs to the world of liberalism. It does not belong to democracy” (CPD, 8). Liberalism is responsible for reducing
democracy to a relativized, mathematical procedure bereft of any goals, substance or defining principles. Modern mass democracy's legitimacy rests on counting votes; it does not reflect or produce moral, metaphysical or theological principles. For Schmitt, "every actual democracy rests on the principle that not only are equals equal, but unequals will not be treated equally. Democracy requires therefore, first homogeneity and second — if the need arises — elimination or eradication of heterogeneity" (CPD, 9). Schmitt's emphasis on "substantial homogeneity" is an ominous and yet incredibly vague term which we must clarify (also see V, 234-5; 238-42 and Dyzenhaus, 1997, 55-58). Unfortunately, it is not a term that Schmitt himself immediately clarifies. Generally, the connection Schmitt seeks to invoke is one that "substantively" links democracy (or the "people") with sovereignty and constitutional order in an identification of ruler and ruled. Schmitt's examples however, indicate that he strives first to understand this connection morally. Two statements, one from his The Spiritual-Historical Situation of Contemporary Parliamentarism, and one from his Constitutional Theory (Verfassungslehre) illustrate his intent. Regarding the question of democratic equality, Schmitt writes that it is "precisely not one of abstract, logical-arithmetic games. It is about the substance of equality. It can be found in certain physical and moral qualities, for example in civic virtue, in arete, the classical democracy of vertus (virtu). In the democracy of the English sects ... equality was based on a consensus of religious convictions." Only since the nineteenth century, and thus only since the romantic re-making of the world, "has it existed above all in membership in a particular nation, in national homogeneity" (CPD, 9). In light of Schmitt's statements in his analysis of parliamentarism, and in light of our discussion above regarding how Schmitt conceives of humanity, his remarks in his Constitutional Theory are even more revealing:

Democratic equality is actual homogeneity and then a homogeneity of the
people. The central concept of democracy is the people and not humanity. If democracy is to amount to a political form, then there is no democracy of humanity, only a people's democracy (V, 234; emphasis added; also see Dyzenhaus, 1997, 56-7).

As Schmitt notes, “equality is only interesting and valuable politically so long as it has substance” (CPD, 9). To equality belongs inequality; the relationship between political equals and unequals is what lies behind his claim that we experience the world as a “plurality” and a “heterogeneity of purposes.” (CPD, 24-32). To presume the equality of all individuals, “simply as a person,” is a liberal presupposition. However, such equality is not democratic, nor is it political:

If one were serious about a democracy of mankind and really wanted to make every person the equal politically of every other person, then that would be an equality in which every person took part as a consequence of birth or age and nothing else. Equality would have been robbed of its value and substance, because the specific meaning that it has as political equality, economic equality, and so forth—in short equality in a particular sphere—would have been taken away. Every sphere has its specific equality and inequalities in fact. However great an injustice it would be not to respect the human worth of every individual, it would nevertheless be an irresponsible stupidity, leading to worse chaos, and therefore even worse injustice, if the specific characteristics of various spheres were not recognized. In the domain of the political, people do not face each other as abstractions, but as politically interested and politically determined persons, as citizens, governors and governed, politically allied or opponents—in any case, therefore, in political categories. (CPD, 11; emphasis added).

Liberalism negates democracy by superimposing individual rights based solely on “birth or age” and thus eliminating any possible basis for a legitimate understanding of what makes citizens equal. As such, liberal democracy is “not a state form but an individualistic-humanitarian ethic and Weltanschauung” (CPD, 13; 33-40). Liberalism may have allied itself with democracy to defeat Church and throne, but it lacks true democratic legitimacy: “the unanimous opinion of one hundred million private persons is neither the will of the people nor public opinion.” Indeed, the will of the people can be better expressed through public acclamation than through the system of non-
deliberative private balloting \((CPD, 16)\). According to Schmitt, democracy, equality and substantive homogeneity can better be expressed through dictatorship, but dictatorship properly understood \((CPD, 16-17; 50, 52, 64, 75-6)\). A proper dictatorship is one which reflects the “acclaimed” equalities and inequalities amongst the governed and between governor and governed. What is important to follow through on is that Schmitt explicitly defines the essence of equality as residing in something which is moral or religious. At the same time, we must ask if Schmitt himself can define his conception of political equality in a manner which does not fall prey to his own objection regarding liberalism and romanticism (that it defines equality simply based on “age or birth” or “race” or the “nation”). To refine our understanding of what Schmitt understands the “substance” of the political to be, we must look beyond his critique of parliamentary government or constitutional theory. However, we already have a fairly good idea from our analysis of his earlier works of how he will ultimately address the question of “substantial equality.” Contrary to the spirit of modern parliamnetarism, Schmitt seeks to invoke a truly representative political body; he seeks to invoke an organization or institution which is capable of re-presenting a democratic will in political form. One such \emph{complexio oppositorum} presents itself in the form of the Roman Catholic Church. In Schmitt’s unique conception, something like the Church can and must embody the highest claims to the truth of theology and morality with the ability to represent the interests of diffuse subjects who are nonetheless equal because they profess faith in the same morality or religion, and which can make binding decisions based on what “excepts” one political group from another \((RC, 8-10; 18-22, 31-33)\).

Schmitt thought that the nineteenth century’s development of the theory of the state rested on two achievements: “the elimination of all theistic and transcendental conceptions and the
formation of a new concept of legitimacy" (*PT*, 51). The only alternative to bourgeois liberal democracy becomes dictatorship. Yet dictatorship, denied the source of legitimacy given it by the clear cut status of the exception, becomes only sheer willing and compulsion. As Schmitt remarks regarding Donoso Cortés, "one who was intensely conscious of the metaphysical kernel of politics," he was keenly aware that "legitimacy no longer exists in the traditional sense" (*PT*, 51). For Cortés, there could only be dictatorship because all alternatives were theologically and morally repugnant, and the modern "revolutionary spirit" had made theocracy impracticable. Already "mathematical natural-scientific thinking" has determined what is legitimate and what is not. Dictatorship cannot succeed in Schmitt's estimation if it is determined or necessitated in resistance to "concepts rooted in the natural sciences" and does not appeal to available means of legitimation (*PT*, 42, 50-1; see also *DD*, 44, 105, 194; *LL*, 38-9, 97-8). The dictatorial willing of decisionism is insufficient without reference to the true nature of the exception which identifies the locus and substance of decision.  

The problem for Schmitt generally, and specifically in regard to sovereignty, decision and the exception, is that he traces this new form of "exclusively scientific thinking" back to Hobbes, who is after all, the political philosopher whom Schmitt also turns to in order to combat modernity. We can state more specifically the set of problems that are to guide our development in the next two chapters. Schmitt creates a seemingly irreconcilable split image of Thomas Hobbes in rehabilitating his political thought which we can crudely and initially identify as an untenable grouping of Hobbes the morally serious "voluntarist" with Hobbes the impersonal "mechanist." Schmitt presents us with a philosopher who was pious and "remained personalistic and postulated an ultimate concrete deciding instance," but who also "heightened his state, the Leviathan, into an immense person and thus point-blank straight into mythology" and thus created a giant impersonal mechanism (*PT*, 47;
see also CPD, 43). Hobbes infused his Leviathan with mythology despite his "nominalism and natural-scientific approach and his reduction of the individual to the atom" (PT, 47). The irreconcilable contrast found in these antithetical tendencies is revealed on the one hand, in Hobbes' "personalism" and the "ultimate concrete deciding instance" in his thought, and on the other hand, in the immense machine-like person of Hobbes' sovereign. In turn, this contrast is reflected in the deeper question of whether the Leviathan is merely a purposeful "literary" and mythological construction that is meant to keep "all in awe," or whether it contains a truth and legitimacy which are grounded in Hobbes' piety? The developments inaugurated by Hobbes both intentionally and unintentionally are captured for Schmitt in the following recapitulation:

But the image of the architect and master builder of the world reflects a confusion that is characteristic of the concept of causality. The world architect is simultaneously the creator and the legislator, which means the legitimizing authority.... Since then the consistency of exclusively scientific thinking has also permeated political ideas, repressing the essentially juristic-ethical thinking that had predominated in the age of Enlightenment. The general validity of a legal prescription has become identified with the lawfulness of nature, which applies without exception. The sovereign,... even if conceived as residing outside the world, had remained the engineer of the great machine, has been radically pushed aside. The machine now runs itself (PT, 48).

Do these developments confirm or betray Hobbes' intentions? Following the "mathematical natural-scientific thinking" which Hobbes inspired seemingly culminates in either the reactionary dictatorship of Donoso Cortés or the modern liberal democratic state. Hobbes, who attempted to imbue his construction with the mythological being of Leviathan, in reality became the architect and "master builder" of a "machine which now runs itself." How is it possible that Hobbes, who was above all concerned with the decision, was capable of creating a system of governing and thinking which is applied "without exception?" How does Hobbes, who Schmitt defends as both pious and
a *vir probus* and whose most important precept was that “Jesus is the Christ,” expel the miraculous and God from the essence of decision? Our quotation from the beginning of this chapter is particularly relevant here in assessing the importance of Hobbes to Schmitt’s efforts to rehabilitate “the political.” If Hobbes opposed his own “scientism” and “mathematical natural-scientific thinking” with his understanding of decisionism and the “ultimate concrete deciding instance,” would not this position by definition involve the exception *par excellence*, which means deciding about “the Enemy, the Accuser, and Destroyer?” And are not all of these terms prefigured in Hobbes’ own definition of the Enemy of the Kingdom of God? As Hobbes himself writes, are we not to understand “the Enemy, and consequently Satan,” as “any earthly enemy of the Church?” On the other hand, how could Schmitt so conveniently ignore the fact that Hobbes’ observation is made with regard to a “Christian Commonwealth” and is seemingly more relevant to understanding the “Kingdom of Darkness,” a “Kingdom” against which Hobbes explicitly fights?

For the moment, in closing, let us turn to what Schmitt spells out in his final chapter as the essence of decision for himself. As we noted, each truly exceptional historical circumstance differs from its predecessors. In answering the providential call “to recognize the age,” the one constant is the recognition of a disjunction, and a resulting friend-enemy distinction, which is not susceptible of reconciliation, mediation or “synthesis in some higher third.” The either/or disjunction which is the special concern of decision is revealed for Schmitt in the contrast between theology and atheism. Schmitt reveals his own position in invoking Cardinal Newman in response to the phenomena of “romanticism” and “everlasting conversation” which he had developed in *Political Romanticism*:

“Wherever Catholic philosophy of the nineteenth century was engaged, it expressed the idea in one form or another that there was now a great alternative that no longer allowed of synthesis. No
medium exists, said Cardinal Newman, between catholicity and atheism" (PT, 53). Schmitt follows up on Cardinal Newman's statement by making it his own position by elaborating it in language which is meant to directly remind of both his Nordlicht and Political Romanticism: "Such moral disjunctions represent contrasts between good and evil, God and the devil; between them an either/or exists in the sense of a life-and-death struggle that does not recognize a synthesis and a 'higher third'" (PT, 55). Contrary to the constructions of anarchism and liberalism, Schmitt reveals what he had already strongly hinted at, that "decision is inherent in the mere existence of government authority" (PT, 55). What Schmitt's emphasis means concretely is that the decision is ultimately metaphysical or theological and thus moral: "Every political idea in one way or another takes a position on the 'nature' of man and presupposes that he is either 'by nature good' or 'by nature evil.' This issue can only be clouded by pedagogic or economic explanations, but not evaded" (PT, 56).

Liberal democrats and even democratic socialists want to enjoy the benefits of the nihilist's and anarchists' assault on both God and political authority, but they themselves want to avoid the "bloody decisive battle" between theology and atheism which determines such outcomes and admit of no mediation, synthesis or reconciliation in some "higher third." It is for this reason that anarchists like Bakunin are of immense help to Schmitt in clarifying his own position vis-à-vis liberalism. As Schmitt noted, while "the liberal bourgeoisie wanted a god, its god could not become active; it wanted a monarch, but he had to be powerless" (PT, 59). In contrast to the bourgeois, anarchists like Bakunin clarify liberalism because their extremism exposes liberalism's shrouded basic position. As Schmitt wrote in response to Bakunin, "all moral valuations lead to theology and to an authority that artificially imposes an alien or extrinsic 'ought' on the natural and intrinsic truth and beauty of human life." The very notion of liberalism's
emphasis on the “autonomy” or “self-hood” of the individual is sheer hubris and blasphemy to Schmitt. In light of the Apostle Paul’s precept that “there is no authority except from God,” only an atheist could equate “power” with “evil” (Romans, 13: 1-3; PT, 57-59). What Schmitt writes in his Glossarium fourteen years later is even more damning. Sarcastically remarking on the “highly treasured” and “oft cited” observation of Jakob Burkhardt (that “power is in itself evil”), Schmitt claims that this remark contains more atheism and nihilism than “Bakunin’s entire collected works,” and rhetorically asks: “who knows today that this very sentence means: God is dead” (G, 201). At the minimum, what Schmitt writes of Donoso Cortés’ reaction to anarchism (and which Schmitt will apply to liberalism) is no less true of his own position: before the onslaught of modern philosophy, “the moral vanished with the theological, the political idea with the moral, and all moral and political decisions are thus paralyzed in a paradisiacal worldliness of immediate natural life and unproblematic correctness” (PT, 64-5). But this onslaught is not the progressive march of truth; it is rebellion (see above 82 and PR, 96). Liberalism, which for Schmitt “discusses and negotiates every political detail” and “dissolves metaphysical truth in discussion” cannot ultimately avoid the “definitive dispute” and the “decisive bloody battle” (PT, 63). It can avoid neither because Schmitt interjects his own theological and moral understanding into his final assessment of liberal constitutionalism and its attendant political order in the concluding statement to Political Theology:

Whereas on the one hand, the political vanishes into the economic or technical-organizational, on the other hand the political dissolves into the everlasting discussion of cultural and philosophic-historical commonplaces, which, by aesthetic characterization, identify and accept an epoch as classical, romantic, or baroque. The core of the political idea, the demanding moral decision, is evaded in both (PT, 65).

What should be of utmost clarity is that Schmitt himself has learned the lesson of the exception because he has thought it through “passionately,” “seriously” and “intensely” and here will
declare that the core of the political idea is indeed "the demanding moral decision." In contrast to the counterrevolutionary defenders of dictatorship (with whom Schmitt is nonetheless highly sympathetic), Schmitt knows that an "absolute decision created out of nothingness" is essentially dictatorship, not legitimacy (PT, 66). What Schmitt strives to invoke is that the debilities of liberal constitutionalism and liberal politics can only be combated legitimately. Likewise, one must draw out the illegitimate basis to liberalism and the legitimate basis to its alternative. For Schmitt this demand means first and foremost arranging the "battlefield" in proper order and hence, reasserting the theological basis of the demanding moral decision. Only with Schmitt's development of the "concept of the political" do we fully learn the relationship between the theological, the moral and the political. But one strong indication of this relationship is already evidenced in our treatment of Political Theology, and is further underscored by a slight but profoundly revealing change Schmitt makes to the text of Political Theology between 1922 and 1934. In 1922, Schmitt had ended Political Theology with his assessment of Bakunin that he "has become ("geworden ist") in theory the theologian of the antitheological and in practice the dictator of an antidictatorship." In 1934, Schmitt now writes that Bakunin had to become ("werden mußte") the theologian of the antitheological and the dictator of an antidictatorship (PT (1922), 84; PT (1934), 75; PT, 66). Why the imperative nature of this change? Schmitt himself has come to confirm in this twelve year period that reasserting the political in its truth and entirety is possible; Bakunin had to become what he became because politics, and not "ethics and discussion" or "economics" is humanity's eternal fate.

In turn, the path along which Schmitt continued between 1922 and 1934 can only be explicated when we turn to The Concept of the Political which marks the beginning of our next chapter. To conclude this chapter, we can now return to the questions with which we began this
Sovereignty for Schmitt is to be understood as an unlimited juridical competence because the exception, which deals with moments of concrete indifference, is not simply analogous to "the miracle in theology" but substantively corresponds to it. The reason for the correspondence of the exception and the miraculous is captured by the nature of true decision. When we confirm the existence of enmity in deciding between friends and enemies, we re-affirm our humanity. True decision for Schmitt concerns itself ultimately with a deeper set of "moral and metaphysical" issues and questions. It concerns itself with the "demanding moral decision" which is a decision between "man by nature good" and "man by nature evil;" between theology and atheism, between "good and evil" and between "God and Satan."
CHAPTER TWO ENDNOTES

1. Schmitt sought to establish this perspective on his own works with the re-issue of *Der Begriff des Politischen* (1932 edition) in 1963 with his remarks that he had in mind a "purely juridical" understanding of the *jus publicum Europaeum* (*BP*, 13) and that his concept of the enemy is not granted any primacy in such an undertaking (*BP*, 14-6). Schmitt made a similar effort in 1970 in *Politische Theologie II: Die Legende von der Erlidigung jeder Politische Theologie* (*PT II*, 101).

See also Schwab, 1976, 3-16 and Schwab, 1996, ix-xxxii. Why Schmitt sought to establish this "sanitized" and "academic" perspective on his own works can be understood first and foremost by noting the simple fact that Schmitt wanted to distance himself from his own decision of 1933 (to support the Nazis). Beyond simple historical revisionism and self-serving forgetfulness, however, lies the fact that the same opportunity did not exist in 1963 that had existed in 1933 — the opportunity to confront the "Antichrist" politically. As quick evidence of the actual consistency of Schmitt's thinking (that he persisted in appealing to political theological distinctions), we might note that even after the war, in 1949, he sees himself "persecuted by Christ's murderers" and that his "concept of the political" has now been "criminalized" by the victors (*G*, 232; also see Meier, 1994b, 328). These words do not indicate someone who has seen the errors of one's ways. In 1963, the political situation had changed and what was tolerated in public discourse had changed as well. The goal, to keep the friend-enemy distinction (and above all, the political theology which supported that distinction), current in political thinking, had not changed. It did, however, require a different rhetorical approach and appeal. The thesis that Schmitt's "granting primacy to the concept of the 'enemy'" is of paramount importance to
his theorizing beyond the "historical moment" of 1933 is the object of our current undertaking. At the same time, we must recognize that Schmitt's deceptive remarks in 1963 and 1970 nonetheless are true in the strictly literal sense. First, God is supremely sovereign and hence is granted "primacy" ahead of the concept of the enemy. Enmity arises from God's commandments, specifically, the fact that after the Fall, God decrees, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed" (Genesis, 3:15). Second, Schmitt himself makes us aware of the "irony" to his professed juridical intentions and the unique nature of his conception of "juridical science:"

I have always spoken and written as a jurist, and actually, in consequence, I have spoken and written only to jurists and for jurists. My great misfortune was that the jurists of my time had all become positivistic legal-administrative technicians ("positivischen Gesetzeshandhabungstechnikern") who were deeply ignorant and uncultured; at best, they were naïve Goethe enthusiasts or neutralizing humanitarians (G, 17).

2. In addition to the elaborated difficulties, one should also note another overwhelming difficulty to McCormick's analysis which also reveals his style of argument. McCormick slips in the impressive sounding phrase "aestheticizing of the fear-evoking quality of domination by a deliberated Hobbesian state" without clarifying the relationship of Hobbes and liberalism, and of the different views of Strauss and Schmitt to the relationship of Hobbes to the liberalism of Spinoza, Locke, Voltaire, Mill or Constant.

3. Without attempting to make sense of the disjunction to which he draws attention, McCormick writes: "even in much of Schmitt's post-World War II writings, he is preoccupied with the notion
of the *Katechon*, a medieval concept of the force, embodied either in an institution or a person, that can hold off the coming of the Antichrist. Schmitt considers the tradition of European jurisprudence and even himself in his “defense” of it against positivist law as examples of a *Katechon*" (McCormick, 1996b, 112). McCormick’s explanation of how these “theological” elements are present throughout Schmitt’s writings — first as “Nietzschean myth” and then, after World War II as “genuine” — does not hold water.


5. Nietzsche is even more explicit in the aphorism which precedes his claim that “religions are destroyed by a belief in morality” when he writes: “Christianity should have made the innocence of man an article of faith — men would have become gods” (Nietzsche, 1968, 94). No clearer contrast could be hoped for which reveals what separates Schmitt’s political theology, his belief in providence and Original Sin from the “atheism” of philosophers. To presume the “innocence” of human nature is the prerequisite for making man supremely self-reliant or in Nietzsche’s estimation, for making man god-like.

6. Schmitt identifies his *Vorgebot* as the defining characteristic of his thought in writing his own epithet: “*Carl Schmitt άναγκα ζωμενος; der Mann der blinden Vorgebote*” (G, 23). Schmitt identifies himself in his personal notebooks as “the man of blind anticipatory faith” in explicit contrast to the platonic καλδς ὁ κίνητος and πάντα τολμητέον (the platonic conception of the "beautiful (or excellent) adventurer" and “daring man”) (G, 23).

7. Already in 1914, in *Der Wert des Staates und die Bedeutung des Einzelnen [The Value of the State and the Meaning of the Individual] Schmitt emphasized the moral superiority of the state
over liberal individualism's emphasis on the autonomy of the self. Schmitt put forth in 1914 that
the state embodied a "higher moral purpose" which relegated individual freedom to a secondary
status. By this early, rudimentary construction Schmitt meant to emphasize that the state drew its
authority from a "higher law" which existed prior to the state. Schmitt himself was vague as to
what this higher law was — it was not simply equivalent to Catholic Natural Law, for example.
But he was clear that the state existed to realize moral right, that it did not receive its authority
merely from seizing power, and that likewise, it did not exist for the sake of maximizing
individual freedom (see WS, 10, 52, 69 and 101; also see Bendersky, 1983, 10-12).

8. While we shall discuss below the misleading translation of Schmitt's *Die
g este s geschichtliche Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus* (which is translated as the doubly
misleading *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, see below, Endnote 17), we shall note that
Schmitt wavered between the title *Die moralische Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus* and *Die
g este s geschichtliche Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus*. Both Schmitt and his editor at
Duncker & Humblot, Ludwig Feuchtwanger, regretted using *geistgeschichtliche* in the title but
feared using *moralische* would prevent the book reaching a larger public by making Schmitt's
analysis seem hopelessly old-fashioned. As well, Schmitt feared that changing the title would
hold up publication at a crucial time (Schmitt to Feuchtwanger, 8 December 1925, quoted in
Kennedy, 1985, xv-xvi). Nonetheless, a letter from Feuchtwanger to Schmitt has been preserved
and reprinted in Kennedy's introduction to her translation of *The Crisis of Parliamentary
Democracy*. Feuchtwanger wrote to Schmitt after the second edition of that book appeared in
1926, that "in spite of being well-worn, *moral* says more in this connection than intellectual-
historical (*geistgeschichtliche*) and almost anticipates the result. The word allows the
endangered prestige of contemporary parliamentarism to shine through already. If we speak about the ‘moral’ situation of a public institution — and that as a title, too — then where the journey takes us is very clearly said. Intellectual-historical ("geistegeschichtliche") is too thin, and as you say, it has been compromised by literary historians." (Feuchtwanger to Schmitt, 14 May 1926, quoted in Kennedy, 1985, xvi; emphasis added to last sentence).

9. While McCormick is right to emphasize the importance of "Technik," "Technizität" and "Technologie" in Schmitt's writings, Schmitt makes clear his intentions by entitling the central chapter of his work on Daubler "Das geistige Problem Europas" ("The Spiritual Problem of Europe"). For a perceptive critique of the amorphous quality of "technology" and "technique" in Schmitt's thought, and McCormick's treatment thereof, see Bill Scheuerman's review of McCormick's book (forthcoming in European Journal of Philosophy). As Scheuerman notes, "technology' refers to many 'social practices' and accompanying modes of thought
[McCormick, 1997b, (312)], and at various points these practices are described as including modern capitalism, formal law, bureaucracy, as well 'technocracy.' The hegemony of the natural sciences, technical (or instrumental) rationality, and formal rationality also constitute elements of the 'technology' criticized by Schmitt.... McCormick's tendency to clump these different phenomena together, though mirroring Schmitt's own ambiguous use of the term 'technics,' and 'technicity,' leads him to obscure crucial elements in Schmitt's theory." (Scheuerman, 1998, 2-3)

10. The question of Schmitt's indebtedness to Weber is a moot point. In his Against Politics as Technology, McCormick claims Schmitt is at the minimum indirectly indebted to Weber, especially for his Nietzschean understanding and propagation of myth (McCormick, 1997b, 115). However, only a few years before, in the introduction to his translation of "The Age of
Neutralizations and Depoliticizations," McCormick made the opposite claim (McCormick, 1993b, 123).

11. I would like to thank Peter Hauber for helping me work through Schmitt’s Latin citations.

12. As Heinrich Meier has pointed out, Paul’s First Letter to the Thessalonians is particularly relevant to a large section of the “apocalyptic tradition because it is the only place in the Bible where ‘peace and security’ are explicitly linked together in terms of the Antichrist’s appearance” (Meier, 1994b, 37)

13. In reference to this passage and its significance to the apocalyptic tradition, see Meier, 1994b, 212-13.

14. We can elaborate Schmitt’s conception of history and the “historical sense” in contrast to Hegel’s in the following manner. While we must wait for Schmitt to develop his critique of Hegel which is not fully undertaken until after The Concept of the Political, we can contrast the two theorists as follows. Schmitt was ambivalent towards Hegel’s philosophy of history. On the one hand, Schmitt elaborated within Hegel’s Philosophy of Right what he took to be Hegel’s concept of enmity as the determining feature of history and politics. On the other hand, Schmitt was deeply disturbed by what he took to be Hegel’s philosophic atheism. Already in his The Spiritual-Historical Situation of Contemporary Parliamentarism, Schmitt had remarked regarding Hegel that his thought more resembled the liberal-democratic Weltanschauung in regard to the crucial respect of choosing to understand man’s fallen state as only being in need of education to overcome its deficiencies: “For the actions of people, there is always the argument that the highest level of consciousness can and must exercise dominion over the lower. In political and practical terms that is the equivalent of a rationalist educational dictator. But
Hegelianism, like every rationalist system, thus negates the individual as accidental and inessential, and elevates the whole systematically into an absolute.... The world soul that Hegel saw riding by in Jena in 1806 was a soldier, not an Hegelian. It was the representative of the alliance between philosophy and the saber but only from the side of the saber. But it was Hegelians, conscious of knowing their own time correctly, who demanded a political dictatorship in which they would naturally become the dictators. In no way different from Fichte, they 'were ready to prove to the world that their view was infallible.' That gave them the right to dictatorship" (CPD, 58). The distinction between Hegel and Hegelians elaborating a "rationalist-educational dictatorship" because of the "timeliness" of their rationalism and Schmitt's defense of dictatorship in light of the demanding moral decision regarding friend and enemy ultimately is what supports his describing himself as a Christian Epimetheus and the "Weltgeist" of Hegel as the Heraklitean Epimetheus Hegel in his Glossarium and other writings (see G, 27, 107, 210-11).

15. McCormick, for example, repeatedly emphasizes Schmitt's "despair" and "horror," words which are on the surface very appropriate. However, they also intimate an affinity for Heideggerian existentialism and Heidegger's ontic categories of Dasein's "Gefallenheit (fallenness)," "Angst," and "Sorge" (concern). Might Schmitt's "despair" (which implies hopelessness) not better be described as anger or outrage? Or even better, given Schmitt's reference to the challenge of Christ from the Gospel of Luke, as righteous indignation?

16. Although it is often "occasionally" cited, few people have devoted any detailed attention to the work itself (for a review of the scant treatment afforded Schmitt's Political Romanticism, see Bendersky, 1987c and 1988).
17. Friedrich Meinecke wrote of Schmitt’s Political Romanticism in a review published in 1920 that his “writing belongs to the most significant writings that have been written about romanticism in the last decade” (quoted in Bendersky, 1988, 465).

18. To show just how far Schmitt is from being genuinely “philosophic,” and to pick up the thread from the questions with which we ended the first chapter, one need only look at the second of the “Drei Collarien” Schmitt appended to the republication of Concept of the Political in 1963. There Schmitt only states that with the advent of Pietism, “friendship has become an increasingly private affair” (BP, 104). This is the only place in any edition of his The Concept of the Political that Schmitt considers the topic of “friends” or “friendship” by itself; and admittedly, even this discussion appears rather late in the game. Nowhere, for example, does Schmitt indicate the relevance of any of the Platonic dialogues on love or friendship — such “philosophic” considerations of friendship are entirely alien to Schmitt’s political understanding and project. Initially, Schmitt’s disregard for a philosophic consideration seems surprising, given the importance Schmitt placed on Strauss’ critique of his Der Begriff des Politischen, and Strauss’ emphasis therein on the Platonic understanding of friendship and its purposes (See Strauss, CP, 100). Why Schmitt ignored friendship is another matter to which we shall turn below and in the following chapters.

19. This passage will also be of great relevance to a section of our investigation and discussion of Schmitt’s The Concept of the Political. For the moment, let me indicate why we shall be returning to this observation of Schmitt’s. In elaborating and defending the “seriousness” of the political, and hence, elaborating and defending the “seriousness” of the friend-enemy distinction, Schmitt intimates that a world without such distinctions would be only a world of “politics-free
As Heinrich Meier, following Strauss’ criticism of Schmitt’s work, has astutely pointed out, “Schmitt does everything to make entertainment nearly disappear in a series of man’s serious pursuits; above all, the ‘etc.’ that immediately follows ‘entertainment’ glosses over the fact that ‘entertainment’ is really the ultimate term in the series, its finis ultimus” (Meier, 1995, 40).

While we shall examine the supporting arguments which Meier employs provocatively to elicit Schmitt’s moral concerns in Der Begriff des Politischen, here we should note the origins of those concerns in order to trace their development and repeated, though carefully phrased, appearance in his later writings.

20. As Schmitt had indicated but a few pages earlier, “[D]uring the nineteenth century, however, the dissolution of the old society and the development of contemporary mass democracy took place in unremitting fashion and with great rapidity. As a result, precisely that domination of the liberal bourgeoisie and its culture was eliminated. The liberal bourgeoisie was never a revolutionary for long” (PR, 13).

21. Heinrich Meier wrote: “Is not the commandment of historical action also a commandment to be courageous? The life-and-death encounter of the enemy demands courage. Whoever wishes to fulfill his ‘duty to the State’ in times of impending civil war will not manage without it. The wars, crusades, martyrizations, and revolutions that world history has in store, to say nothing of the ‘bloody battle of decision’ that cannot be avoided forever, seem to make courage a compulsory requirement. It may not be sufficient in order to be victorious in the battle against Satan, but is courage not necessary in order to begin it? And what is one to say of courage with regard to the bourgeois: have not his most severe critics, from Rousseau to Nietzsche, from...
Hegel to Lenin, from Sorel to Jünger, confronted him with courage, the virtue he negates first of all? Political theology makes courage indispensable" (Meier, 1994b, 35)

22. Karl Löwith developed his criticism of Schmitt's “decisionism” based on his understanding of Schmitt's thought as “occasionalism” as derived from Schmitt’s own Political Romanticism. (Karl Löwith, 1993, 137; 1935, 101). This in turn is one of the chief arguments which supports the claim in Schmitt scholarship that Schmitt, as a political existentialist, fell prey to the very phenomenon he analyzed, that is, Schmitt does not so much excoriate “subjectified occasionalism” but makes it his own cause. On this point, Stephen Holmes makes a similar charge regarding Schmitt's Political Romanticism (Holmes, 1993, 44). While we shall pay closer attention to Löwith's analysis of just this question in our elaboration of Schmitt's Concept of the Political, it is also important to note some of the more careless equivocations made regarding Schmitt's later volte face based on misreading his Political Romanticism. In this context, see, for example, Gordon Craig’s misleading claim in his Germany: 1866 - 1945 (Craig, 1980, 494).

23. Schmitt also renders occasio as “occasion,” or Anlaß (cause, not in the sense of a causal relationship, but in the sense of an occasion which gives rise to something), or Gelegenheit (occasion or opportunity).

24. Here we should note also in light of Schmitt's use of “Gelegenheit” that Schmitt does not and cannot consider the word philosophically in any helpful manner. The occasio is after all a product of modern philosophy. Schmitt could have availed himself of a particularly rich set of observations in Machiavelli, especially in light of Machiavelli’s discussion of conquering “fortuna” and the opportunities provided by “accidente” — others’ misfortunes provide the “occasion” for the exercise of “virtù.” While Schmitt values Machiavelli as a patriot, moralist
and technician, (and he even names his home in Plettenberg “San Casciano”) he does not consider him as a genuine theorist or philosopher. We shall more fully discuss the case of Machiavelli and Schmitt below and why Machiavelli actually presents a strong counter-example which challenges Schmitt’s theorizing (see Chapter Three, 167-72, and Chapter Three, Endnote 19). For a consideration which attempts to investigate Machiavelli’s “accidente” from the perspective of Schmitt’s analysis of the exception, see McCormick, 1993a. While McCormick’s analysis is helpful, he does not consider what separates Schmitt from Machiavelli on the most fundamental level which is their diametrically opposed positions on the status of revelation and religion.

25. Here two general observations are in order regarding Schmitt’s overall intention. One of Schmitt’s favourite phrases came from Theodor Daubler’s poem “Sang an Palermo”: “The enemy is our own question as a figure/And he will hunt us, and we him, to the same end.”

Second, Schmitt’s “academic” discussion of the “metaphysical and moral basis” of romanticism reminds one of Hamann’s charge against Kant’s metaphysics which Schmitt will explicitly refer to in “The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations”: “God has ceased to be a Being, and is now merely a conception (“eine Vorstellung”)” (BP, 89; AND, 137). To further the characterization and implication I have made in the body of the text regarding Schmitt’s early intentions, his analysis and diagnosis of the “moral meaning of the age” is not simply an academic exercise, but is meant to sharpen a specific set of intellectual and moral understandings of the situation as a means of recognizing what is to be done. The secularization of the age, and not its “Technik,” “Technizität,” or “Technologie” however narrowly or broadly construed, is what is at issue for Schmitt. As for the importance of Daubler’s poetry, particularly this couplet
from Sang an Palermo, see his Glossarium (G, 213, 217).

26. As Schmitt further notes in following Novalis' cited designation, "this form of words ... recaptures the linguistic sense of the word [and] is the best characterization of the specifically romantic relationship to the world" (PR, 20). As a writer, Schmitt not only lacked the usual vices of academic German but also was a lucid prose stylist. For someone capable of such flourishing prose, he was also very precise with his use of words. Hence, it is important to note that he repeats his assessment of romanticism on this particular point 50 pages later: "Everything is 'the beginning of an endless novel' (Novalis). Here the word romantic once more becomes true to its etymological sense: Reality is punctuated, and every point becomes the beginning point for a novel" (PR, 74).

27. While we shall investigate both works at greater length later in this chapter, for now, we wish here merely to point out the parallel between the general romantic view which treats the world as "a never ending novel" and parliamentary government, whose chief feature is "eternal discussion" which "in contrast to the truth, means renouncing a definite result" (CPD, 35-36). In this same vein, one of Schmitt's most oft-quoted and damning charges against parliamentarism is that parliament, when confronted with the question "Christ or Barabbas?" will answer "with a proposal to adjourn or appoint a committee of investigation." (PT, 62; PT (1934), 66). It is also important to note here that while for the most part, Ellen Kennedy's translation of Die geistesgeschichtliche Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus is very reliable, Kennedy's and the MIT series editor's choice of translating the title for the work itself is highly inaccurate. Die geistesgeschichtliche Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus translates literally as The Historical-Spiritual/Intellectual Situation of Contemporary Parliamentarism. MIT and Kennedy chose the
doubly misleading The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy. Given Schmitt's emphasis on the moral meaning of the age, and its spiritual condition, Geist cannot simply be translated as “intellectual.” I have chosen to emphasize translating the word as “spiritual” given what I take to be Schmitt’s demonstrable intent in writing the critiques which he does, even when investigating the most institutional features of the political structure of liberal-democracy. In addition to this, however, Schmitt does not use the word “crisis,” and he speaks of “Parlamentarismus” and does not simply conflate “democracy” with “liberalism” or with “parliamentary practice” to the exclusion of all other ways in which democratic impulses express themselves. Indeed, in a very crucial sense, Schmitt views liberalism and parliamentary practice as thwarting the expression of democratic aspirations. To announce, therefore, “the crisis of parliamentary democracy” without allowing the work to first develop those themes on its own terms is somewhat disingenuous. This is particularly made clear by Schmitt's “Der Gegensatz von Parlamentarismus und moderner Massendemokratie” (1926) which he included in his Positionen und Begriffe: im Kampf mit Weimar — Genf — Versailles, 1923 — 1939 (PB, 60-74) and which was included in the second edition of Die geistesgeschichtliche Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus as a new preface to that work when it was reissued in 1926. However, because the work was published in English as The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy, all references to it will be cited as CPD. All references to Die geistesgeschichtliche Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus will be cited as GLP and within the text of this thesis will be referred to as The Spiritual-Historical Situation of Contemporary Parliamentarism. The reason that is necessary to make this observation here is that within the pages of Political Romanticism, Schmitt observes that both the inability to make decisions and the susceptibility of being overpowered by emotional impressions is meaningless
when only understood “psychologically or sociologically.” These phenomena are only meaningful for understanding romanticism if understood in “the context of the spiritual situation.” [geistes Situation] (PR, 51).

28. Ultimately, for Schmitt, this is not an apt or accurate characterization: when push comes to shove, liberal democracies will appropriate and “hyper universalize” the term “humanity” in their battles against their enemies. But this liberal democratic “hypocrisy” not only has disastrous consequences, as we will see in our examination of The Concept of the Political, but reveals in the highest degree the fraudulent, deceitful claims of liberal-democrats “to do away with politics” (see CP, 58-68).

29. See especially Holmes on the thesis that for Schmitt, all of western history is a colossal mistake (Holmes, 1989, 236-37; 1993, 48-54). Schmitt does not simply view the history of western metaphysics or politics as a “colossal mistake,” although such a judgment is understandable. Rather, as will emerge from our analysis, Schmitt views history as a series of providential struggles; hence the recurring set of “heroes” and “villain” within his own writings. Of course, occupying an ambiguous position within his historicized conception is Thomas Hobbes.

30. See CP, 53-5. On this point especially, Schmitt appropriates out of context and makes his own a saying of Proudhon’s: Wer Menschheit sagt, will betrügen. (“Whoever invokes humanity wants to deceive”) (BP, 55).

31. Especially for purposes of explicating Schmitt’s appraisal of German socialism and its “humanitarian impulse,” Golo Mann has written in revealing fashion that “the German Social Democrats were democrats as well as socialists, and they did not use Marx’s phrase ‘dictatorship
of the proletariat' in their programmes. They cared about the rights of free men and did not doubt that social justice was compatible with human freedom. In this respect they were liberal; also in that they adopted an indifferent but not a hostile attitude towards religion which they regarded as a private matter" (Golo Mann, 1968, 217). For Schmitt, of course, treating religion "as a private matter" is a "hostile attitude."

32. Schmitt repeatedly emphasizes this point that while the Catholic Church has been the object of attempted "romanticizations," it is not itself "romantic" or susceptible to such efforts (PR, 50, 86, 90 and RC, 19-20).

33. On the point of Tertullian's decree that we should believe divine commands not because they are good, but because God commands them and Schmitt's invocation of Tertullian, we should note also one of the many points of separation between political theology and philosophy. Especially in the case of Nietzsche, a clear contrast again can be made with regard to Tertullian. Schmitt invokes Tertullian at the moments when he most clearly wants to reveal his own position; Nietzsche, on the other hand has nothing but contempt for Tertullian, and often explicitly ridicules Tertullian's "advice" on acting from faith as a means of denigrating positions he finds repulsive (see, for example, Nietzsche, 1968, 107).

34. The translator makes no note of this or other significant changes between the first edition of 1919 and the second edition of 1925 upon which the English translation is based, but compare PR (1919), 84 with PR, 96.

35. Schmitt states this explicitly in his Festschrift contribution to Ernst Jünger and in The Concept of the Political (see CP, 30-1).

36. The original German text is both more striking, but also revealing of a potential ambiguity:
"Souverän ist, wer über den Ausnahmezustand entscheidet" (PT(1934), 13). This line could potentially be interpreted as "sovereign is whoever decides on the exception." On this point especially, see David Dyzenhaus, 1997, 42-3.

37. In the original 1922 edition of Politische Theologie: Vier Kapitel zur Lehre von der Souveränität Schmitt indicated opposite the title page that "the four chapters of Political Theology are being written simultaneously with an essay 'The Political Idea of Catholicism'" (PT(1922)). This reference was later omitted from the 1934 re-issue of Political Theology which included a new "preface" which we shall turn to before considering The Concept of the Political in Chapter Three below. On the relationship between the two texts of 1922, see Ulmen 1997, xiv and Footnotes 20 and 21, and Meier 1994b, 56-7, Footnote 12.

One note must be made here regarding the translation. While Schwab’s translation of Politische Theologie is in general better than his translation of Der Begriff des Politischen, it does suffer from several difficulties, not the least of which is his mistranslation of the title of the book! The subtitle to Schmitt’s Politische Theologie is Vier Kapitel zur Lehre von der Souveränität which Schwab translates as Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty. Schmitt’s choice of words is idiosyncratic but important and revealing. He does not use the word "Begriff" or "Vorstellung" ("concept" or "conception," respectively), but "Lehre." While "Lehre" is susceptible of being translated as "theory," "teaching," or "lesson," it certainly does not mean "concept." Given the etymological relationship of "Lehre" to "lehren" (to teach) and "Lehrer" (teacher), the meaning Schmitt most likely has in mind in using the word "Lehre" in the subtitle Vier Kapitel zur Lehre von der Souveränität is "teaching" as will become evident from the intent of Schmitt’s "four chapters" and from the use of the word itself within the work.
But by any account, one cannot translate “Lehre” as Schwab has done as “concept.” Given the polemical and pedagogic intentions of his work, a better translation therefore is *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Teaching of Sovereignty*. Schwab makes a similar mistake 11 years later in 1996 when he translates Schmitt’s *Der Leviathan in der Staatslehre des Thomas Hobbes* as *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes* (see McCune, 1997, 612). The significance of these objections is that, as Schmitt himself indicates in the first paragraph of *Political Theology*, in setting out the definition of sovereignty, (“Souverän ist, wer über den Ausnahmezustand entscheidet”) he states that it can only be apprehended as a borderline-concept (“Grenzbegriff”) (*PT* (1934) 13; *PT* (1922) 9). Hence, just as we shall see in taking up the question of *Der Begriff des Politischen*, in taking up the question of sovereignty, one is immediately confronted by the question of how sovereignty is to be understood or delimited simply as a “concept.”

38. I am particularly indebted to David Dyzenhaus for his guidance in helping me to understand Schmitt’s constitutional theorizing, and I am especially thankful for his drawing my attention to this crucial passage in Schmitt’s *Verfassungslehre*. My analysis differs from his with respect to what Schmitt means by the political, why the political is “the total,” and how Schmitt’s critique of and attacks on “liberal humanitarianism” is incorporated into his political and constitutional theory from the standpoint of political theology. In this respect, Schmitt’s *Verfassungslehre* is incomplete for purposes of developing this approach.

39. Schmitt will make this linkage more explicit in his “little pamphlet” *Staat, Bewegung und Volk* (“State, Movement and People”) in 1934. The overtones of “acclamation” being better understood in terms of the Nuremberg Rallies rather than the deliberative, public spirited
assembly of the Athenian demos or the Roman conception of the res publica, and the fact that Schmitt was anti-Semitic make his arguments here potentially disturbing and repugnant. However, a "genuine" connection between Schmitt and National Socialism can only ultimately be proven if what occupies the center of Schmitt's thought is nationalism, race or das Volk. That this is not the case is one of the core questions of this thesis. We shall discuss further Schmitt's hatred for the Jews and his original support of Hitlerism in our conclusion.

40. Schmitt's reflections in his Glossarium again prove an invaluable source of insight which more fully reveal and further the arguments and ideas provided in his works from 1916 to the 1951. Writing of the concept of the Katechon and Donoso Cortés in 1947, Schmitt claims "I believe in the Katechon; it is for me the single possibility for understanding and making meaningful the history of Christ. The Pauline secret teaching is not more so and even just as secretive as every Christian existence. Whoever today does not themselves know something in concreto of the Katechon cannot understand this position.... Every great king of the Christian Middle Ages possessed complete belief in and full consciousness of the Katechon ("mit vollem Glauben und Bewußtsein für den Katechon"). It is totally impossible to write a history of the Middle Ages without seeing and understanding the centrality of this factum.... Donoso Cortés is theologically divided because he remained unaware of this concept" (G, 63). Schmitt explains "poor Donoso" ("Armer Donoso") remained trapped in the labyrinthine maze of absolute versus relative natural law, and hence remained unclear regarding the legitimate basis of decision because "his political theory lacked an adequate concept of the Katechon" (G, 70).

41. As in 1937 when Schmitt wrote the preliminary essay "The State as Mechanism in Descartes and Hobbes," and as in 1938, when he wrote The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas
Hobbes, in 1949, once again, Schmitt declares that “the most important sentence of Thomas Hobbes remains: Jesus is the Christ” (G, 243; L, 83 and 92-3).
Chapter Three: The Concept of the Political

Whence spring those "fables and endless genealogies," and "unprofitable questions" and "words which spread like a cancer?" From all these, when the Apostle would restrain us, he expressly names philosophy as that which he would have us be on our guard against.... He had been at Athens, and had in his conversations with its philosophers become acquainted with that human wisdom which pretends to know the truth, whilst it only corrupts it, and is itself divided into its own manifold heresies, by the variety of its mutually repugnant sects. What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there between the Academy and the Church? And what between heretics and Christians?

Tertullian, On Prescription Against Heretics

Introduction to Carl Schmitt's "Der Begriff des Politischen"

In writing a new introductory preface to the 1934 edition of Political Theology, Carl Schmitt sweepingly declared "we have come to realize that the political is the total" ("Inzwischen haben wir das Politische als das Total erkannt...") (PT, 2; PT (1934), 7). The "in-between" period ("Inzwischen") during which Schmitt makes his journey to the knowledge that "the political is the total" is explicitly demarcated by March, 1922 (when Political Theology first appeared), October, 1929 (when his essay "The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations" was first published), and November, 1933 when he returned to change the text and write a new preface to Political Theology upon its second appearance (PT (1934), 7-8). In his new preface, Schmitt directly signalled the importance of the theological to the political with the following remark about the similarity of the "unpolitical theology" of Protestantism and political liberalism: Protestant theology conceives of God as the "wholly other," just as liberalism conceives of state and politics as the "wholly other."
As a direct result of his belief, or what Schmitt would consider knowledge, that the political is the total, Schmitt states that "we know that any decision about whether something is unpolitical is always a political decision, irrespective of who decides and what reasons are advanced. This also holds for the question whether a particular theology is a political or an unpolitical theology" (PT, 2; PT[1934], 7; Schmitt’s emphasis). Implicitly, Schmitt’s journey to the knowledge that the political is the total is revealed to be a journey within a journey. The most important movement of Schmitt’s thinking takes place between the original appearance of his essay “Der Begriff des Politischen” in 1927, the re-issue of Der Begriff des Politischen in book form in 1932, and the final, authoritative version of Der Begriff des Politischen which appeared in 1933.² Schmitt cannot confidently make his claim that the political is total until he has come to terms with the "concept of the political.” He cannot assert the political basis of decision without first grasping the political as the most important form of knowledge, albeit a unique form of knowledge.

We have seen in the preceding chapters that, with every publication of Schmitt’s, significant changes to his thought had been signalled by additions and deletions to his crucial texts between publications. Schmitt re-issued Political Romanticism in 1925, The Spiritual-Historical Situation of Contemporary Parliamentarism in 1926 and Political Theology in 1934, and in every case, he refined and deepened his political theological aims either through deft editorial work or by giving that work a more explicit direction with important new prefatory remarks. On this curious feature alone, we might rightly wonder of the significance of a work which was issued three times, each time with significant additions and deletions, and in the case of its final edition in 1933, was issued as the direct result of criticisms levelled at the political theologian by a philosopher (and as Schmitt himself will emphasize) a Jew.³ In 1933, Schmitt produced The Concept of the Political, which had only
been re-issued a year earlier in 1932, for the third time in direct response to Leo Strauss' criticisms of Schmitt which had appeared in 1932 in the Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik.\(^4\)

As a means of intimating the significance of both The Concept of the Political and Schmitt's and Strauss' interaction, the following example demonstrates the deepening of Schmitt's theorizing regarding the political in response to Leo Strauss' "Remarks." In 1926 (in The Spiritual-Historical Situation of Contemporary Parliamentarism), and in 1927 and 1932 (in the first two versions of The Concept of the Political), Schmitt had spoken both of the political as a "relatively independent domain" and "as one domain among others" alongside other "various spheres" and "relatively independent domains of human activity and thought" such as economics, science, aesthetics and morality. He also wrote of the political as "independent" and as "not equivalent and analogous to those other distinctions" (CPD, 11; BP (1927), 3,4; BP, 26-7; CP, 25-7). In 1933, Schmitt now writes of the political distinction simply as "independent" ("Jedenfalls, ist sie selbstständig...") (BP (1933), 7; Schmitt's emphasis on "independent"). Strauss drew Schmitt's attention to the status of the political in this and other respects with the following remark. Noting that Schmitt himself seemed to succumb to the liberal tendency to conceive of all "spheres of human activity" as autonomous or "relatively autonomous" domains or as "provinces of culture," Strauss wrote that Schmitt "expresses himself in such a way that to a superficial reader he may seem to intend to bring the political to recognition in a way similar to the way liberalism has brought to recognition the autonomy of the aesthetic, of morality, of science, of economics. His intention, it would appear, was to counter liberalism, but in the pattern of the liberal striving after autonomy. How little that is Schmitt's intention is shown even by the quotation-marks with which he encloses the word "autonomy" in the phrase "'autonomy' of the various fields of human life" (Strauss, CP, 84-5).\(^5\)
What a “superficial reader” might miss, but what Schmitt certainly did not miss in Strauss’ “Remarks” is the fact that he himself did not put quotation marks around the term “autonomy” in 1927 in order to signal his derogation of the “liberal striving after autonomy.” In 1933 when Schmitt emphasizes that the political, unlike other “relatively independent characteristic features,” is simply independent, he drops from the text all references to the putative “autonomy” of the political which had made it seem like other liberal domains or could lead to confusion as to where he stood on the matter (compare BP (1927), 29 with BP, 71). Indeed, Schmitt deletes the discussion with which he had begun the 1927 and 1932 editions of The Concept of the Political from the 1933 text entirely—in 1933, Schmitt eliminates the introductory section from the text, and deletes the first half of the first paragraph which had previously begun the second section. The 1933 edition cuts to the heart of the matter immediately and begins not with a discussion of the relationship of the political to the state, or of the relationship of the political to other “relatively independent domains” of human activity, but with the simple statement, “the actual political distinction is the distinction between friend and enemy. This distinction gives every human action and motive its political meaning; ultimately, every human action and motive traces back to this distinction” (BP (1933), 7; emphasis added). Only after asserting the paramount political status of the friend-enemy distinction does Schmitt discuss its relationship to other “relatively independent characteristics” (BP (1933), 7).

However, as a result of Strauss’ prodding, Schmitt is far more clear about the nature of his attack on liberalism and emphasizing what separates his conception of the political from the liberal striving after autonomy.

In order that both “superficial readers” and attentive readers like Strauss would not miss his real position, Schmitt drives home the incommensurable situation regarding the political. Schmitt
makes his changes clear with regard to the supposed "autonomy" of other "provinces of culture." In the area of aesthetics, an area which we explored from the standpoint of Schmitt's critique of romanticism in Chapter Two (see above, 64-5 and PR, 16), Schmitt had written in terms of its "autonomy" that "liberalism not only recognizes with self-evident logic the autonomy of different human realms but drives them toward specialization and even toward complete isolation. That art is the daughter of freedom, that aesthetic value judgment is absolutely autonomous, that artistic genius is sovereign is entirely taken for granted" (BP, 71). In 1933, Schmitt follows Strauss' veiled critical advice in order that no one should confuse his usage of the word "autonomy" with liberal aspirations. Schmitt now writes that "it seems entirely self-evident to liberalism that art is a 'daughter of freedom,' that aesthetic value judgments are 'autonomous,' that artistic genius is 'sovereign,' and that the work of art is 'without objective intention' ("tendenzlos")7 and has its 'purpose in itself" (BP (1933), 53). Schmitt not only adds the statement that in the romantic-liberal conception of the world, the work of art is "without objective intention" and has its "purpose in itself" which complements and furthers his analysis of aesthetic romanticism. For emphasis which no one could miss, he puts no less than five negative liberal ascriptions in quotation marks to set off the liberal Weltanschauung from his own position. One can speak of the autonomy or "relative independence" of various realms of human endeavor only if the political is renounced and there is not a concept or cause which grasps us whole and confronts us with an unavoidable political decision regarding friends and enemies. To concentrate simply on the "autonomy" of the political means that the political cannot be the total, i.e., it cannot be articulated as a pervasive, all-encompassing or basic attribute of human concourse. Here as in other areas crucial to Schmitt's articulation of the political, Strauss' remark upon what separates Schmitt from the liberal striving after autonomy forces Schmitt
to reveal his position. Nonetheless, Schmitt's clarity in the 1933 edition of *The Concept of the Political* only confirms the characterizations we have articulated in Schmitt's thinking prior to 1933. Strauss' remarks have the effect of forcing Schmitt to think the "political" more carefully, consistently and forcefully than he had previously, but his basic intention and the understanding which he deploys were already present. Strauss' remarks have the effect of making Schmitt's concept of the political consistent with what Strauss detected as Schmitt's basic veiled position.

That Schmitt put so much store in Strauss' criticisms should not only be evident just from the above example, nor from what will unfold in this chapter. While Schmitt's response to Strauss' criticisms must be borne out within the following argument, nonetheless, we also have overwhelming personal reports of Schmitt's indebtedness to Strauss. Heinrich Meier has remarked that after publication of his *Carl Schmitt, Leo Strauss und "Der Begriff des Politischen:" Zu einem Dialog unter Abwenden* in 1988, Günther Krauss, a student of Schmitt's in 1932-33, told him that Schmitt had said of Strauss' "Remarks:" "you've got to read that. He saw through me and X-rayed me as nobody else has" (Meier, 1995, xvii). What is remarkable is that for fifty-five years, both in Europe and in North America, the existence of the third edition of *The Concept of the Political* went unnoticed. Not until Heinrich Meier's work on the three editions and Schmitt's and Strauss' "hidden dialogue" was any attention given to the 1933 text. Yet, viewed from the proper perspective, the evidence of this edition's importance, and the importance of Strauss' comments to Schmitt, should have been fairly obvious. Even in the English speaking world, Schmitt insisted to George Schwab, the English translator of *The Concept of the Political*, that Strauss' commentary on the text be included with the 1976 English translation.⁸ The question could and should have been asked, if Strauss' criticisms were this important to Schmitt, did nothing come of them?
However, that so little attention has been given to the underlying political theological intention of Schmitt's thought as a whole or to the specific nature of the significance of *The Concept of the Political* should not be surprising. We have already noted several of the compelling and less than compelling reasons for Schmitt's dissembling and for the veiling of his basic position which have led almost all scholars astray. As with the concepts of sovereignty and legitimacy, so with the concepts of the political and the friend-enemy distinction, Schmitt gives no quarter to the demands of "objectivity," "scholarly neutrality" or "normative rationality" (*BP*, 29-31; see as well *PT*, 11, 32-3, 46, 56 and *RK*, 35-6, 39-40 and 56). Such an approach is anathema to Schmitt's basic position.

As Strauss noted in the following characterization of Schmitt's own formulations, "all political concepts, ideas and words have a polemical meaning; they have a concrete opposition in view, they are tied to the concrete situation..." (*CP*, 81-2; see *CP*, 30; *BP*, 31). For Schmitt, there can only be politics between persons in terms of their own volition, self-understanding, insights and actions. There cannot be politics between ideas, laws or philosophic-contemplative systems. Ideas, to borrow Richard Weaver's phrase, have consequences, but only to the extent that belief in their truth makes one a partisan of their cause. Already in 1926, in the re-issue of *The Spiritual-Historical Situation of Contemporary Parliamentarism*, Schmitt had made this crucial perspective on the political eminently clear: "people do not face each other as abstractions, but as politically interested and politically determined persons, as citizens, governors and governed, politically allied or opponents — in any case, therefore, in political categories" (*CPD*, 11). Aside from the timeliness or untimeliness of remarks made in the 1933 edition of *The Concept of the Political* which would have made later reference to it or republication of it highly controversial, or Schmitt's later "purely juridical" professions, we should take heed of the following imperative Schmitt makes in his
Glossarium which provides the greatest clarity for apprehending both his deceptions and his basic approach to the political: "Do not give your enemies the chance to grasp you..." (G, 210). In a work which Schmitt issued three times and which is explicitly devoted to the "political," should we be surprised if Schmitt not only confronts and attacks his own enemies, but does his utmost to veil his own basic position in the name of mere "scholarly interest"? In light of Schmitt's own insistence that all knowledge arises from and gains its meaning from polemical confrontation, should we not be on the lookout for the "one case that matters" as it unfolds through Schmitt's own polemic and from his profession of enmity? And can we not learn the most about Schmitt by identifying his enemies and specifically from identifying what makes them his enemies?

As Strauss himself noted, The Concept of the Political already had a "history of development" which preceded his remarks on the 1932 edition. In order to develop the themes of this work as robustly as possible, we shall proceed as follows. First, in light of some of the significant changes Schmitt made between 1927 and 1932, we shall develop and articulate an overview of the structure, conceptual definitions and intention of the 1932 edition of The Concept of the Political. Second, we shall turn our attention to Schmitt's essay "The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations" which Schmitt included with the original 1932 edition of The Concept of the Political. Then, we shall consider Strauss' criticisms and what makes Strauss' understanding of Schmitt's "little work" superior to Karl Löwith's understanding of Schmitt's basic aims. We shall conclude our treatment of The Concept of the Political with an examination of the most significant changes which appeared in the 1933 edition and what these changes mean. To set the tone for our interpretation of The Concept of the Political, we should also take heed of the context of Schmitt’s remark in 1948 about not allowing one's enemies to grasp one's true position and self-understanding.
Following his discussion of fending off one's enemies, Schmitt distinguishes the case of the Christian Epimetheus, which is his own cause, from the Heraklitean Epimetheus Hegel with the claim that Hegel was a nihilist. In turn, he follows up on this "act" of deploying his own self-knowledge with explicit commentary on The Concept of the Political: "The enemy is our own question as a figure/And he will hunt us, and we him, to the same end (Sang an Palermo) What does this verse mean and from where does it come? An intelligence test for every reader of my little writing Concept of the Political. Whoever cannot answer this question out of their own spirit and knowledge ("aus eigenem Geist und Wissen") should guard against becoming involved with the difficult theme of that little writing" (G, 212-13). Schmitt defines himself in combat against liberalism and against the age of "neutralizations and depoliticizations." Whether fighting against pacifists, anarchists, atheists or humanitarian moralists, "Marxist socialists" or "American financiers," Schmitt does not lose sight of the fact, that for him, the most powerful and successful denial of Original Sin and God's place in the metaphysical universe is located in the liberal conquest of politics.10

The Concept of the Political

The development of The Concept of the Political is determined by Schmitt's estimation of the conceptual and strategic strength of his enemy. In 1927, Schmitt views the negation of the political as a result of the "astoundingly consistent systematics of liberal thought, a system that despite seeming setbacks ("und trotz scheinbarer Rückschläge"), is still prevalent today" ("... herrschende Systematik liberalen Denkens zu zeigen") ((BP (1927), 29; my emphasis). In 1932 and 1933, Schmitt writes of the "astoundingly consistent systematics of liberal thought, which despite all setbacks ("und trotz aller Rückschläge"), still has not been replaced in Europe today" ("...heute
in Europa noch durch kein anderes System ersetze Systematik liberalen Denkens zu zeigen") (BP, 70; BP (1933), 52; my emphasis). Liberalism, to be sure, “has not been replaced” by any other system of thinking, but it is no longer prevalent or dominant (“herrschende”); liberalism has been successfully attacked and no longer suffers only seeming setbacks (“scheinbarer Rückschlüge”) which testified more to liberalism’s resiliency “as a system of thought” than to its weaknesses — such setbacks are no longer apparent in 1932 or 1933 but are very real. Schmitt’s estimation of liberalism’s strength bears directly on the construction of his argument in all three editions; the stronger he thought his own case against liberalism, the more clear and articulate he was about the nature of his critique. In turn, Schmitt’s specific changes between 1932 and 1933 (which we will discuss below) can be attributed not simply to his “daring,” “honesty” or “visibility” vis-a-vis liberalism but to a specific set of criticisms which challenged him to be consistent with himself regarding his own basic position. Let us turn to the explication of the text.

Two fundamental themes guide Schmitt’s argument in 1927: the conception of “pure politics” and “domain thinking” (“Gebiets Denken”). Were Schmitt only interested in the phenomenon of the political in terms of “pure politics” there would have been no need for either of the later editions. Likewise, understanding the political merely as one domain among others has an almost purely rhetorical impetus and effect; Schmitt begins his explication of the political so cautiously that he seeks to make the political seem just like every other liberal parceling out of life itself in order that his concept of the political re-gain its due status. The emphasis on the domain of the political serves as camouflage. If the political is only a domain or sphere of human existence and activity, it cannot authoritatively or independently make demands on human beings or other domains of life. Given Schmitt’s estimation of liberalism’s success as a system of political thought,
especially in terms of domestic politics, Schmitt explicates the political as defensively as possible. Hence, two trends mark his explication. First, Schmitt speaks of the political "as one domain among others" and that his effort is merely directed at developing a criteria which will bring to light the political "like every independent domain" (BP (1927), 3-4). Schmitt strives at the minimum to bring the political to light as "a relatively independent domain" like the "other, relatively independent domains of the moral, aesthetic, economic, etc." (BP (1927), 3).

Second, as we noted in our introduction to Schmitt's political thinking, the concept of the friend-enemy distinction emerges in a passive, highly defensive manner. For Schmitt, politics emerges initially as the fending off of the enemy; the "real enemy" ("wirklich Feinde") always appears as the attacker and the theoretical defender of the political always appears as the attacked. (BP (1927), 4-5, 9, 17, 25 and 29). When the enemy, the "real enemy," attacks, Schmitt insists that the will to repulse him "is entirely self-evident" (BP (1927), 29-30). No thinking or explication of "one's ownmost way of life" is needed. Indeed, in the 1927 edition, while Schmitt already had stated that the enemy must be "sufficiently different and alien" so that conflict with him is possible, the enemy primarily defines itself by going over to the attack (BP (1927), 3-4, 7-9, 27-29). The enemy does not rigorously call one's ownmost way of life into question as a question — no reason is given and none is necessary for the political to take place in terms of combat and "organized violence" between friend and enemy.

In 1927, Schmitt's emphasis on "relatively independent domains" of human activity and a "purely political" conception of the enemy allow him to pursue the following line of argument. Politics emerges as entirely oriented towards foreign policy and the prosecution or avoidance of military conflict; politics is primarily the domain of statesmen, diplomats and soldiers and politics
takes place almost entirely at the level of the state’s interaction with other states. While Schmitt begins both the 1927 and 1932 editions by insisting that “the concept of the state presupposes the concept of the political,” Schmitt’s conception of the friend-enemy distinction as a domain and his “purely political” emphasis therein limit the concept of the political to the level of the state or “the organized political unit.” Within Schmitt’s initial conception of the political, war can only take place between nations (*BP* (1927), 6). In 1927, civil war or revolution are the exceptions which prove the rule to this line of thinking. Schmitt does discuss both the October Revolution in Russia and the French Revolution, but almost entirely in terms of how such events effect the state’s ability to conduct foreign policy or wage war (*BP* (1927), 6, 9, 26-7; see Meier, 1995, 21-2). The emphasis on “domains” and “pure politics” does allow Schmitt the moralist to attack liberalism specifically (also see Meier, 1995, 18-25). Already in 1927, Schmitt attacked liberalism for conceiving of politics as “negations” and “neutralizations” and as lacking a clear theory of “state and politics”: “in an overall systematic way liberal thinking ignores or avoids state and politics and moves instead in an ever typical recurring polarity of two heterogenous spheres, namely ethics and economy. The mistrust against state and politics is easily explained in terms of the principle of a system in which the individual must remain *terminus a quo* and *terminus ad quem*” (*BP* (1927), 28).13

In terms of the “purely political” conception of the friend-enemy distinction, Schmitt notes that liberal states do engage in warfare and declare individuals or groups to be “*Staatsfeinde*” or enemies of the state. However, such activities and declarations are political — no “ideal programs” or “normativities” can justify the demand for the sacrifice of life or for killing: “there is no rational goal, no norm however right, no program however ideal, no legitimacy or legality that could justify human beings’ killing one another over it” (*BP* (1927), 17). Schmitt implies that the liberal state
relies on moral categories (for example, in declaring the enemy to be "inhuman" or "barbaric") or legal categories (for example, "criminalizing" the enemy before confronting him in battle). Is this the objection of a theorist who only seeks to delimit the political purely as a concept, or is it the moral objection of a theorist who seeks to reveal the fraudulent and deceitful nature of the "systematics of liberal thinking"? While in 1927, Schmitt does not invoke the "terrible saying of Proudhon" (that "whoever invokes humanity wants to deceive" BP, 55), he does attack liberal "humanitarian morality" as the basis for the liberal "depoliticization" of the world. Liberalism purports to be a doctrine founded on the inviolable nature of individual life — no external "political" claim of duty or obedience can demand that the individual willingly sacrifice life and abandon his or her own first and foremost duty which is self-preservation. The individual must remain terminus a quo and terminus ad quem. At the same time, Schmitt detects within liberal humanitarian morality a doctrine which does indeed advance claims on the basis of its self-understood correctness and as a guardian of "humanity." The object of liberal humanitarian morality is to rid the world of divisive enmity, warfare, and the friend-enemy distinction. It is hardly accidental that the world's most powerful liberal democracy euphemistically refers to itself as the "world's policeman" and classifies its declarations of enmity and foreign military interventions as "police actions". In order for such ascriptions to be considered as more than just euphemisms, in order for policing to replace enmity and warfare, a universal form of justice and legality would have to be operative and accepted by all nations, states and legitimate human groupings. However, the implication of such an "ideal program" entails a world without politics: "should the various peoples and human groupings of the earth so unite that a war between them becomes no longer really possible, so the distinction between friend and enemy as well as the stark eventuality of warfare
ceases. There would only be economics, morality, law, art, etc. but no more politics or state” (BP (1927), 19). 14

While in 1927 Schmitt does much to register his thinly-veiled contempt for the effects of liberalism’s assault on the political, he is most concerned with drawing attention to how liberalism specifically, and the “modern onslaught against the political” in general (see also PT, 65), ignore the purely political conception of domains. Here two problems become evident which necessitate Schmitt’s abandonment of the model of “domain thinking” and “pure politics.” The movement to abolish all meaningful political distinctions seemingly flies in the face of the real world we experience in unmediated fashion: “the political world is a pluriverse, not a universe.... The political unit cannot in its essence be universal” (BP (1927), 19). It is one thing to acknowledge enmity as a guiding force in the relationship between states and “organized political units.” However, the situation is changed when the modern enemy of enmity abandons the “domain” of “pure politics” and draws on “morality and other categories.” Here, the modern onslaught against the political “goes beyond the political” and turns the theoretical and practical agents of the friend-enemy distinction into “inhuman monsters that must not only be fended off but definitively annihilated, and thus is no longer an enemy that can be treated objectively” (BP (1927), 9).

Liberal humanitarian moralists drive the “real battle against the real enemy” into “ideal programs” and “normative prescriptions.” Every war now has the potential to be a “world war” whose chief aim is “world peace” (BP (1927), 19). The object of liberalism’s “depoliticizations” is the elimination of enmity. To the inhabitants of such a “universal society,” the theoretician of pure politics must appear horrifying and repugnant: “because they always have the concrete existential condition of possible enmity in view, the purely political thinker expresses a type of realism which
is suitably terrifying to "peaceful sorts" (BP (1927), 25, also see 22-4). Be this situation as it may, conceiving of the political as a domain reduces Schmitt to reacting out of impotent fury. If the liberal striving after "world peace" and the modern onslaught against the political "goes beyond the political," conceiving of the political as a domain is insufficient for the ultimate task which Schmitt sets for himself which is to combat modernity's "neutralizations" and "depoliticizations." As well, "purely political thinking" can only conceive of the state as the engine of the political. The political does not initially appear as something which compels or commands or grasps us in a fundamental way. The political cannot be the total. To say the least, it cannot conceive of politics from the standpoint of civil war or revolution.

Such conceptions may have been sufficient to launch Schmitt along the path of theoretically refining and making logically consistent and rigorous his initial efforts which were aimed at bringing the political back to prominence. However, the grave deficiencies we have just discussed must be rectified if Schmitt is to carry the battle forward and successfully confront liberalism. To this end, Schmitt both elaborated upon and changed the basic argument of The Concept of the Political. While the overall structure and emphasis on the friend-enemy distinction has not changed, the basis for understanding enmity and the friend-enemy distinction has changed. In 1932, Schmitt now writes not in terms of "domains" or "pure politics," but of a model of intensity:

The specific political distinction to which all political actions and motives can be reduced is that between friend and enemy. This provides a definition in the sense of a criterion and not as an exhaustive definition or new subject matter. Insofar as it is not derived from other criteria, the antithesis of friend and enemy corresponds to the relatively independent criteria of other antitheses: good and evil in the moral sphere, beautiful and ugly in the aesthetic sphere, and so on. In any event it is independent, not in the sense of a distinct new domain, but in that it can neither be based on any one of these antitheses, nor can it be traced back to them.... The distinction of friend and enemy denotes the most extreme degree of a bond or a
separation, of an association or disassociation (BP, 26; emphasis added).

To be sure, Schmitt does not abandon the advantages bestowed by a rhetoric of pure politics and domains, and as we noted above, he downplays the importance of his new “elaborations.” However, in 1932, the emphasis on the model of intensity now serves the political. The political is “inherently objective and independent” because it can “treat, distinguish and comprehend” the “friend-enemy antithesis independently of other antitheses” (CP, 27). The political need not draw upon “all those moral aesthetic, economic, or other distinctions” but it can and does “as the strongest and most intense of the distinctions and categorizations, draw upon other distinctions for support” (CP, 27).

As a political theologian, Schmitt adopts the model of intensity for a variety of reasons. First, understanding the political in terms of “an intensity of a bond or separation” allows Schmitt to account for both politics between states in terms of foreign policy and war and also in terms of revolution, civil war and internal strife within the state. Second, the model of intensity accounts for everything politically; no longer can “social ideals” and “normative prescriptions” drive “physical annihilation” to the utmost extreme without becoming political; when Schmitt conceived of the political only as a “domain,” such an eventuality was possible. Along these lines, the model of intensity explains liberalism’s “neutralizations” and “depoliticizations” politically, and thus repudiates the notion that liberalism does away with political distinctions or can supercede the political simply as a “domain” or in a “purely political” sense. The model of intensity thus makes possible and coherent Schmitt’s assertion that the political is the total. The model of intensity also explains more clearly why we experience the world as a “pluriverse” and not as a “universe.” Finally, as we shall see, the model of intensity indicates what is for Schmitt the most intensive “bond or separation.” Nothing can “go beyond” the political because the political encompasses the most
intensive bond or separation of which human activity is capable. The political is the total because it is theological and moral — even when doctrines such as liberalism seek to do away with both the state and politics, they do so because of an "apolitical" morality (which implies the greatest fraudulence and deceit because it makes its claims in the name of "humanity") and an "antitheological theology." Likewise, even where theology and morality are expressly (or even "esoterically," see RC, 33-4) denied, Schmitt finds the workings of an "anti-divine, this worldly self-deification." Schmitt finds political theology even in the denial of theology. As we shall see in The Concept of the Political's penultimate section, every significant doctrine of the state and of man takes a position on man "by nature good" or man "by nature evil." Every doctrine which explains and justifies human activity and human agency is theological, and thus moral, and thus in the most meaningful and authoritative sense political.

To begin with the basic conceptual definition of the political, we can delineate the changed scope of the political's operation. As Heinrich Meier has noted, "Schmitt speaks of 'war' seventy-seven times in the thirty-three paragraphs of his [1927] essay. The term 'civil war' does not occur once" (Meier, 1995, 21). In 1932, civil war and revolution appear side by side with foreign war. As well, Schmitt begins to elaborate on the political as a form of knowledge. While the enemy is still identified as the "other" and the "stranger" and Schmitt retains his emphasis that there is no "legitimation or justification for physical killing, but a purely existential meaning only," to the partners and participants in the separation of friend and enemy now belongs a "correct knowing and understanding" ("richtigen Erkennens und Verstehens") which grants them the authority as "existential participants" to "correctly judge and participate" in the "extreme case of conflict" (BP, 27; CP, 27). Schmitt here makes an ancillary construction to the model of intensity explicitly to
allow for both eventualities: “next to the primary political decisions and under the protection of the decision taken, numerous secondary concepts of the political arise” (BP, 30). Schmitt clarifies this new construction in two ways. First, the model of intensity serves the political distinction of friend and enemy, the enemy cannot be mistaken with the liberal reduction of the enemy economically to the “competitor” or intellectually to the “debating adversary.” The enemy is the public enemy. Second, Schmitt seeks to clarify the concept of the enemy theologically.

Schmitt specifically interjects a theological understanding into his explication of the political from the outset. As with all of Schmitt’s other writings, so with The Concept of the Political, we must reiterate the following observation. Given the wealth of illustrative texts, historical examples and philosophic, juridical and legal formulations of which Schmitt could have availed himself, it is particularly striking that at every point where Schmitt wants to make his position clearer and stronger, he seeks out the theological. To play on the Lockean “hermeneutics of suspicion,” where a long train of equivocations, evasions and biblical impositions all tend the same way, how can we “hinder ourselves from being persuaded in our own minds which way things are going”? (see Locke, 1963, 453). Let us examine Schmitt’s analysis of what makes the enemy a public enemy:

The enemy is hostis, not inimicus in the broader sense; πολέμιος, not ἔχθρος. As German and other languages do not distinguish between the private and political enemy, many misconceptions and falsifications are possible. The oft quoted “Love your enemies” (Matth. 5:44, Luke 6:27) reads “diligite inimicos vestros,” ἀγαπάτε τοὺς ἔχθροὺς ὑμῶν, and not diligite hostes vestros. No mention is made of the political enemy. Never in the thousand year struggle between Christians and Moslems did it occur to a Christian to surrender rather than defend Europe out of love toward the Saracens or Turks. The enemy in the political sense need not be hated personally, and in the private sphere only does it make sense to love one’s enemy, i.e., one’s adversary. The Bible quotation touches the political antithesis even less than it intends to dissolve, for example, the antithesis of good and evil or beautiful and ugly. It certainly does not mean that one should love and support the enemies of one’s own people (CP, 29; emphasis added).
Schmitt explicitly follows this elaboration with emphasis on the political as a model of intensity. For Schmitt, the political is the "most intense and extreme antagonism, and every concrete antagonism becomes that much more political the closer it approaches the most extreme point, that of the friend-enemy grouping" (CP, 29; emphasis added). "Every concrete antagonism becomes that much more political" the more it reaches the vanishing point of enmity. This statement explains most simply why Schmitt theorizes about the "political" and not politics. Everything, including politics and war, can be "more or less political." In a liberal world, politics may well serve unpolitical ends such as the bureaucratic administration of the rule of law or "economic-sociological tasks." Likewise, global wars and "police actions" may well involve participants who have no idea why they are fighting or why the enemy is a public enemy — such participants would conceive of combatants not as enemies but as "war criminals." The nominalized adjective better captures the essence of politics than the proper noun which denotes the field of enquiry. For the moment however, let us concentrate on the theological significance of the above passage by returning to The Gospel According to Matthew which Schmitt has just referenced and which strongly reflects the direction of his thinking.

*The Gospel According to Matthew* offers a particularly striking set of observations which inspire Schmitt. Were a curious reader to follow up on Christ's admonition in *Matthew* regarding loving one's enemies, the following admonition to secrecy and humility only one chapter later would also become apparent: "But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Matthew, 6:5-6). We have already commented upon Schmitt's professed sense of humility before the "dark sense of history" (PT, 54-5, 58-60). In following the passage Schmitt himself points to in the Scriptures, is
not such humility only truly humility when it is practiced secretly or quietly?15 Beyond the strategic advantages Schmitt attaches to not letting one’s enemies grasp oneself and beyond the veiling of his basic intent, are such deceptions to be understood not only as necessary in an age “which veils its metaphysical oppositions” but also as resulting from a unique conception of piety, a conception of piety that is “not more so and even just as secretive as every Christian existence”? (see G, 63). A second and related point bears mentioning. Both in The Gospel According to Matthew and The Gospel According to Luke, one might say that Christ himself offers testimony to the fundamental nature of eschatologically distinguishing between friend and enemy: “Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man’s foes will be those of his own household.” In addressing his disciples, Christ instructs them that the point of distinction is one between he who “receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives him who sent me” and those who do not (Matthew, 10:34-42; Luke, 12:51-3, see also Mark, 13:12). One may “love one’s enemy” if that enemy is a private enemy; one declares whether one is for Christ or against Christ because God commands it. To say the least, Schmitt’s formulations give new meaning to the “private-public” distinction.

This biblical expression of enmity, and Schmitt’s understanding of it, are very striking in light of two developments. First, in terms of recognizing the internal enemy, the model of intensity as articulated theologically explains how one can apprehend rebellion, civil war, revolution and other “self-lacerations” (see CP, 28-9, Footnote 9). One can now potentially recognize even one’s brother and fellow citizen as the enemy. The story of Cain and Abel not only provides an analog and model for understanding internal discord within a state, and thus within a “people;” the story of Cain and...
Abel contains a basic truth which repeats *mutatis mutandi* and is only "updated" by Christ’s proclamation in the Gospels. As a model of intensity, the point at which the declaration of enmity and the outbreak of combat mark the point at which all associations become political resides in an eschatological distinction. Whether it is a "religious community" or a "class in the Marxian sense," when it is "sufficiently strong to group human beings effectively according to friend and enemy" it ceases to be purely religious or purely economic but has been "gradualized" to the political. From Schmitt’s perspective, the “holy wars and crusades” are now something political because they are definitively based on a public declaration of enmity (*CP*, 38–9, 48). Moreover, Schmitt now declares that the history of civil war and rebellion are to be found as emanating from “dissenters and heretics” (*BP*, 47–8). Already in the ascription of “dissenters and heretics” enmity is prefigured as the chief attribute and feature — there can be no peace in the presence of schismatic elements within the state. Only force and compulsion are suitable means of dealing with those who reject God (in addition, see *Luke*, 14:16–25).

Second, the “pinnacle of great politics” ("die Höhepunkte der großen Politik") emerges in the same light. Heinrich Meier has asked two interrelated and highly important questions of Schmitt’s “model of intensity” with regard to this point specifically. First, “if politics too can be more or less political, if like ‘everything else’ it is subject to the gradualization of the political ... what kind of politics would Schmitt count as political in the ‘eminent sense’?" Second, “by what enmity do his statements about the ‘essence’ of the political enemy take their bearings, what degree of intensity does he regard as the most extreme point of the political?” (Meier, 1995, p. 27). Schmitt’s answer to these questions and his appraisal of the “pinnacle of great politics” is idiosyncratic and demonstrative of his own self-understanding of the political:
For the modern age, I see the strongest eruption of such an enmity ("den mächtigsten Ausbruch einer solchen Feindschaft") — stronger than the by no means harmless écrasez l'infame of the eighteenth century; stronger than the fanatical hatred of [Napoleon's] France by the German Barons von Stein and Kleist ("strike them dead, the Last Judgment will not ask for your reason"), and stronger even than Lenin's annihilating sentences against the bourgeois and western capitalism — in Cromwell's struggle ("Kampf") against papist Spain. He says in a speech from September 17, 1656 (in the Carlyle edition, III, 1902, p. 267 ff.) "The first thing I shall speak to, is That that is the first lesson of nature: Being and Preservation... The conservation of that 'Namely our National Being' is first to be viewed with respect to those who seek to undo it, and so make it not to be." Let us then consider our enemies, "the Enemies to the very Being of these Nations" (he always repeats this "very Being" or "National Being" and then proceeds): "Why, truly, your great Enemy is the Spaniard. He is a natural enemy. He is naturally so; he is naturally so throughout — by reason of that enmity that is in him against whatsoever is of God. 'Whatsoever is of God' which is in you, or which may be in you." Then he repeats: "The Spaniard is your enemy," his "enmity is put into him by God." He is the "natural enemy, the providential enemy," and he who considers him to be an "accidental enemy" is "not well acquainted with Scripture and the things of God," who says: "I will put enmity between your seed and her seed" (Gen. III 15). With France one can make peace, not with Spain because it is a papal state, and the pope maintains peace only as long as he wishes (BP, 67; see CP, 67-8).

This passage is a remarkable example of Schmitt's own self-understanding and self-explication.

First, let us focus on what should be the most obvious point of clarification — does Cromwell really say these things? When one consults the source of Cromwell's speech which Schmitt clearly references within the passage, one finds that more or less, Schmitt records Cromwell's utterances correctly. However, Schmitt changes the order of Cromwell's speech, adds to it, and leaves out rather intriguing details.

Schmitt quotes six of Cromwell's remarks and he quotes from them in the order in which Cromwell made them with one revealing exception. Schmitt breaks up Cromwell's fifth remark into two parts and inserts Cromwell's sixth remark in between them ("And he that considers not such natural enmity, the providential enmity, as well as the accidental, I think he is not well acquainted with Scripture and the things of God"). The reason that Schmitt breaks from the order of
Cromwell's speech is quite simple and yet powerful and compelling—Schmitt makes Cromwell's penultimate statement on enmity Cromwell's ultimate statement on enmity: those who do not know the Scripture and the "things of God" are forgetful that God decrees "I will put an enmity between thy seed and her seed" (see Carlyle, 1969, 270-72). And in case Schmitt's readers and Cromwell's listeners were indeed ignorant of the Scripture and the "things of God," Schmitt adds to Cromwell's text the missing reference. In 1656, Cromwell did not cite "Gen. III 15" in his speech; Schmitt in 1932 interpolates the actual reference to the Bible. Enmity is divinely ordained. The "natural enemy" is the "providential enemy;" the providential enemy is the enemy by special order of Providence.

On this point particularly, an uncited remark from Cromwell's speech which immediately precedes the fourth remark which Schmitt does cite is particularly appropriate to Schmitt's conception of the relationship between sovereignty, sovereign decision, the exception and the friend-enemy distinction. In both language and style of argument, Cromwell's remarks are uncannily similar to Schmitt's own conceptions which we have discussed above in Chapter Two: "And the ground of Necessity, for justifying of men's actions, is above all considerations of instituted Law; and if this or any other State should go about ... to make Laws against Events, against what may happen, 'then' I think it is obvious to any man, they will be making Laws against Providence; events, and issues of things, being from God alone, to whom all issues belong" (Carlyle, 1969, 271). Any set of laws, "normative prescriptions" or "ideal programs" which attempt to banish the miraculous and the providentially decreed "things of God" from the realm of the political can only be understood as an affront and assault on God. Enmity is divinely decreed; enmity literally keeps human history in motion. Without enmity as the guiding force which separates antagonists and divides them into friend and enemy, humanity itself stagnates.
Whether from the internal standpoint of "heretics and dissenters" or from the external standpoint of the "pinnacle of great politics" which is revealed in Cromwell's hatred of papist Spain, the point at which the political can become no more intense is that quarrel which most wholeheartedly and totally guarantees the theological and moral seriousness of life. The political's model of intensity is not a "free-floating" model of analysis in which enmity is approached asymptotically but never authoritatively reaches an end point. While numerous secondary concepts of the political may come into play at various points in human history without becoming theological, there is a definite point at which enmity reaches its most intense "bond or separation" and is therefore most "powerful," meaningful and revealing for all other human groupings, associations and disassociations. Likewise, Schmitt is not ultimately concerned with bringing a "uniquely Catholic sharpening" to politics or with asserting the truth of Catholicism however close that may be to his own position personally. There is ample room within the scope of Schmitt's political conceptions for such "personal" considerations. However, Schmitt the political theorist is above all else concerned with the destruction of human seriousness and the corrosive effects of liberalism on all moral and theological claims. Europe is threatened from within by this exact set of circumstances and without by a "Soviet-Slavic" menace which has seen through Western depoliticizations and neutralizations and views such events propitiously.

While we shall turn to these considerations momentarily, can we know more accurately the substance of the friend-enemy distinction? Cromwell's remarks and Schmitt's deployment of his own self-understanding provide fruitful ground for reflection. Again, let us take as our point of reference a remark Cromwell makes but which Schmitt curiously does not include. Cromwell states immediately after his second remark that his considerations with respect to those forces which seek
to “so make [the National Being] not to be” are as equally directed “to the consideration of what will make it be, of what will keep its being and subsistence” (Carlyle, 1969, 269). For Cromwell and for Schmitt, these two questions are inseparably intertwined. Knowing the enemy and what forces and agents seek to undo one’s “ownmost way of life” is self-knowledge. Nonetheless, to return to a set of questions we raised in Chapters One and Two, what is the type of substantive homogeneity for Schmitt which is created by sovereign decision regarding friend and enemy? What is the substance of homogeneity that defines a people, or more accurately, defines friendship? Is our “ownmost way of living” defined merely by racial, ethnic, linguistic, tribal, religious or other cultural proclivities and groupings or economic class, social status and hierarchy or some combination thereof? Alternatively, are decisions regarding enmity unidirectional or in their effect on individuals, can we speak of an interaction between sovereign authority, “peoples” and individuals? Based on what we now know, we can outline the following three general areas of insight.

First, in The Concept of the Political, Schmitt introduces civil war alongside foreign war in elucidating the political, or in determining who the enemy is. Literally, calling one’s brother’s way of life and existence into question is a question or decision not only of foreign policy but also of domestic policy. This decision constitutes the basis for one’s “ownmost way of life.” The objection might be made, that such decisiveness about authentic political existence is self-deception insofar as that when the “national” population is heterogenous, civil war can be a war to establish homogeneity, religious purification, ethnic cleansing or the liquidation of class oppressors. Enmity can certainly take place along ethnic, linguistic, racial, tribal, cultural, religious or socio-economic lines. However, such groupings would certainly have to be considered as “secondary groupings” since they do not reveal the most profound form of knowledge and self-knowledge regarding enmity.
Such groupings are defined by the sociologist or historian; such groupings become political only when they self-consciously understand themselves and others in terms of the friend-enemy distinction. As we learned from our analysis of Political Theology, and again as we have seen in The Concept of the Political, the decision over friend and enemy is the "demanding moral decision," and it is this decision above all else which constitutes a people. This demanding moral decision and its underlying political theology defines the substance of decision, and not simply racial, ethnic, linguistic or other considerations on their own or in concert with each other.

Following our analysis of Political Theology and The Spiritual-Historical Situation of Contemporary Parliamentarism, while the "people," whatever their supposedly homogenous qualities (German-speaking Aryans devoted to racial purity of das Volk or English-speaking property holders committed to individual freedoms under the rule of law) can be the basis for understanding political equality, they do not ultimately constitute a stable or durable source of authority (see also, V, 75 - 79; Dyzenhaus, 1998, 53). Schmitt is most of all concerned with what we might identify as the leadership provided by "elites" who are capable of reflecting and channeling the political will of the governed.18 Hence, for example, in the case of modern mass democracy, as Schmitt observed, the "will of the people" cannot come about from a system of individual secret ballots. The authentic "will of the people" is framed much more clearly by the "demanding moral decision." Of course, the question lingers, why would Schmitt think the will of the people could come about from decisive leadership, dictatorship or the herding of individuals into mass movements and acts of public "acclamation" — how do "parties" and "movements" contain a purer expression of the democratic will? Why are they not viewed as an even graver corruption? And how does any of this matter if Schmitt does not make clearer what the substance of the demanding moral decision is? Without

172
making this subject matter explicit or at the minimum, easier to follow, why should we believe him, that it is the demanding moral decision made regarding friend and enemy that determines "substantive homogeneity" and "one's ownmost way of life"?

We can respond as follows. Schmitt makes the outline of the substance of the demanding moral decision clear if we pay attention to what Schmitt indicates is important and if we follow up on the "clues" which he provides. In light of the above questions, Heinrich Meier has helpfully made the following generalization with regard to the relationship of the individual, the collectivity signified by an "association or a disassociation," and the political:

The political is indeed grasped by Schmitt as existential. But ultimately not in the sense that the existence of the individual is politically determined because the individual necessarily encounters a community that makes demands on him and with respect to which he himself, whether he wants to or not, has to take a stand, has to determine his position. Rather the individual is required to make the right distinction between friend and enemy as the absolute decision about his own life. The oppositions with which he sees himself confronted become political oppositions not because the community makes the quarrel about them its cause or because they are recognized with regard to the community to be of importance to the whole, but rather because a given opposition is able as a "real possibility" to become a life-and-death quarrel, which is "more political" the closer it comes to the boiling point of a grouping into friends and enemies (Meier, 1998, 35).

If the political is to be the total, if it is be "authoritative" and "measure giving" ("maßgebende"), then it is not a matter of "herding" individuals into mass movements, but of confronting individuals with the most fundamental choice they face as human beings individually. The means of confronting individuals with this question may vary, but it is of the utmost importance that individuals grasp this question as a question of one's own proper way of life and in turn, grasp the answer to this question as the most important type of decision. Schmitt seeks to restore to individual life a facility (to choose) and a faculty (to apprehend the most important choices and what is at stake in choosing). Only when the choice involved is a matter of life and death is it a matter of choosing the right way
of life — one cannot hide from such decisions. What stands in the way of affirming the seriousness
of choosing one's ownmost way of life? A "system of thought" in which the individual "must
remain terminus a quo and terminus ad quem." By Schmitt's reasoning, the ultimate perversity of
liberalism's emphasis on the sanctity of the individual is that it strips individual choice and decision
of all meaning, importance and seriousness: "an individualism in which anyone other than the free
individual himself were to decide upon the substance and dimension of his freedom would be only
an empty phrase. For the individual as such there is no enemy with whom he must enter into life-
and-death struggle if he personally does not want to do so. To compel him to fight against his will
is, from the viewpoint of the private individual, lack of freedom and repression" (CP, 71; emphasis
added). Two extremely important matters should be clear. First, despite his atheistic "historical
sense," Hegel proves useful to Schmitt on this point. Schmitt claims that Hegel offers the "first
polemical definition of the bourgeois": "The bourgeois is an individual who does not want to leave
the apolitical, riskless private sphere.... He is a man who finds his compensation for his political
nullity in the fruits of his freedom and enrichment and above all in the total security of its use.
Consequently he wants to be spared bravery and exempted from the danger of a violent death" (CP,
62-3). One can caricature accurately the "liberal pathos" as a system of thought as follows: "do not
make us choose, this stricture infringes on our most fundamental freedom to choose freely not to
choose."
Second, if Schmitt perceives himself confronted with a system of thought which
erroneously equates freedom of choice with the avoidance of decision, how can he make his own
objections and demands seem compelling and legitimate in light of a liberal emphasis that all choices
are equal and all decisions are individually "free decisions" which admit of no "substantive
oppositions and differences"?
From Schmitt’s perspective, we cannot ignore the ultimate ground of decision which is choosing eschatologically between friend and enemy because God commands it. The source of our knowledge of the condition of providential enmity is faith in revelation. In turn, the knowledge of the “things of God” is an *arcanum*, a secret, esoteric source of strength, *just as* the nineteenth and eighteenth centuries revolutionaries’ condescending love of the people was their esotericism; i.e., “their superior knowledge” (*RC*, 34). These two assessments are explicitly linked by Schmitt’s invocation of “great politics.” Schmitt uses this expression only once in *The Concept of the Political* and in *Roman Catholicism and Political Form*. In *The Concept of the Political*, he introduces the “pinnacle of great politics” as the “strongest eruption of enmity” which is found in Cromwell’s battle against papist Spain. In *Roman Catholicism and Political Form*, Schmitt invokes the phrase “great politics” in terms of its contents: “to every great politics belongs the *arcanum*” (*RC*, 34). What is equally intriguing about Schmitt’s usage of the phrase “great politics” and the “pinnacle of great politics” is what he excludes from its discussion — Schmitt invokes Cromwell and ignores the modern theorist whose writings, if we were to follow Nietzsche (Nietzsche, 1966, 40-1; 131), are steeped with “great politics,” namely, Machiavelli. Here, the second and third areas of insight regarding enmity come into focus.

Behind the question of the meaning of “one’s ownmost way of life” which is drawn into question by the enemy lingers the question of over what does fighting take place? What is at stake? A battle over natural resources, territory or other scarce commodities barely distinguishes man from the animals; a fight over pure prestige, glory or a struggle for recognition may be uniquely human but can hardly be accepted as worthy of the most serious attention or theorizing — in Schmitt’s estimation, such a struggle is mere “Heraklitean flux,” the coming-into-being and ceasing-to-be of...
the forces of agonal human struggle. Whether one approaches participation in warfare from the harsh standpoint of "animal urges" or the struggle for recognition or from the more sophisticated perspective of international relations theory which calculates every use of force from the standpoint of balance of power or deterrence, only with the discussion of "heretics and dissenters" and Cromwell does the friend-enemy distinction begin to take on a substantial meaning which would guarantee the "seriousness" of the political as one of man's highest pursuits.

Schmitt makes no mention of Machiavelli at a crucial juncture where one is most alive to the possible invocation of Machiavelli's name. A discussion of Machiavelli would seemingly be entirely relevant to Schmitt's discussion of enmity because Machiavelli's highest praise in works like The Prince and The Discourses on Livy is reserved for such warlike figures as the ancient Romans. Machiavelli's Romans are eminently granted high status because they perceived their enemies at a distance. Their "farsightedness" was a result first and foremost of knowing in what the essence of their "national being" consisted: "thus, the Romans, seeing the inconveniences from afar, always found remedies for them and never allowed them to continue so as to escape a war, because they knew that war may not be avoided but is deferred to the advantage of others" (Machiavelli, 1985, 12-13). Schmitt is not unaware of the significance of Machiavelli's insights and even discusses Machiavelli's cause before explicitly turning to Cromwell (see CP, 30-1, 66-7). Why does Machiavelli not shine through in the ultimate passage on enmity as the theorist of enmity whom Schmitt invokes?20

The answer to this question is to be found in Machiavelli's impiety, his emphasis on conquering fortuna and his elevation of free will above God's demands on human beings and politics. Machiavelli eschews the limits imposed on the most sweeping of human ambitions by
ancient teleology on the one hand, and Christian theology and the pangs of "conscience" on the other. Machiavelli's teachings instruct and admonish the boldest men to establish "new modes and orders" and to consciously create new horizons within which future civilizations will flourish. Machiavelli calls for the creation and attainment of civil order based on the unfettered expression of man's free will. And Machiavelli especially, if not exclusively, sought to enlist the wills of great men or "founders" whose activities reveal a penchant for cruelty, spiritual warfare and even barbarism.\(^\text{21}\)

Machiavelli's thought does not merely demarcate the origins of modern political philosophy. In breaking with the classical tradition, Machiavelli radically asserted the ability of man to order his actions without reference to the will of God. Machiavelli's great disdain for both the classical and Christian teachings which deny man the ability to determine and realize desirable political activity is the animus which underlies his overarching concern with the relation of virtù and fortune. More precisely, Machiavelli rejected the notion that "worldly things are so governed by fortune and by God, that men cannot correct them with their prudence..." Instead, he boldly asserted that "in order that our free will not be eliminated, I judge that it might be true that fortune is arbiter of half of our actions, but also that she leaves the other half, or close to it, for us to govern." It is of special interest that in the final formulation, the will of God is virtually excluded from controlling the fate of man. At best, it is synonymous with, and can be controlled or at least anticipated, like mere fortune or chance (Machiavelli, 1985, 61, 98).

Machiavelli's analysis of the corruption of the will led to his elevation of the resolute virtù of the ancients. However, the ancients Machiavelli has in mind as worthy of emulation are neither Greek philosophers nor self-abnegating Christian ascetics, but the Romans. Central to this attempt
is Machiavelli’s treatment of Cesare Borgia. At first glance, Borgia seems an unlikely source of greatness or political excellence; he is summoned from the junior ranks to make a minor appearance on Machiavelli’s world stage. However, it is by means of analyzing Borgia that we are provided with a clear cut basis for evaluating how Machiavelli intended to invigorate and infuse the will of modern men by contrasting it with the virtù of the ancient Romans. Machiavelli effects this contrast almost in passing by noting that Borgia’s gruesome murder of Remirro d’Orco “left the people at once satisfied and stupefied” (Machiavelli, 1985, 30). In turn, he contrasts Borgia with the late Roman emperor Severus in a subtle but very important manner by similarly noting that “in Severus was so much virtue that ... the people ... remained somehow astonished and stupefied, while [the soldiers] were reverent and satisfied” (Machiavelli, 1985, 78). Yet, as “great and notable” as the actions of Severus were, Machiavelli draws our attention to two important facts. First, Severus was the only “late” emperor who did not come to a bad end, implying that “earlier” emperors were of greater virtue. Second, in contrast to the empire, the republic was of even higher esteem in terms of the political excellence it embodied. In fact, Machiavelli strongly intimates that what the Romans assembled accidentally and only fully understood when it was too late can now be constructed freely and consciously.

To flesh out the importance of Borgia’s enigmatic presence in The Prince and explore Machiavelli’s impious attempt to liberate human volition, we must turn momentarily to Machiavelli’s Discourses on Livy. We should note that in The Prince Machiavelli does not explicitly criticize Christianity; his critique of Christianity as a force which enslaves and denigrates human agency and thus purely human nobility is only made fully in The Discourses. However, we must note that even in The Prince Machiavelli does implicitly criticize Christianity in several ways. First,
he states that a believer in the authority of the Bible would treat Moses differently than Cyrus, Romulus and Theseus, yet he treats Moses in the same way as he treats the other great founding princes. Second, he urges princes to do things which are not simply contrary to and incompatible with Christianity (for example, he urges the imitation of the inhuman cruelty and treachery of Agathocles and Severus, see Machiavelli, 1985, 34-8; 71-82), he implies that God approves of those who act like Agathocles (Machiavelli, 1985, 39) and he presents Severus not simply as a model, but the model for founding princes (Machiavelli, 1985, 82). Third, he introduces his teaching about virtù in a way which is completely at odds with the traditional Christian notions of providence and sin. Fourth, and more generally, he never mentions the soul, the conscience or the afterlife, thus implying that these are not serious objects of concern. A second major area of concern we must mention is that it is from Machiavelli's treatment of religion as an instrument of social utility and cohesion that we gain insight into the full scope and implications of human agency. It is with this new view of religion as something which is socially useful but "epistemologically false" that we gain insight into the radical freedom Machiavelli urges upon us in contemplating politics on the grand scale.

Machiavelli explicitly identifies Christianity as a politically dangerous religion in *The Discourses* while, significantly, discussing the topics of enmity, warfare and how best to preserve one’s freedom. Machiavelli contrasts Roman religious practices (which acclimated men to the shedding of blood and thus made them “ferocious” and “terrible”) with Christianity:

Besides, the old religion did not beatify men unless they were replete with worldly glory: army commanders, for instance and principi of republics. Our religion has glorified humble and contemplative men, rather than men of action. It has assigned as man’s highest good humility, abnegation, and contempt for mundane things, whereas the other identified it with magnanimity, bodily strength, and everything else that conduces to make men very bold. And, if our religion demands that in you there be strength, what it asks for is strength to suffer rather than strength to do bold things (Machiavelli, 1970, 278).
The "effective truth" of Christianity is that it weakens our concern with the world, thus leading to rule by the "wicked," i.e., those who are entirely concerned with worldly things. As opposed to leading to our "true salvation," Christianity leads to actual enslavement understood both in terms of spiritual impoverishment and surrender to the stronger. Likewise, what makes a religion "effectively true" is the extent to which it concerns and exalts worldly, "mundane" things, especially the virtuous men of action who secure these "highest goods."

This passage is the clearest indication of the subservience of any civil religion to the demands of politics. Even if one were to overlook Machiavelli's impiety and atheism, one could not overlook the fact that Machiavelli seeks to unite politics and religion entirely from the standpoint of what sustains and furthers purely human political excellence. In Chapter Twenty-five of The Prince, Machiavelli seems to subsume any spiritual impulse in man to the pursuit of glory — "riches" correspond to the actual tangible assets of acquisition and conquest, while "glories" correspond to the intangible delight taken in acquiring reputation and honour (Machiavelli, 1985, 99). The dilemma of Christianity specifically, and of religion in general, comes into sharper contrast in light of a comparison Machiavelli makes regarding the skillful use of religion in Book One, Chapter Fourteen of The Discourses. In praising Paprius' shrewd disregard of the Roman auguries and blaming Appius Pulcher's foolishly blatant disregard for them, Machiavelli indicates the proper manner in which a virtuous prince should manipulate piety (Machiavelli, 1970, 149-50). More significantly, he allows to flash to the surface a dilemma he leaves largely unresolved: if the legitimacy of the Roman Republic (or any successful polity) resides in the successful deployment of an honour-loving, glorious and powerful civil religion and not the truth of that religion per se, what is the ultimate source of truth and legitimacy which underlies the exercise of authority by those
who know it is false? Machiavelli is not suitable for Schmitt’s purposes. Machiavelli denigrates religion and undermines belief in God. Moreover, regardless of Machiavelli’s implicit or explicit “atheism,” Machiavelli’s praise of the Romans raises a question Schmitt’s “concept of the political” and its defensive emphasis on the “fending off of the enemy” cannot readily answer. If Roman greatness consisted in the self-knowledge required for “farsightedness” in perceiving enemies and potential enemies, is not such self-knowledge necessarily expansive and imperial? Does not the knowledge that it is “better to fight now” really mean that it is better to fight always and potentially find enemies everywhere? Would not such a position (a position always oriented to the “extreme case”) be inseparable from constant warfare or the potential for constant warfare? Such a position necessarily recasts a purely defensive “fending off” into expansive wars of aggression; such a position comes dangerously close to celebrating war for the sake of war. This position and outlook will eventually need to be confronted and explained in Schmitt’s thought.

A final third area of insight ties together the two general areas of concern discussed above. Schmitt cites three examples which are surpassed by Cromwell’s hatred of papal Spain, but which nonetheless clearly contain a powerful “outbreak of enmity”: the “by no means harmless” counterrevolutionary suppression of the eighteenth century, the German Barons’ hatred of Napoleonic France, and Lenin’s annihilating sentences against the bourgeois and Western capitalism. A second remark Schmitt makes with regard to Lenin illuminates Schmitt’s ascription of “dissenters and heretics.” Schmitt writes that via Lenin and Marx, Hegel’s dialectical method became established in a “new concrete-enemy concept, namely that of the class enemy” and has been transformed into a “weapon of battle” (CP, 63; BP, 62-3). Schmitt writes that “the actuality of Hegel is most strongly alive in Georg Lukács ....” [Lukács] records an expression by Lenin which
Hegel might have made with reference to the political entity of a warring people: Persons, says Lenin, who understand politics as small tricks which often border on deceit must be refuted by us most decisively. Classes cannot be deceived" (BP, 63). First, Hegel is not “most strongly alive” (“am stärkstens lebendig”) in Lukács, but in a remark of Lenin’s which Lukács records. Second, what makes this remark very interesting is that Lenin was certainly wrong in the strictest sense. Classes can be and have been deceived. Classes can settle and actually have settled for trade unionism, job security agreements, indexed wages, legislative limits on daily and weekly working hours and unemployment security schemes, to name but a few examples. Lenin makes clear the intention of his remark with the interjection of himself into the historical situation. Those persons who think of politics as “small tricks” must be refuted by us. Likewise, only classes led by us are infallible. Hegel, or for that matter, Marx may be ever so correct, but they do not act out of enmity; they are not political in the “eminent sense.” They are trapped in the contemplation of “absolute knowledge” or “dialectical materialism.” Neither Hegel nor Marx are capable of “decisively refuting” their “enemy” with a “weapon of battle.” In order not to be deceived, economic classes, specifically the proletariat, need political actors who will prosecute the battle on their behalf. Without Lenin to literally rub their faces in the reality of their bourgeois and capitalist enemies, the proletariat is helpless; as a class, the proletariat is not political and is incapable of recognizing a political enemy. However, such distinctions regarding class enemies are political.24

Following Schmitt, we can understand Lenin’s revolutionary vanguard as political in the decisive sense. Lenin forces the proletariat to recognize in the bourgeois class and capitalism an enemy. They are not “debating adversaries” or “economic competitors.” What is surprising is that in a very crucial and limited sense, Lenin appears on the same theoretical terrain as Locke. Let us
reconnoiter this ground a bit more carefully. Lenin's above quoted statement justifies the activity of his own and his fellow revolutionary vanguard's political activity in driving the proletariat-capitalist relationship into enmity. John Locke, in justifying revolution, urges the exact same outlook, action and way of thinking from the standpoint of preserving the property one has in one's "life, liberty and estate." Let us examine a few of Locke's remarks a bit more closely with regard to "peoples" and individuals. With regard to the detection of tyrannical designs against "the people," Locke writes:

if the People shall find the Ministers, and subordinate Magistrates chosen suitable to such ends, and favoured, or laid by proportionally, as they promote or oppose them: If they see several Experiments made of Arbitrary power, and that Religion underhand favoured (though publickly proclaimed against) which is readiest to introduce it, and the Operators in it supported, as much as may be; and when that cannot be done, yet approved still, and like the better: if a long Train of Acts shew the Councils all tending that way, how can a Man any more hinder himself from being perswaded in his own Mind, which way things are going; or from casting about how to save himself;.... (Locke, 1963, 453).

Locke effects an interesting yet discrete shift in emphasis in the above passage. While the effects of tyrannical design may very well be felt by the "people," when it comes to "casting about" for how to save oneself, the emphasis is squarely on the most farsighted, revolutionary individuals. Lest we think this is but a passing moment in Locke's thought, twelve pages later, Locke invokes almost the exact same language ("a long train of Abuses, Prevarications, and Artifices, all tending the same way") and argument. Noting that the peace which results from not offering up resistance to tyranny is tantamount to the peace enjoyed by the inhabitants of Polyphemus' cave in Homer's Odyssey, Locke reinvents the role of Odysseus to make him seem compatible with peaceful, liberal democratic sentiments: "And no doubt Ulysses, who was a prudent Man, preach'd up Passive Obedience, and exhorted them to a quiet Submission, by representing to them of what concernment Peace was to
Mankind; and by shewing the inconveniences might, if they should offer to resist Polyphemus, who had now the power over them" (Locke, 1963, 463-66).

Of course, Locke not only stretches the truth but also ignores it. The men of Odysseus' crew would have been content to remain in Polyphemus' cave out of fear and cowardice if not for the prodding, entreaties and threats of Odysseus. Individual action and leadership and not "Passive Obedience" and "quiet Submission" are what Odysseus embodies. In the absence of, and even contrary to the wishes of the "many," true revolutionaries will recognize "what is to be done." Such are the qualities and mindset Locke seems to quietly urge on his revolutionaries. However, in both the case of Lockean revolutionaries and Leninist dictatorship, the object of urging individual action towards organized violence is oriented by an anti-divine rebellion. Schmitt can only apprehend the liberal democratic revolutionaries' "condescending love of the people" and Lenin's "annihilating sentences against the bourgeois and capitalism" from the perspective of a revolt against God. To be sure, they both need to draw upon political distinctions in urging the revolutionary activities they condone, but both in their own way seek to eliminate the need to ever again resort to the politically "extreme case" which is the friend enemy distinction. Moreover, they remain purposefully ignorant of the real aims of political action and decision. Schmitt makes this point eminently clear in biting fashion: "to demand seriously of human beings that they kill others and be prepared to die themselves so that trade and industry may flourish for the survivors or that the purchasing power of grandchildren may grow is sinister and crazy. It is a manifest fraud to condemn war as homicide and then demand of men that they wage war, kill and be killed, so that there will never be war again" (CP, 48). Again, on this point specifically we see the curious manner in which Schmitt makes a moral argument seem purely "existential" and ascribes the most "inhuman motives" to "purely
humanitarian impulses" (CP, 49-52). Schmitt’s previous invocation of “heretics and dissenters” allows us to grasp this observation in its proper context.

We have already seen the importance of Tertullian to elucidating Schmitt’s *arcanum*. Tertullian’s *On Prescription Against Heretics* offers further insight into Schmitt’s “concept of the political” as a form of knowledge. Schmitt can only understand the “humanitarianism” behind liberal-democrats and Marxist socialists as arising from rebellion and heresy. Both forces can best be perceived as “mutually repugnant sects” which pretend to know the truth “but only corrupt it.” There can be no concourse, no mediation and no synthesis between the “Academy and the Church” or between “Christians and heretics.” The Apostle to whom Tertullian refers in the passage cited at the beginning of this chapter is the Apostle Paul. By Tertullian’s reckoning, the work of the Apostle is directed at “restraining us” from the “fables and endless genealogies,” “unprofitable questions” and “words which spread like a cancer” which find their origin in one source — purely human thinking and philosophy. To make the connection with Schmitt’s own thinking and prepare our discussion for the final sections of *The Concept of the Political*, let us examine Schmitt’s understanding of such “restraining.” Schmitt will later write of the restraining force of the *Katechon*:

“I believe in the *Katechon*; it is for me the single possibility for understanding and making meaningful the history of Christ. The Pauline secret teaching is not more so and even just as secretive as every Christian existence. Whoever today does not themselves know something *in concreto* of the *Katechon* cannot understand this position…” (G, 63).

We noted previously the illumination provided by Paul’s admonition against those who promise “peace and security” in his *First Letter to the Thessalonians*. Christian duty demands a perpetual and vigilant watchfulness because “the Lord will come like a thief in the night” to bring
His judgment on all (1 Thessalonians 5:2-9). Paul's Second Letter to the Thessalonians provides even stronger expression of the role of the Katechon or restrainer in "holding off" the "lawless one," the "old deceiver" and Satan. Paul makes two significant statements which are both related to knowing the workings of Christ and Antichrist. Both statements revolve around deploying knowledge derived from faith in revelation in the act of restraining the satanic forces unleashed on the world. Until the return of Christ, human beings exist in a state of probation: "let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship..." (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4). Knowledge of the "things of God" serves the act of restraining because it names the core of one's "being" at the same time as it identifies the signs by which we can recognize those who seek to "make it not to be" (see 2 Thessalonians 2:7). Second, Paul states that God will test faithful and unfaithful alike as to the steadfastness of their knowing and faith: "the coming of the lawless one by the activity of Satan will be with all power and with pretended signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are to perish, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends upon them a strong delusion, to make them believe what is false, so that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12).

History is a probationary state of providential struggle and the enmity experienced therein tests our knowledge of the "things of God" and our faith. Following Cromwell, and not Machiavelli (or Hegel, "who rehabilitated Machiavelli" when "it became important for the German people to defend themselves against an expanding enemy armed with an humanitarian ideology" (CP, 66)), the "pinnacle of great politics" is revealed in the strongest outbreak of enmity in modern history.
Cromwell's identification of the natural enemy with the providential enemy decreed by God is the most intense point "of a bond or separation" beyond which nothing can be more political. Nothing is more intensely political than recognizing the enemy "in concrete clarity" as the enemy, as the providential enemy. Schmitt makes two important, sweeping and ultimately revealing claims regarding "all theories of the state" with respect to enmity and the friend-enemy distinction. First, Schmitt states that

"no form of order, no reasonable legitimacy or legality can exist without protection and obedience. The protego ergo obligo is the cogito ergo sum of the state. A political theory which does not systematically become aware of this sentence remains an inadequate fragment. Hobbes designated this ... as the true purpose of his Leviathan, to instill in man once again 'the mutuell relation between Protection and Obedience'; human nature as well as divine right ("gottliches Recht") demands its inviolable observation" (CP, 52; BP, 52; emphasis added).

Two immediate matters must be addressed. First, Schmitt provides the first minimal condition for a genuine political theory. It must be "systematically aware" of the grounding relationship between protection and obedience. Why must every genuine political theory be aware of this relationship as its constitutive element? Because human nature and divine right demand it. Indeed, what at first seems a smoothly constructed dyad ("human nature and divine right") are vitally linked. Human nature is inexplicable without reference to God. Within the space of one sentence, Schmitt has casually but forcefully linked Hobbes' protego ergo obligo with the "things of God."

A second point emerges from the development of the implications of the protection-obedience maxim. This maxim is the sine qua non of the state because the political world is pluriverse, not a universe. The political entity presupposes the "real existence of an enemy and therefore coexistence with another political entity" (CP, 53). One ignores the political at the cost of one's own existence. The plurality of the political world also means that the "political entity
cannot by its very nature be universal in the sense of embracing all of humanity and the entire world" (CP, 53). The reason for the division of the world into a political pluriverse is the political distinction of friend and enemy. Here, on this point, Schmitt prepares his statement that a world without politics is only a world of "culture, civilization, economics, morality, law, art, entertainment, etc." with the following remark: "if the 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" (CP, 53). Any time an ellipsis appears in Schmitt's enumerations, we should pay special attention. Schmitt lists three forces ("Völker, Religionen, Klassen und andere Menschengruppen") which would have to be "done away with" if the political were to cease as a measure-giving distinction. Of those three forces, peoples and states may theoretically "wither away" through either "iron compulsion," as Strauss put it, or the "soapy advertisement of the output of mass production;" classes too, may theoretically disappear as a divisive force in human history via either the triumph of bourgeois capitalism or Marxist socialism; but it is inconceivable that religious distinctions between (and within) Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus or other religious groupings would ever cease as a divisive source of potential enmity.

Schmitt quietly confirms this notion only a few pages later when he speculates that "in this universal society there would no longer be nations in the form of political entities, no class struggles, and no enemy groupings" (CP, 55). Curiously, Schmitt excludes the anticipated clause "no religions" suggested by his previous prohibitive elaboration against a potentially "humanized" globe. Even more interesting is a correction Schmitt makes to the 1933 text which proves its superiority to the 1932 text even in the minor details. In 1932, Schmitt had written that in a completely pacified,
united world "priests and theologians would be as superficial ("überflüssig") as politicians and statesmen." In 1933, one minor correction makes Schmitt’s assessment of theologians and priests logically consistent with his other statements. In 1933, Schmitt now states that they would be as "disturbing" or "troublesome" ("stören") as politicians or statesmen (BP, 64; BP (1933), 45). Priests and theologians would continue to remind "humanity" of its fallen nature. Only priests and theologians would admonish men that "pax et securitas" is a devilish promise, that enmity is divinely ordained and that history is a probationary state of providential struggle. Even if the nation-state “withers away” and classes and other human groupings cease to divide people into friend and enemy, political theology cannot relinquish its duty and obligation to restrain those forces which promise peace and security in light of the providential decree of enmity. The theological basis of politics and the political may well be denied or ignored by those who do “not love the truth” and take “pleasure in unrighteousness,” but it can never be eradicated.

A second major area which determines the legitimacy of “all political theories” is immediately related to the preceding remarks regarding the protection-obedience maxim. In the penultimate section of The Concept of the Political, Schmitt declares that “one could test and thereby classify every theory of the state and every political idea as to whether they consciously or unconsciously presuppose man to be ‘by nature evil’ or ‘by nature good’” (BP, 59; CP, 58). Schmitt seeks to affirm the foundational connection between all genuine political theories and the theological dogma of sin. Rhetorically, Schmitt seeks to introduce his discussion of original sin in neutral, “academic” fashion by referring to such “optimistic or pessimistic conjectures, all of which lead to an anthropological profession of faith” (CP, 58; emphasis added). As such, “the numerous modifications and variations of this anthropological distinction of good and evil ... may appear as
corruption, weakness, cowardice, stupidity or also as brutality, sensuality, vitality, irrationality and so on. Goodness may appear in corresponding variations as reasonableness, perfectibility, the capacity of being manipulated, of being teachable, peaceful and so forth” (CP, 58). Here Schmitt begins his “ascent” from the anthropological to the theological with the invocation of Hobbes — a “pessimistic” anthropological profession of faith became, under Hobbes’ philosophy, the “state nature.” Schmitt defines the state of nature of the “political philosophers of the seventeenth century” as a “condition of continuous danger and dangerousness, and their acting subjects are evil for precisely the same reasons as animals who are stirred by their drives (hunger, greediness, fear, jealousy)” (BP, 59).27 Schmitt curiously does not acknowledge that Hobbes himself denies that man’s nature is fallen or sinful or that any duty trumps our one and only obligation to self-preservation. Hobbes only emphasizes that human nature is dangerous to the individual himself and endangering to others. We shall return to this position in greater detail below and in the final chapter. What is important rhetorically is that Schmitt has prepared his readers for the following hypothesis which will act as a premise for uniting man’s “evilness” with theological doctrines of sin: “what remains is the remarkable and, for many, certainly disquieting diagnosis that all genuine political theories presuppose man to be evil, i.e., by no means unproblematic but a dangerous and dynamic being” (CP, 61; emphasis added). All genuine political theories presuppose man’s “evilness;” all genuine theories take their bearings by this insight in linking protection and obedience which is a relationship demanded by human nature and divine right.

Schmitt’s construction has two immediate effects. Two contrasts come in to play here; a contrast between pacifism and bellicosity, and between authoritarian and anarchist thinking. Within these contrasts, in 1932, Schmitt considers liberalism to be closer to anarchism and pacifism than
either of the other two antipodes. Within this liberal quandary, Schmitt moves towards political theology with the contrast of educative goals and law versus theology and morals: “one must pay attention to how very different the anthropological presuppositions are in the various domains of human thinking. With methodological necessity an educator will consider man capable of being educated. A jurist of private law starts with the sentence ‘one who is presumed to be good.’ A theologian ceases to be a theologian when he no longer considers man to be sinful or in need of redemption and no longer distinguishes between the chosen and unchosen. The moralist presupposes a freedom of choice between good and evil. Because the sphere of the political is in the final analysis determined by the real possibility of enmity, political conceptions and ideas cannot very well start with an anthropological optimism” (CP, 64).

Politics is only possible if man is not fundamentally good. But it is not enough to consider man’s evilness or “animal urges” and vitality as a problem to be solved. Here Schmitt touches on and fosters the fundamental tension he perceives in Hobbes’ political thought. Schmitt moves beyond anthropological conjectures regarding optimism and pessimism and asserts a “necessary” connection between all genuine political theories and theological dogmas of sin:

The connection of political theories with theological dogmas of sin ... is explained by the relationship of these necessary presuppositions. The fundamental theological dogma of the evilness of the world and of man leads, just as does the distinction of friend and enemy, to a categorization of men and makes impossible the undifferentiated optimism of a universal conception of man .... What the denial of original sin means socially and from the viewpoint of individual psychology has been shown by Ernst Troeltsch in his Sozialehren der chrislichen Kirchen und Gruppen and Seillière (in many publications about romanticism and romantics) in the examples of numerous sects, heretics, romantics and anarchists. The methodological connection of theological and political presuppositions is clear. But theological inference generally confuses political concepts because it shifts the distinction usually into moral theology.... For Hobbes, truly a powerful and systematic political thinker, the pessimistic conception of man is the elementary presupposition of a specific system of political thought. He also recognized correctly
that the conviction of each side that it possesses the truth, the good, and the just bring about the worst enmities, finally the war of all against all. This fact is not the product of a frightful and disquieting fantasy nor of a philosophy based on free competition by a bourgeois society in its first stage (Tönnies), but it is to be understood as the fundamental presupposition of a specifically political system of thought (CP, 65; BP, 65).

Is the "methodological connection" between "theological and political presuppositions" as clear as Schmitt would like us to assume? To begin with most important point, at the moment Schmitt invokes the "necessary presupposition" of the connection between "man by nature evil" and "theological dogmas of sin" Schmitt leaves the realm of that which is humanly demonstrable or understandable in purely rational terms. Schmitt makes clear the theological basis of man's evilness by insisting that man is not simply a "dangerous, dynamic being." To pick up on the crucial element of Strauss' larger criticism of Schmitt, "if man's dangerousness is only supposed or believed in, not genuinely known, the opposite, too, can be regarded as possible, and the attempts to eliminate man's dangerousness (which until now has always really existed) can be put into practice. If man's dangerousness is only believed in, it is in principle threatened, and therewith the political is threatened also" (Strauss, CP, 93-4).

Before returning to the question of Schmitt's certainty and knowing with regard to man's evilness, we should note that this formulation and its "presuppositions" equate romanticism and anarchism with heresy. Only by asserting the truth of "theological dogmas of sin" is Schmitt unequivocally able to assert the thesis of man "by nature evil" and thus attain an unassailable position from which to combat such forces. Second, the "necessary connection" between the political and theological dogmas of sin is revealed, or combined in the necessity of political theology — without the theological, man cannot be certain of the basis and bare essence of his own nature; without the political, theology "confuses political concepts" by shifting its emphasis onto a purely
moral understanding of human nature. In Schmitt's estimation, political theology, and only political theology is the "one thing needful" to come to terms with the political as a total form of knowledge. Let us return to Strauss' critique in order to flesh out the challenge Strauss poses to Schmitt's efforts to unite (or, more appropriately, reunite) religion and politics from the standpoint of political theology in Thomas Hobbes.

On the point of man's evil understood as dangerousness, Schmitt's understanding of Hobbes appears either radically deficient or as an act of willful deception and dissembling. While we shall elaborate on Hobbes' basic political and moral teaching below in Chapter Four, to start with the most obvious point of departure, Schmitt asserts Hobbes' state of nature as a revelation of "real politics." Yet, Hobbes himself asserts that the state of nature is something to be overcome in order for politics to take place. Politics, for Hobbes, seems to be guided by the ideal of civilizing men to political society; the object of Hobbesian politics is thus not an assertion of man's dangerousness simply, but of civilization or the civilizing project. Understanding Hobbes' project in terms of how Hobbes meant it to be understood obviously leads to immediate problems in Schmitt's argument. As Strauss noted with regard to Schmitt's obscuring the line between man's evilness understood as "dangerousness" or as fallen and sinful, "Hobbes had to understand evil as innocent "evil" because he denied sin; and he had to deny sin because he did not recognize any primary obligation of man that takes precedence over every claim qua justified claim, because he understood man as by nature free, that is, without obligation; for Hobbes therefore, the fundamental political fact was natural right as the justified claim of the individual, and Hobbes conceived of obligation as a subsequent restriction upon that claim" (Strauss, CP, 96).
For Hobbes, evil is innocent evil because to acknowledge it as anything different is to leave open space for claims on our allegiance or on our sense of obligation which supercede our fundamental duty to ourselves and our preservation individually. So what does Schmitt mean by the assertion of man’s evil? Schmitt seemingly asserts man’s dangerousness and evilness in order to celebrate war for the sake of war, or as Strauss infers, “warlike morals seem to be the legitimation for Schmitt’s affirmation of the political” (Strauss, CP, 95). As Strauss himself acknowledged, however, such a reaction is not really correct. If it is not correct, however, then there must be a legitimation of the political in Schmitt’s thought which can make his argument answer the question of what the “necessary presuppositions” are which hold together the political with the theological dogma of “man by nature evil” and the protection-obedience maxim. Such a position means squaring Schmitt ultimately with Hobbes’ account of politics. Schmitt wants to invoke the name of Hobbes in order to legitimize his concept of the political, but simultaneously he wants to return to Hobbes to attack the very project Hobbes ostensibly put in motion with his Leviathan.

Strauss himself makes us aware that a moral argument does indeed lie behind Schmitt’s attacks on liberalism, anarchism and humanitarian morality: “that Schmitt does not display his views in moralizing fashion but endeavors to conceal them only makes his polemic the more effective .... he affirms the political because he sees in the threatened status of the political a threat to the seriousness of human life. The affirmation of the political is ultimately nothing other than the affirmation of the moral” (Strauss, CP, 98-9). When we link this statement regarding the “affirmation of the moral” as both cause and effect of the “affirmation of the political” with the following statement one page later, we begin to see the connection between the political, the moral and the theological from Strauss’ perspective on the relationship of Schmitt and Hobbes:
The affirmation of the political is the affirmation of the state of nature. Schmitt opposes the affirmation of the state of nature to the Hobbesian negation of the state of nature. The state of nature is the status belli pure and simple. Thus it appears that the affirmation of the state of nature can only be bellicose. That appearance fades away as soon as one has grasped what the return to the state of nature means for Schmitt. The affirmation of the state of nature does not mean the affirmation of war but “relinquishment of the security of the status quo” [BP, 93]. Security is relinquished not because war would be something “ideal,” but because it is necessary to return from “splendid vicarage,” from the “comfort and ease of the existing status quo” to the “cultural or social nothing,” to the “secret, humble beginning,” to “undamaged, noncorrupt nature” [BP, 93] so that “out of the power of a pure and whole knowledge ... the order of human things” can arise again [BP, 95] (Strauss, CP, 101).

To follow Strauss, Schmitt living in a liberal world goes back to Hobbes, the originator of that liberal world. However, can the two positions ever be brought into harmony? Does Schmitt seek to articulate some hidden basis in Hobbes’ thought which has gone undetected? Does Schmitt seek to create in Hobbes’ thought a means to inject illiberal or non-Hobbesian goals into the Hobbesian account of politics? To begin to trace out Schmitt’s response, let us, in closing, look at some remarks of Schmitt’s from the 1933 edition of The Concept of the Political as well as his essay “The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations.”

Neutralizations and Depoliticizations

“The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations” is ostensibly devoted to the union of Socialism and Slavism which Donoso Cortés “said would be the decisive event of the next century” (AND, 130). The reason for this oracular announcement of new dangers (and new enemies) and Schmitt’s detection of its confirmation have to do as much with what has happened in the West as what has transpired in the East. Schmitt detects not an “iron law” of history at play, but a centuries old flight from the political. The political signifies enmity, the friend-enemy distinction, and ultimately a quarrel over the best way of life. Schmitt’s remarks are meant to remind us of “our
situation." In light of our analysis of Schmitt's invocation of the divine and providential commandment of enmity and his detection of this enmity in its "measure giving" form in the story of Cain and Abel, we should be alive to his appraisal of the Russians: "We always live in the eye of the more radical brother ("Man lebt immer unter dem Blick des radikalen Bruders") who compels us to draw the practical conclusion and pursue it to the end..... one thing is certain: that the anti-religion of technicity has been put into practice on Russian soil, that there a state arose which is more intensely statist than any ruled by the absolute princes ..." (*AND*, 131; *BP*, 80). The Russians have seen through Western "depoliticizations" and "neutralizations." Technology, which in the West signifies progress and rationalism, appears clearly to the Russians only as a weapon. Technology does not signify a "new and improved" neutral domain of human activity which has freed human beings from the need to make political distinctions. How did the West come to this predicament? Schmitt's answer is that our situation is the "consequence of the last centuries of European development; it completes and transcends specific European ideas and demonstrates in one enormous climax the core of modern European history" (*AND*, 131).

The reason for the last few centuries of development is the flight from the political. Every "successive stage" of European development is marked by a changing "central sphere." Schmitt detects the advent of secularism as the defining moment and origin of this process: "I consider the strongest and most consequential of all intellectual shifts of European history to be the one in the 17th century from traditional Christian theology to "natural" science" (*AND*, 137). Each century since the shift of "central spheres" from theology to metaphysics has been marked by a further removal from the truth of European existence and purpose. In all, Schmitt detects five "spheres" which have defined all movement: 1) the move from a theological core of existence to one based in metaphysics
(for example, rationalism), 2) the move from metaphysics to the humanitarian-moral sphere (for example, the Enlightenment), 3) the move from the humanitarian-moral to the economic, and 4) the move from the economic to the technical-scientific "age of progress." Schmitt is quick to qualify his statements that they do not constitute a "theory of cultural or intellectual dominance" nor a "historico-philosophic law" and that each central sphere was "nothing more than the central sphere;" i.e., it could exist simultaneously with other "spent stages," secondary concepts and a plurality of other notions (AND, 131-3).

What is crucial is that in each case, arguments erupted within each sphere which led to such concrete antagonism and enmity that peace or "neutrality" were sought in a new sphere. When disputes over the fundamental correctness of the governing sphere's doctrines were so drawn into question as to lead to instability, the erosion of security or the outbreak of warfare, the "central sphere" was abandoned for the succeeding stage. When theology no longer could hold the center and enmity erupted from theological disputes, secularization began to take hold, theology was abandoned, and metaphysics made its imprimatur on European consciousness. Even as late as the eighteenth century, Schmitt remarks, "in Kant's system God appears as a 'parasite of ethics.' Every word in his Critique of Pure Reason — critique, pure and reason — is polemically directed against dogma, metaphysics and ontology" (AND, 133). From our perspective, what is interesting in Schmitt's analysis is that even the realm of economics gave way to enmity via Marx's elaborations of the bourgeois—proletariat relationship and thus, class warfare, and thus via neutralization, was abandoned for the realm of science and technology (AND, 134). The economic gives way to the scientific and technical, but not simply in the sense of a "magical" series of resolutions: "This belief was self-evident to the great masses of the industrialized countries. They skipped all intermediary
stages typical of the thinking of intellectual vanguards and turned the belief in miracles and an afterlife — a religion without intermediary stages — into a religion of technical miracles, human achievements and the domination of nature" (AND, 134). It should be eminently clear that Schmitt does not simply record this fact neutrally but passes the severest judgment on it. Technology and the “spirit of technicity,” this “religion of technical miracles” are not neutral in any sense of the word. They are the epitome of an anti-divine, purely human rebellion. Our “Russian brothers” have reminded us of this fact by marrying the anti-religion of technicity with Slavism and Eastern Orthodox spirit. In Schmitt’s estimation, in his seemingly thankful estimation, our “radical brother” confronts us in enmity after having seized our insights as a weapon of battle.

What the Russians have seen through specifically is that “technology appeared [to the West] to be a sphere of peace, understanding and reconciliation” (AND, 139). Europe could only arrive at such a conclusion by literally selling its soul: “on the basis of the new central sphere, one hoped to find minimum agreement and common premises allowing for the possibility of security, clarity, prudence and peace... Concepts elaborated over many centuries of theological reflection now became uninteresting and merely private matters. In the metaphysics of 18th century deism, God himself was removed from the world and reduced to a neutral arbiter of the struggles and antagonisms of real life — as Hamann argued against Kant, he became a concept and ceased to be a Being” (AND, 137-8; BP, 89).

“*The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations*” strongly illustrates how Schmitt deploys political theology. Before turning to the full question of Hobbes in the next chapter, let us return to the 1933 edition in order to emphasize Schmitt’s deepening and refinement of his basic position. Three important areas leap to mind: First, Schmitt’s clear signaling of liberalism as *the enemy*;
second, his clarification of the legitimation of the political; and third, his changing appraisal of Hobbes. With regard to the first point, Strauss had challenged Schmitt in his "Remarks" to clarify his position regarding liberalism. Specifically, Strauss "baited" Schmitt by quoting Schmitt's own remarks regarding Donoso Cortés' mortal hatred of anarchism and adding to it his ridicule of liberalism as a mere "neutral" which attempts to mediate but only gets in the way: "the contempt, the disregard, is to be taken literally: they do not 'regard' him; each seeks only a view of the enemy; the 'neutral' obscures this view and obstructs the line of fire; he is gestured aside: the enemies never look at him" (Strauss, CP, 104). As any reader of Machiavelli knows, however, neutrals cannot and are not simply "disregarded;" eventually, both sides demand that "neutral parties" declare their allegiance — failure to do so is tantamount to a declaration of enmity.

Schmitt responded by branding liberalism not simply as an enemy of healthy politics but as the enemy. Liberalism becomes the driving force behind "antireligious, this-worldly activism" because it becomes the "home" of technology and science and subsumes anarchism into its doctrines via its emphasis on radical individual freedom. Now, in 1933 Schmitt claims that liberalism enlists on the side of "economy, industry and technology over state, war and politics" (BP (1933), 56). The only political contrast is between authority and anarchy; the contrast between pacifism and bellicosity is subsumed as a secondary concept by the former antithesis. Two additions emphasize Schmitt's deepening open enmity for liberalism. In 1932, Schmitt had written that "in the eighteenth century the idea of progress was primarily humanitarian-moral and intellectual, it was a spiritual progress; in the nineteenth it became economic-industrial-technological. This mutation is decisive.... The complete inventory of this system of antitheses and their possible combinations is contained in the 1814 treatise by Benjamin Constant" (CP, 75).
1933, Schmitt now writes even more damningly and clearly that Constant is not simply the "inaugurator" of liberalism, but is a "Church Father of the entire liberal intellectuality of the nineteenth century" ("ein Kirchenvater der gesamten liberalen Geistigkeit des 19. Jahrhunderts") whose "illusions and deceptions" constitute the liberal catechism (BP (1933), 56). Initially, while this addition might not seem anything more than a bombastic change, it is only intelligible from the perspective of political theology. Political theology, or the need for political theology, emerges nowhere more clearly than in the repudiation of providence. Moreover, Schmitt now subsumes Marx under liberalism: "Marxism is only a case of the application of the liberal mentality of the nineteenth century" (BP (1933), 55-6; also see 55, 58). As Heinrich Meier has remarked, from Schmitt's stunning perspective, "the Marxists of today are the bourgeois of the day after tomorrow. Liberalism and Marxism alike have set the 'final war of humanity' before the definitive establishment of universal peace and security. Ultimately, both derive from one faith" (Meier, 1995, 73). Of course, a "real" Marxist would insist that his or her ultimate goals are the means of production and not "comfort and ease." Such a claim is insignificant from Schmitt's perspective because the latter is the real goal of securing the means of production from capitalist monopoly — increasing the "purchasing power" of successive generations is the effective truth of Marxism, from Schmitt's perspective, whether it comes about from Leninist revolution or the "withering away of the state."

Even more important than Schmitt's clarity regarding liberalism is his response to Strauss' loaded analysis of the legitimation of the political and the possibility that Schmitt's theorizing is only a celebration of "martial virtues," "bellicosity" and "war for the sake of war." Schmitt explicitly prefaced his remark that knowledge of the political resides in the friend-enemy distinction by distinguishing between "unpolitical-agonal struggle" and the "determinative understanding" of the
real possibility of war” and the “task of determining this in clear knowledge through this fact” which consists in “correctly distinguishing between friend and enemy” (Das Politische liegt nicht in Kampf selbst .... sondern in einem von der realen Möglichkeit eines Krieges bestimmten Verhalten, in der klaren Erkenntnis der eigenen, dadurch bestimmten Situation und in der Aufgabe, Freund und Feind richtig zu unterscheiden”) (BP (1933), 15-16; also see 10, 12 and 17). The political names a task and embodies “clear knowledge” which leads to correctly distinguishing between friend and enemy.

In this area especially, two additions hammer this point home. We are familiar with Schmitt’s remark that the enemy is not an “adversary, opponent or rival” (“Konkurrent, Gegner ... Gegenspieler”) from his remarks in 1932. In 1933, Schmitt supplements his initial definition by adding that “the opponent, the ‘antagonist’ in the bloody contest of the ‘agon’ is also not the enemy” (BP (1933), 10). Schmitt elaborates specifically on this point in a footnote (attached to the word “Agon”) with a contrast between Ernst Jünger and the Catholic jurist Paul Adams: “A. Baumler cites Nietzsche’s and Heraklitus’ concept of war entirely in terms of the agonal. Question: From where does the enemy come in Valhalla? ... The great metaphysical opposition of agonal and political thought arises in every more profound discussion of war. In most recent times, I would cite the magnificent dispute between Ernst Jünger and Paul Adams (Deutschland-Sender, 1 February 1933) ... Here Ernst Jünger held forth on the view of the agonal principle (“man is not designed for peace”) whereas Paul Adams saw the meaning of war in the establishment of dominion, order and peace” (BP (1933), 10; also see Meier, 1995, 63-5). Schmitt makes it very clear what separates his own thought from the likes of Ernst Jünger later in 1933 when he invokes war as the only guarantee of the seriousness of life in its orientation towards dominion, order and peace, but understood from the perspective of political theology. In re-prefacing his remark on what an “unpolitical world” would
contain and why it threatens the political (see CP, 53), Schmitt now prefaces his remark with an uncited invocation of Augustine which reveals for Schmitt what is most important about political theology: "the old thesis that man should not expect complete security in this life — *plena securitas in hac vita non expectanda* — might become outdated" (*BP* (1933), 36; see Augustine, 1984, 892-4). The elimination of the truth of Augustine's maxim ensures only the triumph of satanic forces. The denial of Augustine's maxim, but not its elimination, necessitates a political-theological answer. The political is "threatened;" whether it can ever be eradicated is another matter. 

And what are we to make of Hobbes and his place in Schmitt's theorizing? We end this chapter with an open question purposefully. For all intents and purposes, Strauss' criticism of Schmitt's seemingly confused understanding and usage of Hobbes led Schmitt to even further distance himself from Hobbes. In 1927, as Strauss noted, Schmitt described Hobbes as "by far the greatest and perhaps the only truly systematic political thinker" (Strauss, CP, 90; *BP* (1927), 25). In 1932, Schmitt refers to Hobbes as only a "great and truly systematic political thinker;" in 1933, Hobbes sinks even further in Schmitt's estimation — now he is only a "great and truly systematic thinker" — but no longer "political" (*CP*, 65; *BP*, 65; *BP* (1933), 46). Given this diminishing appraisal of Hobbes, initiated by Schmitt himself in 1932, one would not be surprised if Hobbes faded more and more into the background. Why does Schmitt not only devote a book length study to Hobbes in 1938, five years after the final edition of *The Concept of the Political*, but return to Hobbes and to Strauss' criticism of Schmitt's understanding of Hobbes in 1965? As we shall see, the answer turns on Schmitt's assessment of Hobbes' piety as well as Schmitt's assessment of Strauss' argument that Hobbes sacrificed his piety on the altar of "*pax et securitas.*"
CHAPTER THREE ENDNOTES

1. Schmitt literally begins his "Preface to the Second Edition (1934)" with a lie, namely, that "the second edition of Political Theology remains unchanged" (PT, 1). That Political Theology had been changed, and changed in a significantly interesting and revealing way, we have already taken note of with regard to Schmitt's two different assessments of his bête noire, Mikhail Bakunin (see Chapter Two above, 116).

2. No one in the wide ranging field of Schmitt scholarship has questioned the central importance of The Concept of the Political to Schmitt's theorizing. However, Ingeborg Maus has objected to limiting interpretive approaches to "the pamphlets with which [Schmitt] reached a wider public" at the expense of "his main works which are in legal theory" (Maus, 1997, 125). While Maus raises an important point which draws attention to the extensive and wide-ranging nature of Schmitt's publications, she seems primarily intent on a strictly legal reading of Schmitt's juridical and constitutional works. Such an approach is difficult to sustain in light of Schmitt's highly idiosyncratic understanding of "juridical science" (see especially Chapter Two above, 43-5 and Chapter Two Endnote 4; and G, 17; see also G, 23 and 70-1) and his claim that the "political is the total." It does not help Maus' cause that she accepts Schmitt's own postwar efforts to understand him simply or primarily as a legal and constitutional theorist. In quoting from Schmitt's Constitutional Essays from the Years 1924-1954 (Verfassungsrechtliche Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1924-1954), Maus notes that Schmitt wrote, "my conceptions of constitutional law are ... not an ex post function of retrospectives from later, structurally different situations, which have only arisen from the collapse of Weimar legality" (VA, 350; Maus, 1997, 127-8). At the minimum, this
statement is highly ambiguous. Maus claims that this statement supports Schmitt’s abandonment of his positions prior to 1933; in other words, she implies that Schmitt was unprincipled and inconsistent. In fact, Maus, only a few sentences later, writes that “by relying on the postulate of legitimacy in order to reinterpret the constitutional order in accordance with the dictates of a presidential dictatorship” Schmitt had surrendered the substance of the Weimar Constitution (Maus, 1997, 128). That Schmitt attacked the “liberal substance” of the Weimar Constitution and sought a “postulate of legitimacy” in political theology is the position we have elaborated in Chapter Two. While we should take notice of Maus’ objections, we should also note the following. First, nowhere does Maus actually demonstrate how or why Schmitt’s writings “which reached a larger public” are of less value for understanding his thought. Schmitt returned to several of these writings repeatedly in order to refine and elaborate his arguments. These efforts hardly reflect a quick attempt at publicity. Second, Maus does not even begin to address or explore what the “postulate of legitimacy” is within Schmitt’s theorizing. Third, if political theology is of paramount importance to Schmitt’s concept of the political, and if the political is the total, we must follow Schmitt’s own stipulations and follow the “political” into the “legal realm” and not vice versa as Maus implies. Fourth, if we were to follow Maus’ urgings, we would have to ignore the overwhelming continuity demonstrable in Schmitt’s repeated concentration on Thomas Hobbes’ political thought; Schmitt returns to Hobbes, and Leo Strauss’ criticism of his understanding of Hobbes, again and again after 1933 (see Chapter Four below).

3. In 1938, Schmitt will explicitly contrast “the Jewish scholar, Leo Strauss” with, “from the German side, Helmut Schelsky” in comparing different approaches in Hobbesian scholarship (see L, 10-1; L (1938), 20-2; emphasis added.).

204
4. "Der Begriff des Politischen" originally appeared as a 33 page essay in the Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik in September, 1927. Der Begriff des Politischen appeared in book form in 1932 (published by Duncker & Humblot in Berlin) and was republished in 1933 (by Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt in Hamburg). In the 1933 edition, Schmitt somewhat misleadingly indicates that the first edition appeared in August, 1927 and the second edition appeared in October, 1931 (BP(1933), 6). It is possible that he has not the publication dates but completion dates of his writings in mind. Strauss' "Anmerkungen zu Carl Schmitt, Der Begriff des Politischen" appeared in September, 1932 (with Schmitt's assistance) in the same journal in which Schmitt's original essay had appeared five years earlier. Strauss' "Remarks" are based on the 1932 edition of Der Begriff des Politischen (which included Schmitt's "The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations" as an appendix) (Strauss, 1932, 732, Footnote 1). "The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations" originally appeared in November, 1929 in the Europaische Revue, (66-81) as "Die europäische Kultur in Zwischenstadien der Neutralisierungen" ("European Culture in the Intermediary Stages of Neutralization") and was appended in essay form to the 1932 edition of The Concept of the Political and again, in 1940, in Schmitt's Positionen und Begriff im Kampf mit Weimar — Genf — Versailles 1923-1939. (PB, 132-40). As we shall note later in this chapter, Schmitt made significant changes to this essay as well between 1929 and 1932.

5. As Heinrich Meier has commented on this point specifically, Strauss actually makes Schmitt's argument stronger than it seems. Strauss had signaled his awareness of Schmitt's earlier works and the earlier version of The Concept of the Political, yet, as Meier has pointed out, Strauss "as elegantly, and as discreetly as possible, calls attention to these things" by making Schmitt's reticence and confusion in crucial areas seem as if these aspects are either subtle rhetorical obfuscations or
forceful insights when they are neither (Meier, 1995, 16; see Strauss, CP, 84-5). In 1927, as Meier observed, Schmitt explicitly refers to the political not as measure-giving or authoritative ("maßgebende") or independent ("selbständig"), but as being merely one "relatively independent" domain among others. In other words, Schmitt begins his exposition of the political so defensively that he seeks to make the political seem just like every other liberal parceling out of life itself (BP (1927), 3-5). If the political is only a "domain" of human existence, it cannot authoritatively or independently make demands on human beings or other "domains" of human activity and thought.

In turn, while no one could mistake Schmitt for a "good liberal," there was the possibility held out by Strauss that Schmitt's thought, if not sufficiently clarified, could be mistaken for "liberalism with a minus sign," that is, essentially relying on liberal presuppositions to produce illiberal results (Strauss, CP, 103).

6. Strauss had especially drawn Schmitt's attention to the usage of the word "autonomy" by noting that Schmitt "occasionally used" autonomy in the sense indicated. Only once does Schmitt actually place the word "autonomy" in quotation marks, on page 71 of the 1932 edition of Der Begriff des Politischen (BP, 71). Not once in the 1927 edition (as we noted above, see Endnote 5) did Schmitt employ the word autonomy in such a way. Schwab's translation, which is highly problematic, does not retain Schmitt's usage of quotation marks at all (compare CP, 72 with BP, 71).

7. "tendenzlos" can also be translated as "unbiased" or "non-tendentious." The last phrase of the sentence reads "...und daß das Kunstwerk "tendenzlos" seinen "Zweck in sich" hat" (BP (1933), 53).

8. On Schwab's inclusion of Strauss' remarks, see Meier, 1995, 8, Footnote 7. I had the opportunity in July, 1997 to ask Schwab about the inclusion of Strauss' "Remarks" in his translation
and he confirmed Meier’s story. Schmitt had written of his intent of getting Strauss’ comments on *The Concept of the Political* published in the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* in a letter to his publisher at Duncker & Humblot, Ludwig Feuchtwanger, on June 10, 1932: “so far, perhaps over a hundred reviews of *The Concept of the Political* have appeared, but I have learned little from them. The only item of interest is that Dr. Leo Strauss, the author of a book about Spinoza, has written a very good essay about my book — very critical, of course — which I hope to find a place for in Lederer’s *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft*” (quoted in Meier, 1995, 8, Footnote 7).

9. Among the more problematic phrases Schmitt inserted into the text of 1933 which makes it politically assailable is his remark that Weimar legality “criminalized” the Nazis. (*BP (1933)*, 30). One should not interpret such remarks to signify Schmitt’s endorsement of Nazism. Schmitt had originally supported the ban on anti-Weimar political groups ranging from the *Red Front* to the *Stahlhelm* and the *Sturmabteilung*.

10. In the most important sense, Schmitt has already provided the source of “spirit and knowing” which answers this question in 1922 in *Political Theology* (a passage which is repeated in 1934). Writing of the contrast between dictatorship and the never ending discussion of liberal democracy, Schmitt wrote of Cortés’ struggle against Proudhon:

> Dictatorship is the opposite of discussion. It belongs to the decisionism of one like Donoso Cortés to assume the extreme case, to anticipate the Last Judgment. That extremist cast of mind explains why he was contemptuous of the liberals while he respected atheist-anarchist socialism as his deadly foe and endowed it with a diabolical stature. In Proudhon he claimed to see a demon. Proudhon laughed about
it, and alluding to the Inquisition as if he were already on the funeral pyre, he called out to Donoso Cortés: Ignite it! The satanism of that period was not an incidental paradox but a powerful intellectual principle. Its literary expression was the elevation of the throne of Satan — the “adopted father of those who, in a fit of anger, cast out God the father from the earthly paradise” — and of Cain, the fratricide, while Abel, the bourgeois, was “warming his belly at the patriarchal hearthside.” “The descendents of Cain ascend to heaven and on earth throw down God!” (Baudelaire) (PT, 64-5).

We have already noted that for all of Schmitt’s admiration of Cortés, he criticized him, not so much for his “extremism” nor for his “anticipation of the Last Judgment,” but for the lack of a notion of the Katechon which left him “theologically divided” and incapable of conceiving of either institutional or individual action capable of restraining the Antichrist (see above, Chapter Two, 114-7 and Endnote 40 and G, 63 and 70). Cortés’ understanding of what was at stake was fundamentally correct, particularly with regard to his identification, via Baudelaire, of the revolt against God carried out in the name of the enthronement of Satan and “the descendents of Cain.” However, he could see only a “deadly foe.” Among other things, Schmitt is clear that because of Cortés unaided “extremism” he is unable to recognize the inherent dangers of liberalism’s own “atheism.” Schmitt himself makes us aware that he will not fall prey to this same confusion. However, as we have already indicated above, Schmitt can only assert his own knowledge of the antitheses and moral disjunctions posited by “good and evil, God and devil” (PT, 55) after coming to terms with the concept of the political.

11. Again, that there are any differences between the three texts would not occur to anyone who took
Schmitt's assessments of his own works at face value, or at the minimum, did not examine Schmitt's seemingly facile remarks carefully. We have already remarked upon the curious silence regarding the 1933 edition of Der Begriff des Politischen (both Schmitt's own silence and that of his advocates' and critics'). As well, in 1932, Schmitt wrote the following with regard to the differences between the 1932 and 1927 editions of that work in an "Afterword to the Edition of 1932": "The current edition contains... a series of new formulations, notes and examples, but no changes to or extensions of the basic line of thought itself. I would like to wait and see which trends and viewpoints will emerge as decisive" (BP, 96). That nothing could be further from the truth we have already noted with regard to the major trends and a few specific examples drawn from comparing the 1927 and 1932 editions. Nonetheless, Schmitt's remark is typical of other similar statements he makes in appraising his works; he reveals as much as he conceals in stating that he will wait "to see which trends and viewpoints will emerge as decisive." In a sense, with the perceived weakening of the "systematics of liberal thinking" Schmitt switches over from a defensive articulation of the political to what we might term a stronger and more transparent elaboration, as well as changing the very model initially employed to explicate the political.

12. Schmitt defines the enemy in an entirely defensive manner. The "actual enemy" ("der eigene Feind") or the "real enemy" ("der wirkliche Feind") who is "plainly the other, the alien" is defined as follows: "it is enough that the enemy is in a particularly intensive sense existentially something different and alien, so that in case of conflict he signifies the negation of one's own kind of existence ("die Negation der eigenen Art von Existenz") and therefore is fended off or fought in battle in order to preserve one's own, proper kind of life ("die eigene, seinsmaßige Art von Leben") (BP (1927), 4). Schmitt makes no substantive elaboration of how or why the enemy threatens
"one's own kind of existence" or "one's own, proper kind of life" immediately or clearly.

13. This passage is also typical of the minor changes Schmitt makes to the 1927 text. In 1932, this passage now reads: "In an overall systematic way, liberal thinking ignores or evades state and politics and moves instead in an ever typical recurring polarity of two heterogeneous spheres, namely ethics and economy, intellect ("Geist") and trade, education and property. The critical mistrust against state and politics is easily explained in terms of the principle of a system in which the individual must remain terminus a quo and terminus ad quem" (BP, 69; boldfaced, italicized phrases represent Schmitt’s minor textual changes).

14. The changes to this passage between 1927 and 1932 are another significant supporting addendum to the claim that Schmitt's claims are ultimately moral and theological in nature. In 1932, as we noted earlier (see Chapter Two, 64 and Chapter Two, Endnote 20), Schmitt elaborated on this passage in moral tones. Schmitt wrote that were the friend-enemy distinction to be eradicated by liberal humanitarian impulses, the world would only be a world of "politics-free Weltanschauung, culture, civilization, economy, morals, law, art, entertainment, etc." (CP, 54). Strauss commented on this passage specifically in observing that “Schmitt does everything to make entertainment nearly disappear in a series of man's serious pursuits; above all, the 'etc.' that immediately follows 'entertainment' glosses over the fact that 'entertainment' is really the ultimate term in the series, its finis ultimus” (Strauss, CP, 98). The only guarantee that individuals and "humanity" will ever grasp the seriousness of any pursuit or "domain" of human activity requires taking one’s bearings from the political — as Strauss comments, “the only guarantee against the world becoming a world of entertainment is politics and the state...” (Strauss, CP, 98). The “political” is the necessary condition for serious reflection on man’s legitimate pursuits.
15. Schmitt understands Christian humility not simply in terms of the obvious prohibition against loud, boastful professions of faith or prayer (as evidenced by Matthew 6:5-6) but, as we elaborated in Chapter Two above, as residing in an arcanum. Humility not only directs or forms outward actions but also inward belief. This point will loom large in Schmitt's later efforts to rescue Hobbes as a vir probus against Hobbes' "outward" profession of philosophy and "natural scientific thinking."

16. This passage indicates how troublesome Schwab's translation is — Schwab does not even bother to translate Schmitt's "lengthy note" into English! He dismisses Schmitt's elaboration with the explanation, "omitted here is a long note by Schmitt on examples of enemy declaration" (CP, 47). Within the text, Schmitt writes in carefully neutral-sounding terms that "every state provides, therefore, some sort of formula for the declaration of an internal enemy. The πολέμιος declaration in the public law of the Greek republics and the hostis declaration in Roman public law are but two examples" (BP, 46-7). However, at the heart of Schmitt's note which elaborates the state's reaction to internal discord is the following statement: "Therefore one finds here countless examples in the political history of dissenters and heretics for which the following argumentation of Nicholas de Vernuls (de una et diversa religione [on the one and the many religions] 1646) is characteristic: "one also may not tolerate the heretic within the state even if they seem peaceful (pacifique) because people like heretics can never be entirely peaceful" [nb: Schmitt's usage of both "Ketzer und Häretiker" and his emphasis on dissenters and heretics; normally "Ketzer" is translated as heretic, here, Schmitt includes "Häretiker" as well to emphasize the schismatic nature of disputes arising within a state because of "dissenters and heretics"] The things over which "dissenters and heretics" disagree compels them to be declared enemies and leaves no alternative but the hostis declaration of public enmity. The issues over which they disagree and which compels them to enmity admit of
no peacefulness or mediation. Here there is only enmity and the friend-enemy constellation in its nascent, ubiquitous form.

17. This elaboration answers the question of why Schmitt never considers “friends” or “friendship” on their own as a separate topic. Friendship is inexplicable without enmity just as recognizing the “National Being” is inexplicable without reference to those forces which seek to make it not to be.

18. As a simple example, we might point out that no one considers the New Model Army without identifying it with reference to who formed its basis and goals; no one refers to the New Model Army without first identifying it as Cromwell’s New Model Army.

19. Here, we should clarify that Machiavelli himself never uses the phrase “great politics” and that it is a “device” employed by Nietzsche to dramatize the coming European order introduced by “a long, terrible will of [Europe’s] own that would be able to cast its goals millenia hence...” (Nietzsche, 1966, 131). However, as we learn elsewhere in Nietzsche’s writings, an imitation of Machiavelli’s “boisterous allegrissimo” is necessary to this task (see Nietzsche, 1966, 40-land Endnotes 20 and 21 below). Machiavelli’s ultimate teaching was afterall the creation of “new modes and orders” on the scale of Moses, Cyrus, Theseus and Romulus. If such sweeping efforts to reforge the civilizational crucible do not constitute “great politics,” then nothing does.

20. The simplest (but most revealing) reason that Schmitt does not fully consider Machiavelli (for example, with regard to Machiavelli’s discussion of “accidents,” decision and the formation and preservation of the state) is that Schmitt did not think Machiavelli was a genuine philosopher. As Heinrich Meier has commented:

All that Schmitt has to say about the “poor Florentine humanist” (L, 128), after whose estate he will name his own house in his seclusion in Plettenberg, remains in
every respect within the realm of the conventional. In a newspaper article on the 400th anniversary of his death, Schmitt writes that Machiavelli was "neither a great statesman nor a great theoretician....." (Kölnische Zeitung, June 21, 1927). Schmitt sees in Machiavelli the patriot, the moralist and the technician. He esteems his "honesty" and stresses that the author of the Prinicipe was no Machiavellian. He does not even want to grant him a "theory of State," however, and he sees in him even less a political philosopher with whom he would seriously have to enter into critical discussion" (Meier, 1998, 100-1, Footnote 103; see also DD, 6-10; CPD, 37, 42; L, 78, 128-9; G, 49, 55).

That there is a contrast (indeed, a very revealing and provocative contrast) to be made between Schmitt’s "opting" for Cromwell and ignoring Machiavelli is nonetheless our current undertaking. Machiavelli is indeed unsuitable for Schmitt’s purposes, but not for the reasons Schmitt might have given. Machiavelli’s articulation of the reasons and purposes for conflict and warfare form a very important set of observations which challenge Schmitt’s concept of the political, the friend-enemy distinction and decisionism.

21. The following interpretation regarding Machiavelli’s impiety should not be surprising. Aside from the Catholic Church’s placing of Machiavelli’s works on the Index, Nietzsche praises the “tempo” of Machiavelli’s Prince, and the “boisterous allegrisimo” with which Machiavelli deals with the “most serious matters” (Nietzsche, 1966, 40-1) thus indicating the superior ability of Machiavelli to confront his task. Aside from the more substantive agreements, (the concern with Christianity, especially Borgia’s attempt to “overthrow” it by putting it to impious uses), Nietzsche praises Machiavelli as well in The Will to Power as representing the perfection of politics (see Nietzsche,
22. In this sense, despite Borgia's "technical" failures, and his overall inability to seize the power of the papacy for himself, his significance cannot be overlooked because his thoroughly un-Christian intentions could have destroyed in one fell swoop the religious sway the Church held over Italy and Europe. This point was not lost on Nietzsche, who in The Antichrist follows Machiavelli this far in recognizing the unique potential and promise Borgia represented (Nietzsche, 1971, 173-75).

23. Schwab leaves out the important clause "by us" ("bei uns") from Lenin's remark. The original sentence reads "Personen, sagt Lenin, die unter Politik kleine Tricks verstehen, die manchmal an Betrug grenzen, müssen bei uns die entschiedenste Ablehnung erfahren. Klassen können nicht betrogen werden" (BP, 63).

24. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn has magnificently captured the same train of thought in an invented monologue. In The First Circle, Solzhenitsyn portrays Stalin's modus vivendi as being derived from the same political inspiration which animates Lenin's remark regarding classes and class warfare. Solzhenitsyn fantastically conjectures the inner workings of Stalin's political thought as follows:

The Immortal, stirred by great thoughts, paced his night office. A kind of inner music surged in him, a kind of enormous orchestra provided marching music for him. Dissatisfied people? All right. There were always dissatisfied people and there always would be.

But reviewing in his mind the not-so-complex history of the world, Stalin knew that with time people would forgive everything bad, even forget it, even remember it as something good. Entire peoples were like Lady Anne, the widow in Shakespeare's Richard III. Their wrath was short lived, their will not steadfast, their
memory weak — they would always be glad to surrender themselves wholly to the victor. That was why he had to live to ninety — because the battle was not yet finished, the building not completed, and there was no one to replace him.

To wage and win the last world war. To exterminate like gophers the Western social democrats and then all the others in the world who were still unbeaten. Then, of course, to raise the productivity of labor, solve the various economic problems. Only he, Stalin, knew the path by which to lead humanity to happiness, how to shove its face into happiness like a blind puppy’s into a bowl of milk — “There, drink up!” (Solzhenitsyn, 1968, 130).

Independent of Schmitt’s analysis of the political, Solzhenitsyn provides strong evidence via his conjectures that Stalin and Stalin’s policies were chiefly determined by enmity, not economics or securing the “means of production.” Revolution; i.e., class warfare, is a permanent condition which forever elusively holds out the attainment of “human happiness” as its goal. At the core of Stalin’s (and Lenin’s) political thought is a friend-enemy distinction on a global scale. Within such a conception, ideological and class enemies are not “treated of objectively” and “driven back into their borders” but are to be hunted down world wide and “exterminated like gophers” (see CP, 36; 34-7, 53-4, 56-8; G, 242, 263, 285). From Schmitt’s perspective, we might surmise, Lenin and Stalin were merely the most ruthless (but consistent) of morally deficient “humanitarians”!

25. Why Schmitt would make such an egregiously inaccurate assessment is beyond the scope of our current undertaking. Here we will note only that Hegel was a great admirer of Napoleon and was sympathetic (at the minimum) to Napoleon’s imposition of the ideals of the French Revolution.

26. The one area which unites Strauss, Heidegger and Schmitt is their unvarying contempt (unlike
the varying reasons for their contempt) for the world of “last men” created by a united-at-the-level-of-the-lowest-common-denominator, pacified, “humanized” globe devoted to technology, economics, comfort and ease. Writing in agreement with Heidegger (at least of Heidegger’s assessment), Strauss characterized the world created by modern science and technology:

What is decisive for him [Heidegger] is that this world society is to him worse than a nightmare. He called it the “night of the world.” It means, indeed, as Marx had predicted, the victory of an ever more completely urbanized, ever more completely technological West over the whole planet — complete leveling and uniformity regardless of whether it is brought about by iron compulsion or by soapy advertisement of the output of mass production. It means unity of the human race on the lowest level, complete emptiness of life, self-perpetuating doctrine without rhyme or reason; no leisure, no concentration, no elevation, no withdrawal; nothing but work and recreation; no individuals and no peoples, but instead “lonely crowds.” ....

Man’s humanity is threatened with extinction by technology (Strauss, 1989, 42).

To be sure, Strauss ultimately distances himself greatly from Heidegger’s “existentialism” just as ultimately he has no shared basis for agreement with Schmitt’s political theology. However, it is hardly exaggerating Strauss’ early basic position to say he was as horrified and repulsed by the “promise” held out by modern philosophy and modern science and technology as Schmitt and Heidegger were for very different reasons.

27. Once again, even in the minor details, Schwab’s translation proves flawed. Schmitt describes the seventeenth century philosophers’ “state of nature” as a condition of continual danger and dangerousness (or endangering and dangerousness) (“ein Zustand fortwährender Gefahr und
28. Schmitt refers to Constant’s *De l’esprit de conquête (The Spirit of Conquest and Usurpation)*. Schmitt understood Constant’s critique of Napoleon’s “militarism” and “selling out of the principles of 1789” to be based on his assessment that war and conquest no longer procure the “goods of life” and that hence, “war is no longer useful” (*CP*, 75). Constant could only understand enmity and warfare as directed at the securing of material goods via conquest. Schmitt elaborates the series of antitheses in Constant’s work as revolving around “freedom, progress and reason” against “feudalism, reaction and force,” and “economy, technology and industry” against “state, war and politics” which culminate in the antithesis “parliamentarism” against “dictatorship.” In Constant’s estimation, according to Schmitt, technology made war so “terrible” that it gave the lie to all personal reasons for individual participants to desire war (for example, heroism, glory, courage, or the “delight in fighting”) and destroyed more than it procured for the victors. These antitheses and basic line of reasoning are fundamentally misguided according to Schmitt, but highly revealing of liberal motives and the atheism which quietly informs the liberal world view.

29. It is in light of Schmitt’s ultimate assertion of the theological as the basis for the political, and hence, the friend-enemy distinction, that we can appreciate the final assessment of Hegel in Schmitt’s thought. Schmitt was uneasily divided over the status of Hegel throughout his earlier writings. As we have noted, Schmitt found many of Hegel’s formulations helpful; at the same time, he found the basis of the Hegelian worldview and conception of history troubling. After reading Alexandre Kojève’s *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel* shortly after it appeared in French in 1947, Schmitt believed that he had found the confirmation of his “concern” that Hegel was essentially an atheist. What did the atheism of the “Heraklitean Epimetheus Hegel” mean concretely for Schmitt
and Schmitt’s friend-enemy distinction and decisionism? Schmitt focused on Kojève’s presentation of Hegel’s belief that Napoleon represented the “Perfect Man,” that is Napoleon represented that being who is “fully and definitively satisfied by what he is” — being the realization of the Christian idea of Individuality, the revelation of this Man by absolute Knowledge has the same content as Christian Theology, minus the notion of transcendence. Christian doctrine ... differs from [Hegel’s] own doctrine only in its form: Christian theology in reality reveals to us nothing other than the Hegelian concept of Individuality, but in the form of the representation (Vorstellung) of god-manhood” (Kojève, 1989, 73-4; Kojève’s emphasis retained. Schmitt refers specifically to this passage in Kojève’s work in his essay “Clauswitz als Politischer Denker: Bemerkungen und Hinweise,” 1967, 488-90). Schmitt specifically draws attention to the above argument as the elucidation of Hegel’s claim that Napoleon is thus “the apparent God in our midst” (Schmitt, 1967, 488; Hegel, 1980, 472). Napoleon is “the apparent God in our midst” because he is “fully and definitively satisfied by what he is” and, in turn, Hegel (and later Kojève) can give a complete account of Napoleon and themselves: “that man is Wise who is capable of answering in a comprehensible or satisfactory manner all questions that can be asked him concerning his acts, and capable of answering in such fashion that the entirety of his answers forms a coherent discourse” (Kojève, 1989, 75; Kojève’s emphasis).

Prior to Schmitt’s assessment in 1967, these concerns led Schmitt to contact Kojève and were the origin of an interesting correspondence which formed the basis for Schmitt’s final judgment of Hegel. Writing to Kojève in 1955, Schmitt specifically inquired about his estimation of the concept of the enemy in Hegel’s thought: “In general, the question is whether there can be an ‘enemy’ in Hegel at all; this is similar to the question of the possibility of a ‘dictatorship’ in the system of
Hegelian philosophy. For either he is only a necessary intermediate stage of negation or null and insubstantial .... My concern is the expression ‘the enemy in his ownmost figure.’ Who is the enemy who shows himself in the animal functions? More precisely: how is it possible that he shows himself exactly in the animal functions? What is he [Hegel] after there? In my little book Ex Captivitate Salus the following verse is cited on pp. 89-90 in a remark on the enemy: ‘The enemy is our own question as a figure ...’ Hegel’s philosophy has no ethics that could found an absolute scission between good and evil. For it, good is what in each particular stage of the dialectical process is the rational and thus the real. What is good is timely in the sense of correct, dialectical knowledge and deliberateness. If the history of the world is the world’s court of judgment, then it is a process without a final instance and without a definitive disjunctive judgment. Evil is unreal and is conceivable only insofar as something untimely is conceivable, thus perhaps explainable as a false abstraction of the understanding, a passing confusion of a particularity that is limited in itself’ (Schmitt to Kojève, 14 December 1955 in Kojève and Schmitt, 1998, 113-4).

Kojève’s response to Schmitt’s question and Schmitt’s appraisal of the “Hegelian” situation is even more revealing. Kojève responded that “‘the enemy in his ownmost figure’ is most likely the Devil, more precisely: the Christian Devil, who shows himself precisely in ‘animal functions.’ For Hegel (‘for us’ or ‘in itself’) these functions are ‘null’ because man negates them and is man, and not only animal, only as their negation (“Für Hegel ("für uns" oder "an sich") sind diese Funktion nichtig, weil der Mensch sie negiert und nur als deren Negation allein Mensch und nicht nur Tier ist”) But since the ‘unhappy consciousness’ (i.e., the religious man, more precisely: the Christian) appears as a slave in the face of death and of the risk of his life in the struggle, ‘for it’ the animal-character is not ‘null’ but powerful, i.e. precisely ‘devilish’ .... If one has angst before the
enemy, the latter becomes ‘devilish’ and thus ‘powerful’: he is the ‘master’ and one is his ‘slave’ (at least insofar as one does not flee from him, into ‘another world’). ‘Can there be an enemy in Hegel at all?’ you ask? As always: yes and no. Yes, insofar and so long as there is a struggle for recognition, i.e. history. World history is the history of enmity between men (of which there is none among animals: animals ‘fight’ for something, but never out of enmity) (‘...die es unter den Tieren überhaupt nicht gibt: Tiere ‘kämpfen’ für etwas, nie aus Feindschaft’). No, insofar and as soon as history, i.e. the struggle for recognition, is ‘sublated’ into absolute knowledge. Thus in the end enmity is only an ‘element’ of ‘logic’, i.e., of human discourse. The fully concluded discourse of the wise man (absolute knowledge) also talks (in the Phänomenologie des Geistes) about enmity, but the wise man never speaks out of enmity, nor to enemies” (Kojève to Schmitt, 4 January 1956, in Kojève and Schmitt, 1998, 114-6; Kojève’s emphasis).

There can be neither enmity nor an absolute decision over friends and enemies in Hegel’s account of philosophy and history because there is not a “scission between good and evil.” No such disjunction, and hence no need to decide is actually ever in evidence; history itself to Hegel and Hegelians “is a process without a final instance and without a definitive disjunctive judgment.” From Schmitt’s perspective, Augustine’s maxim is affirmed. Man could only expect total security in a world comprised of fully satisfied beings (Napoleons) and wise men (Hegel and Kojève) capable of accounting for such satisfaction, which by definition means accounting for the elimination or sublation of all transcendental concepts in the “god-manhood” of such complete and completely satisfied beings. Either enmity is providentially decreed or it withers away as merely an “element” of the “logic of absolute knowledge.” These two positions, while extreme, seem to be the only “logically” acceptable alternatives to comprehending “enmity” (see also Meier, 1998, 15, 65). As
Meier observed, “Kojève noticed right away the case that matters to Schmitt” (Meier, 1998, 65).
Chapter Four: Thomas Hobbes’ Mortal God

For if the philosophers are right in their appraisal of natural morality, of morality not based on Divine revelation, natural morality is, strictly speaking, no morality at all: it is hardly distinguishable from the morality essential to the preservation of a gang of robbers. Natural morality being what it is, only a law revealed by the omnipotent and omniscient God and sanctioned by the omniscient and omnipotent God can make possible genuine morality, “categorical imperatives;” only revelation can transform natural man into the “guardian of his city,” or to use the language of the Bible, the guardian of his brother.

Leo Strauss, Persecution and the Art of Writing

Interpreting Carl Schmitt’s Understanding of Hobbes

There can seemingly be no place for Thomas Hobbes’ political thought in Carl Schmitt’s theorizing. Despite the fact that Schmitt articulates the “state” as the sole source of protection for the state’s citizens, the state (or more accurately, genuine sovereign authority) is ultimately authoritative because it embodies the political decision-making power *par excellence* regarding friend and enemy. Enmity, not security, is what guides Schmitt’s concept of the political. Schmitt can only understand the political from the standpoint of political theology which unites both politics and morality theologically and vice versa, unites theology and morality politically. By emphasizing the theological basis of deciding, Schmitt places the protection-obedience maxim in jeopardy. How can Schmitt reconcile his support for Hobbes’ aims of security for citizen and subject created by the protection-obedience maxim with his own bedrock position of political theology? If enmity is providentially decreed, is not history a state of probationary struggle and *plena securitas in hac vita non expectanda*, man should not expect complete security in this life? Should man be comprehended
in terms of the flowering of his "humanity" afforded by his security against himself or in terms of friend and enemy, chosen and unchosen, sinful and redeemed and hastener and restrainer? (See CP, 64). If the contrasts are this unremitting and irreconcilable, why does Schmitt not jettison Hobbes from his theorizing entirely? Why does he not only return to Hobbes in 1938 but also seek a dialogue with Strauss on the topic of Hobbes as late as 1965? Let us begin as basically as possible. We need to reconstruct Thomas Hobbes' political and moral teaching as simply but as rigorously as possible in order to develop the proper evaluative stance. While our analysis of Hobbes is made from the standpoint of political philosophy and not political theology, we shall heed the advice Strauss makes above in evaluating The Law of Reason in the Kuzari and attempt to remain open to both political philosophy and political theology. However, our ultimate point is to clarify the difference between the two, not reconcile them in "synthesis" or in "some higher third."

Before turning to Hobbes, we must make a further qualification to the aims of this chapter. In examining whether Hobbes adheres to a "natural" or a "divine" basis for his own theorizing, we must state that our object is not to prove conclusively that Hobbes was an atheist, heretic, heterodox or orthodox believer in the Christian faith. Such an undertaking is far beyond the scope of this thesis. Our point of inquiry is as follows: Given Hobbes' denial of man's sinfulness, his effort to create a non-teleological political science and his emphasis that no conceivable good outweighs suffering a violent death, and given Schmitt's emphasis on the protection-obedience maxim in terms of both human nature and divine right and the "methodical connection of theological and political presuppositions," is Schmitt's appraisal of Hobbes 1) consistent with Schmitt's image of Hobbes as conveyed by his recounting of Hobbes' political philosophy, and 2) is Schmitt's assessment of Hobbes internally consistent with itself? If Schmitt's own analysis and arguments contradict each
other or the source upon which they draw, Schmitt’s larger aims must be found wanting, or in the least, must be found to require a point of legitimation outside of the sources Schmitt would hope to find them.

The Enduring Question of Thomas Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes occupies a unique position among modern philosophers in that he rejected both ancient philosophy’s and Christian theology’s claims to comprehend the whole of human nature, politics and morality, while also rejecting the bellicose path of Niccolò Machiavelli who seemed to repudiate justice simply, not merely ancient and Christian accounts of justice. In a sense, Hobbes’ overarching task is twofold, and seemingly contradictory: he criticizes and denies those who would claim that there is any such thing as a greatest good or *Summum Bonum* to human existence (for example, contemplation, wisdom, humility or glory), and at the same time, he explicitly criticizes those who would claim that “there is no such thing as justice” (Hobbes, 1994, 90).

At the outset, we might more positively cast Hobbes’ aims in the following manner. If all previous philosophers and theologians failed to comprehend man in his complexity, because in one way or another they presumed man’s perfectibility or highest aspirations as the moral compass by which we should take our bearings, then Hobbes’ corrective is to promote a more rigorous, non-teleological science of politics and morals. In turn, if thinkers like Machiavelli were too “cynical” or “realistic” in turning away from the promotion of virtue, Hobbes will reform the aim of politics and morals to focus on the civic duties of peacefulness, amity and the secure enjoyment of “commodious living.” Hobbes’ basis for this revolution consists in promulgating a new “natural law” which will be truly natural; it will be a basic set of laws derived from a true understanding of human nature. In turn, Hobbes’ new morality, which is intimately bound up with his philosophic and political teachings,
provides the basis for a new moral education.

It is helpful for purposes of exposition to briefly locate Hobbes' thought in contrast to the tradition he opposed. In a sense, it is not only helpful but necessary, because Hobbes himself viewed *Leviathan* as a corrective to all previous political philosophizing. Moreover, there are two acute points of contrast that readily serve as an avenue of enquiry into Hobbes' radical answer to the traditional questions concerning politics, morals and civic education. At the basis of Hobbes' thought on both man and commonwealth is an absolute skepticism which finds its expression in Hobbes' thought in a direct form of epistemological nominalism and moral relativism. According to Hobbes, notions of good and evil, justice and injustice are strictly related to each individual who understands and operates according to one's own idea of the order of things and the necessity of one's condition:

> But whatsoever is the object of any mans Appetite or Desire; that is it, which he for his part calleth Good: And the object of his Hate, and Aversion, Evill; and of his Contempt, Vile and Inconsiderable. For these words of Good, Evill, and Contemptible, are ever used with relation to the person that useth them: There being nothing simply and absolutely so; nor any common Rule of Good and Evill, to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves; but from the Person of the man (where there is no Common-wealth) or (in a Common-wealth) from the Person that representeth it; or from an Arbitrator or Judge, whom men disagreeing shall by consent set up, and make his sentence rule thereof (Hobbes, 1994, 28).

Words such as "Good" and "Evill" mean what we want or need them to mean; their meaning does not actually correspond to any external, objective content independent of the context in which they are employed or independent of the "needs and wants" of those employing them. Hobbes' major premise is that even our most certain solutions to the questions of what is good or just are radically dependent on our needs and wants or on our "appetites and aversions." Reason serves, rather than governs, the passions; man can no longer be considered as the "rational animal" whose reason
governs his thumotic and erotic elements.² Reason does not govern the passions, it merely serves them by supplying information, suggesting possibilities and acting as the “scouts and spies” of our desires (Hobbes, 1994, 33-4, 41-2).

It is important to elaborate on this assertion because from it Hobbes derives the epistemological basis which directly grounds all moral and political claims, obligations and rights. There are three closely related minor premises to Hobbes’ claim of relativism regarding our ability to determine anything which is true, good or just. First, Hobbes claims that reason has no standard of its own to steer by, because there is nothing intrinsically good at which to aim. Second, reason has no strength to control the passions; reason is purely instrumental. Hence, we only begin to think when we desire something; it is the passions which focus our thoughts. Finally, Hobbes denies the very notion of free will, or the traditional and popular conception of moral responsibility. It is important to mention these considerations at the outset because they are inextricably bound up in Hobbes’ denial of one best way of life, Summum Bonum or Finis Ultimus.

Hobbes formulates his account as follows. When we deliberate about anything, we are choosing between two or more courses of action which will satisfy our “Appetites, and Aversions, Hopes and Fears” (Hobbes, 1994, 33-4). The act of deliberating itself is aided by reason, but the objects of deliberation are supplied by what we desire to attain or avoid. Hobbes does speak of distinguishing between “good” and “bad” desires; however, as we will see, this qualification does not contradict the premises of his argument. As such, Hobbes states that “in Deliberation, the last Appetite, or Aversion, immediately adhering to the action, or to the omission thereof, is that we call the Will; the Act (not the faculty,) of Willing” (Hobbes, 1994, 33). Hobbes expressly makes it clear that this is not a “Rationall Appetite,” because all so-called voluntary acts “proceedeth from the will,
and no other.” Hobbes makes clear the limits of reason by anticipating an objection to the seeming circularity of this definition. He states that “if instead of a Rationall Appetite, we shall say an Appetite resulting from a precedent deliberation, then the Definition is the same that I have given here. Will therefore is the last Appetite in Deliberating” (Hobbes, 1994, 34).

Hobbes claims that the very notion of “free will” is unintelligible (Hobbes, 1994, 136). It is sensible to speak of a person being free to do what he or she wills, meaning that nothing physically hinders him or her. But it does not make sense to say the will itself is free. The will, according to Hobbes, is merely a desire, and it is non-sensical to refer to one’s “free desire.” One is not free to choose one’s desires; our freedom pertains to the ability to act on our desires (Hobbes, 1994, 33-4, 136-7). As a point of illustration, one can desire to eat or not to eat, but no one is “free” to choose to be hungry or not hungry. Hence, Hobbes explains that all of our desires arise, by necessity, from preceding causes. Even if we could choose our desires, what would determine our choice? There are two possible answers, neither of which is satisfactory. Either nothing determines our desires, in which case our desires are entirely random, or something determines them, in which case we are not “free” to choose differently. At the most superficial level, Hobbes seemingly denies the very notion of moral responsibility. If our desires ultimately determine our actions, and we cannot choose our desires, we ultimately cannot be held responsible for our actions. Pace Schmitt, Hobbes not only seems to ignore man’s sinfulness but to contradict purposefully any theological account of Original Sin: punishment (whether divine or human) is understood as a motive to correct behavior or to counteract anti-social motivations; it is not a just or justifiable response to sin or “freely chosen” evil.
What is crucial to Hobbes' argument at this point is that first and foremost, the desires and not reason, reign supreme: the "Thoughts are to the Desires, as Scouts and Spies, to range abroad and find the way to the things Desired...." (Hobbes, 1994, 40). Significantly, Hobbes reduces all objects of desire to one thing: power. It is worth quoting from him on this point:

The passions that most of all cause the differences of wit, are principally, the more or lesse Desire of Power, of Riches, of Knowledge, and of Honour. All of which may be reduced to the first, that is Desire of Power. For Riches, Knowledge and Honour are but severall sorts of Power (Hobbes, 1994, 41).

Of almost equal significance to the telescoping of all desires into the category of the "desire for power" is Hobbes' assertion that it is the intensity or lack of this desire which differentiates men, not their possession of wisdom or knowledge. He goes so far as to insist that prudence is neither a moral nor an intellectual virtue, but a form of "wit," which "dependeth on much Experience, and Memory of the like things, and their consequences heretofore in which there is not so much difference of Men, as there is in their Fancies and Judgements" (Hobbes, 1994, 40).

Hobbes' account of man's approximate intellectual equality bears directly on his account of the supremacy of the passions and indirectly on his discussion of the legitimate basis of authority, thus combining the concerns of moral enquiry with political philosophy. Socrates had stated in his famous discussion of the "third wave" in the Republic's account of the best city that philosophers should rule because (1) they most clearly understand what justice is, and (2) the city itself is nothing great in their eyes and they are therefore above the partisan strife which attends political quarrels (Plato, 1991, 198-200). Hobbes' response to this is comically severe. First, according to Hobbes, men are equal in almost every capacity, especially wisdom: "For such is the nature of men, that howsoever they may acknowledge many others to be more witty, or more eloquent, or more learned;
Yet they will hardly believe there be many so wise as themselves:...For there is not ordinarily a greater signe of the equall distribution of any thing, than that every man is contented with his share” (Hobbes, 1994, 75). The equality of intelligence and wisdom among men is proven by the fact that no one complains of their stupidity or foolishness! Yet, this laughable conclusion (and there is a certain irony to the fact that Hobbes viewed laughter as a sign of foolishness, see Hobbes, 1993, 59) leads to the stark realization that since most men esteem themselves to be equal in the most important capacities, their disputes over similarly desired objects more often than not lead to violent conflict and not peaceful (let alone wise) resolution. Wisdom is a poor source of appeal, not because some people are not actually wiser than others, but because our supposed equality proves to reside in the fact that we are all equally dangerous no matter how much wiser we esteem ourselves (Hobbes, 1994, 74-5).3

Equally important for Hobbes’ rejection of antiquity’s claim on behalf of philosophy is his observation that “a plain husband-man is more prudent in affairs of his own house, then a Privy Counsellor in the affairs of another man” (Hobbes, 1994, 40). Significantly, wisdom, whether or not it is attainable or whether or not it differentiates men, is an insufficient claim to rule because being wise does not compel the philosopher to care about someone else’s business as much as that other person does. The very argument Socrates advances on behalf of philosophy’s claim to rule is turned against him.

The full proof which underlies Hobbes’ rejection of the Platonic-Socratic position, however, lies in his treatment of the relationship of men’s desires to power. According to Hobbes, the power that men desire is infinite. To this extent he argues that it is a “generall inclination of all mankind, a perpetuall and restlesse desire of Power after power that ceaseth only in Death” (Hobbes, 1994,
The reason for this neverending desire for power is evidenced by the nature of man, the chief components of which are the desire for sensual pleasures and for glory and the fear of a painful or violent death. Accordingly, some individuals (we might call them the greedy) desire unlimited power merely to guarantee ever more intense delights. A second group (we might call them the ambitious or the glory-seekers) want more power for its own sake, especially the glory and pride which moves them to seek acknowledgment and recognition of their superiority from others. A third group (we might call them the fearful or security-conscious) would be content with moderate power, but need ever more power to ensure themselves and the power they already have. Hence, even the most pacific or timid type of human being is compelled, when confronted by the former two types, to seek power infinitely (Hobbes, 1994, 57-8). As a result of this inescapable condition, the concern with power is unceasing and endless even where the desires are not.

In turn, this crucial insight undergirds Hobbes' rejection of the teachings of the "old Morall Philosophers" and their singular, thematic concern with the best way of life and the "Ideas," "Justice" and the "Good." Hobbes equates the discovery and arrival at a "Finis ultimus (utmost ayme) [or] Sumnum Bonum (greatest Good)" with the "repose of a mind satisfied" (Hobbes, 1994, 57). Yet Hobbes claims that human happiness or "felicity" is such that it has no specific or durable content and is therefore a ceaseless progress from desire to desire. There can be no lasting satisfaction or contentment. By Hobbes' account, human happiness and fulfilment can have nothing to do with such concerns; indeed, Hobbes implicitly equates the "repose of a mind satisfied" with death. Not only does Hobbes rule out such contentment, but he implies that the ancient conception of the "greatest Good" is the greatest delusion.
It is important to note that Hobbes, in describing man’s natural condition, or the “state of nature,” also abjures the traditional theological concept that man has fallen from a state of grace. Specifically, Hobbes does not ascribe sin to our nature, “the desires and other passions of man, are in themselves no sin. No more are the actions that proceed from those passions, till they know a law that forbids them” (Hobbes, 1994, 76-7). As we shall see, the only laws which man can truly know are those which are promulgated and made known to all explicitly by the sovereign. In the strict sense, we can only know what we make. For Hobbes, this state is not only a condition of rough equality but more importantly of continuous conflict, a war of all against all.

The sources of this conflict and struggle stem directly from man’s nature and the status of man’s appetites and aversions. Hence, it is important to establish the path down which man’s natural desire for “power after power” leads him. Hobbes telescopes the variety of man’s passions into three categories. His formulation of the three greatest appetites and aversions is especially significant for understanding his regrounding of morality and politics. Hobbes asserts that the fear of violent death, combined with a desire for comfort or “commodious living” and the hope of attaining peace and comfort through industrious and rational activities can overcome the greatest sources of danger and violent quarrels (competition for scarce resources, diffidence or distrust towards others, greediness, avarice and above all, the love of glory) (Hobbes, 1994, 74-8). An interesting dilemma emerges when one compares these separate drives among men. While both the fear of violent death and the desire for comfort (especially enjoying what one already has) can give rise to both enmity and a desire for peace, greed, avarice and the desire for glory can only lead to continuous warfare to obtain recognition from, and power over, others (Hobbes, 1994, 78).
There is a reason for Hobbes’ reticence or care in dealing with this problem. This reticence arises directly from Hobbes’ dangerous instrumental view of human reason. While reason does act as our scouts and spies, it does not always do so in a helpful or constructive manner. As Leo Strauss noted in regard to the new status of reason in Hobbes’ enterprise, “the specific difference between man and all other animals is reason. Thus man is much less at the mercy of momentary sense-impressions, he can envisage the future much better than can animals; for this very reason he is not like animals hungry only with the hunger of the moment, but also with future hunger, and thus he is the most predatory, the most cunning, the strongest and the most dangerous animal” (Strauss, 1952, 9). We can conceive that the Rousseauan alternative to Hobbes’ state of nature — a state of nature, life as solitary creatures — might not be so terribly awful. However, Hobbes does not seriously entertain the notion of such an actual historical state for one moment. Rather, Hobbes views the state of nature as an ever present possibility for civil society. It is for this reason that he translates Thucydides’ account of the Peloponnesian War to instruct his fellow Englishmen that the state of nature is a state of war (Hobbes, 1975, 6-27). In light of the above considerations, we should more carefully examine Hobbes’ elaboration of “Warre”: 

Hereby it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common Power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called Warre; and such a warre, as is of every man, against every man. For WARRE, consisteth not in Battell onely, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time, wherein the Will to contend by Battell is sufficiently known; and therefore the notion of Time, is to be considered in the nature of Warre; as it is in the nature of Weather. For as the nature of Foule weather, lyeth not in a showre or two of rain; but in an inclination thereto of many dayes together: So the nature of Warre, consisteth not in actuall fighting; but in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary. All other time is PEACE (Hobbes, 1994, 76).

War and its attendant harsh, domineering redefinition and reordering of all aspects of social and
political life is the ever-present possibility by which Hobbes would have us take our bearings. Hobbes’ qualification that “all other time is PEACE” is rendered meaningless in light of the monstrous nature of human beings without common rule; stated differently, the hope that states and individuals will always maintain their “better sentiments” is as groundless as the hope that it will never rain again.

In a sense, the only moral considerations to emerge from Hobbes’ regrounding of political science result from conforming to one’s only duty: avoiding a violent death and seeking peace. To avoid the total and thorough moral and political convolutions engendered by returning to a state of “mere nature,” Hobbes must be able to prove the superiority of constantly taking one’s bearings by the possibility of suffering a violent death to the other great desire, the desire for glory. Crudely, Hobbes had to distinguish between social and anti-social desires, without recourse to a Summum Bonum. The dilemma Hobbes is faced with is to prove that the love of glory is foolish, but foolish by the standards of the passions and not simply by the standard of reason. Glory is founded in the imagination — it is the imagination of one’s power relative to others — which in reality can only be satisfied by violent confrontations with others. Glory is like a dream of power which renders invisible the realities of waking life, including the most important fact that all persons are capable of killing each other. Hobbes calls us to wake up and assess our prospects for power in relation to a salutary fear of violent death. Hobbes claims that aversion to violent death is more sensible because it leads primarily to the seeking of security and only secondarily is it a means of seeking power. The desire for glory, on the other hand, is a passion which drives men to overpower and dominate others, and hence, is the most dangerous and immediate cause of violent conflict and warfare. Hobbes identifies the love of glory as an irrational and foolish striving for power with no
comparable benefit to peaceful and commodious living. One of the ways in which Hobbes claims reason leads one away from the love of glory is the insight that the basis for seeking recognition from others is the desire to not only stand out from all others but also to make others acknowledge their inferiority or subservience. The problem is thus that not all can be equally honored and respected, because to be honored means to stand out, and conversely, to honor everyone diminishes the delight in the prospect, not to mention, the power one enjoys which is derived from such recognition. It is the insight or awareness of the impossibility of sustaining such recognition, combined with the realization of other natural scarcities, and a desire for peace and commodious living, which leads to the desire for the protection of civil society. Specifically, the delight or felicity derived from glory is as imaginary as it is real while the enjoyment of “commodious living” is immediately discernible and requires no imagination (Hobbes, 1994, 57; 58-9).

Hobbes’ preference is thus for those who constantly bear in mind the horrors of suffering a violent death and seek power only to protect themselves. Reading Thucydides or Hobbes’ own works is one way to keep both the unimaginative and the over imaginative in line. It is important to stress that Hobbes arrives at this preference by a consistent appeal to his own argument. Two considerations are necessary. Hobbes claims that those moved primarily by the fear of violent death are more sensible because they live by the true insight that no conceivable good outweighs it. Hence, if you could make glory seekers remember the horror of suffering a violent death, they would be more circumspect and less likely to risk all for the sake of fleeting, illusory pleasures. In a sense, one of the overwhelming purposes of Leviathan is to confront those who would imitate the virtues of Machiavelli’s “natural princes.” Yet, Hobbes’ main point is that fear is more rational than the love of glory because its coherence and appeal is not destroyed by being thought through or by
remembering other things besides the possibility of suffering a violent death. In contrast, “Glorying” is foolish, but it is foolish by the standard of the passions themselves. When the fear of violent death is properly informed by the “scouts and spies” of reason, it tends to overpower and restrain the love of glory. As we have indicated, Hobbes abjures a genuine historical or anthropological account of the rise of man from an idyllic state of nature. Hobbes adduces as evidence not man’s “historical origin” from such a putative condition, but the actual warlike conditions which exist between nations and even within civil society when civil authority breaks down (Hobbes, 1994, 76-7). It would seem that the only good thing about our natural condition is that we can escape from the state of nature, if and when we recognize our primary moral duty and seek peace (Hobbes, 1994, 99-100). This development of course brings us to the importance of Hobbes’ sovereign, whose “office” it is to guarantee peace and educate the subjects of the commonwealth.

In following one’s only moral duty and seeking peace, one covenants with others to create a social contract whereby one’s safety is preserved and a sovereign is thereby appointed who is capable of settling disputes, enacting laws and ensuring peace. In a very crucial sense, however, the social contract is radically fictitious. First, as Hobbes emphasizes, anyone who enjoys the protection of the laws of a commonwealth has already tacitly consented to its authority (Hobbes, 1994, 82-3). Second, as Hobbes points out, all contracts are binding, even if entered into from fear of violence or pain of death (Hobbes, 1994, 86). Finally, no commonwealth anywhere has ever emerged from the origins described in Hobbes’ vision of the social contract and he admits so himself (Hobbes, 1994, 491-2).

It is worth noting that to the extent that we recognize the primary purpose of government as residing in the securing of the rights of subjects and citizens, Thomas Hobbes emerges superficially
as a progenitor of liberalism. However, while Hobbes’ theory of the social contract does indeed encompass the basis and impetus for deriving political right from our natural condition, his solution entails a form of absolute sovereignty. Hobbes’ sovereign, who wields the powers of both purse and sword, is bound neither by the original covenant nor by subsequent considerations of justice. The question, or paradox, of sovereignty can thus be expressed as follows, following Chapter Twenty-six of Hobbes’ own Latin edition of *Leviathan*: “*Auctoritas, non veritas facit legem.*” If it is the act of deciding and acting in regard to what preserves the life and rights of subjects and citizens that constitutes sovereign authority and makes its exercise legitimate, then liberalism is only a benign and fortuitous possibility in Hobbes’ thought.

However, questions of the validity of government or the extent of rights provided by the social contract pale in comparison to the question of authority itself. In examining the question of sovereignty, it is important to remember that Hobbes’ appeal to political hedonism precludes determining good and bad regimes or just and unjust actions outside of the criteria of honoring contracts and following the moral imperative to seek peace and secure one’s life. As Hobbes himself argues regarding tyranny, “the name signifieth nothing more, nor lesse, than the name of soveraignty, be it in one, or many men, saving that they that use the former word, are understood to bee angry with them they call Tyrants...” (Hobbes, 1994, 492). In the strictest sense, one can no longer speak of the common good as the determining feature which distinguishes regimes because all individuals are expected to pursue their own private goods. The only material consideration as to whether or not the social contract is binding and obedience is owed to the sovereign, however constituted, is if one’s security and the means of its continuation is realized.
In beginning to delineate from this contract the rights and duties of both sovereign and subject, one must examine the limits of the sovereign's power. Hobbes makes clear that all of our duties are conditional, our only fundamental duty is our self-preservation and what tends towards it. Indeed, Hobbes unflinchingly claims that even criminals who resist punishment or soldiers who run from battle cannot be considered simply as unjust (Hobbes, 1994, 82). From Hobbes' treatment of the subject, we can deduce the following logic: (1) All justice arises from contracts, however entered into; (2) Only contracts which secure some good for both parties are binding; (3) No good outweighs suffering a violent death; (4) Hence, no contract to surrender your life is just; (5) Likewise, nothing you do to preserve your life is unjust. While Hobbes' sovereign, who is indeed "king of the proud," reserves all rights to punish or "keep all in awe," one's moral duty to oneself is both inviolable and non-transferrable.

In turn, the sovereign himself has no duties to his subjects in the strict sense because the sovereign authority (whether one or many) is created by the social contract; the sovereign authority is not a contracting party. Whether the sovereign is one or many, he is the artificial man who represents the wills of all individual subjects at the level of government. Literally, the sovereign can will nothing that the individual subjects do not themselves will (Hobbes, 1994, 110-1). Second, and more important, the sovereign is not a party to or bound by the social contract. Sovereign authority is the product of the social contract; it polices the terms of those who were parties to the contract — namely, the subjects of sovereign power. All rights previously "enjoyed" by men in their natural condition, except the right of self-preservation, are renounced in favor of the sovereign. Hence the subjects cannot accuse the sovereign of either injustice (not keeping his word) or require the sovereign's punishment: they either accuse themselves of injustice in the former, or enter into a state
of nature with all in the latter (Hobbes, 1994, 111-2). While this assessment initially strikes modern readers as draconian, it is important to bear in mind two things. First, both sovereign and subjects share in the same advantages (peace and security) and disadvantages (civil war and anarchy) in roughly equal proportions (Hobbes, 1994, 108). Second, all actions and judgments are measured against the "Summum Malum" of violent death, and Hobbes insists that "the obligation of subjects to sovereign, is understood to last as long, and no longer, than the power lasteth, by which he is able to protect them" (Hobbes, 1994, 147). This situation does create a dilemma of sorts for Hobbes. While it is just to resist legitimate authority when your life is threatened, Hobbes claims it is unjust to come to the aid of others being so threatened, i.e., Hobbes does not morally condone third parties coming to the aid of those who claim they are oppressed. The uneasy solution which Hobbes seems to offer is that you should not come to the aid of those resisting the sovereign, but resistance itself can be legitimate if your life is individually threatened. John Locke of course will pick up on this ambiguity in his Second Treatise when he discusses the justifications for revolution.

In light of the above considerations, it is all the more important to examine the scope of sovereign authority as expressed or promulgated in law, and second, to examine the duties which Hobbes claims devolve on the sovereign. Hobbes defines civil law as "to every subject, those Rules, which the Common-wealth hath Commanded him, by Word, Writing, or other Sufficient sign of the Will, to make use of" (Hobbes, 1994, 173-4). Hobbes makes it clear that all laws derive their authority and force from the will of the sovereign only. It is in this sense that we most clearly see how all other rights are surrendered to the sovereign:

But the Right of Nature, that is, the naturall Liberty of man, may by the Civill Law be abridged, and restrained: nay the end of making laws, is no other, but such restraint; without the which there cannot possibly be any Peace. And Law was
brought into the world for nothing else, but to limit the naturall liberty of particular men, in such manner, as they might not hurt, but assist one another, and joyn together against a common Enemy (Hobbes, 1994, 175).

Although all civil laws are the expression of the will of the sovereign, Hobbes insists that they are not contrary to reason, despite the fact that he has just defined law explicitly in contrast to reason.(Hobbes, 1994, 175-6). The reason that Hobbes can uphold this position is that the reason of the commonwealth is not different from the will or command of the sovereign authority’s representation of the commonwealth. Hobbes’ “command theory of law” is not to be mistaken with capricious or arbitrary monarchical acts. Civil law must be made explicitly known to all. The sovereign authority cannot promulgate and uphold laws in arbitrary or capricious fashion or punish on the basis of selective decrees or retroactive pronouncements. Above all, the sovereign will is not to be mistaken with monarchical whim or desire. The sovereign authority cannot punish subjects who have not broken any laws.

Likewise, in the necessary act of interpreting the laws for the commonwealth, a sound interpretation depends not on abstract considerations of justice but on the will of the commonwealth itself. In an argument as applicable to his own Leviathan as any other author considered by him, Hobbes proclaimed that “the interpretation of the Laws of Nature, in a Commonwealth, dependeth not on the books of Morall Philosophy. The Authority of writers, without the Authority of the common-wealth, maketh not their opinions Law, be they never so true” (Hobbes, 1994, 180-1). In light of Hobbes’ distinction between the command of law and mere counsel, Hobbes counsels at the end of Leviathan that his book might be “profitably printed, and more profitably taught in the Universities.” The explicit reason why reading Leviathan is to be commended to a general curriculum is that, “the Universities are the Fountains of Civill, and Morall Doctrine, from whence
the Preachers, and the Gentry, drawing such water as they find, use to sprinkle the same upon the People...” (Hobbes, 1994, 496-7). The peculiarity of Hobbes’ solution is that given his hard-headed and unsympathetic account of unrestrained human nature, he remains seemingly blissfully optimistic regarding the efficacy of university education.

Be that as it may, it is also important in light of Hobbes’ treatment of sovereignty and his hopes of enlisting the aid of future readers, that we turn to a brief consideration of what he holds the “offices” or duties of the sovereign to be specifically in regard to moral education. Given the centrality of the role education plays in forming and maintaining the type of regime envisioned by Hobbes, an effective civil education is particularly crucial to its success. The sovereign’s first and primary duty is not only the procuring of the safety of the people but also something which goes beyond “mere preservation” and encompasses “all other Contentments of life, which every man by lawfull Industry, without danger, or hurt to the Commonwealth, shall acquire to himselfe” (Hobbes, 1994, 219-20; see also 78, 82-3). First and foremost, the sovereign must undertake to educate citizens regarding the nature of government and laws and even how to begin to speak of the sovereign (Hobbes, 1994, 381). The most important corollary of the sovereign’s efforts is that one not tolerate doctrines and false teachings which encourage the abandonment of one’s duties to the sovereign and oneself. The necessity of combating those forces that would counsel the abandonment of one’s moral duty to self-preservation and seeking peace entails a critique of religion.

This necessity is inferred from a quick analysis of both the frontispiece and first chapter. The engraving of the first edition of Leviathan comes to mind most readily for its portrait of the makros anthropos, or giant man, who is made from and contains all of the citizens of the commonwealth. The mighty Leviathan holds both a sword and crosier in hand, and rules over the tranquil, peaceful
city below him. The source of the quarrels which the sovereign must suppress are also represented below him through a series of antipodes signifying the divisive powers of the secular and spiritual world: the portrayal of a church counterposes that of a fortress, a bishop’s miter the crown, symbolic representations of syllogisms, arguments and distinctions rival the force of cannons, rifles, lances and banners, and finally, the representation of a learned council in meeting opposes that of battle. It emerges clearly that the sovereign must confront and master these sources of division which compete with him for the both the hearts and minds of citizens (see also L, 18). The sovereign must literally rise above not only the most proximate motivation for “Glorying,” which is military conquest and political cabal but also the “invisible powers” wielded by the Church. While Hobbes displays a great deal of care in dealing with “powers ecclesiastical,” it seems very clear that loyalty to the sovereign is threatened by not only the love of glory but also by the powers of the “Kingdom of Darkness.” Churchmen and papists emerge as powerfully as Machiavelli’s natural princes do as strong rivals of Hobbes’ sovereign — it is the unfettered human “imagination” which fuels both powers (see Hobbes, 1994, 435-41, 444-5, 459). Indeed, while the love of glory promises earthly rewards to tempt the Hobbesian citizen, these rewards are bound to the here and now — religion promises man eternal rewards in the kingdom of heaven. How is the sovereign authority to wrest loyalty from those who hold contempt for mere life in the face of divine commandments? It is hardly surprising that underlying the Hobbesian project is a strong attempt to banish the very notion of the “City of God” from human consciousness.

As part of the education that subjects and citizens receive, they are taught that “thou shalt love thy neighbor as thy selfe” (Hobbes, 1994, 224-5). However, this “new” commandment reverses Hobbes’ previous negative formulation of the golden rule as his summation of the laws of nature.

241
(Hobbes, 1994, 177), and serves to underscore the futility of either natural or divine law's efficacy without the weight, form and patina of the sovereign's authority. In terms of "knowing" divine law, we can more broadly infer that one cannot even honor the decalogue until the sovereign authority himself has commended it to us. While most readers of Leviathan no longer bother to read Books Three and Four which represent Hobbes' efforts to re-interpret scripture, thus making it amenable to the political and moral project of the Leviathan, it is not accidental that Hobbes immediately follows his discussion of the "office" of the sovereign representative with a chapter entitled "Of the Kingdom of God by Nature." Therein, Hobbes makes the clearest contrast between the promulgation of civil law and revelation:

To rule by words requires that such words be manifestly made known, for else they are no laws. For to the nature of laws belongeth a sufficient and clear promulgation, such as may take away the excuse of ignorance; which in the laws of men is but of one only kind, and that is, proclamation, or promulgation by the voice of man.... As for sense supernatural, which consisteth in revelation, or inspiration, there have not been any universal laws so given, because God speaketh not in that manner but to particular persons, and to divers men divers things (Hobbes, 1994, 235)

In the above sense, Hobbes limits the sovereign authority to a creation which has its origin and its right only in itself. Only positive law promulgated by the sovereign authority is legitimate. The scriptures by themselves do not instruct; they must be interpreted, and this stricture, by Hobbes' definition, means they can be egregiously misinterpreted (Hobbes, 1994, 398-9; 411-20). Second, revelation is only authoritative to those to whom something has been revealed — to everyone not party to revelation, such acts must be understood to be acts of "imagination" which have no hold on us; worse, they might be "feigned" acts of those who want to gain power over us (Hobbes, 1994, 186-7; 398-9). This limitation on "knowing the divine will" has the effect of clearly delineating a
line between legal and theological transcendence; and Hobbes’ sovereign becomes a new “mortal God” (Hobbes, 1994, 210). However, if the sovereign authority is limited by the uniformity of promulgated law, its equitable interpretation and fair enforcement, his purview must necessarily also include deciding what is an article of faith, even what is miraculous, and thus his authority encompasses reconciling politics and religion from the standpoint of what promotes peacefulness and “commodious living.” A question does linger beyond the sovereign’s command, however, and that question is, however efficacious the new moral-political education might be, to what extent does the sovereign’s authority reach into the internal thoughts and beliefs of individuals? Again, all would seem to depend on the efficacy of the sovereign’s performance of his “office.” In the final analysis, the Hobbesian sovereign can command outward behavior but not internal belief.

In terms of the opposition between the command of outward behavior (the performance of those acts that the sovereign authority has commended to us) and inwardly held belief, in the Hobbesian scheme of civil law, public duty owed the sovereign and commonwealth and private obligation to what one believes is true or lawful, we can adduce the following strategy. Hobbes reconciles questions which arise from, for example, the demands of faith (potentially experienced by subjects as grounds for non-compliance with duly enacted civil law or even rebellion against it) and the sovereign command of law (that is, the sovereign promulgation of what subjects may lawfully do and not do) in the following manner. Hobbes states that although the sovereign authority can enact laws or issue commands that touch on articles of faith and belief, compliance with questionable laws and commands reflects upon the sovereign himself and not on his individual subjects — in other words, our outward performance has no bearing on our inner beliefs (Hobbes, 1994, 338-9). Such an approach would even apply to the sovereign’s demand that we publicly deny
the existence of God (Hobbes, 1994, 339). Is there room for conscience in the outward performance of duty in Hobbes' world? Edward Andrew has pointed out that while judges and lawyers can instruct juries as to the sovereign's will, in "ordinary trials of right," juries can decide on not just questions of fact but also questions of law, and hence, the sovereign and his representatives cannot direct verdicts; i.e., they cannot ultimately tell people what to think in the limited, but very important, civic duty of judging one's fellow citizens (Hobbes, 1994, 184; Andrew, 1999, 215-6). As Andrew has concluded, there is a place for "conscience" within Hobbes' theorizing, but it is limited to operating within a legal system of law; it cannot operate independently or outside of a system of civil law (Andrew, 1999, 223-5). It certainly cannot be a basis for justifying revolution or for making political friend-enemy distinctions. We might conclude more generally that Hobbes is more concerned with compartmentalizing Protestant conscience within civil law than with demanding public confession as an act which combines inward belief with outward performance of duty. Hobbes especially remonstrates against public professions of belief which incite violence against the sovereign authority or seek to justify a view of the sovereign's authority as illegitimate or open to question (see also Hobbes, 1990, 27-8, 55, 63-4, 95, 159). By referring to the sovereign authority as a "mortal God," Hobbes meant to draw on, while diminishing, the appeal and legitimacy of religious demands which compete for the obedience owed sovereign authority.

Hobbes is the first philosopher to insist that a regime's laws do not prescribe an entire way of life, but that where the laws are silent, you may do as you see fit (Hobbes, 1994, 143). Hobbes' new political science also paves the way for Spinoza's biblical hermeneutics and, in stressing the origin of political right from man's natural condition, forces subsequent political philosophers to address this "new" form of reasoning. In light of the increased role education plays in forming the
minds of man and subject in the Hobbesian regime, it is hardly surprising that two of Hobbes' most illustrious successors felt compelled to discuss education separately and at great length (see, for example, Rousseau's *Emile* and Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*). In turn, this new understanding of morality and politics is commended to all; every human being can discover for him or herself by means of soberly and properly reflecting on their passions, desires, hopes and fears what is truly virtuous and conducive to a good life and healthy politics. Everything else is but vain contemplation and idle philosophizing, "be they never so true."

**Carl Schmitt's Return to Thomas Hobbes**

Schmitt's 1938 study of Hobbes is paradoxical, yet revealing. Schmitt both returns to the subject of Hobbes to complete his political-theological critique of Hobbes' philosophizing and yet at the same time, Schmitt attempts to rescue Hobbes from himself by stressing Hobbes' piety. Schmitt's most crucial evaluation is that Hobbes, who "had lived through the terrible times of civil war" (*CP*, 53), only sought to rise to the challenge of his time; in England, as throughout Europe, sovereign powers and their rivals (the nobility, the clergy and rebellious subjects) made friend-enemy distinctions based on outward professions of faith which reflected internal beliefs about not just the best way of life here and now but also the "Supreme Good" (as Augustine put it) which acutely raised questions about eternal salvation. However, Schmitt's initial assessment seems weak. Schmitt goes beyond this facet in declaring that Hobbes took the crucial "first step" in leading to the very forces Schmitt decries — "the neutralization of every truth, a neutralization that culminates in technologizing" (*AND*, p. 137). Hobbes was instrumental in creating the "idea of the state as a technologically perfected *magnum artificium* created by man" (*L*, 20-1). Only Hobbes' piety saves him and explains this terrible mistake as a mistake made out of genuine piety (*L*, 71-2). In light of
our basic exposition of Hobbes’ political philosophy, two questions suggest themselves. First, what is the image of Hobbes that Schmitt wishes to convey to his readers? Second, is Schmitt’s assessment consistent with what we have elaborated as Hobbes’ basic position, and is it consistent not only with what Hobbes says but also what Schmitt demands of a “legitimate political theory” (CP, 58-65)?

First, let us turn to an explication and overview of Schmitt’s 1938 study. The overarching theme which guides Schmitt’s treatment of Hobbes is the contrast of the state as a “machine,” the “first technological creation” of man with divine provenance. In this sense, Schmitt’s book is above all guided by the question of the contrast between and possible reconciliation of religion and politics. Within this grand theme, two contradictory assessments of Hobbes’ political thought and its implications are made. First, Schmitt attacks and criticizes Hobbes the philosopher for unwittingly unleashing the unsavory, uniformly functioning “machinery of sovereign power” upon modernity. Second, and more surprising than Schmitt’s completion of the political-theological critique of Hobbes, he celebrates Hobbes as a vir probus who “remained within the faith of his people.” Can Hobbes the vir probus rescue or redeem Hobbes the philosopher who “made the decisive first step” towards the “neutralization of every truth?” Stunningly, and in a complete disavowal of Hobbes’ outward profession of philosophy, Schmitt claims yes, Hobbes is redeemed as a great teacher to whom Schmitt himself reaches out with the remarkable closing statement: “Non jam frustra doces, Thomas Hobbes!” (Thomas Hobbes, now you do not teach in vain!”) (L, 86).

First, let us turn to the critique of Hobbes that seems to seal his fate as a “teacher of the state.” Within Schmitt’s general reaction to Hobbes, three critiques elaborate Hobbes’ failure as a philosopher: First, Hobbes created an “ungodly” mortal god which became a machine that has “its
right” and “its truth” only in itself; it is an elaborate positivistic mechanism of command which only serves the protection-obedience maxim from the “this worldly” perspective of security. Second, Hobbes created a “wholly individualistic” construction of the social contract that is an “artificial product made by man.” Finally, Schmitt abhors Hobbes’ involvement with political symbols he neither understood nor mastered; hence, the “terrible name Leviathan,” which “cannot be uttered without punishment,” was turned on Hobbes. As we shall see momentarily, Hobbes invoked an image which properly can only be understood and employed by the “rabbis of the cabalalah” and pious Christian theologians. Both sides understand the term as a weapon of battle or symbol of struggle against heathens or Antichrist.

Two movements mark the beginning of Schmitt’s book on Hobbes and set the tone for the work as a whole. First, the very name Leviathan is to be understood in its proper context. In the long history of political theories, a history rich in “images, symbols, icons and idols, paradigms and phantasms,” the “leviathan is the strongest and most powerful image” (L, 5). Why is it the most powerful and strongest image? It is an image from the Hebrew Bible which also finds resonance in the theology of the “Christian Middle Ages” up to the “period of scholasticism” (L, 7). It not only names a monstrous, diabolical animal or serpent, it “may just as well symbolize the power of the devil in his various forms ... including Satan himself” (L, 6-7). Schmitt offers two alternatives to understanding the image of Leviathan. From the Jewish side, Schmitt invokes the image from the “Jewish mythologization by the rabbis of the cabalalah” (L, 7). Leviathan symbolizes for the Jews, not the monster from The Book of Job (Chapters 40 and 41), but “the heathen world powers hostile to the Jews”:

According to such Jewish-cababalistic interpretations, the leviathan represents ‘the
many cattle upon a thousand hills' (Psalms 50:10), namely, the heathens. World history appears as a battle among heathens. The leviathan, symbolizing sea powers, fighting the behemoth, representing land powers. The latter tries to tear the leviathan apart with his horns, while the leviathan covers the behemoth's mouth and nostrils with his fins and kills him in this way. This is, incidentally, a fine depiction of the mastery of a country by a blockade. But the Jews stand by and watch how the people of the world kill one another. This mutual 'ritual slaughter and massacre' is for them lawful and 'kosher' and they therefore eat the flesh of the slaughtered peoples and are sustained by it.... Of significance is that both the leviathan and the behemoth become in this interpretation Jewish battle myths of the grandest style. Looked at from the perspective of the Jews, each is an image of heathenish vitality and fertility, the 'great Pan' that Jewish hatred and Jewish feelings of superiority have transformed into a monster (L, 9)

We must state here that Schmitt's The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes is his most anti-Semitic work. Schmitt manages to turn a "Jewish myth" against the Jews. What makes Schmitt's invocation all the more remarkable is that he invokes a Jewish myth to lay the groundwork for criticizing Spinoza in the same work that he quietly but strongly criticizes "Nazi legality" (L, 70-1, 73).9

Against the Jewish myth, Schmitt sets out the appropriate Christian response which is inseparable from his own position.

The interpretation of the leviathan during the Christian Middle Ages was completely governed until the period of scholasticism by theology: because of Christ's death on the cross the devil lost his battle for mankind because, fooled by the servile figure of God hidden in the flesh, he tried to devour the crucified Man-God but was caught by the cross as if by a fishhook. The devil is depicted here as the leviathan, that is, as a huge fish that was lured and caught by God .... The illustrations in medieval books depict the leviathan, the 'huge whale,' only in connection with this patristic interpretation. In this way it is also depicted in the splendid drawing in the Hortus Deliciarum of the Abbess Herrad of Landsberg (twelfth century): God is represented as a fisherman, Christ on the cross as a bait on a fishhook, and the leviathan as a huge fish who took the bait (L, 7-8).10

Against the Christian understanding of leviathan as a devil or even Satan himself and against the Jewish myth of the leviathan as the portrayal of heathen worldly powers whose destruction God
sanctions for "Jewish sustenance," Schmitt reacts in horror to Hobbes' appropriation. Hobbes could only understand the image and the powers summoned thereby in terms of a large man who could keep all in awe. Hobbes' efforts reflected more an Enlightenment attitude that all power found in religious myths was dead or dying than a healthy respect for and understanding of the terms invoked. Hobbes' apparent deprecation certainly could not reflect or reveal any theological truths. Hobbes invoked the name Leviathan in a "thoroughly literary-ironic sense and in the style and atmosphere of English wit" (L, 25). That Hobbes misunderstood the powers he summoned becomes a motif of the entire work. The name Leviathan is to be understood in terms of its "historico-mythological" origins and the stark theological alternatives it embodies; this outlook marks Schmitt's approach from the outset.

The second aspect which marks the beginning of Schmitt's treatment of Hobbes and sets the tone for the entire work is Schmitt's placing or "staging" of the most important contrast. Schmitt prefaches the discussion of reconciling politics and religion by counterposing the "Jewish scholar, Leo Strauss" with "from the German side, Helmut Schelsky." Schmitt's contrasts are misleading, but misleading in a highly significant way. Schmitt refers to Strauss' evaluation of Hobbes in his *Spinoza's Critique of Religion* with the following remark:

[Strauss] remarks ... that Hobbes regarded the Jews as the originators of the revolutionary state-destroying distinction between religion and politics. That is correct insofar as Hobbes opposed the typically Judeo-Christian division of the original political unity. The distinction between the secular and the spiritual power was, according to Hobbes, alien to the heathens because religion was to them part of politics; the Jews brought about unity from the side of religion. Only the Roman papal church and the power-hungry Presbyterian churches or sects thrive on the state-destroying separation of the spiritual and secular power... The struggle to overcome the Roman papal church's division between a "Kingdom of Light" and a "Kingdom of Darkness" — that is, the restoration of the original unity — is, as Leo Strauss ascertained, the actual meaning of Hobbes' political theory. This is correct (L, 11;
Is this assessment really what Strauss wrote? Does Hobbes attempt to restore the original unity of politics and religion? No. When one consults Strauss’ argument (Strauss, 1965, 95-7), an almost diametrically opposite assessment comes to view. Strauss nowhere discusses the “Roman papal church,” “power-hungry Presbyterians,” nor the “actual meaning of Hobbes’ political theory” in terms of “the restoration of the original unity.” The aim of Hobbes’ theory according to Strauss is just the opposite of that ascribed by Schmitt. Strauss stated that “for the pagans, religion was a part of politics.” It is only with the advent of claims based on revelation that politics becomes “a part of religion; thus, if we understand Hobbes aright, it reverses the natural relationship which was realized in paganism” (Strauss, 1965, 96). For both Hobbes and Strauss, it seems, it is an open question whether politics should become a part of religion or whether politics should try to banish the basis for religion’s hold on the human mind. Strauss and Hobbes seem to emphasize the latter (Strauss, 1965, 97). For Schmitt, however, who glosses over Strauss’ (and ostensibly Hobbes’) preference, the question emphasizes the “restoration of the original unity” (something which Strauss does not even mention in this context) and allows Schmitt to claim in the name of a “Jewish scholar” that Hobbes sought after the unity of religion and politics. At the minimum, that Hobbes viewed rebellion against established authority inspired by revelation as both dangerous and illegitimate does not seem to bother Schmitt. Likewise, Schmitt pulls an equally interesting trick with the invocation of Schelsky. He cites Schelsky’s remark that “Hobbes fought his historically timely struggle against political theology in all forms” (Schelsky, 1987, 197; L, 11). As Heinrich Meier has observed, Schmitt uses Schelsky’s phrase to introduce the concept “political theology” without having to declare it himself. More important, he employs Schelsky’s observation which had been originally
directed against himself and his articulation of political theology in Schelsky’s article to advance his own point that “the success of the struggle depends on whether the myth of the leviathan forged by Hobbes constitutes a faithful restoration of the original unity of life” which means for Schmitt (but not Schelsky or Hobbes) finding out “whether the leviathan withstood the test of being the politico-mythical image battling the Judeo-Christian destruction of the natural unity, and whether he was equal to the severity and malice of such a battle” (L, 11; Schelsky, 1938, 176-201; Meier, 1998, 113).

With these two general observations in mind, we can discern what Schmitt strives to find in his reading of Hobbes — the “restoration of the original unity” or what Schmitt makes Schelsky’s critique of Schmitt state, the “natural unity.” But was Hobbes’ image of leviathan up to this task? Was the accomplishment of this task even Hobbes’ aim? In seeking to restore the “original unity” or “the natural unity” to human beings, Schmitt seemingly strives to grasp man wholly or in his entirety via Hobbes; Schmitt seeks to unite man body and soul by making “politics a part of religion.” Yet Schmitt elevates the task of Hobbes only to make Hobbes’ failure that much more spectacular while simultaneously, this approach allows Schmitt to unmask every “anti-Christian” attack waged since the Enlightenment in the spirit of Hobbes as a failure as well. It is in this respect that Schmitt develops his critiques of Hobbes’ leviathan as a “mortal god” who delivers peace and security to the “children of pride” by ruling through “terror” (L, 20). Schmitt redefines Hobbes’ civil state as “in the ‘civill,’ stately condition all citizens are secure in their physical existence; there reign peace, security and order. This is a familiar definition of police. Modern state and modern police came into being simultaneously and the most vital institution of the security state is the police” (L, 31). The police, like the state and the peace, order and security they are supposed to uphold are all products of human ingenuity. Here, Schmitt draws an interesting parallel that leads to the
disjunction he has in mind. Schmitt contrasts the *Defensor Pacis* of Marsilius of Padua which originates in God to the creator of a purely earthly, this-worldly peace, the “*Creator Pacis*”: “Because state power is supreme, it possesses divine character. But its omnipotence is not at all divinely derived: It is a product of human work and comes about because of a ‘covenant’ entered into by man” (*L*, 33). Hobbes’ state is an “intellectual construction” which embodies “order and commonwealth” as a result of “human reason and human inventiveness and comes about by virtue of the covenant” (*L*, 33). Here is the meaning of leviathan which Hobbes opts for; Hobbes opts for the image of the machine (or the *machina machinarum*) as opposed to the other images of leviathan which he had mentioned in his work. Hobbes’ “mortal god” is machine-like in appearance and performance. Schmitt expresses the core of his critique of Hobbes by combining both images (the “mortal god” and the “*machina machinarum*”) as follows:

To that extent the new god is transcendent vis-à-vis all contractual partners of the covenant and vis-à-vis the sum total, he is obviously so only in a juristic and *not in a metaphysical sense*. The intrinsic logic of the manmade, artificial product ‘state’ does not culminate in a person but in a machine.... It 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* ... 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 prototypical, work of the new technological era — the development of the state itself. (*L*, 34; *L* (1938), 52).

The “mortal god” who promises peace and security is only transcendent in the “juristic sense,” not the “metaphysical sense” and certainly not in the divine sense. The Hobbesian account of the “original unity” quickly falls apart (as Schmitt had planned): “Life is of interest only insofar as it concerns the here and now, the physical existence of the individual, of acting, living beings; the most important and the highest goal is security and the possible prolongation of this kind of physical existence” (*L*, 35). Hobbes can speak to the police and the “terror” wielded by the state to “keep in
awe" the "children of pride;" he cannot speak to the "terror" which comes from beyond this "veil of tears" nor to the soul's deepest longings — the mortal god and his subjects can only affirm their physical security; they cannot fulfill their spiritual yearnings. The splitting of human beings, and thus the destruction of the way back to the original, natural unity was consummated by Hobbes! Hobbes took the decisive first step after which everything else was mere technological refinement. No new metaphysical decision or argument was necessary intellectually once Hobbes conceived of the state as "a product of human calculation" (L, 37). As such, "after the body and soul of the huge man became a machine, the transfer back became possible, and even the little man could become a homo-machine. The mechanization of the concept of the state thus completed the mechanization of the anthropological image of man" (L, 37; emphasis added). Along this path of mechanization, Schmitt now repudiates what had been for him in 1922 (and even as late as 1934) an exciting discovery in Hobbes' thought; namely Hobbes' "personalism." Now in 1938, Schmitt writes that "this personalistic element too is drawn into the mechanization process and becomes absorbed by it. As a totality, the state is body and soul, a homo artificialis, and, as such, a machine. It is a manmade product" (L, 34). In order for Hobbes' "personalism" and "decisionism" to conform to Schmitt's expectations as we elaborated in Chapter Two, Hobbes' "personalistic element" must be won back from the machine which Hobbes created.

Schmitt begins to wrest back the deciding power of sovereign authority by situating the development of the Hobbesian state in the "process of neutralizations." We are familiar with this terrain from Schmitt's analysis in "The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations." In the specific context of Hobbes, Schmitt ascribes Hobbes' motives in making the state into something unproblematic and neutral to a "century that was filled with despair and nausea with religious and
theological strife, disputes and bloody wars ... Consequently the first and foremost task of theorists was to avoid quarreling theologians” (L, 42-3). Yet, Hobbes could not have foreseen the effects of his project; “turning from the church to the state did not yet signify to him the basic neutralization of every truth, which is the climax of the mechanization process” (L, 43). At every point where Schmitt sharpens and deepens his critique of Hobbes the philosopher, he leaves open space to return and save Hobbes’ project with an external image. “The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations” had set as its task the tracing out the effects of secularization. Here, Schmitt returns to the same themes to attempt to explain how the pious could have opted for the initiation of this process and in what their efforts actually culminated.

Initially, Schmitt seems to reassess Hobbes in open-eyed fashion. With reference to his own work of 1922, Political Theology, Schmitt goes beyond reappraising Hobbes’ personalism and now states with regard to the formulation “Auctoritas, non veritas” that “Hobbes’ sentence ... becomes a simple, objective expression of value-and-truth-neutral, positivist-technical thinking that separates the religious and metaphysical standards of truth from standards of command and function and renders them autonomous” (L, 45). We shall return to this specific expression of what separates the specifically “religious and metaphysical standards of truth” from the Auctoritas of command below. What is interesting here is the reversal of impressions Schmitt wishes to make. Schmitt, who is often identified with emphasizing the importance of decision regardless of its truth (indeed, the insinuation is made, the more “irrational” the decision, the better) strives to emphasize the necessity of reuniting truth and the authority of sovereign command. It is Hobbes, not Schmitt, who creates this situation: “the idea of the state as a technically completed, manmade magnum-artificium, a machine that realizes ‘right’ and ‘truth’ only in itself — namely, in its performance and function — was first
grasped and systematically constructed by him into a clear concept" \( (L, 45) \). With this additional elaboration, we recognize as well the "distancing" that Schmitt created between himself and Hobbes between the second and the third edition of *The Concept of the Political* — Hobbes remained a "systematic" thinker, but was no longer political. Here we see why. His "mortal god," in becoming a neutralizing force which has its "right" and its "truth" only in itself, is incapable of making genuine friend-enemy distinctions based on divine right or theological truth.

There is one overarching development that arises from Hobbes' creation of a "mortal god" which is transcendent in a "juristic, not a metaphysical sense" and has its "right" and "truth" only in itself. First, only the sovereign authority "on the basis of its sovereignty, determines what subjects of the state have to believe to be a miracle" \( (L, 53) \). Moreover, the sovereign authority, in order to fulfill its "right" and its "truth," can command the reverse: "Miracles cease when the state forbids them" \( (L, 55) \). The supposed aim of restoring the original unity resides in the usurpation of religious belief and theological insight by the sovereign. This usurpation has the effect of "rupturing" the unity of religion and politics rather than effecting their reconciliation. Hobbes splits our being into two spheres of "public and private," "private judgment and public confession," "faith and confession," "fides and confessio" and "inner and outer" \( (L, 55-6, 57, 61-3) \). Schmitt emphasizes that the sovereign can only demand "lip service confession" from subjects while abandoning the private sphere of the individual to the "individual’s right to observe his ‘inner faith’ beyond any compulsory encumbrance" \( (L, 56) \). We seem to arrive at the true dilemma of individualism which Schmitt excoriates; it is not simply the case that the emphasis on individual security demands sole concentration on the "here and now" of "the physical existence of the individual," the social contract enacts a *quid pro quo* that erects an unswerving barrier between public and private and inner and

255
outer existence. Schmitt articulates two important implications to this development both of which directly reflect his political theology.

First, Schmitt updates the Jewish myth of leviathan from the first chapter of his Hobbes' book. However, just as he initially recounts the Jewish myth to pillory the Jews and make them seem "fiendish," now Schmitt recasts the myth of the leviathan to turn the Jewish "weapon of battle" against the Jews by identifying them as the enemy of healthy politics. The Jews promote, or rather corrupt through promoting, liberalism because it reenacts their "standing on the sidelines" while Leviathan and Behemoth do battle:

Only a few years after the appearance of the Leviathan, a liberal Jew noticed the barely visible crack in the theoretical justification of the sovereign state. In it he immediately recognized the telling inroad of modern liberalism, which would allow Hobbes' postulation of the relation between external and internal, public and private, to be inverted into its converse. Spinoza accomplished the inversion in the famous Chapter 19 of his Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, which appeared in 1670. Already in the subtitle of his book he speaks of the libertas philosophandi (L, 57).

Spinoza seizes upon Hobbes' "life saving" distinction which puts an end to sectarian warfare in order to "subintroduce" Jewry into European life. How do we know this assertion for fact? Because Schmitt invokes Hobbes' piety and faith: "the Englishman did not endeavor with such a proviso to appear out of context of the beliefs of his people but, on the contrary, to remain within it, whereas the Jewish philosopher, on the other hand, who approached the religion of the state as an outsider, naturally provided a proviso that emanated from the outside" (L, 58). How do we know that Hobbes did not intend this result? We know it to be true because Schmitt professes his faith in Hobbes' faith as proof! Hobbes ultimately wanted to remain within the "beliefs of his people."

To state that Schmitt's "proof" of Hobbes' intent is problematic is an understatement. First, Schmitt implies that Spinoza sought to "invert" the order of obedience and protection because he was
a "liberal Jew" and advocated the "libertas philosophandi." But did not Hobbes also advocate the "libertas philosophandi"? Aside from the apocryphal admission of Hobbes' admiration of Spinoza, Hobbes indicates at the end of Leviathan that he has better things to do with his time than solve political-theological problems — Hobbes states that he above all desires a return to the study of natural science (Hobbes, 1994, 496-7). How very different are Hobbes' stated aspirations from Spinoza's? Second, and more important, Hobbes explicitly states that outward profession of faith is of no concern whatsoever to the sovereign or to what is good for the commonwealth politically. If Hobbes could only envision a Christian Commonwealth as the "hidden basis" for his teaching in Leviathan, he would not have admonished his readers that the sovereign can command us to say "there is no God" or that "Jesus is not the Christ" (Hobbes, 1994, 336-40; see especially 339). If Hobbes' state concretizes the "rupture" between "public and private" and "outward confession and inner belief," it is not an accidental by-product of an effort which actually aimed at restoring the "original unity," it was intended all along. We do not know Schmitt's reaction to any of these considerable objections because Schmitt remains purposefully silent on such matters. Such considerations belong to the field of political philosophy; they are not comprehended in the activity of a political theologian.

We are nonetheless confronted with Schmitt's anti-semitism and must address it as an aspect of his political theology. Schmitt can only understand Spinoza, and later Friedrich Julius Stahl and Moses Mendelssohn from the standpoint of a competing Jewish political theology. To seek out or realize their aims in the neutrality and safety of the "libertas philosophandi" is a "Jewish trick" (L, 61, 69-71). Schmitt's anti-semitism is neither explained by Nazism, whose crude biological "science" Schmitt never took seriously, nor by vague appeals to the "cultural proclivities" of
Germans or Catholics. Schmitt’s anti-semitism is part and parcel of his political theology. Schmitt’s case, and the cause of his political theology are revealed most strongly in his support of Hitler: “In fending off the Jew, I fight for the work of the Lord” (Schmitt, “Das Judentum in der Rechtswissenschaft,” quoted in Meier, 1998, 154). As we have noted in our commentary on The Concept of the Political, Schmitt sought to treat the enemy objectively by recognizing the enemy as enemy; he did not seek their annihilation (CP, 34-6) and Strauss himself commented on the peculiarity of this feature of Schmitt’s thought (Strauss, CP, 94-5). Nonetheless, despite the truth of Aron’s remark that Schmitt “was never a Hitlerian and never could have been,” he was an anti-semitite and continued in this way after the war just as he continued in his efforts to bring political theological distinctions back to prominence (see especially G, 57, 64, 85, 154, 209, 287). Schmitt’s remark to his English translator George Schwab that “at last they [Jews] again have contact with a soil they can call their own” does not deflect Schmitt’s anti-semitism at all but rather highlights Schmitt’s perception of an inherent interconnection between politics and religion (see Schwab, 1996, xxx; see also Dyzenhaus, 1997b, 98-101). From Schmitt’s perspective, now that the Jews have a state, they can be honest politically, they need no longer use a “deceitful manner to mask [their] motivation” (L, 70). Understanding the basis of and reasons for Schmitt’s anti-semitism in no way justifies or condones the phenomenon; rather, the opposite is the case — unless we can speak honestly of why Schmitt wrote what he wrote and said what he said, we will not have understood him. This interpretive stricture requires weighing even the ugliest features of Schmitt’s theorizing in light of the fundamental nature and impetus of Schmitt’s project which is political theology.

In light of Schmitt’s anti-semitism, let us return to Schmitt’s equally baffling claim that Hobbes was a vir probus who only wished to remain “within the belief of his people” because “he
belonged to a Christian people” and was “committed to the proposition that ‘Jesus is the Christ’” (L, 83). The claim of Hobbes as a vir probus is meant to counteract the debilities of Hobbes the philosopher and the “inversion” of the Hobbesian order created by the “liberal Jew” Spinoza. First things first; does Hobbes really profess faith in the precept “Jesus is the Christ”? No. Hobbes affirms it as the central teaching of the Gospels; he does not affirm it as his central teaching. Hobbes’ central teaching as we have noted (and which Schmitt reviled) was that our own self-preservation is inviolable and that our only moral duty beyond self-preservation is to seek peace. Hobbes especially makes this premise evident in explicity declaring that even if we are commanded to say “Jesus is not the Christ” by the sovereign, it is no sin (Hobbes, 1994, 338-9). Why does Schmitt thus single this passage out? The answer lies in considering the source of the saying in The First Letter of John: “Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son” (I John 18:22). Does Hobbes actually condone (or even hasten) the Antichrist? Does Hobbes actually deny the Father and the Son? Or is there indeed “genuine piety” in Hobbes which redeems his thought, reveals the real, hidden basis of the Leviathan and serves as a model of restraining the forces of Satan which flourished when “Europe was divided against itself”? All of this matters immensely for Schmitt, whether it actually matters for Hobbes is a question whose answer went to the grave with him. All we know is what Hobbes has written and based on what he has written (and which we have elaborated in basic fashion at the beginning of this chapter), the answer is no. Whether the sovereign commands us to say “there is no God,” “Jesus is not the Christ” or “Allah is great” is of no concern to Hobbes. Nonetheless, Schmitt lays out the basic position by which he apprehends Hobbes in closing his meditation on Hobbes’ thought: “Although Hobbes defended the natural unity of spiritual and secular power, he opened the door for
a contrast to emerge because of religious reservation regarding private belief and thus paved the way for new, more dangerous kinds and forms of indirect powers” (L, 83). In light of the precept that divides the friends of God from his enemies, Schmitt can only understand Hobbes as a misguided adherent. Nothing else matters but Hobbes’ putative faith. But even in this case, it means that Schmitt reads Hobbes from the perspective of a political theologian who never abandons the “conceptual sharpness and clarity” of friend and enemy.

In closing this chapter and our investigation of Carl Schmitt, let us examine Schmitt's remarkable essay from 1965, “Die vollendete Reformation” (“The Completed Reformation”). In this essay, Schmitt devoted himself to a renewed effort to save Hobbes' piety from the clutches of atheistic interpretations and “neutralizations of the basic truth.” “Die Vollendente Reformation” is entirely devoted to defending the theological interpretation of Hobbes. (Schmitt, “Die Vollendente Reformation,” 61). Here Schmitt states that “the most important question about Hobbes” is the question of his “position in the process of so-called ("sogenannten") secularization, in the progressive dechristianization and dedivination of public life.” Schmitt insists that it is of the utmost importance because with the answer to this question comes the “identification of the spiritual locus of Hobbes” (Schmitt, “Die Vollendente Reformation,” 61). In 1965, Schmitt no longer even mentions Hobbes as the instigator of the “mortal god” who becomes a “machina machinarum” and possesses “juridical transcendence” only because he has “right” and “truth” only in himself; Hobbes is now identified only as the advocate of the “political unity of a Christian community” (Schmitt, “Die Vollendente Reformation,” 52, 54, 58-9). Schmitt particularly re-affirms that “Jesus is the Christ” is Hobbes' fundamental position, and in this respect, casually calls upon the “charming book by Samuel Mintz” as authoritative refutation that Hobbes could have been an atheist at all (Schmitt,
“Die Vollendete Reformation,” 58). What is most interesting about Schmitt’s casual reference is that when one turns to the specific page in Mintz’s book that Schmitt points to, one finds not a defense of Hobbes’ theism, but an attack on Leo Strauss’ charge that Hobbes was an atheist. As late as 1965, Schmitt sought out a dialogue with the one thinker who challenged his understanding of the “concept of the political” and Hobbes (see Mintz, 1969, 44 and Strauss, 1960, 199).

Of equal interest to Schmitt’s defense of Hobbes’ piety and belief as the basis for comprehending his entire thought is a peculiar remark he makes in a later essay which obliquely references his 1965 essay. In 1967, in “Clauswitz als politischer Denker,” where Schmitt ostensibly devotes his energies to refuting Hegel and engaging Alexandre Kojève (Schmitt, “Clauswitz als politischer Denker,” 482-89, see especially 488-9), he inserts the following remark in passing with regard to the “welding of the philosophy of German idealism and the Reformation, national revolutionary legitimacy and Protestant principle,” that “Barbey d’Aurevilly declared Hobbes’ Leviathan and de Maistre’s du Pape as the two most important works of modernity” (Schmitt, “Clauswitz als politischer Denker,” 493, Footnote 7). On the surface, this remark is without justification; Hobbes may deserve a “top ten” finish, but de Maistre? In a spirit of generosity, de Maistre might crack a “top fifty” list. Schmitt’s comment is only sensible in light of Schmitt’s lifetime concern with the “neutralization of every truth” that is embodied in Hobbes’ “positivistic” Auctoritas and his renewed efforts in 1965 to refurbish Hobbes the vir probus. Could Maistre supplement or replace the Hobbesian “neutral” sovereign? This possibility becomes sensible when we consider one of the most basic positions Maistre articulates in du Pape: the Pope should have the ability to release subjects from their allegiance to a specific monarch or “sovereign-representative person” (see Maistre, 1966, 181). A reciprocal interaction is established or re-established; if the
sovereign can command us to renounce the fundamental teaching that “Jesus is the Christ,” then the “indirect power” of the pope, as the “enemy” of the Protestant inner retreat, can demand a decision for or against this “truth.” Confronted with a force which challenges the obedience owed the sovereign authority, a challenge which specifically resides in a renewed political theological challenge, the modern Hobbesian “police state” cannot respond. But Schmitt’s historicized Hobbes can respond because Schmitt, to the end, contends that Hobbes answered the historical challenge of his time “out of genuine piety.” Such conjecture, while fantastic, is sufficient to raise seriously the eschatological choice that Schmitt claims can never be “neutralized” or avoided. It is certainly consistent with Schmitt’s assessment of Hobbes from sixteen years before Schmitt’s return to the “Completed Reformation” in 1965:

The most important sentence of Thomas Hobbes remains: “Jesus is the Christ”... We can thus ask ourselves, to whom is Dostoevsky’s Grand Inquisitor closer? The Roman Church or Thomas Hobbes’ sovereign? Reformation and Counterreformation turn out to be directly engaged. Tell me who your enemy is and I will tell you who you are: Hobbes and the Roman Church — the enemy is our own question as a figure (“der Feind ist unsere eigene Frage als Gestalt”) (G, 243; emphasis added)
CHAPTER FOUR ENDNOTES

1. Hobbes “misquotes” the Psalms in a revealing way without making reference to the biblical passage he employs. Hobbes had written “the fool hath said in his heart: ‘there is no such thing as justice;’ and sometimes also with his tongue....” (Hobbes, 1994, 90). This statement mirrors both Psalms 14 and 53: “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God.’” The point of contrast is significant. As we shall see, justice for Hobbes consists in keeping one’s word and honoring all contracts into which one has entered; it has nothing to do with righteousness, piety or fear of the Lord. To follow the implication of Strauss’ commentary on the Law of Reason in the Kuzari, even a gang of robbers can be “honest with each other.” As the passages in The Psalms to which Hobbes points infer, justice arises from knowing there is a God, that He is righteous and that He punishes the “ungodly” (Psalms, 53:5). Wisdom (not justice) arises not from individuals who are simply honest but only in those individuals “that seek after God” (Psalms 14:2; 53:2).

2. A particularly revealing contrast can be made with Plato’s Phaedrus. Whereas in the Myth of the Charioteer, reason is portrayed as the force which tames and guides the two unruly horses of good and bad desires, Hobbes unequivocally rejects such popular, ancient notions — there is only a chariot pulled in the direction of whichever desire proves more powerful.

3. Hobbes does distinguish science or “sapience” (which is acquired from method and which places some above others) from prudence (which is naturally acquired from experience and which is roughly equal among human beings of the same age). However, even this distinction does not invalidate the crucial aspects of Hobbes’ argument: regardless of whether wisdom (or more appropriately, “science”) distinguishes one individual from another, it is no title or claim to rule over
others.

4. We can of course “naturally” know the “Laws of Nature” when we consult our reason. However, to elucidate the laws which stem from the imperative to seek peace (Hobbes, 1994, 80) requires “method” or “science,” something which not all men have (Hobbes, 1994, 89-100). Hence, the pedagogic “utility” of Hobbes’ Leviathan.

5. Laurence Berns has characterized Hobbes’ intent in a helpful way (Berns, 1987, 401):

Fear of death, desire for comfort, and hope of obtaining it through industry incline men to peace. Reason, working along with these passions of fear, desire and hope, suggests rules for peaceful living together. By comparing these passions with the three great natural causes of human enmity, we see that fear of death and desire for comfort are present both among the inclinations toward peace and among the causes of enmity; vanity, or the desire for glory is absent from the group. The task of reason then is to devise means of redirecting and intensifying the fear of death and the desire for comfort, so as to overpower and cancel out the destructive effects of the desire for glory, or pride. By understanding human nature mechanistically, we become capable of manipulating it, and finally, so Hobbes seems to hope, conquering it.

6. Even in emphasizing that suffering a violent death at the hands of others is the worst possible evil which can happen to an individual, Hobbes is “theologically” troublesome and controversial. Augustine, for example, holds that the “Supreme Evil” is “eternal death” just as the “Supreme Good” is eternal life” (Augustine, 1984, 852-3). Neither the “Supreme Evil” nor the “Supreme Good” are to be found in this life.
7. It is worth noting that Hobbes, who wrote *Leviathan* in the wake of the English Civil War, took particular pride in being the first to flee. One is tempted to note that, unlike Rousseau, he abided by the same principle he urged others to follow.

8. Hobbes endeavors to make it explicitly clear that even when the sovereign commands us to claim publicly that there is no God, this admission is no sin against our conscience or faithfulness:

   But then what shall we answer to our Saviour’s saying “Whosoever denieth me before men, I will deny him before my Father which is in Heaven?” (Matt. 10:33)

   This we may say: that whatsoever a subject ... is compelled to [do] in obedience to his sovereign, and doth do it not in order to his own mind, but in order to the laws of his country, that action is not his, but his sovereign’s; nor is it he that in this case denieth Christ before men, but his governor, and the law of his country” (Hobbes, 1994, 339).

9. In light of Schmitt’s *ex post facto* justification of the Röhm purge in 1934 (see “Der Führer schützt das Recht” in *PB*, 227-33), it is nothing short of amazing that twice Schmitt applauds Hobbes’ dictum *nulla poena, nullum crimen sine lege* (“no punishment, no crime without law”). It is worth noting that Schmitt’s Hobbes book was published in 1938 at the height of the Nazi’s hold on power and the increase of exactly those aspects Schmitt deplores and argues against, i.e., secret arrests, imprisonments and executions. In turn, Schmitt’s anti-semitism is not an attempt to curry favor with the Nazis after his “fall from grace” in 1936. We shall address what Schmitt’s anti-semitism means below.

10. Schmitt identified with this interpretation of the leviathan as devil incarnate so closely that he actually chose a reproduction of the Abbess Herrad of Landsberg’s *Hortus Deliciarum* as the artwork.
for the cover of *Der Leviathan in der Staatslehre Thomas Hobbes* in 1938. However, he only reproduced the image of the leviathan itself on the dust jacket and final page of the book. In the reprint of 1984, this artwork was replaced, without Schmitt’s approval, with the depiction of fishermen gutting the carcass of a beached whale (“Der angespülte Fisch”), but an excerpt of the original *Hortus Deliciarum*’s portrayal of just the leviathan was retained on the last page of that work (see L, 86, L (1938), 132). This image of a serpent-like whale with an upturned head whose tongue stuck out at a strange angle puzzled many people. When one views the *Hortus Deliciarum* in its entirety, the odd pose of the leviathan is explained: it is not sticking out its tongue, but his mouth has been run through with the hook of the cross of Christ and he has been captured by God the Father, who “dangles” Christ as bait in order to snare the devil in a trap. Heinrich Meier has included a reprint of the artwork which inspired Schmitt (and was the only artwork Schmitt ever chose to illustrate any of his books) in Meier, 1998, 174. Heinrich Meier related the following story to me that adds intrigue to Schmitt’s already captivating choice of art (both the selection of the work itself and Schmitt’s decision to use only the incomplete image of the upturned leviathan on the dust jacket and last page of the work in 1938). Meier had contacted Schmitt regarding the source of Schmitt’s original choice of art. Schmitt instructed him that he could find a reproduction of the *Hortus Deliciarum* in the *Reallexicon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte* under the entry “Der Antichrist.” Up until that time, no one had made a connection between Schmitt’s reference in the text of his book to the *Hortus Deliciarum* and the cover art. Meier searched the *Reallexicon* for such an entry and found nothing; however, he kept looking and under the entry “Der Angler” (“The Fisherman”) found the *Hortus Deliciarum*. Forty years after publishing his book on Hobbes, Schmitt was still attempting to reveal his meaning by leading people slightly astray. As Meier has drily noted, “that

266
is how Schmitt's 'admiration of Leviathan' looks when put in pictoral terms" (Meier, 1998, 114).
Conclusion: Political Theology and Carl Schmitt’s Relevance to Political Science

Carl Schmitt, Political Theology and Liberal Democracy

Is Schmitt merely the “scourge of liberalism,” the modern anti-liberal thinker who most clearly embodies nihilistic or existential irrationalism, self-serving romanticism, atavistic longings or unintelligible prejudices, or is there in Schmitt’s theorizing a challenge that liberal democratic thought must confront? Our exploration of Schmitt’s thinking, which can be most readily and fruitfully understood in terms of political theology, embodies a legitimate challenge to liberal democracy. The core of Schmitt’s political theology is found in his affirmation of the central teaching of the Gospels — Jesus is the Christ. Those who deny this truth “deny the Father and the Son;” they are “the antichrist” (I John: 18:22) Everything else that is of significance in Schmitt’s arguments, criticisms and attacks emanates from his belief in the fundamental insight into an eschatological struggle between Christ and Antichrist which divides friend from enemy, chosen from unchosen, sinner from redeemed. Let us review the path we have taken that has led to this conclusion. Let us return also to perhaps Schmitt’s most honest self-assessment of his own significance.

In his post-war work Ex Captivitate Salus, Schmitt advanced the self-assessment (amidst his more shameless self-indulgences) that his is the “bad, unworthy yet still authentic case of a Christian Epimetheus” (“Es ist der schlechte, unwürdige und doch authentische Fall eines christlichen Epimetheus”) (ECS, 12). In describing his efforts at identifying and holding back the satanic and anti-christian forces of his particular epoch, Schmitt describes his own efforts as both “bad and unworthy” but also “authentic.” Schmitt tacitly admits that he horribly misjudged the significance of the moment of 1933 and he misjudged Hitler. Yet, at the same time, he considers his case
authentic — he responded out of genuine piety against “liberal humanitarians” and the whole pantheon of “providential enemies” which sprang from the denial of God. In light of Schmitt’s powerful yet enigmatic statement that “the enemy is our own question as a figure,” what are we to make of Schmitt’s own inability to seemingly identify his enemies or his own time correctly? Schmitt’s answers allow us both to assess his “case” and offer a summary evaluation of his political theological aims.

Schmitt clarifies his sense of his case’s (and his cause’s) authenticity in his notebooks from the same period. In Hobbes, Schmitt perceives a vir probus whose fate is similar to his — a devout man, battered on all sides by enemies who did not understand him, and who sought only to rise to the historical challenges of his time. Schmitt historicizes the case of Thomas Hobbes in order to ascertain his piety. Hobbes’ failure, like Schmitt’s failure, is not to be judged by the “terrible effects” of his “metaphysical decision.” Schmitt clarifies this assessment in raising the spectre of Dostoevsky’s “Grand Inquisitor”: who stands closer to the satanic promise of “total security” purchased with the renunciation of “Jesus is the Christ,” the Roman Church or Thomas Hobbes? Hobbes, who at first seems destined to fail in this comparison, might yet rise to the challenge if we recognize the challenge of Hobbes as arising from the history of his time — to the extent that Hobbes’ attacks on religion and theology are attacks on Roman religion and Roman theology, Hobbes “philosophically” legitimizes Oliver Cromwell’s battle against papal Spain. Schmitt claims that the important, perhaps most important, matter to bear in mind for “Hobbes and Cromwell’s time” is the “conscious abandonment of the Katechon-tradition of the Roman Empire.” For Hobbes, the “Roman Church is the ghost that sits on the grave of the Imperium Romanum,” however, it was “entirely not universal, it was no Orbis” (G, 273; see also 243).
Might not Hobbes and Cromwell both have answered the eschatological challenge by perceiving, rightly or wrongly, the workings of the Antichrist in the Roman Church's "catholic" claims? Is it possible that the Roman Church abandoned the tradition of the *Katechon* in its quest for the "security" of its faith understood not as genuine faith but a sham "universal acceptance" of its "catholicity"? Might not Hobbes specifically have risked all by creating a modern "mortal god" who could summon forth the resources to combat such a force? And would not such an effort have in view not the "neutralization of every truth" but the preservation of it? It is sufficient for the sake of the political that "total security" is called into question by providential enmity. However, Schmitt ultimately answers these questions with a confession: "Nicht humanitas, sondern humilitas" (G, 274). Not humanity, but humility is the standard of judgment — history, like the omnipotence and omniscience of God, is unfathomable. Before either force, we must humble ourselves and not anticipate possession of the correct answer or the right judgment. There is an inseparable connection between our "reeling blindly through history," an image first conjured in Schmitt's *Political Theology*, and our anticipation of a commandment which is to be obeyed without disputation. The point where both forces come together is in the eschatological sharpening required by choosing between friend and enemy. Yet with the anticipation of correctly making this distinction, and in the "knowledge" that "knowledge of the enemy" is ultimately "self-knowledge" (G, 243), we are confronted with the realization of a tension created by the desire to conform to one's duty and deploy one's knowledge in action. As Schmitt wistfully, and perhaps out of genuine humility, confesses, if the most important form of knowledge is also self-knowledge, then it is also true that "all deception is and remains self-deception" (G, 27, 63, 89). Might not the self-understood *Katechon*, in anticipation of a decision, deceive himself as to his humility and his anticipation and thus deceive
himself as to his enemies and as to the significance of the moment? Indeed, might not such eschatological anticipation increase the danger of self-deception? Schmitt’s simple response is that it is better to risk having anticipated such a moment falsely, even if from the “false joy of restraining,” than to let a potential disjunction pass by unrealized (G, 31, 95, 174, 227, 238; see also ECS, 31, 53).

The reason for the anticipation of such a disjunction, to return to the themes of Political Theology, Roman Catholicism and Political Form and The Concept of the Political, is that Schmitt affirms the problematic nature of human history and our condition: we continue to exist in a state of probation, God rules our history “whose dark meaning continues to grow;” above all, God does not rule through “general rules” (G, 45, 88, 110, 274). It is in this sense that Schmitt’s attacks on “general norms and laws,” “liberal normativities,” his emphasis on the “exception” and his recognition of the true meaning of the “high point of great politics” come together and gain their sharpness: “the historical act” of Christ’s life breaks all “natural orders” or “laws;” it especially breaks through “the crust of a mechanism which has grown torpid through repetition.” It is an event which forms all of history from Schmitt’s perspective by demanding nothing more than total faith in a single event. It is in this sense as well that Schmitt affirms that the political is the total — there is a God, He became human in the person of Christ, He actively intervenes in our world and He makes demands on all men. Such a situation admits of no “reconciliation through synthesis” or “resolution in some higher third.” In turn, as a model of the political, it represents the highpoint or the highwater mark of enmity — nothing can go beyond the political because the political is not simply the “most intensive form of an association or disassociation,” it represents the confrontation of those who deny “Jesus is the Christ” with those who affirm it. In turn, so long as enmity
continues to shape human events, enmity can still lead back to the original, profound enmity.

Man should not expect total security in this life. Schmitt asserts the truth of Augustine’s insight in order to combat atheism, anarchism and Hegel’s “universal, homogenous state,” as well as the “Hobbesian security state” which seemingly can only promise “physical security” from a “this-worldly” perspective. But might not Hobbes have been devout from the beginning, might it not have been philosophers who corrupted Hobbes’ intent? Schmitt’s reading of Hobbes, while at sharp variance to Hobbes’ stated aims and supporting arguments, raises a provocative possibility. It is a possibility which is all the more intriguing in that it was directed at both Leo Strauss and later Alexandre Kojève, and in turn, used by Jacob Taubes to justify his own interest in Schmitt’s theorizing (see Bredekamp, 1999, 248-9). Hobbes after all does not entirely eliminate enmity from the human calculus; so long as a thinker does not abandon enmity as the determining feature of politics, there are still grounds for rescuing such thought. Unfortunately, while Schmitt classifies “all legitimate political theories” according to their stand on the theological dogma of sin and “man by nature good” or “man by nature evil,” Schmitt very rarely offers us a case that “concretely” and authoritatively answers all questions we might put to him. Especially in the paradoxical case of Schmitt’s lifelong occupation with Hobbes, we have outlined several serious objections to faithfully accepting Schmitt’s judgment of Hobbes’ faith. Nonetheless, in appealing to the most fundamental alternatives to ancient and modern political philosophy, Schmitt makes us aware of a crucial perspective on a seemingly permanent and determinative feature of all human concourse. Anyone who wants to master the factum brutum of the political must first come to terms with Carl Schmitt’s “concept of the political.” To the extent that Carl Schmitt’s theorizing about the political addresses issues germane to the most basic considerations of political science and political philosophy, his
thought represents a force which must not only be confronted but also understood.

**Carl Schmitt's Relevance to Political Science**

We can conclude our exploration of Carl Schmitt's political theology by examining its relevance to political science. Specifically, political theological distinctions help us to understand and more fully appreciate Samuel Huntington's empirically grounded "clash of civilizations" thesis which directly challenges the globalization thesis, or what Huntington and like-minded political scientists take to be the notion that we are moving towards a "universal, global civilization." Carl Schmitt's theorizing provides one of the most fecund means for comprehending what is at stake in evaluating the forces Huntington draws attention to in his work *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. At first glance, despite the so-called "realistic" orientation that marks both Huntington's approach to conceptualizing international relations theory and Schmitt's likewise captivating cutting of the theoretical "Gordian Knot" in his articulation of the "political," Huntington and Schmitt would seem to make for strange bedfellows. Yet, considering Huntington's analysis of globalization in light of Schmitt's analysis of the "political" should not come as a surprise, particularly for those who have followed the growing interest in Schmitt studies over the last few years. As we have noted, both defenders and critics of Schmitt have acknowledged that, whether his influence has been for good or ill, it is far-reaching and extensive. In the present context, we mention this connection not because we wish to construct a "forensic chain of evidence" linking Huntington and Schmitt, but because Schmitt's theorizing about enmity and the friend-enemy distinction confronts any analysis or set of prescriptive measures which orient us towards hoping for a peaceful, global order with a counterclaim which challenges the basis of such hopes. What bears examination in this respect specifically is the question of how Schmitt provocatively and coherently makes sense

273
of the issues we are confronted with in analyzing globalization. The subject of Carl Schmitt not only provides insight but also points to areas of future research.

Let us sketch the broad outlines of Huntington’s thesis in its essential features. First, Huntington observes that somehow national, ethnic, cultural and religious differences persist in defining political distinctions for people, despite the death of ideology as a dividing force between nations. Huntington claims that the persistence of these differences is not an accidental or a momentary resurgence of nationalist sentiments in light of the splintering of the former Soviet Union and the global reconfigurations set off by that event. Specifically, Huntington injects a very Schmittian motif into the foreground of his analysis. While Huntington quotes from Michael Didbin’s Dead Lagoon and not from Schmitt’s The Concept of the Political, we should take heed of his remark’s impetus and effect: “There can be no true friends without true enemies. Unless we hate what we are not, we cannot love what we are. These are the old truths we are painfully rediscovering after a century and more of sentimental cant.” Huntington immediately follows up on this with what can be identified as the impetus to his work:

The unfortunate truth in these old truths cannot be ignored by statesmen and scholars. For people seeking identity and reinventing ethnicity, enemies are essential, and the potentially most dangerous enmities occur across the fault lines between the world’s major civilizations (Huntington, 1996, 20)

To quickly note, Huntington’s remarks are addressed to “statesmen and scholars.” Huntington’s thesis is aimed at more than a scholarly audience; he includes policy recommendations and appeals to a sense of world affairs which can be grasped without elaborate academic models. Huntington outlines the major thrust of his thesis in five parts:

1) For the first time in world history, global politics is both multi-polar and multi-civilizational.
2) The “balance of power” among civilizations is shifting and there are three effects:
   a) Asian civilizations are expanding their economic, political and military strength;
   b) Islam is exploding demographically with destabilizing consequences within Muslim societies and without against non-Muslim neighboring societies and countries;
   c) In general, non-Western civilizations are re-affirming the value of their own cultures contrary to Western practices and expectations.

3) A “civilization based” world order is emerging in which nations and societies sharing cultural affinities cooperate with each other to the exclusion of nations and societies which do not. Attempts to “shift” one society from one civilization to another are unsuccessful (for example, efforts to “Westernize” Japan, Pakistan and Turkey have failed, likewise, with the splintering of the former Yugoslavia, Bosnia became increasingly Islamic, Croatia gravitated towards its Catholic co-religionists in the West and Serbia moved closer to its Eastern and Orthodox Christian brethren). The implication of a “civilization based” order is that countries group themselves around the lead or “core” states of their civilization.

4) The West’s universal or global pretensions (which consist in one form or another of the spread of human rights and individual liberties, the separation of church and state, the imposition of the “rule of law,” and liberal democratic elections, practices and institutions) bring it into conflict with other civilizations, especially Islam and China. At the local level, conversely, these conflicts reveals themselves in “fault-line” wars, especially between Muslims and non-Muslims, which is the greatest evidence of the phenomenon of “kin-country” rallying. Huntington defines this concept in terms of countries of the same civilization rallying to the defense of their co-religionists either by providing support on the international stage, granting favourable trade status or relaxed immigration policies,
accepting refugees, supplying arms and material or even engaging in conflicts themselves. The core states of these civilizational cleavages also can act as the greatest deterrent in halting the escalation of such wars either by intervening directly or negotiating with the core state(s) of the contending civilizational order(s).

5) Huntington recommends the following two general policy positions: First, the survival of the West depends on Americans reaffirming their Western identity and Westerners, in turn, accepting their civilization as unique and not universal. The West must unite to renew itself against the challenges of other civilizations, which sounds surprisingly like Schmitt's own international law contributions towards elaborating a juridical "Grossraum" for Europe which would rival the United States' Monroe Doctrine (see, for example, PB, 179-183; 291-296 and 335-343). One might say that what Schmitt sought for Europe in his turn to international law, Huntington seeks for the West, once the United States is forced to make a decision. Second, the avoidance of a global war of civilizations depends on world leaders cooperating to maintain the multi-civilizational character of world politics. While America and the West still hold a "relative competitive advantage" in the balance of power, they must seek to delineate this line of thinking in policy.

What concerns us are the related points developed in Parts One and Four of Huntington's overall thesis which deal with the question of the West's "universalist" pretensions. Huntington divides these two areas of concern into the "political or cultural project" and the economic and technologizing aspect of globalization. Of particular import is Huntington's claim that "modernization is distinct from Westernization and is producing neither a universal civilization in any meaningful sense nor the Westernization of non-Western societies" (Huntington, 1996, 20; 56 - 72). This distinction between modernization and Westernization brings us to the conundrum of
“globalization” — what is meant and implied by this rubric? From Huntington’s perspective, there are three facets or general areas of analysis. “Globalization” is a somewhat unwieldy or catch-all term which brackets Huntington’s analysis as something of a “clearing house” for several related phenomena. Huntington claims that there are three general and interrelated phenomena which in turn are interpreted in various ways as being meant to act more or less salubriously or harmoniously to produce a “Universal Civilization”: (1) “The End of History/ The End of Ideology”; (2) “Modernization”; (3) “Westernization.”

“The End of History/The End of Ideology” means for Huntington the position articulated, for example, by Francis Fukayama’s “end of history” thesis — with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the last great practical and theoretical challenge to liberal-democracy for humanity’s hearts and minds has ceased to exist. Huntington claims that this conclusion is misleading. First, such a conclusion ignores religion as a viable alternative which satisfies individual and collective longings, desires, needs and wants to a greater and deeper degree than liberal democracy does. Second, it suffers from the “single alternative” fallacy — we will elaborate these points from Schmitt’s perspective (Huntington, 1996, 66).

Huntington understands “modernization” as the rise of science, technology, mass manufacturing, economics, international trade, finance and other business and commercial practices, communications and the media in its various forms. Huntington’s basic position is that “modernization” does not have the effect of creating an enduring peace or a universal civilization. Whether creating that expectation through greater understanding and cultural exchanges, through the increased exchange of consumer goods or people, whether through the “instantaneous exchange of information” via modern mass communications or whether through the uniform practices of modern
science and technology, "modernization" does not lead to a less bellicose, more peaceful world (Huntington, 1996, 66-67; 74-8). Specifically, Huntington points out that neither international trade nor mass communications has ever decreased the possibility for war — to the contrary, when one searches for historical instances, one finds nothing: "In 1913, international trade was at record highs and in the next few years nations slaughtered each other in unprecedented numbers. If international trade at that level could not prevent war, when can it?" (Huntington, 1996, 67). Likewise, via CNN, the world's stock exchanges (and the rest of the world) knew immediately that Secretary of State James Baker found the final Iraqi efforts at negotiation over Kuwait ineffectual, but such knowledge did not stop the subsequent air strikes at the beginning of the Persian Gulf War. Interestingly, from our perspective, Huntington uses the word globalization only once in contrasting the quest for creating (through modernization) a "universal civilization" with the international reality he perceives: "'From sociology, globalization theory produces a similar conclusion: in an increasingly globalized world — characterized by historically exceptional degrees of civilizational, societal and other modes of interdependence and widespread consciousness thereof — there is an exacerbation of civilizational, societal, and ethnic self-consciousness.' The global religious revival, 'the return to the sacred,' is a response to people's perception of the world as 'a single place'" (Huntington, 1996, 68)

Finally, in terms of "Westernization," Huntington's point is simple: the West was the West long before it was modernized. It is therefore misleading to associate what is distinctively Western with what claims or promises to be of universal import because of its purely rational basis. Huntington singles out as more or less unique to the West the following factors: The Classical legacy (Greek Philosophy and rationalism, Roman law, the Latin language); Christianity, the split
or schism of Catholicism and Protestantism and the subsequent division of and subordination to
temporal authority by spiritual authority, social pluralism, representative bodies and the rule of law
(Huntington, 1996, 68 - 74). The most important contrasts for our purposes are between religious
authority and political authority: “Only in Hindu civilization were religion and politics also so
distinctly separated. In Islam, God is Caesar; in China and Japan, Caesar is God; in Orthodoxy, God
is Caesar’s junior partner” (Huntington, 1996, 70). For the West, this relationship has unique effects
in that it practically underpins Western notions of individual freedom and perhaps theoretically
makes Hobbes’ observation that “where the laws are silent, you may do as you want” something
realizable. But its realization arises not from the clarity of philosophic insight, but from the historical
conditions of the separation of temporal and spiritual authority.

From this general analysis, Huntington concludes that “globalization,” understood in either
the narrower sociological sense or understood in terms of all three factors elaborated above taken
together, does not produce “a universal civilization” — to the contrary, “globalization” does nothing
to decrease the potentiality for conflict based on civilizational friend-enemy distinctions. Indeed,
because adherents of globalization obfuscate or blur the reasons for conflict, they potentially make
matters worse, and conflict thus becomes that much more violent, inflamed and unnecessary. For
Huntington, the sad spectacle of the former Yugoslavia is exhibit number one. While much more
can be said about what happened in Yugoslavia, and Huntington has much to say, one factor must
be singled out and it is relevant to both Huntington’s analysis and his positive policy prescriptions:
“American elites ... were favourably disposed toward the Bosnians because they liked the idea of a
multicultural country, and in the early stages of the war the Bosnian government successfully
promoted this image. Throughout the war, American foreign policy remained stubbornly committed
to a multi-ethnic Bosnia despite the fact that the Bosnian Serbs and the Bosnian Croats overwhelmingly rejected it .... American idealism, moralism, humanitarian instincts, naivete, and ignorance concerning the Balkans thus led them to be pro-Bosnian and anti-Serb .... By refusing to recognize the war for what it was, the American government alienated its allies, prolonged the fighting, and helped to create in the Balkans a Muslim state heavily influenced by Iran” (Huntington,1996, 290). Not only is the hope that “globalization” in one or all of its above-mentioned forms misguided in its expectations for fostering a global peace and eradicating war, it has already (in the post-Cold War era) disasterously exacerbated the horrendous damages of what Huntington refers to as a multi-civilizational war in the former Yugoslavia. Let us examine Huntington’s phrase “American idealism, moralism [and] humanitarian instincts” because it provides an intriguing contrast with Schmitt’s critiques of modernity.

As we have witnessed in great detail, Schmitt argues strenuously that the prospect of a “universal civilization” would no longer even be “humane” let alone political. Globalization is meaningless (at the minimum) or disastrous and destructive (at the worst) because ultimately, it relies on a vague concept of “humanity” to unite the globe. Schmitt specifically elaborated on the political theory and practical realization of such a prospect in two ways. First, “humanity is not a political concept, and no political entity or society and no status correspond to it.” Indeed, to remind ourselves of one of Schmitt’s favorite remarks, “whoever invokes humanity wants to cheat” (“Wer Menschheit sagt, will betrügen”) (BP, 54-8). Second, to generalize or universalize the term “humanity” in the sense that liberalism does actually has the effect of generalizing and universalizing war: “To confiscate the word humanity, to invoke and monopolize such a term probably has certain incalculabe effects, such as denying the enemy the quality of being human and declaring him to be
an outlaw of humanity; and a war can thereby be driven to the utmost extreme of inhumanity” (BP, 54-5). These observations, and Schmitt’s supporting arguments, are certainly points relevant to Huntington’s analysis — politics means distinguishing between “friends” and “enemies.” The importance resides in making the distinction “friend” or “enemy.” Such distinctions are the basis for understanding the most important political matters. Such distinctions are inescapable. For Schmitt, the abandonment of the friend-enemy distinction is why “a globalized peace” is simply the continuing development of the current liberal West writ large.

How does Schmitt’s “concept of the political” deepen and elaborate our understanding of Huntington’s thesis without distorting it or doing it an injustice? Just as we have seen how amazingly circumspect Schmitt is in actually defining rigorously or elaborating on what makes the enemy our enemy, if globalization is to be understood as the predicate of rational or technological means of universalizing (and thus eradicating) political discourse, behavior and relationships, then Huntington seemingly picks up on how the most universal aspect of “Western Civilization” (i.e., technology and science) is the most neutral, and hence, the most dangerously misunderstood aspect of what proponents of the “peace through globalization” thesis hold out. His examples in this respect are both highly reminiscent of Schmitt’s arguments in “The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations” and they are especially revealing, in no small part, because they also indicate what concerns and even outrages him. Huntington, like Schmitt, cannot hide his moral indignation with what he perceives as Western intellectual and moral flabbiness and groundless self-congratulatory bombast. While for the most part, Huntington suggests that the revival of religion is harmless unless certain sociological criteria are met (for example, demographic shifts, population explosions or rare convergences of multi-overlapping civilizational fronts as happened in the former
Yugoslavia), he does allow to flash to the surface a more insightful elaboration in terms of liberal democracy and its secularization of religious life. Not surprisingly, this elaboration takes place in confrontation along and within “Islam’s bloody borders.” Huntington writes “increasingly, Muslims attack the West not for adhering to an imperfect, erroneous religion, which is nonetheless a ‘religion of the book’ but for not adhering to any religion at all. In Muslim eyes Western secularism, irrelegiosity, and hence immorality are worse evils than the Western Christianity that produced them” (Huntington, 1996, 213). Indeed, Huntington develops the rather Schmittian point regarding the neutrality of technique and technology in quoting from Fatima Mernissi’s Islam and Democracy — while Huntington notes that in the West, Mernissi’s book was hailed as a “courageous statement” by a “modern, liberal, female Muslim” (Huntington, 1996, 214), her portrayal of the West could hardly be less flattering:

The West is ‘militaristic’ and ‘imperialistic’ and has ‘traumatized’ other nations through colonial terror (Mernissi, pp. 3, 9). Individualism, the hallmark of Western culture, is ‘the source of all trouble.’ (p. 8). Western power is fearful. The West alone ‘decides if satellites will be used to educate Arabs or to drop bombs on them. .... It crushes our potentialities and invades our lives with its imported products and televised movies that swamp the airwaves... It is a power that crushes us, besieges our markets, and controls our merest resources, initiatives, and potentialities. That was how we perceived our situation, and the Gulf War turned that perception into certitude.’(pp. 146-7)” ..... To liberate themselves from this subservience, Islam must develop its own engineers and scientists, build its own weapons (whether nuclear or conventional she doesn’t say), and ‘free itself from military dependence on the West.’(pp. 43-4). These to repeat, are not the views of a bearded, hooded ayatollah” (Huntington, 1996, 214)

Schmitt, following Huntington, might add, however, they are the as-yet unheeded call of new “providential enemies” who (as Huntington indicates) do indeed call our “ownmost way of life” into question and who (as Schmitt might conclude) know who they are and who their friends are because they know who their enemies are.

282
BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. WORKS BY CARL SCHMITT (IN GERMAN)


283


"Der Gegensatz von Parlamentarismus und moderner Massendemokratie (1926)"

"Wesen und Werden des faschistischen Staates (1929)"

"Staatsethik und pluralistischer Staat (1930)"

"Der Führer schützt das Recht (1934)"

"Totaler Feind, totaler Krieg, totaler Staat (1937)"

"Großraum gegen Universalismus (1939)"


II. WORKS BY CARL SCHMITT (IN ENGLISH)


----- 1985b. The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy. Translated by Ellen Kennedy. Cambridge,
MA: MIT Press.


**III. SELECTED SECONDARY SOURCES**


288


289


291


292


