# LONERGAN AND VOEGELIN ON POLITICAL AUTHORITY

Thomas J. McPartland

Kentucky State University

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Is "political authority" an oxymoron? The term "authority" derives from the Latin *auctoritas (*from the root *auctor*, the agent who could guarantee a legal transaction).[1] The Roman *auctoritas* conveyed in a compact way the ideas of (1) the guarantor of a legal transaction, (2) the personal, especially moral qualities, of an agent or, by extension, of an institution, such as the senate, and (3) the property of creation or initiation, still associated with the term "author." The original meaning of *auctoritas*, then, was the capacity to evoke voluntary compliance distinct from coercive power.[2] And yet in modern political culture the "political" has been increasingly identified with power, either as simply force or as the machinery of government. Machiavelli gave expression to the former conception in his classic statement that "the main foundations of every state . . . are good laws and good arms; and because you cannot have good laws without good arms, and where there are good arms, good laws inevitably follow, I shall not discuss laws but give my attention to arms."[3] Modern liberalism, on the other hand, supports the latter view since it sees government as an artificial machine serving the interest of freedom. At the same time it is highly suspicious of authority. Indeed modernity has rejected the medieval symbolism of politics, whose archetypal expression was the formula of Pope

[1] For general discussion, see Leonard Krieger, "Authority," *Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Studies of Selected Pivotal Ideas*, ed. Philip P. Wiener (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, Publishers, 1968), I, 141-162.
[2] Krieger, "Authority," I, 141-146.
[3] Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. George Bull (New York: Penguin Books, 1961, chap. 12, p. 77.

Gelasius I, as embracing both authority (the sacred authority, *auctoritas sacrata pontificum*) and power (the secular power, *potestas regalis*).[4] While the medieval discussion of politics was replete with terminological confusion of *auctoritas* and *potestas*, the modern discussion, left solely with the *potestas regalis*, has tended to reduce authority basically to a justification for, or an ancillary to, power.

Lonergan and Voegelin speak a language very different from that of most of modern political discourse. They approach politics in a radical and foundational manner, holding positions that differ significantly from the reigning assumptions of modernity regarding epistemology, philosophical anthropology, and metaphysics. They both dissent from the modern preoccupation, since Descartes, of becoming "masters and possessors of nature" and, by implication, of human nature.[5] They view the two leading political movements of the twentieth century, liberalism and totalitarianism in its various guises, in a very dim light, seeing liberalism as, at best, superficial, and totalitarianism as diabolical. Lonergan spent much of his academic life in trying to work out a philosophy of history at odds with both liberal social engineering and totalitarian practicality. Voegelin in his effort to restore political science not only vigorously attacked the presuppositions of liberalism and totalitarianism but in the process wrote books in the 1930's against National Socialism that placed his life in jeopardy. Not surprisingly, Lonergan and Voegelin hold that politics encompasses both authority and power, with neither

[4] Krieger, "Authority," I, 148.

[5] See René Descartes, *Discourse on Method,* trans. Laurence J. Lafleur (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1956), p. 40. Descartes pondered whether the ideal would be to have one person organize the political society and rejected the idea, perhaps with irony, as impractical. Ibid., pp. 7-10. Later thinkers in the Cartesian spirit would not be so hesitant about proposing the scientific engineering of society. See Floyd W. Matson, *The Broken Image: Man, Science, and Society* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1966), chap. 1; Stephen Toulmin, *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), chap. 2.

term reduced to the other, but both as essentially and specifically linked in the real life of the polity.

## 1. Lonergan and Voegelin as Political Philosophers

Lonergan presented the philosophical foundations for political theory in his magnum opus *Insight* (as well as in works leading up to it or following from it). This may come as a surprise since *Insight* is clearly a book on epistemology. On the one hand, epistemology appears to be not only outmoded in an era when philosophy has taken, with Wittgenstein, the "linguistic turn" or, with Heidegger, the "ontological turn" but also a conspicuous example of the foundationalism so decried by Post-Modern philosophy. How, then, can a political theory "founded" on epistemology be compelling and even legitimate enough to warrant inspection? And, on the other hand, how would a book avowedly concentrating on epistemology (and the consequent metaphysics) be focused enough on politics to be able to establish the putative foundations of political theory? (The example of Hobbes's Leviathan, which opens up with an extensive treatment of epistemology, is not a favorable one, given the mechanistic model Hobbes employs.)

Lonergan indeed addresses epistemological problems in *Insight*, meeting head on, for example, such modern theories of knowledge as those of Descartes, Hume, and Kant; and he subsequently expands the epistemology into a comprehensive metaphysics of critical realism; but he does both only after a venture into what he calls "cognitional theory," which is a systematic account of the actual operations and structure of knowing. Cognitional theory is not, however, based on some foundationalist apprehension of the knower. It is based neither on a transcendental deduction, nor on idealist speculation, nor on a reduction of consciousness to

neural physiology. It is rooted in "self-appropriation" of one's conscious activity of knowing.[6] Its base is the "subject as subject," not the "subject as object."[7] Hence the foundation of epistemology is cognitional theory, and the foundation of cognitional theory is the performance of the subject as subject. There is a foundation here, but no foundationalism. The linguistic turn in philosophy is not radical enough to grasp the subject as subject since language is an expression of insight; the ontological turn in philosophy is too restricted to grasp the subject as knower since it assumes knowing to be something like the Cartesian or Kantian claims about it. And if this non foundationalist foundation is, according to Lonergan's later description, "Descartes' *cogito* transposed to concrete living," then cognitional theory must be applied to human cognition in all of its concrete endeavors, including the inquiry, understanding, and judgments associated with political life.[8] If *Insight* was "untimely" in the twentieth century, this was perhaps the case not because it was a backward-looking relic of early modern epistemology (or, worse yet, of medieval Scholasticism) but because it was so forward-looking, going against, as it did, much of the climate of opinion, that its relevance can only be grasped adequately in the twenty-first century.

We must note that Lonergan offers a distinct and radical approach to philosophy—and hence to political philosophy. His use of such terms as the "subject as subject," "consciousness,"

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[6] Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, 5th ed., *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 3, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), pp. 4-6, 11-17, 22-23, 343-366, 372-375, 381-383, 399-409, 413-426, 433-436, 577-585, 626-628, 659-662. See also Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Collection*, vol. 4 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed.* F. E. Crowe (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), chap. 14; Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), chap. 1. William Mathews in *Lonergan's Quest: A Study of Desire in the Authoring of Insi*ght (Toronto: University of Toronto press, 2005), p. 261, sees a major problematic in *Insight* as the Kantian subject-object gap, formulated by Ernst Cassirer.

[7] Bernard Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic: The Boston College Lectures on Mathematical Logic and Existentialism*, vol. 18, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Philip J. McShane (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), pp. 213-215, 310-317.

[8] Ibid., pp. 215, 316.

and "intentionality" must be understood in the context of this distinct and radical approach. The "subject as subject" is the concrete consciousness of a concrete person.[9] "Consciousness" is the self-presence, the immanent awareness, of the person who performs operations of sensing, imagining, remembering, questioning, gasping insights, formulating, marshaling and weighing evidence, judging, deliberating, evaluating, and deciding. It is not an inner look.[10] "Intentionality" is not necessarily an outer look. It is simply the orientation of consciousness to something, and looking is only one type of orientation.[11] Here Lonergan joins Voegelin in criticizing Husserl's' notion of intentionality as modeled exclusively on sensing.[12] Underpinning all conscious operations is a spontaneous basic, or transcendental, intentionality that gives consciousness its dynamism: this is the unrestricted desire to know that unfolds into the unrestricted intention of the good. This basic intentionality is normative, for from it arise the "transcendental precepts"—the imperatives to be attentive, intelligence, reasonable and responsible.[13] Fidelity to the transcendental precepts is the self-transcending source of both objectivity and authenticity. It is an orientation to what is real. Thus Lonergan's epistemology issues into metaphysics. Engulfing the basic intentionality and the conscious operations performed by the authentic inquirer is the conscious existential state of being unrestrictedly in

[9] *Phenomenology and Logic*, pp.205, 288.
[10] On Lonergan's distinct notion of consciousness as self-presence, see *Insight*, pp. 344-52; *Method*, pp. 6-9; *Collection*, pp. 209-10; Thomas J. McPartland, *Lonergan and the Philosophy of Historical Existence* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001), chap. 1; Louis Roy, *Mystical Consciousness: Western Perspectives and Dialogue with Japanese Thinkers* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), chap. 1.
[11] *Method*, pp., 6-13.
[12] *Insight*, p. 440; see Eric Voegelin, *Anamnesis: On the Theory of History and Politics*, vol. 6 of Collected Works of Eric Voegelin, ed. David Walsh and trans. M.J. Hanak based on trans. by Gerhart Niemeyer (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002), chap. 2; Eric Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol. 5, *In Search of Order*, vol. 18 of Collected Works of Eric Voegelin, ed. Ellis Sandoz (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002), pp. 28-33.
[13] *Method*, pp. 20, 33, 55, 231, 302.

love, experienced as a "participatory consciousness"--at once a love of being and an "openness as a gift."[14]

Lonergan's metaphysics includes a process philosophy of world development (what he calls the "worldview of emergent probability").[15] Emergent in the universe are higher integrations. The operations of human consciousness—cognitional, moral, and spiritual—are higher integrations of the sensitive psyche of animals.[16] The sensitive psyche is a higher integration of organic routines, which are a higher integration of chemical compounds, which are a higher integration of subatomic processes. The human polity emerges when humans through their shared culture of common meanings and values create a higher integration of economic practices, technological potentialities, and intersubjective interactions.[17] Lonergan's notions of consciousness, intentionality, transcendental precepts, objectivity, authenticity, and openness can be applied to the polity.

Careful scrutiny of *Insight* shows there is a political context and political content to the work. Lonergan adverts to a political context in his Preface when he raises the question of what "practical good" could come from the book. His answer is immediate and vigorous. "Insight into both insight and oversight," he proclaims, is the "very key to practicality." The problem of distinguishing progress and decline is "delicate, profound, practical," and no problem is "perhaps more pressing."[18] The problem is pressing because of unprecedented human power over nature and human beings at the same time that political culture in the technologically advanced societies

[14] Ibid,, chap. 4 ;*Collection*, chap. 12.
[15] *Insight*, pp. 138-51, 284-92, chap. 15.
[16] Ibid., pp. 476-504.
[17] On "community" as common experiences, understandings, judgments, and decisions, see *Method*, pp. 79, 356-57; on the relation of technology, economy, polity, and culture, as objective orders of society, see *Insight*, pp. 232-37; on the relation, and tension, between civic order and intersubjective community, see ibid., pp. 237-44. If culture is the "set of meanings and values that informs a way of life," then political culture is the set of meanings and values that informs political life. See *Method*, p. xi.
[18] *Insight*, p. 8.

of the West has been in a long cycle of decline, issuing in the brutish glorification of the purely practical by the totalitarian political movements that Lonergan witnessed firsthand in Europe.[19] The problem, then, is real, and the lack of sustained development has its ugly historical and decidedly political dimensions.[20] In his original Preface, Lonergan called this a "social crisis" that was "the historical issue of the twentieth century."[21] It is not clear whether Lonergan wrote chapters 6 and 7 of *Insight*, which focus on common sense, first, but it is clear that the themes of chapter 7, including the discussion of the polity, as the editors of *Insight* note, "had engaged him far back in his student days, kept surfacing in the minor writings of his Montreal period of teaching, 1940-46, and influenced his work on economics in 1942."[22] Among his writings on economics was the manuscript *For a New Political Economy*, arguing for a free, democratic appropriation of the general laws of economic productivity.[23] The material on politics, then, in chapter 7 was central to the project animating Lonergan's work.

Lonergan, to be sure, devoted little space to political philosophy itself, and what political philosophy we can extrapolate from *Insight* and other writings anticipates little of what we might take to be the normal themes of political philosophy. For instead of reflections on sovereignty, the best regime, valid forms of government, the origins of the polity, or separation of powers we see Lonergan discussing authenticity, transcendental precepts, mystery, and transcendent truth. Lonergan spent much of his academic effort in articulating a philosophy profoundly at odds with the two leading political movements of the twentieth century, which he would characterize as

[19] Ibid., pp. 8, 256-57.
[20] Ibid., pp. 653, 655.
[21] *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 3:1 (1985), 5.
[22] *Insight*, p. xxii.
[23] Bernard Lonergan, *For a New Political Economy*, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 21, ed. Philip J. McShane (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998). See Appendix for dating.

liberal social engineering and totalitarian practicality.[24] He both dissented from the modern obsession, since Descartes, with being "masters and possessors of nature" and departed from the implications of the antiquated, pre-Copernican cosmology, whose notion of a natural and static hierarchy informed ancient and medieval political philosophy.[25] This is precisely the uniqueness of Lonergan's philosophy, namely, that he carries on a dialogue between ancient and modern thinkers, seeking a new fusion of horizons grounded in his philosophy of self-appropriation. Nor is he alone in this enterprise. We must now consider Voegelin.

Voegelin, unlike Lonergan, wrote extensively on politics. He published a number of books dealing with such political topics as American political culture, the race idea and the state, the Austrian constitution, legal theory, the history of political ideas, modern political ideologies, and the history of symbols of order.[26] He contributed many articles and book reviews to political journals. He held a teaching position in the department of government. Nevertheless Voegelin was unconventional in his approach. Very early he broke from the neo-Kantian methodologies still prevalent in Germany in the 1920's. He studied cultural horizons as they developed in

[24] Ibid, pp. 4-5; *Insight*, pp. 257-258, 266.

[25] *Insight*, pp. 8, 448; s**Error! Main Document Only.**ee Descartes, *Discourse on Method,* p. 40.

[26] Eric Voegelin, *On the Form of the American Mind*, trans. Ruth Hein, vol. 1 of *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, ed. Jurgen Gebhardt and Barry Cooper (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996); *Race and State*, trans. Ruth Hein, vol. 2 of *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, ed. Klaus Vondung (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996); *The History of the Race Idea from Ray to Carus*, trans. Ruth Hein, vol. 3 of *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, ed. Klaus Vondung (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998); *The Authoritarian State: An Essay on the Problem of the Austrian State*, trans. Ruth Hein, vol. 4 of *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, ed. Gilbert Weiss and commentary by Erika Weinzierl (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999); *The Nature of Law and Related Legal Writings*, vol. 27 of *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, ed. Robert Anthony Pascal, James Lee Babin, and John William Corrington (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991); *History of Political Ideas*, 8 vols., ed. Ellis Sandoz, *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, vols. 19-26 (Columbus: University of Missouri Press, 1997-1999); *The New Science of Politics* in *Modernity Without Restraint: The Political Religions; The New Science of Politics; and Science, Politics, and Gnosticism*, ed. Manfred Henningsen, *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, vol. 5 (Columbus: University of Missouri Press, 2000; *Order and History*, 5 vols., *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, vols. 14-18 (Columbus: University of Missouri Press, 2000-2001).

concrete history rather than in terms of the neo-Kantian categories of cultural forms, which were constituted as "objects" by a methodologically postulated ego.[27] In the mid-1930's while still under the influence of the formalistic German *Staatslehre* and the positivistic theory of law of his teacher, Hans Kelsen, Voegelin already indicated the direction of his future work: it was not enough to investigate law in terms of the horizon within which it operated; one must identify in a critical fashion the experiences that gave rise to the horizon. Thus Voegelin pushed for a "transformation of the dogmatic system of natural right into an analysis of existential experiences that make regulation of certain institutions [property, obligation, family] the inevitable component of any legal order."[28] In his study of the Austrian constitution he made clear his distance from liberal reliance on constitutional procedure and from Kelsen's Pure Theory of Law. If the concrete historical reality of Austrian political society were such that it could not withstand the onslaught of radical ideologies, right and left, then an authoritarian state would be most suited to keep open the possibilities for democracy.[29] His monumental *History of Political Ideas* was not an examination of "ideas" in the ordinary sense of political concepts and descriptions. It was a study of ideas as expressions formative of the polity itself, and it approached "political theories" as rare latecomers in the history of the polity, usually arising at times of crisis when the "ideas" had become opaque.[30] Voegelin departed from even his unorthodox history of political ideas when he found "ideas" inadequate to convey the substantive sources of political order, namely, experiences of openness to being and their symbols.[31] *Order*

[27] *On the Form of the American Mind*, Introduction.
[28] *Race and State*, p. 4.
[29] *The Authoritarian State*, esp. chap. 7; Eric Voegelin, *Autobiographical Reflections*, ed. Ellis Sandoz (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), p. 41.
[30] Eric Voegelin, *History of Political Ideas*, vol. 1, *Hellenism, Rome, and Early Christianity*, ed. Athanasius Kouklakis , vol. 19 of *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1997), Appendix A.
[31] *Autobiographical Reflections*, chaps. 17, 20.

*and History* replaced *The History of Political Ideas.* But the project of the history of order and its symbolisms took a new turn when Voegelin drew out the implications that there are "lines of meaning that are not temporal."[32] As a consequence the "later Voegelin" resorted more and more to meditative reflections on political order and disorder. The differences at various stages of his thought notwithstanding, there were a basic continuity in Voegelin's political philosophy, which will be our focus. There had been an internal momentum to Voegelin's unconventional path of inquiry away from the modern preoccupation with politics as power, as the machinery of government, or as the procedural norms. And it is our contention in this paper that he was heading in the same direction as was Lonergan.

## 2. Comparison

It is very difficult and very rare, according to Voegelin, for a political philosopher to rise above the evocations of the age. Perhaps only Aristotle, Aquinas, and Bodin have had some success in doing so. What the contemporary world needs, Voegelin says, is another Aquinas.[33] Voegelin's own efforts can be viewed as an attempt, however modest, to respond to that exigency. From Lonergan's remarks on the history of philosophy it would seem that very few philosophers have consistently adhered to what he would call "positions," that is, formulations consonant with the conscious process of knowing (intellectual conversion).[34] But among the few he would rank Aquinas, who produced in his day a creative synthesis of Greek philosophy and Christian culture.[35] Lonergan would seek to accomplish a similar task today: to merge the

[32] Eric Voegelin, *Order and History,* vol. 4, *The Ecumenic Age,* vol. 17 of *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), pp. 47-51.
[33] *History of Political Ideas,* VI, 57.
[34] *Insight*, p. 413.
[35] *Insight*, p. 770; *Collection,* chap. 13; Bernard Lonergan., *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas,* vol. 2 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan,* ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan,* ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), chap. 4.

horizons of Greek and Scholastic philosophy with the contemporary culture infused with modern scientific method, the shift to interiority, and historical-mindedness.[36]

Here we witness lines of convergence between Voegelin and Lonergan despite their different personal, social, historical, and intellectual experiences. It was undoubtedly for this reason that they read each other's works.[37] We should not be surprised, therefore, that the convergence will apply to the topic of political authority. We must assemble enough material to make the case for that convergence--but in a summary fashion with only an occasional appeal to more detail for further elucidation. Since Voegelin, of course, gave much more attention to political thought, we can use his more precise categories as the points of comparison (see the table below). We can proceed under the following headings: power, representatives, norms, symbolization, and modernity

[36] *Collection,* chap. 16.
[37] Voegelin refers to *Insight* in *Anamnesis,* p. 399; Lonergan refers to Voegelin in *Topics in Education: The Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education,* vol. 10 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), passim.; *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, vol. 6 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), passim.; *Third Collection,* chaps. 10, 12, 13.

| CATEGORIES | VOEGELIN | LONERGAN |
|---|---|---|
| Power | Articulation | Past Achievement Present Cooperations<br>Good of Order |
| Representatives | Existential | Authorities |
| Norms | Representation of Transcendence<br>Differentiations<br>Noetic<br>Pneumatic | Good as Value<br>Conversions and Authenticity<br>Differentiations<br>Intellectual<br>Transcendence |
| Symbolization | Evocations<br>Symbols<br>Myths | Mystery of Known Unknown<br>Dramatic Artistry and Myths<br>Incarnate Meaning |
| Modernity | Deculturation<br>Recovery | Longer Cycle of Decline<br>Shift to Interiority and Historicity |

## TABLE OF EQUIVALENCE

### 2.1 Power

Voegelin's idea of "articulation" is captured in Lonergan's treatment of the emergence of the polity as a distinct intelligible order with both objective and subjective components. For Voegelin, articulation of a political society is the process of achieving the form of action in history. Beyond a mere association or a mere contractual relationship for civil security, the initial articulation is the eruption of the substance of a populace as an actor in history, usually the consequence of a myriad of historical circumstances--economic, social, military, and cultural–

shrouded in mist and legend. The articulation, in short, is that of a communal substance. The articulation, furthermore, can augment itself and reach down to embrace more fully the individuals within the society.[38]

Similarly, Lonergan emphasizes, objectively, the emergence of a distinct level of organization, the polity, out of the lower manifolds of economic and social schemes of recurrence, which, in turn, rest upon a technological base. The polity, specializing in persuasion, commitment, and decision, is a higher integration of patterns of cooperation.[39] In corresponding fashion, the polity is, subjectively, a leap beyond intersubjective community; it is rooted in a new kind of community with its distinct political culture precisely because of its shared vision of, and commitment to, an intelligibly devised social order beyond intersubjective spontaneity, namely, the good of order.[40] Lonergan's ideas, then, taken together--ideas of emergent probability, of the seriation of technological, economic, and political levels of society, of the unique mission of the political, of the political community as a distinct shared horizon, of political culture as the meanings and values that inform political life–all constitute, as a dynamic unit, we would argue, the equivalent of Voegelin's concept of articulation. The two positions seem to crystallize around the idea of political community since Voegelin insists that articulation is the eruption of

[38] Eric Voegelin, *History of Political Ideas*, vol. 1, *Hellenism, Rome, and Early Christianity*, ed. Athanasios Mouklakis , vol. 19 of *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1997), I, 158; *History of Political Ideas*, vol. 3, *The Late Middle Ages*, ed. David Walsh, vol. 21 of *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1998), pp. 137-139; *The New Science of Politics*, , pp. 116-17, 121-22. Voegelin commends the insights into the fourteenth century political theorist, Sir John Fortescue, into the initial forming of a communal substance ("eruption") and the continuing process of articulation ("proruption"). *History of Political Ideas*, I, 155-162; *The New Science of Politics*, pp. 121-24; Sir John Fortescue, *The Governance of England*, in *On the Laws and Governance of England*, ed. Shelley Lockwood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), esp. chap. 2. Voegelin's most detailed illustration of articulation is that of the development of English society into the polity of the realm from 1200 to 1500. *History of Political Ideas*, I, chap. 19; *The New Science of* Politics, pp. 118-19.

[39] *Insight*, pp. 233-34.

[40] Ibid., pp. 238-39; *Method*, pp. 48, 361; *Third Collection*, pp. 6-7.

communal substance and Lonergan sees the carrier of power as the community. Power, for Lonergan, is precisely the actuality of past achievement and present cooperations.[41]

## 2.2 Representatives

To be articulate, says Voegelin, a political society must have representation. A representative, as opposed to an agent, who operates on instructions from a principal, has the power to make decisions on behalf of the political society by virtue of the position held in the political structure without need of special instructions. Voegelin's definition is much broader that the specific type of representation that involves sending delegates to a central assembly.[42] Voegelin adopts Hauriou's argument that essentially the representative orders, extends, and preserves the community as a substantive political agent that can exercise power on the field of history.[43]

This approach to representatives would seem to coincide with Lonergan's notion of authorities.[44] Entrusted with certain offices, authorities, for Lonergan, act of behalf of the political community. Moreover, the differentiation of political tasks, roles, and offices seems to parallel the augmentation and evolution of the political community as it expands beyond the local need, the spontaneous response, and the occasional solution. Lonergan therefore sees the mutually defining relation between articulation and representation. Whence does the authority of representatives arise? Lonergan does not resort to some narrow constitutional or juridical interpretation of the legitimacy of authorities by elections or other procedures. Rather he claims

[41] *Third Collection*, pp. 5-6.
[42] *History of Political Ideas*, I, pp. 145-154; *The New Science of Politics*, chap 1. "Existential representation" is the material component of articulation precisely as the institutional means of expressing the will of the articulated political society.
[43] *The Authoritarian State*, pp. 99-100, 221-222, ff.; *The New Science of Politics*, pp. 125-26. The central principle, the *ideé directrice*, of the polity is to augment the capacity to act as a unit in history.
[44] *Third Collection*, pp. 7-8, 11.

that authority belongs to the community as the carrier of the political culture.[45] Authorities are authorities because they are necessarily and essentially linked to the authority of the community. It is in this sense that political authorities represent political society. Indeed some external criterion is needed to legitimate the authorities. But Lonergan does not tie this criterion to the election of delegates or officials. He simply says there is needed some external standard by which their positions can be publically recognized.[46] This generic standard could apply equally well to hereditary monarchs as to elected deputies to a parliament. Far from relying upon a narrow constitutional, or juridical, standard for assessing legitimacy of authorities, Lonergan would argue that even the sweeping generic, external criterion is only a necessary but not a sufficient condition of legitimacy.[47] For the legitimacy of authorities, as the legitimacy of political authority in the political community itself, rests ultimately upon authenticity, a much murkier and challenging standard than that of constitutional norms. So Lonergan advises that inquiry into the legitimacy of authorities is "complex, lengthy, tedious, and often inconclusive."[48] After all, the real delegation of authority to authorities by the political community as its representative is the "product of use and want"–it is a reflection of the historical tradition.[49] The power of authorities is, in part, the resultant of the accumulated, developed, and integrated achievements of the past.

[45] Ibid., p. 5.
[46] Ibid., p. 11.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid., pp. 8-9.
[49] Ibid., pp., 6-7. The polity has its "obscure origins in human intersubjectivity" and in the "spontaneous articulation of the kinship group." Ibid., p. 7; *Insight*, p. 238. Thus "civil communities that exist and function know only a story of their origins, only an outline of their development, only an estimate of their present complexion." Ibid., p. 236. The origins and development of the polity cannot be subsumed under some system of definitions, postulates, and deductions: "As its adaptions are continuous, so its growth is as secret as the germination, the division, the differentiation of cells in seed and shoot and plant. Only ideal republics spring in full stature from the mind of man." Ibid.

This is not to say, however, that Lonergan views the authorities, the representatives, as merely passive expressions of the articulation of a political society. For the prime function of political authorities is to exercise political leadership in persuasion and communication, not only persuasion and communication about particular tasks, palpable challenges, and routine concerns but persuasion and communication about a new idea of the good that goes beyond the spontaneity of intersubjective groups to embrace the integration of political order itself. [50] Ultimately political leadership must persuade and communicate about the worth of the political order in terms of higher values. Active political leadership of this sort brings the achievements of the past into the current situation and organizes structures of cooperation in the present through acts of persuasion and communication. It deals, then, with the word of authority, the "current actuality of power generated by past development and contemporary cooperation."[51] But the word of authority is the word of the political community, where the authority resides. Thus insofar as political authorities develop and promote the idea of political order, they play an active role in the articulation of the polity and the eruption of the political community as an actor in the drama of history. We may say, therefore, that, for Lonergan as for Voegelin, political authorities as much legitimate the polity as the polity legitimates the political authorities.

Voegelin, of course, goes on to distinguish two functions of representation: existential and transcendent. We have been considering here the existential function. But we must underscore that existential representation pertains to the externality of the political cosmion and to the beliefs that hold the community together. The polity must meet material needs, which express the external character of the body politic. To meet such material needs as food, shelter, clothing, internal security, and territorial defense the polity must coordinate various networks of

[50] *Insight*, p. 234
[51] Ibid. , p.6.

institutions. To coordinate the institutions, including those of defense, the political community must hold beliefs with sufficient conviction that make it meaningful for the polity to be an acting unit in history. Voegelin points out the obvious: the very existence of the polity ceases if the representatives fail to protect the population from dispersal or extermination, if the representatives themselves are liquidated or suppressed, or if the representatives, who are the main bearers of the culture that renders the society a politically articulated one, allow the disintegration of the foundational beliefs either through active complicity or through failure to respond to historical challenges.[52] In short, since articulation necessarily entails representation, representation has as a chief concern the existence of the polity as a unit of action in history.

In a similar vein, Lonergan recognizes the function of authorities in the police, the courts, the diplomatic field, and the military to counteract the deviations of individuals and groups that threaten the good of order.[53] A legitimate representative of the word of political authority sustains the intelligible structure of cooperations that is the good of order and carries out sanctions against those who would disrupt it. A charismatic leader, who has skill through persuasion and communication in dealing with human interaction, may even be responsible for creating it in the first place. The good of order is an embodiment, an externalization, of the word of authority, for "to a great extent the word of authority resides in the sum total of current institutions" – that is, in the ways of cooperating commonly understood and commonly accepted.[54] Because the good of order functions as an objective reality, as a set of actually operating schemes of recurrence, the polity exists as a reality in the external world. The good of order is the intelligible structure that makes a potential political society an articulated one. The

[52] *The New Science of Politics*, pp. 112-13.
[53] *Insight*, p. 620.
[54] *Third Collection* , p. 6.

good of order is the unifying coordinating structure of the polity. It is an all-embracing single order to "close the circuit of interlocked schemes of recurrence."[55] Conversely, economic breakdown and political decay are the breakdown and decay of the good of order. Thus we can say that, in Lonergan's view, representation of the polity is existential insofar as the political authorities sustain the good of order, the prime condition for its existence. To draw a parallel with Voegelin: if the authorities succeed, Lonergan tells us, using the language of Toynbee, they are a "creative minority"; if they fail, they become a "dominant minority," who risk not only their demise at the hands of dissatisfied subjects, the "internal proletariat," or of an opportunistic "external proletariat" but risk the demise of the polity as well.[56] Furthermore, the good of order also requires a community with a shared political culture. If the population of the community is destroyed, the carrier of power is destroyed. If the political culture declines, then so, too, does adherence to the good of order. The political authorities, the representatives of the polity, clearly must prevent these disasters lest the society no longer exist as an effective actor in history.

**2.3 Norms**

When we turn to representation of transcendence, perhaps we witness the greatest affinity between Voegelin and Lonergan.

The articulated political society, Voegelin maintains, is a cosmion, a world illuminated from within by meaning. The human polity is not a bee hive or an ant hill. External existence in the world of things is obviously an essential feature of the polity, and its technological base, its social institutions as recurrent patterns of cooperations, and its sedimentations of the expressions of political culture take on the aspect of objective facts and externality. But the self-constitution of the polity is concomitant with the politically effective self-interpretation of the members of the

[55] *Insight*, p. 239.
[56] *Third Collection*, p. 10.

polity. The formation of the polity is an essay in world creation, where the essay is an effort, a test, a struggle of self-interpretation to endow the fact of existence with meaning.[57] As Voegelin puts it, in one of his most crystalline formulations:

> Human society is not merely a fact, or event, in the external world to be studied by an observer like a natural phenomenon. Though it has externality as one of its important components, it is as a whole a little world, a cosmion, illuminated with meaning from within by the human beings who continuously create and bear it as the mode and condition of their self-realization. It is illuminated through an elaborate symbolism, in varying degrees of compactness and differentiation – from rite, through myth, to theory – and this symbolism illuminates it with meaning in so far as the symbols make the internal structure of such a cosmion, the relations between its members and groups of members, as well as its existence as a whole, transparent for the mystery of human existence.[58]

The self-illumination is through symbols that represent the society and its members as participating in transcendent reality. The question here is not one about bare existence but about endowing the fact of existence with meaning. The "endowing with meaning" is not an arbitrary, artificial process. The political cosmion is meaningful by virtue of its participation in a whole that transcends the polity and its members.[59] The whole is neither an illusion nor a fiction; the human polity is a partner in a larger community of being, and the individual members of the polity participate in it to the core of their being. This partnership and this participation, according to Voegelin's philosophical anthropology, is a primal experience that carries with it a

[57] *History of Political Ideas*, I, 225.
[58] *The New Science of Politics* , p. 109.
[59] Ibid., pp. 109-10.

sense of obligation and a sense of urgency. If the polity is not a pre-given thing, neither is it an artificial creation. To claim that the community of being is an illusion or a fiction and that the polity is an artificial creation is a skeptical abstraction from the experience of human existence that has large appeal only when the polity is in a stage of deep decline and has lost its enchantment.[60] The experience of participation is indeed disconcerting, for human beings have no comprehensive understanding of the whole; it is a mystery. But it is a mystery at the very core of the drama of human existence. We, the human actors in this drama of human existence, know we have a role, the role of a partner in the community of being with its accompanying demand that we create the cosmion of human society, and yet we do know with certitude what the role is–still we cannot sit outside the drama.[61] We must act and create.

While the creation of the polity reflects the concreteness of historical circumstances and experiences, it carries with it permanent norms, which have been captured in the differentiating insights of philosophy and revelation. The norms, quite simply, revolve around openness, whether noetic or spiritual, to transcendence itself. Voegelin argues that the basic experience of human openness to reality remains constant throughout history but the symbols engendered by the experience can range from compactness to differentiation.[62] Voegelin stresses that the symbols of differentiated consciousness do not replace the structure of questioning but elucidate it. While this elucidation creates a tension with myth and can render the earlier "cosmological" myths as no longer efficacious, it does not supersede myth as such. It rather heightens the sense of transcendent mystery. The noetic differentiation of consciousness took place in Hellas among such philosophers as Xenophanes, Parmenides, Heraclitus, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. These

[60] *History of Political Ideas*, I, Introduction, 231.
[61] *Order and History*, I, 2-4.
[62] Ibid., I, 5, 60.

lovers of wisdom, involved in an inquiry into the process of inquiry itself, identified the openness of questioning as the norm of human existence. The philosophers, furthermore, differentiated the realm of transcendence, for the philosopher's process of inquiry was both a search for the ground of being, the Divine Beginning, and was experienced as a response to a sacred pull (*helkein*) in the depths of the soul, the Divine Beyond.[63] In the pneumatic differentiation of consciousness of Israel and Christianity the focus was on the spirit as the ultimate norm of existence, and the sense of transcendence was, if anything, heightened. Spirit was constituted by a moving divine presence from beyond the cosmos that was also (as in the Book of Genesis) the Beginning of things.[64] A human being was accorded a new status, that of spirit. In the language of the Old Testament, a human being is in the image of God. In the language of the New Testament, a human being participates in the *pneuma* of Christ.

The noetic and pneumatic differentiations of consciousness have created the ideal of the open society, in Bergson's sense.[65] They have shed unmistakable light on the issue of the common good by illuminating the status of human beings as images of God who carry within their souls the sources of order. They have shown that just order originates in transcendence.[66] The polity cannot ignore these clarifications of the human good. Certainly every polity has some kind of legal order committed to what is "right." Voegelin draws on his nuanced interpretation of Aristotle's *physei dikaion* to show that "what is right by nature" is precisely the polity's representation of transcendence.[67] What is right by nature is the proper tendency of the political

[63] Ibid., II, III, V, chap. 1; Eric Voegelin, *Published Essays, 1966-1985*, vol. 12 of the *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, ed. Ellis Sandoz (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), chap.10; *What is History? And Other Unpublished Writings*, vol. 28 of the *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, ed. Thomas A. Hollweck and Paul Caringella (Baton 2Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), chap. 5.
[64] *Order and History*, I, IV, chap. 5, V, chap. 1; *Published Essays, 1966-1985*, chap. 7; *What is History?*, chap. 5.
[65] *The New Science of Politics*, p. 136; Henri Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*,
[66] *The Nature of Law*, p. 79.
[67] *Anamnesis*, pp. 55-61.

community in its changing nature in relation to the immutable divine essence, and the proper tendency of the political community is to pursue the common goal of realizing human nature. Because the polity's purpose involves right and justice, and therefore representation of transcendence, the polity must listen to those historically differentiated intellectual and spiritual communities. Insofar as the polity listens well and insofar as those communities have true intellectual and spiritual authority, then to that extent the polity will promote what is right by nature.

It is in light of these differentiating insights that Voegelin can address the question of political authority. The polity, it is true, becomes articulate under concrete historical circumstances; the representation of the political society as an actor in the drama of history, correspondingly, reflects those concrete circumstances. But this does not mean that the sole authority is the very self-assertion of the existence of the polity as a force in history. For the differentiating noetic and pneumatic insights are themselves authoritative in the sense that they identify, explore, and call by name the very norms present in the self-constitution of the polity as a human cosmion in the larger community of being. Voegelin finds that the principles of authority were formulated in classic fashion in the proemium of the *Institutes of Justinian*, where the authority of the ruler rests on three factors: (1) as an emperor who maintains internal order and defends the empire externally; (2) as *religiosissimus iuris*, a ruler who administers justice, the substance of true law, with religious conscientiousness, that is, with the intellectual virtue of *justitia* and the practical virtue of *ius*; and (3) as the *defensor fidei*.[68] Hence the three sources of authority are power, reason, and spirit.

[68] *The Nature of Law*, pp. 70-71; Eric Voegelin, *Hitler and the Germans*, trans. Detley Clemens and Brendan Purcell, vol. 3*1 of The Collected works of Eric Voegelin* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), pp. 79-80.

Lonergan identifies cognitive, moral, and spiritual dimensions to the hermeneutics of authentic performance and authentic interpretation in political life. These dimensions all entail a process of self-transcendence open to the transcendent. It is not difficult to see how openness to transcendence is the fruit of fidelity to what Lonergan calls the transcendental precepts. Voegelin's cognitive, moral, and spiritual openness has its counterpart in Lonergan's intellectual, moral, and religious conversions. Lonergan refers to this normative dimension of human life by the term "authenticity." The criteria, Lonergan argues, for exercising intelligence and reason while responding to the challenges of political existence are not extrinsic to the process. There are norms inherent in the process of questioning itself. This, it should be noted, is performance. Fidelity to the desire to know is the ultimate court of appeal. When persons are engaged in intelligent and reasonable political behavior, this is what they do. Nevertheless to recognize that this is what they do and to identify the norms ingredient in inquiry would be to enhance their commitment to those norms and to overcome misconceptions that would support ideas, however inchoate and implicit, at odds with the exercise of those operations. This effort of recognition and identification Lonergan calls self-appropriation, or, because it usually involves a radical horizon shift, "intellectual conversion."[69] The polity, however, is does not function solely with intelligence and reason; it is committed to practical intelligence and practical reason, for the practical is the decision-making. The polity, as we have seen, is a specialization in persuasion and rendering decisions. The polity therefore, by its very nature, is implicated in the process of deliberation and deciding. This process, too, like that of cognitive inquiry, has its own internal norms, which are not limited by any purely extrinsic consideration. The criteria, then, for exercise of responsible choice in political life are norms inherent in the process of moral inquiry.

[69] *Insight*, p. 11, 13-17, 22; *Method*, pp. 238-239.

Concretely this means fidelity to the intention of the good, a commitment that takes one beyond mere satisfactions to obligations regarding what is worthwhile. Lonergan names this kind of commitment and its concomitant explication "moral conversion."[70] Political progress requires not just incidental, partial, or convenient moral choice but rather sustained commitment to the desire to know and the intention of the good. Lonergan identifies the existential condition for this sustained commitment as the existential state of unrestrictedly being in love that engulfs the desire to know and the intention of the good.[71] Lonergan calls this existential state "religious conversion."

The relevance of authenticity to the polity's representation of transcendence is that the process of inquiry is not satisfied simply with the good of order (bare existence of the polity on the level of vital and social values) but raises the question for deliberation and decision about which good of order is worthwhile. The good of order can be an object of devotion. Human beings can embrace one system and reject another. "They can do so," says Lonergan, "with all the ardor of their being, though the issue regard neither their own individual advantage nor that of their relations, friends, acquaintances, countrymen."[72] The further component of the polity above and beyond the good of order is the good as value. The good as value is central to the polity's representation because authority ultimately resides in the political community, the political community shares a common political culture, and the political culture is concerned in its essence with values. If the political community, its culture and traditions, are authentic, then the authority of the political community is legitimate. If, in addition, political authorities meet external criteria of recognition as part of the good of order and they and their political tradition

[70] *Method*, pp. 240; *Insight*, pp. 624-626.
[71] *Method*, pp. 240-241.
[72] *Insight*, p. 621.

are authentic, then their authority, too, is legitimate. Legitimation, for Lonergan, therefore can be reduced neither to mythic validation, nor to legal norms, nor to valid forms of a constitution.[73] This is because legitimate authority is rooted in the self-transcending process of inquiry and its correlative transcendent object. If the polity lacks representation of self-transcendence and transcendence, then it lacks legitimacy. This, then, for Lonergan, is the crucial point: the pure desire to know and the intention of the good demand that the polity represent transcendence. Related to this is natural right, where "nature" is Aristotle's "internal principle of change and rest" and the internal principle is the self-transcending process of inquiry whose summit is the unrestricted state of being in love. "Natural rights" would be derived from natural right since natural right embraces the originating value of the person engaged in the self-transcending process of inquiry. "Natural rights" therefore encompass the whole scale of values from the vital, to the social, to the cultural, to the personal, and to the religious – in other words, "natural rights" encompass the realization of the potentialities of human nature, that is, of humans as incarnate self-transcending questioners. The similarity with Voegelin's approach to what is right by nature should be obvious. Perhaps ironically, to represent transcendence is the key to practicality and to existential representation, for the fruit of sustained authenticity is progress, with its increasing responsibility and order, reasonableness and cohesion, intelligence and objective intelligibility, attentiveness and grasp of challenges, while the fruit of inauthenticity is decline, with the breakdown of community and cooperation--and, in the limit, destruction of the polity. Thus self-transcendence is not some optional adjunct to political life but is the very condition of authenticity and legitimacy in addressing the challenges of political existence, promoting

[73] *Third Collection*, p. 11.

progress, and doing what is truly practical. *The self-constitution of the polity itself is a process of self-transcendence.*

There is an historical component to this problem. Fidelity to the process of inquiry can be practiced at any time in any polity. But to recognize and make thematic the process of inquiry as the source of order involves what Lonergan calls a differentiation of consciousness.[74] Out of early, compact culture, which is a compact amalgam of common sense and myth, emerges distinctly different modes of thinking and corresponding realms of meaning.[75] Such a differentiation, for example, occurred among the Hellenic lovers of wisdom, the self-styled philosophers.[76] Such thinkers as Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Parmenides, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, both by virtue of creating a new more reflective, critical "cultural superstructure" of systematic meaning and of themselves as exemplars of intellectual, moral, and spiritual commitment, were able to develop tools of investigation and technical language appropriate to making explicit the nature and significance of intellectual, moral, and religious conversions.[77] Lonergan sees the resultant higher intellectual culture, insofar as it is purged of its own tendencies toward bias and has adequate penetration of the nature of intellectual, moral, and religious conversions, as having a powerful but subtle relation to politics. Its main task is to *call to authenticity*, and its main forum is the culture.[78] It joins ancient philosophical wisdom to the modern differentiations of science and historical scholarship, and, in so doing, presents a dialectic analysis of progress and decline in history as a corrective to the short-sightedness of

[74] *Method*, pp. 85-99, 257-262, 302-318.
[75] McPartland, *Lonergan and Historiography*, chap. 4.
[76] *Method*, pp. 90-93, 260, 303-304; *Collection*, pp. 235-238.
[77] On the existential dimension to the Hellenic differentiation of consciousness, see *Third Collection*, pp. 188-192, 219-221, where Lonergan discusses Voegelin's analysis; McPartland, *Lonergan and the Philosophy of Historical Existence*, pp. 147-59.
[78] *Insight*, pp. 261-262, 266*; Phenomenology and Logic*, pp. 207, 296-97. "Philosophy is the attempt to illuminate the effort of intelligent, reasonable, free, fully responsible self-constitution." Ibid., p. 207.

common sense. It would act as a community—Lonergan names it cosmopolis—whose complex relation to the polity would primarily be one of persuasion.[79]

The intellectual differentiation of consciousness is also a differentiation of the realm of transcendence insofar as the unrestricted sweep of the desire to know and the intention of the good is a human orientation to the transcendent beyond. Another differentiation of consciousness, however, opens up the realm of transcendence as a result of the experience of participation in transcendence itself.[80] The differentiation of the realm of transcendence places the accent not on human inquiry or even on a human account of spiritual experience but on the participatory event itself. Lonergan would include in this differentiation the experiences of the great religious traditions of West and East, notably Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism.[81] If the relation of differentiated intellectual culture to the polity is a nuanced, tenuous, and complex one, it should not be surprising that the relation between the higher religions and the polity would be even more nuanced, tenuous, and complex. There is no doubt, in Lonergan's mind, about the role of religious consciousness vis a vis the polity. Religious conversion is the ever precarious unrestricted state of being in love. As such it calls, heals, and sustains authenticity. Its prime role in political society is therefore redemptive. Flowing from the unrestricted state of being in love is the reality of self-sacrificing love: "In the measure that the community becomes a community of love and so capable of making real and great sacrifices, in that measure it can wipe out the grievances and correct the objective

[79] *Insight*, pp. 258-261, 263-67, 647-49; McPartland, *Lonergan and the Philosophy of Historical Existence*, chap. 6. Its business is "to prevent the formation of the screening memories by which an ascent to power hides its nastiness; it is its business to prevent the falsification of history with which the new group overstates its case; it is its business to satirize the catchwords and the claptrap and thereby to prevent the notions they express from coalescing with passions and resentments to engender obsessive nonsense for future generations; it is its business to encourage and support those who would speak the simple truth though simple truth has gone out of fashion." *Insight*, p. 265.
[80] *Method.*, p. 266.
[81] Ibid., pp. 109, 266; *Third Collection*, p. 217.

absurdities that its unauthenticity has brought about."[82] Lonergan would point here to Toynbee's ideal-type of universal religions, within which civilization can arise from disorder and conflicts.[83] The universal religions are those that have experienced the differentiation of the realm of transcendence.

Both Voegelin and Lonergan are aware that the representation of transcendence is a complicated affair, particularly when differentiations of consciousness have occurred in history. There are numerous tensions associated with the representation of transcendent truth in the public world by intellectual and spiritual communities. Amid the complex tensions of community and institutionalization, spirit and intellect, creativity and tradition, value and order, transcendence and worldly existence, there stands out a foundational reality. Lonergan's intellectual and spiritual community of cosmopolis has its ultimate basis in the self-appropriation of intellectually, morally, and spiritually converted subjects. Self-appropriation is always a precarious withdrawal from inauthenticity.[84] This applies to the self-appropriating person no less than to the struggling political community. Voegelin, in similar fashion, sees the response to disorder as the concrete noetic and pneumatic consciousness of a concrete person.[85]

## 2.4 Symbolization

"To set up a government is an essay in world creation."[86] Voegelin describes the symbols representing transcendence in the self-constitution of the polity as "evocations." They are, in his technical sense, "myths." They have their peculiar quality because they interpret experiences of transcendence and the mystery of human existence – experiences of realities that

[82] *Third Collection,* p. 10.
[83] Ibid.
[84] *Method,* pp. 110, 252.
[85] *Anamnesis,* pp. 398-404.
[86] *History of Political Ideas,* I, 225.

do not exist as physical things in the external world – and they interpret in the context of the drama of the self-constitution of the polity. The myths, if they are true myths, are not fabrications of human shrewdness or vital will to power; rather they are expressions of the experience of openness that simultaneously constitutes the substance of the political community. Voegelin, then, can follow Schelling to proclaim that the community does not create the myth, the myth creates the community.[87] Still, the evocation of the polity must respect the concrete historical materials that limit its possibilities. If the evocation of the polity is too transparent for its finitude, then it loses its aura of enchantment; if, on the other hand, its evocation is too restrictive and rigid then it risks becoming a mere dream world that ignores the uncertainty of human existence.[88] To shelter the denizens of the polity from the anxiety of existence so that they can act as a unit in history is a delicate but legitimate task. To seek to abolish the anxiety of existence by the creation of a dream polity is to seek to abolish human nature.[89] Clearly we are facing norms by which to judge the legitimacy of evocations.

Lonergan, for all his emphasis on intelligently devised social order and his apparent debunking of myth in *Insight*, has a complex of ideas equivalent to Voegelin's mythic "evocations." If the political community has legitimate authority, then its political culture must be in accord with the self-transcending openness of inquiry and represent transcendence. If it represents transcendence, then it must represent "mystery," the known unknown"--that "undefined surplus of significance and momentousness."[90] Human beings, by nature, are oriented to mystery. The proper expressions of mystery are symbols and myths. Symbols are

[87] *Published Essays 1966-1985,* p. 228. In Voegelin's view, the thinker who first recognized this relationship was Vico. Eric Voegelin, *History of Political Ideas*, vol. 6, *Revolution and the New Science,* ed. Barry Cooper, vol. 24 of *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1998), chap. 3.
[88] On the dynamics of "evocations," see ibid., 226-31.
[89] Ibid., 231.
[90] *Method,* pp. 77, 110;.*Insight,* pp. 555-558, 569-571.

"images of real or imaginary objects that evoke feelings or are evoked by feelings."[91] Myths are narratives that convey affectively charged and imaginatively rich hunches or heuristic insights into the known unknown of the drama of history and mystery of existence.[92]

This is the primary component in the complex, but other factors follow from it. If political culture, as any culture, is to speak to the human heart as well as the human mind, then it must have recourse to symbols and myths. The self-interpretation of the political community can become effective in concrete living only if the content of insights, the direction of judgments, the dynamism of decisions "can be embodied in images that release feelings and emotions and flow spontaneously into deeds no less than words." The integration of the human psyche and human intelligence demands that feelings, emotions, and sentiments be linked to "sensible presentations or imaginative representations" and "issue forth in exclamations and bodily movements, in rites and ceremonies, in song and speech."[93] Meanings and values in the political culture are not only cognitive and communicative but also constitutive of the political community itself and of its objective good of order on the stage of history.[94] Here we see the ulterior significance of poetic

[91] *Method*, p. 64.
[92] Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophical and Theological Papers 196-1980*, vol. 17 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), chap. 20. The criteria for discriminating between genuine myths expressing the sense of mystery and derailments of myths have to do with dynamic correspondence between the flow of the psyche and the self-transcending process of inquiry. *Insigh*t, pp. 554-72. To achieve this correspondence is not an easy task. Ibid., pp. 229-30, 499-503. It is assisted, however, by the "upwardly directed dynamism of the psyche," which seeks fuller realization on higher sensitive and intellectual levels and whose symbols provide the hunches that form the substance of myths. Ibid., 482; *Philosophical and Theological Papers 196-1980*, pp. 386-87. Lonergan describes this psychic energy in Bergson's language as the *élan vital*. Ibid., p. 390 Clearly Lonergan does not see this correspondence of psyche and intelligence in terms of some Nietzschean world-immanent vital force; rather he would agree with Ricouer that the psyche has its teleological as well as archeological dimensions. *Method*., p. 68; Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, trans. Denis Savage, Terry Lectures (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970). Lonergan would not interpret "teleology" here as Aristotle's final causation but as Aristotle's *physis* or as Bergson's "finality," which Lonergan names for the upwardly directed dynamism of emerging world process—whose "goal" is transcendence. *Insight*, 470-76, 482, 655-56, 687-88.
[93] *Insight*., p. 556.
[94] Thus the self-constitution of the polity has artistic criteria as well as practical ones. "The first work art is human living." *Insight*, p. 210. Lonergan can join Vico in proclaiming the priority of poetry and symbol in the self-

and narrative reflections on the existential, or living, history of the political community and on its ultimate goals and purposes.[95] The existential history of the political community will focus on great deeds and great persons. It will focus, in other words, on the incarnate meanings that embody the formative self-interpretations of the political community and that played a crucial role in the self-constitution of the polity amid diverse historical contingencies, crises, and challenges.[96] Furthermore, insofar as the articulated polity has acquired the form of action in history, it has entered into a drama. It acts before others, where its own dignity is at stake, a dignity related both to its exercise of power, in Lonergan's sense, and to its representation of transcendent meaning and value. The polity therefore operates in the dramatic pattern of experience, subject to the dramatic hermeneutic of affects and images.[97] This entire complex, then, of mystery, myth, culture, constitutive meaning, existential history, incarnate meaning, and drama – as intrinsically relevant to the nature of the polity – approximates Voegelin's notion of "evocations."

## 2.5 Modernity

Given the convergence of Lonergan's thought with Voegelin's ideas of articulation, existential representation, representation of transcendence, and evocations, it would make sense that both Lonergan and Voegelin would have similar criticisms of modernity's counter-positions at odds with their equivalent positions on political authority. For Voegelin these counter-

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constitution of the polity: "To proclaim with Vico the priority of poetry is to proclaim that the human spirit expresses itself in symbols before it knows, if ever it knows, what its symbols literally mean." *Collection*, p. 241.

[95] *Topics in Education*, pp. 229-31.

[96] *Method*, pp. 73, 166; *Third Collection*, p. 7.

[97] On the dramatic pattern, see *Insight*, pp. 210-11. The great expressions of the polity's aspiration simultaneously embody incarnate, intersubjective, and symbolic meanings. *Method*, pp. 59-60, 64-69, 73. "Nor is the abiding significance and efficacy of the intersubjective overlooked when motley states names themselves nations, when constitutions are attributed to founding fathers, when image and symbol, anthem and assembly, emotion and sentiment are invoked to impart an elemental vigor and pitch to the vast and cold technological, economic, and political structures of human invention and convention." *Insight*, p. 238.

positions manifest an "eclipse of reality," perhaps most vividly and horribly demonstrated in the case of the Hitler regime.[98] For Lonergan they exhibit a "scotosis," a blind spot, creating the unintelligibility immanent in social facts, which he named the "social surd."[99] This displays an "existential gap" between authentic existence and distorted self-interpretation of existence.[100] Both thinkers would agree that modernity through scientism, positivism, and the irrationalist reactions has

- limited reason to the investigation of world-immanent things or to mere instrumentalism;
- collapsed the hierarchy of values and the aim of politics to the material sphere of either comfort or vital assertion of power;
- attempted to abolish a genuine sense of mystery from the political culture; and
- sought to eliminate, supplant, or diminish the presence in the public realm of intellectual and spiritual representatives of transcendence.

The consequences of these tendencies are clear. As Voegelin argues, following, among others, Pascal, the attack on Transcendence, whether on the self-transcendence of reason or on the self-transcendence of spirit, does not eliminate the drive to transcendence. Rather it ensures that the drive will present itself in diabolical form.[101] Thus we see the totalitarian movements substitute for the in-between First Reality of human self-transcendence in orientation to transcendence their own various Second Realities.[102] Political magic has replaced genuine

[98] *Hitler and the Germans*, chap. 3; see Lonergan, *Insight*, pp. 257-58, 557.
[99] It is not surprising that Voegelin's one reference to a technical term of Lonergan's would be a reference to "scotosis." *Anamnesis*, pp. 399-400.
[100] *Phenomenology and Logic*, pp. 209-12, 281-84, 298-310.
[101] *Hitler and the Germans*, pp. 262-64.
[102] Ibid., pp. 109, 262-64; *Published Essays 1966-1985*, chap. 2.

political myths. Neo-gnostic ideologies have usurped the role of evocations.[103] The mystery of human existence has been collapsed onto the destiny or historical necessity of totalitarian movements. The fact of political existence has been equated with the meaning of political existence. Power has absorbed all authority. The liberal *cordon sanitaire*, its refuge in constitutional procedures, legal norms, and valid forms of government, only deflects the issue from substantive legitimacy in what is right by nature, and it is ultimately more a symptom of the larger problem than its solution.

Lonergan sees modernity as evidencing the longer cycle of decline. The wars of the Reformation seemed to supply the evidence that reason alone should guide the public realm. The failure of reason and its tolerance to provide coherent solutions to social problems supplied the conditions for the *reductio ad absurdum* of the cycle: totalitarian practicality. Totalitarian movements have replaced mystery with

> the economic development, the military equipment, and the political dominance of the all-inclusive state. Its ends justify all means. Its means include not merely every technique of indoctrination and propaganda, every tactic of economic and diplomatic pressure, every device for breaking down the moral conscience and exploiting the secret affairs of civilized man, but also the terrorism of a political police, of prisons and torture, of concentration camps, of transported or extirpated minorities, and of total war.[104]

Since the permanent alternative to mystery is myth, in its pejorative sense, it is not surprising that totalitarian movements have put in place of genuine myth the distorted ideology

[103] *The New Science of Politics*, chaps. 4-6; *History of Political Ideas*, IV, chap. 3; *Science, Politics, and Gnosticism in Modernity without Restraint*; *Hitler and the Germans*, pp. 262-264.
[104] *Insight*, p. 257

that will secure total subordination to the requirements of the reality of the "social surd."[105] They have substituted for reason–the self-transcending process of inquiry–a practical intelligence, an instrumental reason, subservient to the will to power. Thus, says Lonergan, "We are brought to the profound disillusionment and focal horror of our time."[106] Lonergan would view liberalism as the mere thesis to which totalitarianism is the antithesis.[107] The situation cries out for a higher viewpoint.

Voegelin and Lonergan both declare that philosophy has a remedial obligation. Philosophy, for Voegelin, has the therapeutic task of responding to the disorder of the age.[108] The times require a philosophy of history that can appropriate the classical and Christian differentiations of consciousness and, at the same time, assimilate the materials of modern historical scholarship, take seriously the modern insight into historical existence, as found, for example, in Bodin, Vico, and Schelling, and build upon contemporary efforts in literature and philosophy to develop a theory of consciousness.

Lonergan, accepting Toynbee's characterization of history as a pattern of challenges and responses, would respond to the challenge of modernity by working out a critical theory of history in a fashion at least complementary to Voegelin's efforts. Lonergan's philosophy of history, whose foundations are cognitional theory and the notion of conversion, employs dialectical tools that differentiate between progress and decline. Its tools would be formulated as an upper blade of a critical hermeneutical scissors, whose lower blade would be

[105] The "social surd" is the significant residue generated by the general bias of common sense that is immanent in social facts but not intelligible. Ibid., p. 255.
[106] Ibid., p. 572.
[107] Ibid., pp. 265-266.
[108] *Order and History*, I, 24.

the materials of historical scholarship and human science.[109] Lonergan's philosophy would build upon the achievements of the Greek philosophers and medieval Schoolmen, but purged of every trace of antiquated science;[110] and it would, simultaneously, integrate the achievements of the past with contemporary emphasis upon scientific method, interiority, and historicity.

## 3. Concluding Assessment

Political authority, for Lonergan, is authenticity. Political authority, for Voegelin, is living transcendent truth. Where do these two converging notions of political authority by Lonergan and Voegelin leave us? A few concluding remarks are in order.

### 3.1 Non-Formalistic Political Philosophy

Neither Lonergan's nor Voegelin's political philosophy looks much like what we would expect a political philosophy to be, at least if we take such writers as Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and the authors of the *Federalist Papers* as our models. We find very little discussion of what we would anticipate to be normal themes of political philosophy. Instead of treatment of such issues as sovereignty, the best regime, the valid form of government, the origins of civil government, or separation of powers we find instead reflections on authenticity, transcendental precepts, mystery, being in love, transcendent truth, noetic and pneumatic differentiations of consciousness, and myths. To be sure, neither philosopher completely ignores the conventional topics. Lonergan wrote extensively on political economy, offering a post-Keynesian theory of macro-economics.[111] Voegelin published books on the constitution of the Austrian state, on race and politics, and on jurisprudence. He also addressed conventional issues

[109] *Insight*, p. 600; *Method*, pp. 284-286, 293; McPartland, *Lonergan and Historiography*, pp. 38-43.
[110] *Insight*, p. 448.
[111] Bernard Lonergan, *Macroeconomic Dynamics: An Essay in Circulation Analysis*, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 15, ed. Frederick G. Lawrence, Patrick H. Byrne, and Charles C. Hefling, Jr. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

throughout his eight-volume *History of Political Ideas*. But, on the whole, neither Lonergan nor Voegelin were concerned with the usual approaches because they sought an alternative road of inquiry regarding political authority. The reason for this should be obvious by now: they rejected or downplayed the conventional type of discourse found in political theories because those theories were framed within the horizon of philosophies with which both Lonergan and Voegelin had profound and radical disagreement.

Let us briefly consider some of the points of disagreement. To treat politics largely in a formalistic manner–that is, in terms of constitutional procedures, judicial concepts, typologies of regimes, and so forth--is superficial. The form of the polity, for Lonergan, is the good of order. But there is the further question of the good as value, and when that question is raised, the criterion of norms comes up. So we are lead to the transcendental precepts as the basic law and as the norm of authenticity. We have here the foundational principle of legitimacy. By contrast, a purely juridical solution to legitimacy, even that of Grotius on natural law, is inadequate, on principle. Or, in the case of Voegelin, to examine the polity chiefly in terms of the structure of its institutions or the systems of its laws is to disregard the spirit of the laws, the nature of the polity's evocations whose meanings illuminate the polity as a cosmion from within, and even to ignore whether the polity has attained articulation. A form of government, for example, that worked well in Anglo-American countries with their long-standing parliamentary traditions and experiences of self-rule might be quite inappropriate in Austria right after World War One, when her only political history had been that of being a domain of the Hapsburgs. In this historical situation, the issue of legitimacy of form would seem to be a ludicrous one. In the extreme, the formalist runs the risk of examining the political cosmion solely in terms of externality and thus

losing in the process the distinctively human element in politics, namely, the orientation to transcendence.

We can note, however, that because Lonergan and Voegelin take the formalist type of analysis to be secondary at best, this not does mean that they having nothing at all to say about forms of government. Lonergan's emphasis, for example, on liberty as the principle of progress would seem to resonate with some liberal ideas and would seem to support some kind of pluralistic, decentralized democracy under appropriate historical conditions.[112] Still, however attractive this form of government may be, it is not the same as cosmopolis, that dimension of consciousness and possible community whose historical task it is to reverse the longer cycle of decline. Voegelin praises Lincoln's "masterful" formulation of political articulation down to each member of the community in his language of a "government of the people, by the people, and for the people."[113] Voegelin also invokes Churchill's and Mark Twain's balanced witticisms about the superiority of democracy.[114] Since we do not live in a polis or in the *sacrum imperium*, a democracy may be the most suitable form for our historical situation.[115]

Whatever commendations Lonergan and Voegelin would make about democracy, they do not do so because they acknowledge some putative social contract. Indeed both thinkers rule out of court a social contract theory. The idea of a social contract, whether historical or purely logical, as the source of political authority is a conceit having neither historical nor logical validity. Epistemologically rooted in nominalism, psychologically associated with materialism, and sociologically related to bourgeois interests, it is as old as the Sophists (witness Glaucon's playful formulation of the Sophist's arguments at the opening of Book Two of Plato's *Republic*);

[112] *Insight*, pp. 259-60.
[113] *The New Science of Politics*, pp. 119-20.
[114] *Hitler and the Germans*, pp. 84-85.
[115] Ibid., pp. 205-206.

but it has gained greater currency in the modern period with the advance of scientism and its application of Newton's analytic, reductionist, genetic method to human affairs. Lonergan's epistemological critique of nominalism, materialism, and scientism, replete throughout *Insight* and other works, and Voegelin's unrelenting assault on scientism in most of his writings mark their distance from the contract theory of government as unmistakable.

One reason Lonergan and Voegelin do not accept formalistic theory or the contract theory is that these approaches do not take seriously the historical dimension of human existence. In this, at least, Lonergan and Voegelin would join Vico, Burke, and Heidegger. Recall Lonergan's contention that inquiry into legitimacy is tedious and often inconclusive because the formation of the polity is usually the product of use and want, a slow historical process. Voegelin would add to the classical definitions of a human as a rational animal (*zoon noetikon*) and as a political animal (*zoon politikon*) the definition of a human as an historical animal (*zoon historikon*).[116]

Nevertheless, neither Lonergan nor Voegelin succumb to historical relativism, which would be a modern version of the sophistic play of nature (*physis*) versus convention *(nomos*). For from the horizon of historical relativism, or historicism, either every regime is legitimate, rooted, as it is, in its own history, or legitimacy is simply the function of the exercise of power in the struggle of one group against the other within the state or in the struggle of one state against another. In either case, the logical end game is nihilism. It is here that Lonergan's and Voegelin's language, so strange to the climate of opinion, about transcendental precepts, being in love, noetic differentiation, and pneumatic differentiation is absolutely crucial. There are transcultural norms ingredient in historical life itself–for Lonergan, the norms of self-

[116] *Published Essays 1966-1985,* pp. 267-68.

transcending inquiry formulated in the transcendental precepts, for Voegelin, the openness of the Question in orientation to transcendence.[117] To attack, to diminish, to banish reason and spirit from the polity is to engage in criminal assault against the very foundations of political order, justice, and genuine human life. Because this assault is so characteristic of modern intellectual culture and modern political movements, Lonergan and Voegelin have devoted most of their energies in restoring political sanity to the enterprise of explicating what reason and spirit really are. The ideological attacks of modernity and the dogmatic defenses of classicists and traditionalists have both unwittingly joined in a dialectical game, often brutal in its political consequences, of alternately denying and obscuring the reality of reason and spirit.[118]

Lonergan's and Voegelin's affirmation of basic transcendent norms allows them to handle the relation of power and authority in a manner that avoids the pitfalls discussed above. Political authority, for them, is no oxymoron. They do not reduce politics to power, and they conceive of power itself as essentially linked to authority. Lonergan claims that power resides in the word of authority, for the word of authority is the current actuality of power generated by past development and contemporary cooperation. Power is not equated with brute force. Its source is cooperation; its carrier is community; and its exercise is through authority. Power, as Lonergan conceives of it, is related to Voegelin's concept of articulation. But legitimacy inheres neither in mere power nor in mere authority. For the source of legitimate power is authenticity, and the source of legitimate authority, and of legitimate authorities, is also authenticity. And authenticity is always an orientation to transcendence. So we see, for Lonergan, the intrinsic connections among power, authority, authenticity, and transcendence. Similarly, Voegelin views power as the kind of authority concerned with articulation of a political substance. In Justinian's

[117] *Order and History*, IV, 388-404.
[118] Voegelin, *Published Essays 1966-1985*, chap. 3.

formulation, power is the authority of *imperium*. Articulation requires representation, and existential representation involves the authority of power. But representation of transcendence in the forms of reason and spirit, whether in compact or differentiated political cultures, is crucial if the polity is to be more than an external shell. Reason and spirit, too, are authorities. When Voegelin describes them in terms of "living the truth of existence" and "openness," he is using language equivalent to Lonergan's "authenticity." And since Voegelin makes explicit that reason and spirit, as he interprets them, are necessarily oriented to transcendence, we have again the partnership of power, authority, authenticity, and transcendence. As Lonergan and Voegelin avoid the error of reducing politics to power, and thereby take authority seriously as a factor in political existence, so they do not make the error of reducing authority to some pristine world cut off from the inconveniences of life, from the exigencies of bodily existence, from the tragic limiting situations and mystery of the drama of history, and from the permanence and the perplexity of the unintelligible social surd. They thereby take power seriously.

This leads us, finally, to encounter two challenges Lonergan and Voegelin make of us as we consider political authority in the context of our contemporary world of representative democracy: the challenge of representation of transcendence in the public realm and the challenge of coming to grips with the social nature of guilt.

### 3.2 Transcendence and the Public Realm

The representation of transcendence in the public realm is a challenge because there is a need for it, because it does not currently exist in any stable and coherent form, and because there is no easy solution. We have already established that, for Voegelin, representation of transcendence is essential for the political cosmion as a cosmion. The failure to do so brings about diabolical results. Lonergan recognizes unrestricted love as the culmination of authenticity

and the only adequate remedy to the corrosive effects of decline. It is important to note that both Lonergan and Voegelin here are talking about "religion," but not in terms of blind adherence to a creed or in terms of "faith" as a decision in the face of nothing, as does Bultmann in a fashion parallel the political decisionism of the Nazi sympathizer Karl Schmidt and of Heidegger in his infamous address as rector of Heidelberg University.[119] They both emphasize religious faith as love, where *fides* is analogous to the philosopher's experience of *eros*. So Lonergan defines faith as the "knowledge born of religious love" and differentiates it from "belief."[120] Voegelin refers to Aquinas' definition of faith as *fides caritate formata*.[121] If *fides* is bound up with love, then the representation of transcendence is a complicated issue. For if *fides* is love, then it cannot simply be identified with an institution. Lonergan describes cosmopolis, the historical corrective to decline, as a "dimension of consciousness" rather than as an institution, whether an organization, academy, court, or government.[122] Cosmopolis is the universal viewpoint that is committed to the openness of reason. But the existential condition of cosmopolis is the openness of spirit, of unrestricted love.[123] This seems to pull us farther back from an institution. Herein, suggests Lonergan, lies an irresolvable tension. *Fides* can never fully be identified with an institution; and yet because humans are bodily, social, and historical beings, *fides* must also be institutionalized.[124] The religiously converted will tend to form communities, sharing their love and the perspective on existence it will bring, and the community will tend to be institutionalized. A complex of tensions will remain: spiritual individual with spiritual community, spiritual individual and community with spiritual institution, and spiritual

[119] Karl Löwith, *Martin Heidegger and European Nihilism*, trans. Gary Steiner, European Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).
[120] *Method*, pp. 115, 123.
[121] *History of Political Ideas*, IV, 249-251, VI, 59.
[122] *Insight*, p. 266.
[123] Ibid., pp. 656, 712.
[124] *Third Collection*, pp. 11-12.

individual, community, institution with cosmopolis. Though cosmopolis is existentially constituted by spirit, it can nevertheless challenge the particular horizon of the spiritual individual, community, or institution either because of the incomplete development of cosmopolis or because of the inauthenticity to its own tradition of the spiritual individual, community, or institution.[125] The tensions are not contradictories; they are simply manifestations of the overriding tension of limitation and transcendence, the hallmark of human existence, which, under the influence of the spirit, has become a tri-polar tension of psyche, intelligence, and spirit.[126] Thus, to refer back to the polity, it becomes evident that the political cosmion needs the public presence of reason and spirit and that this representation carries with it the complex of tensions adumbrated above – including those derived from institutional representation.

In the modern period the religious institutions, communities, and individuals have been relegated to the purely private sphere, or, worse, consigned to oblivion. True, in cases such as the Catholic Church in Communist Poland during the 1980's religious representation was clear and effective. But such instances are the exception to the rule. Indeed they are usually described as "medieval residues." In fact, nothing in the Western world has replaced the *sacrum imperium*. While liberal advocates of secularism may laud this development as progress, the totalitarian wars of the twentieth century would suggest otherwise: there is a vacuum in the public realm filled by the totalitarian movements. The collapse of Communism in 1990 does not mean that the dangers of extreme desacralization are over. The United State might seem to be an exception insofar as the religious underpinnings of American democracy are still prominent in American political culture. But in the "culture wars" of the past few decades those

[125] Ibid., pp. 747-750.
[126] Ibid., pp. 497, 747-750.

underpinnings have come under attack, and the battlefield often seems dominated by "conservative right" dogmatists versus "secular progressive" ideologues—symptomatic of what Lonergan calls a process of decline with ever narrower viewpoints.

So wherein is to be found the solution? Neither Lonergan nor Voegelin are so naive as to advocate a return to the Gelasian formula in contemporary politics. Among other things, there is no unified Christian community, and even if there were, other religious traditions have entered the historical consciousness. Thus Lonergan moves from discussing the redemptive activity of spirit in exclusively Christian terms to embrace Toynbee's ideal-type of universal religions. Voegelin believes that Bodin first grasped the theoretical problem of a philosophy of history in which Christians would have to come to grips with the fact of a plurality of universal religions. Perhaps a solution to the problem of representation of spirit will involve greater commitment to the human good on the part of religious communities and greater cooperation among the universal religions, as all essentially carriers of the experience, and message, of unrestricted love in an age Lonergan describes as one of "emerging religious consciousness." Lonergan's tone may seem to be more hopeful, while Voegelin's more tragic and guarded.[127] This difference may reflect Voegelin's own personal experience of totalitarianism and of the complicity of the German churches in the National Socialist regime.[128] It may also be somehow related to Lonergan's acceptance of the historicity of Jesus Christ and of Voegelin's reluctance to speak on the issue.[129] Voegelin's relation to Christianity is truly worthy of a monograph. We may be

[127] On Voegelin's tone, see Eugene Webb, *Philosophers of Consciousness: Polanyi, Lonergan, Voegelin, Ricoeur, Girard, Kierkegaard* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), pp. 121-122, who cites Voegelin's contrast of Anaximander's balance of consciousness with the hope of imperishable life in the Pauline vision of the resurrected, in *Order and History*, IV, 305-306, 337-338.
[128] *Hitler and the Germans*, chaps. 4-5.
[129] On Voegelin's reluctance, see John J. Ranieri, *Eric Voegelin and the Good Society* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1995), p. 233.

tempted to formulate the following disjunction: either Voegelin, as a philosopher, has sublated Christianity into his philosophy, or he writes as a Christian thinker. Voegelin would undoubtedly reject the disjunction. He is not a Christian thinker committed to doctrine, but he operates within the orbit of Christianity. He does so, not as a philosopher raising the truth of Christianity to some higher speculative viewpoint, but as a philosopher of history who must acknowledge the maximum differentiation of order in history when he sees it. Consequently, he reads great significance into Aquinas' claim that Christ is the "head of the *corpus mysticum* that embraces, not only Christians, but all mankind from the creation of the world to its end."[130] It was precisely the failure of the German Catholic Church during the Nazi era to adopt this outlook and serve humanity rather than her own institutional self-interest that aroused Voegelin's ire.[131] And this was, in his view, a colossal failure of what should have been the mission of spiritual authority to represent transcendence.

This is still very general. We are confronted with the possibility that the solution does not as yet exist. If there is to be an effective solution to the problem of representing transcendence in the polity, then presumable it will be a product of use and want, emerge slowly in response to crises, and lead to evocations associated with meanings incarnate in words, deeds, and persons.

### 3.3 Guilt and Collective Responsibility

Finally, on a more concrete and personal note, both Lonergan and Voegelin in their treatment of political authority challenge us to come to grips with the social nature of guilt. Lonergan insists that modern historical consciousness and modern evolutionary theory have

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[130] *Published Essays 1966-1985*, p. 294.
[131] *Hitler and the Germans*, pp. 201-212.

together promoted the idea that we are collectively responsible for the direction of history.[132] More specifically, political authorities, including political leaders and shapers and carriers of the political culture in the academy and the media, have the imperative to be authentic, and so do political subjects, the citizens. Authenticity means not simply following the proper rules and demands of the political tradition but inquiring about the authenticity of the tradition itself. This is a tall order. Voegelin sharpens the issue with his poignant and wrenching examination of social guilt in Nazi Germany. It is frightening enough to contemplate, with Voegelin, how legal authorities, who simply "looked the other way" as they gave tacit or perfunctory approval for some "special project," were as guilty as the actual agents who carried out the project of murder, genocide, and extermination. But perhaps more frightening, because it implicates such persons as academics and journalists, who bear some kind of authority in the horizon of the political culture, is Voegelin's unwavering contention that those persons who create and preserve the *environment* where the crimes take place participate to the same degree as the actual perpetrators themselves, including the murderers.[133] The creation of the environment can be a long-term process of eroding the standards of reason and of spirit step by small step. The question of political authority is a question than can demand resolute and deep soul-searching.

We do not have long to search for examples of philosophers who have responded to the problems of the age as responsible academic authorities. Lonergan and Voegelin spent much of their lives devoted to the exploration of larger horizons as they challenged the dominant assumptions of their times, often to be labeled as oddballs who did not fit in with the climate of opinion. Voegelin early in his career worked his way out of neo-Kantian methodologies. Lonergan refused to follow the conceptualist and naïve realist principles underpinning the

[132] *Third Collection*, p. 169
[133] *Hitler and the Germans*, p. 234; see also ibid., chap. 2*; Published Essays 1966-1985*, chap. 1.

reigning Neo-Scholasticism. Their example can serve as incarnate meanings for the twenty-first century.

Lonergan would see the authentic response to contemporary historical challenges as the difficult path of being a member of the "not numerous center," which would be a carrier of the authority of reason and of spirit:

> There is bound to be formed a solid right that is determined to live in a world that no longer exists. There is bound to be formed a scattered left, captivated by now this, now that new development, exploring now this and now that new possibility. But what will count is a perhaps nor numerous center, big enough to be home in both the old and the new, painstaking enough to work out one by one the transitions to be made, strong enough to refuse half measures and insist on complete solutions even though it has to wait.[134]

Voegelin's case is accentuated by the fact that he was a public philosopher in the 1930's. During that decade he wrote four books attacking National Socialist ideas. He almost paid with his life, narrowly escaping from Austria with the Gestapo on his trail. Here we have concentrated a symbolism of the great struggle of the twentieth century: Voegelin, the representative of reason and spirit, that is, of legitimate authority, confronting the Gestapo, the representative of naked, brutal power absolutely devoid of reason and spirit, that is, of inauthentic existence.[135]

Political authority is not an oxymoron. Politics without authority, as ultimately destructive of politics itself, is the oxymoron.

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[134] *Collection*, p. 245.

[135] Voegelin, to be sure, claimed, probably with a humorous smile, that he never sought—or expected—the confrontation. When he wrote his books critical of National Socialism, he assumed the Western powers would not allow Germany to take over Austria in the heart of Europe! *Autobiographical Reflections*, p. 42.