

HOBBS, METAPHOR AND POLITICAL THOUGHT

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FOR GRANDMOTHER WILLSON

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ABSTRACT

The thesis examines the role of metaphor in political thought and, in particular, in the work of the British philosopher Thomas Hobbes. It is argued that, contrary to what many critics have suggested, Hobbes's use of images, metaphorical and otherwise, formed the basis for much of his political philosophy. Indeed, it is from a correct understanding of the use of the metaphoric image in political thought that varied Hobbesian concerns such as history, science, geometry, optics, poetry, and political philosophy can be united.

Appropriately, chapter one narrates four distinct traditions of applying the subject of metaphor to philosophy. It is argued that, far from being marginal to political thought, metaphor partially forms the basis for much of the activity of political thinking. The second chapter develops a theory of the meaning of political metaphors. It is argued here that many twentieth century accounts of the meaning of metaphors are deficient for they fail to acknowledge how metaphorical images are used in political thought: namely, to unite the populace in a common political judgment.

The remainder of the thesis is then devoted to the work of Thomas Hobbes. Based upon an understanding of political metaphor as outlined in the first two chapters, it is argued in chapter three that contemporary theorists are wrong when they suggest that Hobbes contradicted himself when using metaphors to adorn his prose and yet, at the same time, condemning their very existence. On the contrary, it is argued that Hobbes's treatment and use of metaphors was highly consistent. More importantly, once Hobbes's alleged contradiction has been satisfactorily resolved, we soon find that the metaphoric image was to play a large role in almost all of his work, from his translation of Greek classics to his theory of rhetoric and of history. Chapter four then turns to Hobbes's optical theory of knowledge, for it is argued here that the starting point to Hobbes's understanding of science, geometry, and, ultimately, knowledge is primarily visual. Chapter five then analyzes the metaphorical imagery of Hobbes's most popular work, Leviathan. From a close look at various aspects of this work we find that the metaphoric image is perhaps its most constitutive element. Finally, chapter six analyzes the double-edged sword to our political images. From looking at the role of metaphorical imagination in Hobbes's political philosophy, including a discussion of the poetic imagination of Michael Oakeshott and Martin Heidegger, it is argued that the act of imagination can be either politically creative or highly dangerous. This, indeed, is the consequence of the metaphoric image in political thought - it has the power either to save or enslave us.

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CHAPTER ONE:
FOUR TRADITIONS OF METAPHORIC THOUGHT

I have no great opinion of definition...for when we define, we seem in danger of circumventing nature within the bounds of our own notions, which we often take up by hazard, or embrace on trust, or form out of limited and partial consideration of the object before us, instead of extending our ideas to take in all that nature comprehends, according to her manner of combining.

—Edmund Burke

Like a sun refusing to set, metaphor hovers over us, blinding us into forgetfulness about its unerring presence. We speak in metaphors. More importantly, as Nietzsche reminds us, we think metaphorically, borrowing from our vocabulary of sense experience and translating it into our mental discourse. Often our understanding of our fellow man, our environment, our institutions is articulated by hidden metaphors, and no more so than when we ponder on matters philosophical or political. If one dares to draw the circumference wider still, then consider the case of myths, parables, and symbols, for these, too, are largely metaphorical. What follows is an entreaty to consider the role of metaphors in political thought, from the Greeks to the present day, but with particular attention to the work of one of the first truly modern political theorists: Thomas Hobbes. Could metaphor, that most sublime vehicle of human understanding, illuminate the thought of Hobbes, one of the most important political thinkers of any age? The answer is: most assuredly yes. And where do we go from this, perhaps surprising, affirmation? To the realm of political imagination, where dwells the philosopher and the poet, the artist and the political theorist, which will be the theme of the final chapter of this dissertation.

Let us first begin with the rather anodyne definition that the goal of political philosophy is to discover the grounds on which the state justifies its authority over its citizens. In turn, the political theorist attempts to provide the underpinnings for various concerns such as political obligation, individual rights and liberties, theories of justice, and other principles of a justificatory nature. The aim of a political theorist to develop a coherent - that is, consistent - philosophy of the state, political

institutions, and society.

This definition of political philosophy would perhaps go unchallenged for its inoffensiveness; indeed it forms the starting point for most of the literature of political thought from Plato onwards. The above formulation of the concerns of political thought, however, does lead us to notice a second characteristic that until the last hundred years has gone largely unnoticed: that political thought is inextricably built into the language that it uses.

This latter observation is not as innocent as it may first seem. It itself is a product of the "linguistic turn" made by many of the human sciences over the last eighty years (variously: philosophy, psychology, literary criticism and, of course, political thought).¹ The interdisciplinary appeal of this linguistic approach to human knowledge lends credence to its supposed insights, covering a wide range of concerns from the way we think about ourselves and our current condition to how we "think" in general. The off-shoot of the linguistic turn, best exemplified by the analytic political thought of T.D. Weldon and Margaret Macdonald, taught that several of the problems perennially encountered by political philosophers could be resolved by a closer examination of the language which was used. If one were no longer "bewitched by language" (to borrow from Wittgenstein) it was believed that one would then be able to reformulate the political and philosophical puzzles which have plagued political thought, and thus arrive at a clearer understanding of the true nature of the political.

This insight that the linguistic turn promised, however, was not universally accepted. Its detractors, notable Gellner and Mure, argued that the need to solve longstanding philosophical puzzles by

attending to the use of language was itself a product of psychologically and socially inspired errors of thought. The linguistic turn was a sign of a creeping illness in rational discourse, an attempt, as Bertrand Russell complained, to acquire by theft what one has failed to purchase by honest toil. Today, perhaps Norman Barry best typifies this attitude against a linguistically based political thought when he declares that "the dominance of the purely linguistic approach to political philosophy is at an end." In Barry's account, modern political thought should be about the "truth and predicative power of particular theories" and not about meaning, which holds little relevance in political philosophy's more "scientific" pursuits.²

Yet what about metaphor? Should the study of our metaphorical utterances also be relegated to the dustbin of ideas merely because they do not speak of "science" or "facts" or "truth?" In an attempt to prove otherwise, this first chapter attempts to re-align the subject of our metaphorical pronouncements onto an orbit which includes the physical sciences as well as the social. The following hopes to show that the domain of metaphor, political and otherwise, cannot be considered to be mere poetry. As the first section of this present chapter argues, Barry and others err in articulating a false dichotomy between the realms of science and non-science. Indeed, metaphoric models form a crucial link between the world around us and our scientific knowledge of it.

The second section traces many of our current pronouncements upon metaphor back to their classical Greek origins. By re-casting the long shadow of metaphoric discourse back to its original posture, this section shows that we are the partial inheritors of this ancient

tradition, and also that some of our current misevaluation of the subject can be traced back to these Greek roots.

The third section offers a rival tradition to that of the classical. The Romantic movement which had, rather curiously, drawn its inspiration from Plato considered metaphor to be intimately linked to the art of imagination. To the classical school which had attempted to carve up experience in order to study and understand it better, the Romantics had responded by metaphorically restructuring man's place in the cosmos. Thus the Romantics saw metaphor as a bridge connecting both the artist to his world and man's own rationality to nature's grand design.

The fourth and concluding section is in direct response to the first three since the deconstructionist account of metaphor plays an essentially subversive role in the cause of political philosophy. The deconstructionist account of metaphor precludes any talk of scientific or of classical divisions of experience, and spurns the Romantic notion of imagination. If this final section shies away from some of the more severe conclusions that the deconstructionists have to offer, it does so only in the belief that there is a poet, there is a scientist, there is a political philosopher who imaginatively creates his metaphors from the stock of images which surround him and, in doing so, effectively changes our understanding of the world, and in particular our political imagination.

Finally, in highlighting four separate "traditions" of metaphoric thought I do not mean to imply that these are the only ones available to us. There are countless others, as any student of metaphor would rightly contend. Indeed, I use the word "tradition" a bit hesitantly, and when it is used it should only be understood in its weakest sense.

What is meant by a tradition is that the authors concerned share a comparable approach to the problem of language. Metaphor is the art of comparing, a calling to mind, a collection of resemblances. When we fuse two seemingly unlike things together and declare that they are identical we do so, with a nod and a wink, knowing that they are not. Tradition, in its weakest sense, need do no more than metaphor in this regard: an evocation of things in common, a correspondence of approaches.

Section 1:

Metaphor, Popper, and Social Science Explanation

In an intriguing passage, Thomas Hobbes remarks in Leviathan that the use of metaphors in science is like wandering amid innumerable absurdities which can only lead to false knowledge and, worse still, to civil unrest.³ Hobbes's warning about metaphors in science is surprising because the passage itself is full of metaphorical images: the pursuit of scientific knowledge is likened by Hobbes to traveling down a path, and metaphors are said by him to be "false fires" that mislead the scientific wanderer in search of the truth.⁴ Although almost all commentators have misunderstood Hobbes on this point (a misunderstanding which will be cleared up in chapter three), it is not uncommon to find Hobbes's overall mistrust of metaphors, particularly in science, echoed in philosophic and scientific circles even to this day. If science is conceived as the pursuit of truth, the argument runs, then it follows that any language which is to reflect the scientific endeavor must remain free from rhetorical flourish. The discourse of science, including that of social science, must always strive to be literal and never metaphorical.

An account of social science and scientific explanation in regards to metaphor, then, would have to begin with an analysis of what it means to define or to describe something. If precision in language is to be our goal, then whenever possible words must directly correspond to their objects. Hobbes's complaint about metaphors in science was that the meaning of words outside the scientific domain - in poetry, for example - often contrasted with how they are used within the scientific disciplines, thereby making the pursuit of knowledge impossible. In short, for many thinkers above the doorway of a social science or scientific institute should appear a sign that reads: For Nominalists Only.

More recently, Karl Popper's influential pronouncements on the methods of science have been a partial restatement of Hobbes's own concerns voiced three hundred years earlier. For Popper, the language of scientific definitions should never stray from basic nominalism. Popper declares that there are two methods of engaging in definition: the nominalist method and the essentialist method.⁵ Essentialism, according to Popper, can be described as the belief that objects contain certain essences or properties and that these are distinct from their material or observable characteristics. Aristotle, for instance, believed that the definition of a thing was an account of its essence - its true inner substance rather than its accidents. A similar account of this is to be found in the Platonic Forms or World of Ideas where the true nature and description of an object can be found in an immaterial realm rather than in the world of appearances. Nominalism, on the other hand, is described by Popper as having its roots in the seventeenth century empiricist theory of science. Nominalism as a scientific definition is simply an account of how an

object can be used. Thus these two rival descriptions of objects - their essentialist nature versus their nominalistic use - is presented by Popper as if there were a clean break between them in the field of social and physical science, their respective methodologies appearing to be mutually exclusive.

It is Popper's contention in The Open Society and Its Enemies that scientific pursuits remained largely stagnant so long as philosophers were solely concerned in the "essential" nature of objects.⁶ Yet, Popper argues, questions about the substance and meaning of things are ultimately unanswerable. For example, we do not know anything about the true substance and meaning of the phenomenon of "light," but we can know something about how light behaves - that is, we can describe those features with which a nominalistic account of light is able to provide us. Crucially for Popper, the "backwardness" of the social sciences throughout history is due almost entirely to their reliance upon essentialist descriptions. The degree to which the various sciences have been able to make progress, Popper avers, depends upon the degree to which they have forsaken essentialism and have adopted nominalism as their guiding methodology.

Insisting that this distinction between rival descriptions of objects will ultimately lead social science, once it had adopted the correct nominalist posture, to create a systematic body of knowledge, Popper claims that the distinction between essentialism and nominalism can be recognized by how the descriptions are "read."⁷ An essentialist, Popper explains, would first state the name of the object to be defined on the left side of the equation and then describe the object's properties on the right side. The essentialist description thus reads from left to right. For example, we can define

"man" as "a featherless biped with a capacity for speech, normally consisting of two arms and two legs..." and so on until we grow tired, for this form of description can never be exhausted since, if we chose to do so, we can list an endless number of things which comprise what it means to be human. On the other hand, Popper points out, a nominalist's description is read from right to left and contains little or no information about the properties of the term used. For example, instead of making an endless list of the properties of "man" we can instead agree to use a shorthand label, say, the letter 'X', just to save time. The nominalist's right to left description, according to Popper, serves only to "introduce new arbitrary shorthand labels." ⁸

Now Popper might be correct in proposing the paradigm of "left to right" as opposed to "right to left" as a means of describing objects, or even ourselves. However, to say along with Popper that one form of description is scientific and the other non-scientific is to fail to understand how language, specifically metaphorical language, is used. For example, let us consider an alternate paradigm to Popper's: a model of scientific descriptions where the word on the left side of the equation is defined on the right side and - this is the important part - one where there is a simultaneous movement from right to left. An interplay thus develops between right and left, with the scientific description residing between the two poles. What we are describing here, in other words, is a metaphor.

A metaphorical description is a composite concept whose meaning is housed in the space between the subject and predicate, partially acting as a description of the underlying nature of an object

(Popper's essentialism) and as a shorthand description of its behavior (Popper's nominalism). Metaphor bridges the gap between the essentialist and the nominalist description of our world. When we describe 'x' as being 'y', which is the standard metaphorical format, what we are in fact saying is that the properties of 'x' and those of 'y' are shared. Moreover, these properties can be combined to create an image - an image which is not exclusively composed of 'x' or 'y' but is made up of both 'x' and 'y' simultaneously. The familiar social science metaphor of "the state is a machine" cannot, for instance, be adequately reduced, via Popper, to either essentialism or nominalism. One of the reasons why this particular metaphor has been so common to political thought since the seventeenth century is its privileged ability seemingly never to exhaust itself; even today new insights are being created which seem to conform to this metaphoric model of society. The crucial point is this: when a scientist or a social scientist creates such metaphors he is not attempting to establish an essentialist, mystical relationship between two unlike things in order to sow confusion, nor is he simply offering us a short-hand label with which to refer to a political society. Rather, the introduction of a metaphoric description by the social scientist can imbue the subject with a particular clarity to which no nominalist definition could ever hope to aspire, and the same goes for a definition that is solely essentialist.

So with apologies to T.S. Eliot, we can say that between the essentialist and the nominalist, falls the metaphor.

Indeed, pace Popper, it is difficult to conceive of any type of scientific explanation that does not already exist within some sort of metaphoric framework. Scientific models and scientific terminology

are hopelessly metaphorical. For instance, our understanding of particle physics is partially based upon the image of particles in motion. We can assume that atoms swirl around in a molecule like planets rotate around the sun, but we do not know this for a fact. It may be possible that gas behaves as if it were made up of particles in motion, but, epistemologically speaking, gas and particles may be composed of two entirely different entities. Our description of general relativity which talks of "worm holes" or of electrons existing in "electron clouds" or of atoms in "miniature solar systems" are entirely metaphorical, to list but a few examples. As Rom Harre points out, without a model in which to decipher information, we have no method in which to base our scientific explanations. According to Harre,

"The kinetic theory of gases is nothing but the exploitation of the molecular model of gas, and that model is itself conceived by reference to the mechanics of material particles."⁹

Now a Popperian, or even a Hobbesian for that matter, might insist that these metaphorical descriptions are merely elliptical - that is, they are colorful expressions that cleverly disguise the fact that a more literal language can be found to describe the same phenomena. To this response some philosophers of science have replied that this position does not explain the insights which the metaphoric models suggest to the scientist, particularly when the discipline is a young science like cognitive psychology. According to Richard Boyd, such metaphoric models in science are "theory constitutive" - that is, the metaphoric models determine and shape what the scientist discovers and how his discovery is to be explained. "Even among cognitive psychologists who despair of actual machine simulation of human

cognition," Boyd explains, "computer metaphors have an indispensable role in the formation and articulation of theoretical positions."¹⁰

Again, our Popperian-Hobbesian friend might still want to reply that these metaphors simply act as explanatory models, pedagogical devices which enable the reader more firmly to grasp what is being discussed. Science and social science use metaphors, our friend may continue, precisely because our ability to understand complex phenomena is heightened by the use of metaphor or analogy, or by the use of easily understood metaphoric images on which to model the information we receive. Once this information is processed by us, or once the model has served its pedagogical purpose, scientific explanation can safely retreat back into the world of nominalistic discourse, happy in the formulation of literal, short-hand descriptions of scientific phenomena.

The main problem with the above objection is that it does not invite too close a scrutiny into how metaphoric models are used in science. Thomas Kuhn, for example, points out that metaphors are "essential...in establishing links between scientific language and the world."¹¹ These metaphoric models, Kuhn adds, cannot be discarded in favor of literal descriptions even after the supposed insights which the models produce have been noted. For example, take Niels Bohr's metaphoric model of atoms. As Kuhn suggests, Bohr's model of atoms replaced the "solar system" metaphoric model which had previously been popular. Bohr's success was chiefly due in replacing one set of metaphors with another. "Without its aid," Kuhn argues - or in other words, without Bohr's metaphoric model - "one cannot even today write down the Schrodinger equation for a complex atom or molecule, for it is to the model, not directly to nature, that the various terms in the

equation refer."¹² So metaphoric models cannot be thought of as merely pedagogic devices for often, as with Bohr's own model, it is to the metaphoric models themselves that the literal descriptions in science refer, either directly or indirectly.

As is commonly applied, metaphor (from the Greek word metapherein) is a "figure of speech in which a name or descriptive term is transferred to some object different from, but analogous to, that which it is properly applicable" [OED]. Beyond being just a linguistic expression, metaphors also offer us an image for inspection. Metaphors suggest that there is a relationship between two seemingly unlike things and that when this relationship is understood (or once the image is grasped) the result can be a profound insight. As Aristotle says, "it is from metaphor that we best get hold of something fresh."¹³

It will hopefully be clear by now that both science and social science make heavy use of metaphoric models. The "body politic," for example, is a commonly used metaphor in the social sciences, joining individuals into a single community. As Michael Walzer points out, the body-politic image "provides the starting point for political thinking, [from which] so long as it is effective, no other starting point is possible."¹⁴ To put it quite crudely, this political metaphor says that elements of the political state behave as various elements of a single human body. Within this image, Walzer continues, the king has no choice but to act out his assigned position as the "head" of the "body." It is for this reason, Eugene Miller suggests in a critique of political metaphors, that "a dominant metaphor thus tends to become self-perpetuating, although competing metaphorical

definitions of political reality can arise to supplant and create a new orthodoxy."¹⁵ The counterpart to scientific language cannot be more clear. Just as metaphoric models in cognitive psychology and physics are indispensable in formulating and understanding scientific knowledge, so too the metaphoric models in the social sciences play a governing role in articulating many of our political experiences.

Now placing metaphoric descriptions on a par with more literal language has created difficulties for political philosophers throughout history. Just as Popper has ignored the role of metaphors in articulating scientific descriptions, many political theorists have been unhappy with anything that is not perceived as literal language.

While literal propositions, it has been argued, have the benefit of corresponding to reality (that is, they can be tested for their truth value against the known world), figurative language cannot be analyzed by looking either at the world or at the definitions of the words involved. The meaning of a metaphor is not the same as a literal meaning of the words used. The state is clearly not a machine or a human body, though it might operate like one. Figurative language has the defect, it has further been suggested, of being ambiguous and open to varied interpretations, whilst the meaning of literal propositions is at once clear and, if it is not, can be understood by an appeal to the literal definitions of the words involved.

Such has been the argument leveled against metaphoric discourse in political thought, and for the most part it is simply a restatement of the Popperian view of scientific language applied to political discourse. The defect of this position, however, as was with its application to the physical sciences, is that it is difficult to conceive of social science discovery and explanation outside of a

metaphoric framework. The rather straightforward definition of the central concerns of political philosophy which was enunciated on the second page of this chapter, for instance, reveals the very problem that political philosophy has with metaphorical language for embedded within the definition are metaphorical terms which are not presuppositionless. Talk of the "grounds" of political thought and the attempt to provide the "underpinnings" of a theory of justice, for instance, reveal an interpretation of political thought that is primarily foundational - in other words, the definition already presupposes that there is a structure of thought which can be easily translated into grounded principles. After all, if one presupposes in one's definition that such a construction exists, then it hardly seems surprising that that is what one soon finds.

A rather recent attempt to come to terms with metaphoric discourse in the social sciences has been made by T.D. Weldon. Weldon considered that the aims of political philosophy should be to provide the "grounds" for its philosophy and, preferring to embrace political philosophy's architectonic aspects, he embarked upon an enterprise to reveal what lay hidden within the structure he had encountered.¹⁶ Weldon excavated the "foundations" of political thought in order to expose the fallacies that were hidden within the structure. The difference is that for Weldon a metaphorical description (like the "state is a machine") is not an image but a literal description of the state which can be tested for its accuracy, just as it would be in the physical sciences. Political thought, Weldon argued, often talks as if there really are "grounds" and "foundations" to its structure. If taken literally, these metaphors will reveal the problems that political theorists create with their language.¹⁷ It is difficult,

however, to take Weldon's interpretation of political discourse entirely at face value. If our "foundations" do not have a metaphorical meaning then Weldon must be using them in some special sense. As one commentator has remarked, Weldon's claim to the literality of political metaphors can only be taken seriously if we take the term "literal" metaphorically.¹⁸

Margaret Macdonald, on the other hand, is willing to admit that metaphors are non-literal descriptions of a perceived political reality ("the state is a machine" thus offers us a picture of the way in which the state operates), yet she also believes that metaphors are created by political theorists largely to justify their philosophy.¹⁹ In saying this, Macdonald is suggesting that these metaphors are rhetorical, that they are used for their persuasive ability rather than for their scientific truthfulness. Again, what Macdonald seeks to avoid is the bewitchment of language - in this case it is metaphorical language - as we fall under the spell of mechanistic or organic metaphors of the state. For Macdonald, the metaphors of the social sciences are artificial contrivances or poetic analogies. Real analogies, Macdonald argues, are reserved for the physical sciences as a means of gaining knowledge. Poetic, political metaphors are the domain of opinion, a false front, as it were, persuading us that the image presented is real, and she posits that the two uses of metaphor - that in the social science and that in the physical science - are distinct because their applications are different.

The problem of assuming that the domain of science is distinct from that of the social science, as is Macdonald's claim, is that it neatly avoids confronting the fact that the way in which metaphoric models operate within each discipline may be entirely similar.

Indeed, Macdonald's position ends up in overstating the accuracy of scientific metaphors while underplaying their legitimacy in political thought. Macdonald's belief in the supremacy of scientific metaphors stems from a misconception of what science does as opposed to what political philosophy does. As W.V. Quine tells us, metaphors are equally fundamental to both disciplines as they are "vital...at the growing edges of philosophy and science."²⁰ Macdonald's error is a common one: the assumption that the function of science is to posit the true nature of the things which will require no further interpretation. Models and metaphors in science are exact, or so the argument goes, whilst those in political philosophy are either ambiguous or rhetorical or forever requiring further interpretation. The fallacy of this position is not in the belief that political philosophy's metaphors are inexact or ambiguous, but in the belief that metaphors of science somehow correspond to the "truth."

The Kuhnian response to the belief in the supremacy of the methods of science over that of other methods is to note that science, when it acts as an instrument or method of measurement, does indeed progress when it solves various technical problems, but this is not to say that the ontological truth - "what really exists in nature" as Kuhn says - is finally grasped by the use of scientific metaphors.²¹ Differing or competing metaphoric models do not correspond to "truth" but simply vie with one another as rival descriptions of the world. Metaphoric models are either good or bad, apt or poorly formulated, independent of their respective disciplines. The metaphors of quantum physics, for example, are not privileged over those of political thought, though they might have more application in an increasingly scientific age. When scientists replaced the "geo-centric" model of

the universe with the "helio-centric" model they did not arrive at some "truth" which only the methods of science were able to discern, but rather simply found a better way in which to measure and describe what was already out there. We can conclude from this that the political theorist's description of society, successively, as a "beehive," an "anthill," a "human body" and a "machine" works in a similar fashion to that of the physicist's model of particles: what we have are only differing metaphorical descriptions which enable us to make better measurements. What we have succeeded in doing is to substitute one type of metaphoric vocabulary in place of another.

This Popperian impulse within political philosophy to mirror its methods on the physical sciences can be attributed, in part, to their common origins in Western philosophy. From the Greeks to the late nineteenth century, political theorists thought of themselves primarily as natural philosophers, and then secondarily as philosophers of civil society. The impulse was to locate a single unifying cause of everything, whether that thing was composed of atoms, monads, rationalism, geometry, or God, and then to explain the phenomena of the world which was governed by this single unifying link. Although some, like Aristotle, contented themselves in explicating a world dependent upon the divisions of language and of the senses, others, like Thomas Hobbes, started from the premise that the world was composed of matter in motion, and then derived from this simple premise an elaborate theory of civil society. For almost all of these thinkers, metaphor was chiefly seen as a linguistic device: for Aristotle it was pleasing to listen to; for Hobbes its excessive use was quite dangerous; for Locke it was an unpardonable absurdity.

Yet as we have seen, the concept of metaphor cannot be easily divorced from either science or social science, and thus cannot be simply thought of as a rhetorical trick of speech. It exists as an alternative description of objects, neither wholly essentialist nor purely nominalist. Whilst instrumental in the advancement of the physical sciences, metaphor nevertheless plays a crucial role in the development of the social sciences. We should no longer, therefore, continue to make the mistake of dismissing the metaphors of political thought as unscientific, rhetorical, or simply irrelevant. Attention should now be paid to this rather curious figure of speech.

Section Two:

The Aristotelian-Classical Tradition

The reader no doubt has noticed that in the preceding section the terms "metaphor," "model," "analogy," "image" and even "paradigm" were used interchangeably. Certainly, the reader might rightly complain, not all metaphors are models or even images. The metaphor of "the legs of a table" does not offer us a model on which to base our concept of "table," for it is indeed possible to have a legless table. In fact, although "the legs of a table" offers us a particular, if rather mundane, idea to contemplate, this idea hardly serves as a general paradigm for what might be considered to be a table and what might not. The world of tables, legless and otherwise, is too diverse to be captured by any one description, and certainly by any single metaphor. Is this not, then, simply a confusion of terms? Do metaphors, models, analogies, images and paradigms all denote the same thing, or are some important distinctions being lost whenever these terms are jostled in the same bag.

In fact, many theorists would claim that these terms can be used interchangeably. The authors of Metaphors We Live By, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, argue that semantically these terms share a strong similarity, what they refer to as a "metaphoric concept." "Concepts," they argue, "are not identified solely in terms of inherent properties; instead they are defined primarily in terms of interactional properties."²² Read in this way, most of the terms cited above are "interactional" in that they depend upon a conjunction between two dissimilar things. In his Cognitive Theory of Metaphor Earl MacCormac argues that different figures of speech - simile, irony, metonymy, synecdoche, personification, and catachresis - can all be subsumed under the broad umbrella of metaphor for much the same reason.²³ Almost all of the authors included in two fairly recent anthologies on metaphor, On Metaphor, edited by Sheldon Sacks (1979), and Metaphor and Thought, edited by Andrew Ortony (1988), also speak as if any figure of speech which succeeds in coupling two terms into a single concept can be applied to metaphor.

This tradition in Anglo-American philosophy of assuming that differing figures of speech can be subsumed under the general category of metaphor goes back to the Greeks, and in particular, to Aristotle's pronouncements on the subject.

In Latin the Aristotelian dictum that man is animal rationale was meant to distinguish man, as the sole possessor of reason, from the rest of the brutes. If we go back to original Greek, however, we find that it reads zoon logon echon which translates into animal possessing logos. Reason is just one of the many possible meanings of logos, the others being, variously, "word," "thought," "reasoned account,"

"logic," and perhaps more usefully, "coherent speech."²⁴ It is this latter definition of coherent speech that Aristotle identifies as being logos in his short treatise on language, De Interpretatione. For the Greeks words were not mere symbols or sounds which pointed towards truth or to a perceived reality, but were the primary bearers of meaning. As with the example Aristotle offers us, the term "goat-stag" clearly "signifies something but not, as yet, anything true or false - unless 'is' or 'is not' is added (either simply or with reference to time)."²⁵ The word "goat-stage," then, has some kind of meaning for Aristotle, and we could today add many other examples within our own discourse of words which bear meaning but without having any direct reference ("unicorn" or "Santa Claus," for example). As Aristotle reminds us,

"Every sentence is significant (not as a tool but, as we said, by convention), but not every sentence is a statement-making sentence, but only those in which there is truth or falsity.

There is not truth or falsity in all sentences: a prayer is a sentence but is neither true or false."²⁶

Thus coherent speech, like an offered prayer, need not refer to anything in reality to bear meaning, and for Aristotle and the classical tradition what was to be avoided was incoherent speech or nonsense, which was the Greek negation of logos, alogos.

The salient point in Aristotle's treatment of language for our present purposes is his suggestion that the two unlike terms "goat" and "stag" can be combined into a single concept and yet not be considered to be an absurdity. The concept of alogos only applies if the word's presence signifies that the object truly exists. Although knowing that there were no examples of a goat-stag in existence,

Aristotle nevertheless knew that to have an image of one was not an absurdity. Similarly, in Leviathan Thomas Hobbes did not consider his metaphoric image of the "artificial man" to be an absurdity, for absurdity for Hobbes was the domain of nonsensical language rather than of images, as for instance a "round quadrangle."²⁷ What this means in the Aristotelian-classical tradition of metaphor is that any figure of speech (whether it be metaphor, simile, synecdoche, or whatever) which is combined in such a way as to render an image for inspection becomes automatically intelligible to the perceiver. If two terms are combined in such a way as to establish an image or a model, then the rule regarding alogos does not apply.

The bias in Western philosophy against metaphors seems to be largely directed against metaphors as figures of speech rather than against their purely image-making capacity. In addition to Hobbes's attack against absurd speech (as apart from images), Locke in his Essay Concerning Human Understanding declares that it is "figurative speech" which leads one "to insinuate wrong ideas" which are "wholly to be avoided...where truth and knowledge are to be concerned."²⁸ In Western philosophy, from the Greeks onwards, the challenge to philosophers was to clean up the language by avoiding tropes in philosophical or scientific discourse. It was not man's imagination or image-making capacity which was under attack, rather it was his use of language to accurately describe his surroundings which was under fierce scrutiny. The possibility that words would not have a fixed meaning, or that meaning could be twisted to some devious purpose greatly animated the Greeks. Thucydides, who along with Herodotus was the first to use the word metapherein, complained bitterly about those who used words in order "to change their usual meanings."²⁹ How could

words correspond to reality when their meaning fluctuated? In the Thaetetus Plato complains that words, as the Heracleitans employed them, never had a fixed meaning, for "when you put a question, they pluck from their quiver little oracular aphorisms to let fly at you, and if you try to obtain some account of their meaning, you will be instantly transfixed by another, barbed with some newly formed metaphor." ³⁰

The Greeks made little attempt to get behind the ontology of coherent speech; it was enough that words enjoyed a fixed meaning, that they could be used and understood in ordinary discourse, and that the rules of syntax and grammar be applied to avoid alogos. Although logos did not necessarily correspond to the truth, it could nevertheless serve as a model for reality, for instance in Plato's Forms. The Forms for Plato were not phantasms or undefined concepts but were mirrors for the inner structure of coherent speech. The world for Plato had to be based upon logos or else its meaning would become nonsense. Aristotle, although rejecting the Platonic ontology, also saw the structure of language as resembling that of the known world. The problem that language presented for Aristotle was not its application to the known world, however, but in finding the appropriate expression in which to describe it. Knowledge consisted in locating the correct language and expressing the information in a coherent fashion.

Language describes the world, but only a discourse that uses the correct linguistic structures can be honored as embodying correct knowledge. Just as the world is made up of a variety of substances that are known through their categories, ways of talking about these substances are equally diverse. Now Aristotle devotes separate

treatises to these differing forms of discourse, distinguishing the method of logical discourse from that of the poetical, the metaphysical, the political and the rhetorical. Given the Greek understanding of language as not constituting reality but as a means of describing it, each method of describing can only be judged on its own terms as being correct or incorrect. Therefore it would simply not do, as Aristotle warned, for a logician to use poetic language in his description of the world since poetry is meant to charm the hearer. As Aristotle explains, language

"...must also be appropriate, avoiding both meanness and undue evaluation; poetical language is certainly free from meanness, but it is not appropriate to prose. Clearness is secured by using the words (nouns and verbs alike) that are current and ordinary."³¹

Each use of language, in other words, whether it be in logic, poetry, ordinary prose, or rhetoric, must be judged on its own merits. Although words do not have to correspond to the truth, they may still become suspect when they stray outside their respective disciplines.

The classical bias against metaphor, then, has had a noble lineage, with roots stretching back to the Greek complaint against the Sophists, Plato's argument with the poets, and Socrates's recorded triumph over Gorgias. Given Aristotle's initial distinction between the linguistic structure of discourse (logos versus alogos) and the appropriate form that a discourse should have, the place that the subject of metaphor holds in such a schema would seem most troubling. Metaphor, by its very nature, is decidedly ambiguous. Metaphor honors no separation of categories, confusing quality with quantity,

substance with accident, genus with species. Yet the Greeks also argued the metaphor cannot be ignored. Aristotle declares in his Poetics that "the greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing that cannot be learnt from others; and it is also a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars."³²

Aristotle develops his ideas on metaphor chiefly in Book III of the Rhetoric and in several chapters of the Poetics. In chapter twenty-one of Poetics he lists four types of metaphor followed by examples of how they are used. "Metaphor," he tells us, "consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else; the transference being either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, or on grounds of analogy."³³ In brief, this "transference" can be seen in such sentences as: "Here stands my ship"; "Truly ten thousand good deeds has Ulysses wrought"; "Drawing the life with bronze"; and in the analogy "the cup is in relation to Dionysus what a shield is to Ares."³⁴ In the Rhetoric Aristotle expands these classifications of metaphor to include the transference of inanimate objects into animate objects, and says that Homer's poetry is full of such examples.³⁵

Given Aristotle's examples of metaphor in use, it is not hard to see why contemporary commentators continue to classify a broad range of differing figures of speech as being metaphorical. Aristotle's own examples of metaphor in Poetics are more properly cases of hyperbole, metonymy, and analogy. Granted all these figures of speech involve a "transference" on some level, but there can be a great deal of difference between, say, an analogy and a hyperbole and this is unfortunately lost in Aristotle's account.

In spite of Aristotle's influential contribution to the study of metaphor, his account is deficient in at least one major respect. Lacking in Aristotle's treatment is a critique of the metaphoric image. For Aristotle, metaphors are words rather than images. This glaring omission has unfortunately colored a great many subsequent critiques of metaphor, for all too frequently in the literature of political thought metaphors are damned for being an abuse of words and yet ignored for their image-making capabilities. Certainly this is how Locke and frequently Hobbes have understood metaphor: a case of misleading the scientific wanderer in search of the truth by misusing the language.

Aristotle's own failure to note metaphor's image-making capacity can be traced back to the Greek insistence that metaphors are a transference of words. Within the early classical tradition metaphors were seen as individual words rather than as combined concepts. Isocrates, who is the first to specifically use the word "metaphor," argues in the Eragoras that "the poets are conceded many methods of adorning their language, for...besides the use of normal words they can also employ foreign words, neologism, and metaphors" [emphasis added].³⁶ It did not occur to Aristotle that his own example of a goat-stag was a metaphorical concept or that it was even possible to entertain an image of such a beast. For Aristotle, "Every word must be a current term, a strange word, or a metaphor."³⁷ Images need not apply.

The insight that metaphors combine themselves into models or images did not occur to the Greeks until around three hundred years after Aristotle. The anonymous author of the Rhetorica ad Herennium, which appeared around the year 86 B.C., informs us that a metaphor is

used "for the sake of creating a vivid mental picture."³⁸ Around 170 A.D. Hermogenes of Tarsus argued that the importance of metaphor was not in the Aristotelian "transference" of words but in its "composit concept." According to Hermogenes,

It is Oblique Language when a term not relevant to the subject matter but signifying some extraneous object of reference is introduced into a sentence so as to unite its significance in a composite concept; this is called Metaphor by the grammarians, but it should not be considered, as they aver, as a transference from lifeless to alive, etc., for rhetoric entirely avoids busying itself with such details."³⁹

So metaphor began to live a double life. As a combination of words metaphor was certainly Aristotle's "sign of genius," but that meant that it was also suspect when the words were used inappropriately. However, in the late classical period metaphor took on a secondary characteristic as a "combined concept" or image. By its innovative use of visual images metaphor came to be considered to be one of the chief tools of persuasion. Cicero remarks in De Oratore that "metaphor has direct appeal to the senses, especially the sense of sight."⁴⁰ In De Inventione he instructs lawyers who try their cases before the courts to "bring the action as vividly as possible before the eyes of the judge...so that a shameful act may seem as shameful as if he had been present and seen it in person."⁴¹ Echoing Cicero's advice, Quintilian comments upon the visual-persuasive abilities of metaphor in the Institutio Oratoria by saying that it is "designed to move the feelings, give special distinction to things, and place them vividly before the eyes."⁴²

When we join Aristotle's analysis of metaphors as stylistic words

with the late classical tradition theory of mental images, we then have a highly charged combination - one that is potentially dangerous to philosophy. The Aristotelian-classical account of metaphor is therefore one that celebrates its genius while being at the same time wary of its power. It is a trick of language, a sublime diversion, a mildly instructive artform, but it is also dangerous if ever misused.

Perhaps the best summary of this Aristotelian-classical tension with regards to metaphor is reflected in the pages of the ad Herrenium which warns us: "They say that a metaphor ought to be restrained so as to be a transition with good reason to a kindred thing, and not seem indiscriminate, reckless, and precipitate leap to an unlike thing."⁴³

Section Three:

The Platonic-Romantic Tradition

It would be an over-simplification to view the varying traditions of metaphor as springing from either Aristotelian or Platonic origins; however, borrowing from Coleridge's dictum that everyone is either an Aristotelian or a Platonist, there is much to be said for attributing the differing approaches to either camp. The Aristotelian theory of language is one where discourse is carved up into various components, separating the functions of language from one another, favoring that discourse which appears to be more apt. In the Aristotelian framework, metaphor exists only at the margins, or rather resides in the marginal functions of the poetic and the rhetorical.

The Platonic view is more ambiguous. The subject of metaphor does not figure in the Dialogues, and Plato's discussion of language is too vague to entirely ascribe one coherent point of view.⁴⁴ That has not, however, stopped those who have tried to derive a consistent

philosophy of language from Platonic thought or have seen in Plato a particular strain of thought which has at least partially informed subsequent theories. Such has been the case with the Romantic notion of metaphor and language, one which sees its roots as springing from Platonic philosophy.

The Romantic's case for reading Plato as being sympathetic to metaphor is as follows:

There are two main modes of experience for Plato, the poetic and the philosophical, and through them mirror the polarities of opinion (doxa) and knowledge (episteme), the world of appearances and the world of the Forms, those who dwell in the Cave and those who are privileged to wander outside it. Plato draws a wider circumference around the poetic experience than does his pupil Aristotle, who relegates poetic discourse and metaphor to the margins of everyday life; the voice of poetry for Aristotle simply being one more in the contending voices of rhetoric, logic, metaphysics, politics and ordinary prose. In contrast Plato, by including in the poetic experience all that is opinion and mere appearance - and consequently condemning poetry for offering only false knowledge - succeeds by his blanket condemnation in elevating the importance of poetry and metaphor beyond what the classicists would admit. It is for this reason that a particular conception of metaphor (the Romantic tradition) has arisen from the unlikely source of Platonic thought; the attacker of the poets giving unwitting birth to a renewed poetic spirit.

Plato, though analyzing the relative merits of writing versus speech in several passages, chiefly limits the subject of language in general to one particular dialogue, the Cratylus. In the Cratylus we

are given an argument for the nominalist version of language; here names signify not the essence of things but denote an object's agreed upon (that is, conventional) description. The dialogue concerns a debate between Cratylus, who believes that names are a natural phenomenon (that is, that they naturally correspond to that which they signify) and Hermogenes, who believes that names are chosen by convention, having no fixed meaning beyond what society declares. Socrates, who often argues on Hermogenes's behalf, acts as the mediator in this dialogue and through its course it emerges the Cratylus is increasingly unable to defend his essentialist position against a barrage of Socratic attacks. At first Cratylus contends that "he who knows the names also knows the things which are expressed by them," but soon he allows that the form of expression is determined by conventional agreement on how the words used are to be understood.⁴⁵ With this admission towards the end of the dialogue, Socrates is at last able to declare his belief that, while wanting to agree with Cratylus, he must regrettably side with Hermogenes that "the correctness of a name turns out to be convention, since letters which are unlike are indicative equally with those which are like, if they are sanctioned by custom and convention."⁴⁶ Thus words, in this reading at least, are chosen by convention, the names of things having no natural or fixed correspondence to that to which they refer.

In his other dialogues Plato does not condemn the use of metaphor per se but he does condemn the philosopher's use of rhetoric, which he regards as the chief tool of the Sophists. The natural inference from Plato's denunciation of rhetoric would be that metaphor, since it preys upon ambiguity and is often concerned with the outward appearance and resemblance of things, becomes rhetoric's

fellow-traveler. When one takes into account the well-known Platonic argument against poets one could further infer that metaphor, the main instrument of the poet's art, is equally guilty in abusing the distinction between the world of appearance and that of the Forms. The love of poetry masks and even distorts a truer devotion: the grounding of the soul of the polis upon the higher craft of philosophy.

The Platonic theory of language revolves around the twin pillars of imitation (mimesis) and imagination. For Plato all knowledge is an imitation of one sort or another. The poet attempts to imitate the world of appearances and, when successful, achieves by this imitation a kind of imperfect knowledge or opinion (doxa). The philosopher, on the other hand, attempts to divine the content of the Forms from which a more perfect kind of knowledge can be gleaned. Truth becomes the accurate reflection - the mimesis - of the Forms, and in an ideal state like the Republic it is the philosopher who should rule whilst the poet, the one who dwells in the Cave, who should be banished.

Underlying Plato's theory of language was an attempt to dethrone Homer as the educator of Greece. Although admiring the poet as the principal founder of Greek culture, Plato stipulates that "we must not honor a man above the truth" - the truth, in this instance, being the philosophic mimesis and not the poetic.⁴⁷ Ion, whose sole knowledge of the world seems to consist in the recitation of Homeric epics, is ridiculed by Socrates as being a blind follower of the world of appearance.⁴⁸ Athens was a society whose very soul was possessed by Homer. The mimesis of the apparent world rather than the true one is a "corruption of the mind of all listeners who do not possess as an antidote a knowledge of its real nature." The mimesis of the poetic

mode of existence misleads the naive and is likened by Plato to the casting of spells over the polis which, once these false metaphors are stripped bare, are revealed to be empty.⁴⁹

Since Plato's condemnation of the poet seems fairly exhaustive, how then was it possible for the Romantics to read into Platonic thought a sympathy with the poetic enterprise, and in particular metaphor? The answer is partially found in the Phaedrus where Socrates proclaims:

"Well, there is one point at least which I think you will admit, namely that any discourse ought to be constructed like a living creature, with its own body, as it were; it must not lack either head or feet; it must have a middle and extremities so⁵⁰ composed as to suit each other and the whole work."

What Plato seems to be advocating here is that discourse should be constructed as an organic whole. Unlike in Aristotle's categories of discourse where each expression must be apt to the subject at hand, Plato is urging that discourse be complete, from head to foot, as it were, so as to leave nothing out. Curiously, this organic principle is consistent with Plato's attack upon poetry where only one form of discourse (poetry) is said to reveal the truth. Read in the Romantic fashion, Plato is suggesting that poetry is dangerous because the poets claim to have a privileged link to the truth, whereas no such discourse, apart from the philosophical, can ever reach such dizzying heights.

So the Romantics preferred to read in Plato a kindred spirit. The reasons for this belief were perhaps due to Plato's stress on the pervasiveness of the poetic experience (even if this stress was meant to damn rather than to praise poetry) coupled with a theory of

language which talked of its unfixed, conventional, organic character.

Certainly the Romantics took to heart Plato's suggestion to construct discourse like a living creature, believing, as Coleridge was to believe, that the only thing that matters to a poet is language as experienced in all its forms rather than as dissected.⁵¹

We commonly think of the Romantic era as beginning around 1770 and ending around 1850.⁵² Its exact origins are uncertain; what might be offered as a partial explanation is that its genesis was in response to various elements of the Enlightenment and the rise of rationalism and science. Part of the problem of assigning a single cause to the Romantic's revolt against elements of the classical tradition was that they defined their cause as in reaction against, variously, classicism and neo-classicism, the Enlightenment and the Age of Reason, science and the methods it employed. Perhaps typical of this need to define themselves in a confrontational and dramatic manner is Shelley's announcement in his preface to Prometheus Unbound that he would "rather be damned with Plato and Lord Bacon than go to Heaven with Paley and Malthus."⁵³ Thus, just as the Humanists had defined themselves as existing in stark contrast to the prevailing power structures of the Middle Ages, the Romantics oftentimes needed to toss up so-called 'Enlightenment values' as a call to arms.⁵⁴ These Enlightenment values which the Romantics saw as their duty to combat were exemplified by laissez-faire philosophers and utilitarians whose economic egoism threatened to individuate members of society just when, the Romantics had thought, society needed to be harmonized.⁵⁵

Isaac Newton's laws of gravity and motion and his work on optics had, for the Enlightenment mind, proven that the stuff that made up

the world could be knowable by recourse to the tools of rationality and science. For the Romantics, however, the world appeared open-ended and organic, an opaque presence which could only be understood by that which was akin to a mystical experience, and they consequently accused their enemies of conjuring up a stagnant, clinical world devoid of God. "We murder to dissect," Wordsworth wrote in his anti-rationalist poem "The Tables Turned," which ended with perhaps the best summary of the Romantic attitude towards scientific thought: "Enough of science and of art / Close up those barren leaves." ⁵⁶

If the sin of the Enlightenment world, as with the classical world before it, was an over-reliance upon reason and an unstoppable need to carve up language and the world into its more empirical parts, then for the Romantics proper dispensation could be had by practising the cult of imagination - and thus we come full circle to our discussion of metaphor. "Reason," Shelley observes in his Defence of Poetry, "respects the differences and imagination the similitude of things." ⁵⁷ Imagination here does the same work as metaphor: the ability to note resemblances. For the Romantics metaphor became the way in which one could experience the world. As Terence Hawkes explains, for the Romantics metaphor was not simply a "fanciful embroidery of the facts," which the Aristotelian-classicists had believed, but was "a way of thinking and living; an imaginative projection of the truth." ⁵⁸ The Romantic individual achieves his genius by entering into the world, projecting himself into nature, and by this combining the world with the self, the I with the Thou, and artist with his art, the Romantic thinker was metaphorically able to make sense of his own existence.

This Romantic theory of metaphor and imagination would have been antithetical to Aristotle's or to Hobbes's or even to Karl Popper's more classicist belief in the divisions within language. For Hobbes, for example, imagination was a product of sense perception, and poetic mimesis was the art of capturing the tropes that nature provided in a pleasing fashion. The virtue of heroic poetry, Aristotle and Hobbes maintained, was its ability to give glory to the great deeds performed by gods and by men. Aesthetic experience could be found in man's more delightful diversions: poetry, drama, music and dance; metaphors were to be designed for a specific purpose: to secretly instruct the reader or to provide him with pleasing images to engage his attention.

Contrary to the tenets of the classical tradition, "the power of poetry," Coleridge wrote in his essay on Shakespeare's Tempest, "is, by a single word perhaps, to still that energy into the mind which compels imagination to produce the picture."⁵⁹ That picture of the world which the poet draws metaphorically is held together by his imagination. It is an imagination which metaphorically combines the objects which present themselves in the artists' path. It is only by this active, metaphorical participation in the world, as opposed to its passive, clinical description, that the metaphoric image becomes real and thus forms part of man's felt experience. In this way the Romantic ego became objectified by language - that is to say, language was at once a part of man and yet also was outside the self, turning into the primary vehicle in which the self was discovered. Through metaphor, the Romantic notion of the self became an object to be pondered and studied.

Section Four:

The Deconstructionist Approach to Metaphor

The deconstructionist approach to metaphor is entirely subversive to what has gone before. We wallow in metaphors, the deconstructionists claim, and the divisions of discourse in which the classicists, empiricists, rationalists and others have philosophized should no longer be maintained. The Popperian would like to argue that there are certain facts which can be verified by attending to the accuracy of our scientific descriptions; the classicist would like to believe that there are clear distinctions between the form of the sentence and its content, between the literal meaning of a proposition and its figurative meaning; the Romantic would like to think that the artist imbues an order onto the cosmos by imaginatively engaging with it. It is because the deconstructionist disagrees with all three traditions that deconstructionism remains the most controversial of the approaches to metaphor so far encountered. Language, it is said by the deconstructionist, is but a fiction of the truth; the author, the Romantic ego, is but an imaginative construction which does not exist outside discourse; and metaphor is but a tool that philosophers use to pave over this untruth of language and of the self.

The initial move the deconstructionists make is to point out that all language is rhetorical. Just as the political orator may overtly seek to persuade his audience to follow a particular course of action, the political philosopher covertly tries to persuade his readers that, for instance, reason and rationality are on his side, or even that reason and rationality comprise the litmus test of what it means to engage in philosophy. "What is called 'rhetorical,'" Nietzsche argued, "as the devices of a conscious art, is present as a device of

unconscious art in language and its development." According to Nietzsche,

"We can go so far as to say that rhetoric is an extension of the devices embedded in language...no such thing as unrhetorical, 'natural' language exists that could be used as a point of reference; language is itself the result of purely rhetorical tricks and devices...Tropes are not something that can be added or abstracted from language at will; they are its truest nature." ⁶⁰

All language by its very nature carries with it a rhetorical element. Moreover, Nietzsche argued, the knowledge that language conveys is irredeemably metaphorical: either it is based upon old, forgotten metaphors or it is embellished with new tropes that cannot be divorced from the language without a loss in meaning. The crux of Nietzsche's argument rests on the observation that

"There is no 'real' expression and no real knowing apart from metaphor. But deception on the point remains...The most accustomed metaphors, the usual ones, now pass for truths and as standards for measuring the rarer ones. The only intrinsic difference here is the difference between custom and novelty, frequency and rarity." ⁶¹

Whenever we speak of truth, Nietzsche pointed out, we do so by speaking in old, dead metaphors, not realizing that their original meaning has become effaced. Quentin Skinner may write a book entitled The Foundations of Modern Political Thought but this is to make heavy use of the metaphor of "foundationalism." ⁶² This old metaphor embedded in the title suggests to the reader that modern political thought began, say, in the thirteenth century and that a particular thinker or moment can mark the true beginning of modern political theory. In his

Philosophical Investigations Wittgenstein distinguishes between the metaphors of foundationalism and bedrock: we do indeed reach a foundation to our investigations when we can go back no further, Wittgenstein points out, but this does not mean that we have discovered the bedrock of our inquiries since its true origins remain forever beyond our grasp.⁶³ It is to these metaphors in discourse that Nietzsche observes that "knowing is nothing but a working with the favorite metaphors, an imitating which is no longer felt to be an imitation." The Platonic view that all knowledge is mimesis is therefore reinforced by Nietzsche's observations; we imitate knowledge by using metaphors and tropes, all the while falsely believing that this mimesis conveys accurate knowledge. For Nietzsche the mimesis of philosophy is the imitation of the world of appearance, thus turning Plato on his head. So intrinsic is metaphor to our conception of ourselves, Nietzsche suggested, that "one cannot for a single instance dispense with [metaphors] in thought, for one would thereby dispense with man himself."⁶⁴

It is with the above insight that Jacques Derrida has more recently attempted to "deconstruct" philosophical discourse.⁶⁵ Since the metaphor of foundationalism has been calcified into an epistemology, Derrida concludes, then there can be no sure ground on which to criticize philosophy that does not itself fall prey to a foundational metaphor. It is for this reason that Derrida claims that deconstructionism is not a philosophical tradition at all but more of an attitude towards philosophical discourse (which is the reason why this section is entitled "The Deconstructionist Approach to Metaphor" rather than the "Deconstructionist Tradition"). The language of Derrida's deconstructionist efforts is therefore full of word play and

indirect attacks upon various philosophical traditions, for to engage directly with philosophical discourse is to concede that its metaphors, the myth of "presence" as Derrida calls it, can never be contested. As Derrida would no doubt describe his approach, what he has attempted to discover is how can philosophy as such appear to itself other than itself, so that it can interrogate and reflect upon itself in an original manner.

A typical example of Derridian thought is to be found in his essay on Husserlian philosophy, "Signature, Event, and Context."⁶⁶ Derrida argues that Husserl's belief that philosophy must start with what is immediately aware to our senses is defective for two reasons. The first concerns the problem of presence - that is, what is immediately present to our senses. The present, Derrida observes, is actually a composite of that which we are presently aware of coupled with our understanding of the past and our expectations for the future. Therefore, Husserl's isolation of the present from this contextualization leaves us with a denatured present, Derrida contends, shorn from its full meaning.

The second problem that Derrida finds with Husserl's philosophy is with his distinction between "expressive signs" (that is, those signs in language which convey meaning) and "indicative signs" (which do not convey meaning but indicate those signs that do). What Derrida argues is that for anything to be considered a sign it must have an application which is not found in the sign itself. The sign's meaning must partially reside outside itself, just as any single word must necessarily exist in context with other words in order to have any meaning. What this suggests in regards to metaphor is that language does not have a "presence" in the words themselves, but rather its

meaning is to be located outside its own discourse. Meaning can never find a "presence" in any single word. The distinction between literal and metaphorical collapses because the very notion of literality or presence can no longer be maintained. All language points outside itself; all language is, in a sense, figurative.

To Nietzsche's suggestion that one cannot dispense with metaphoric thought "for one would thereby dispense with man himself," Derrida has a controversial reply: the attempt to locate the individual outside of language must necessarily end in failure. There is nothing in the world except language or the text, and since, to borrow from Heidegger, man is forever housed in language, no man's language can be entirely called his own. The author disappears within the text - or rather the text is the only thing that exists - and, what is more, embedded within are the metaphors and other inconsistencies of discourse that sow the seeds for the text's ultimate unraveling. There are two controversial claims, therefore, of deconstructionism: firstly, that the metaphors within the text betray the text's own ideology; secondly, that of the proclamation of the 'death' of the author.

Now a response to the above deconstructionist account of authors and metaphoric texts might take the following line: that hidden within the deconstructionist approach is a hidden ideological agenda. After all, one cannot criticize foundationalism without standing upon some kind of foundation oneself. Deconstructionist discourse draws upon an interplay between the language of the text under consideration and suggests that the rhetorical flavor of the text masks a preference for, say, the status quo or for some other world view. This position can be said to be akin to a kind of cultural materialism. The text is

considered by the deconstructionists to be an ideological tract which should only be read in a way that the author had not intended, and metaphors are understood as if they were unintentional Freudian slips. Read in this fashion, the explication of any text must subvert the author's intention, for only the deconstructionist can truly determine what lay hidden within the author's thoughts. Moreover, metaphors can only betray the author's intention by revealing those things which he would never dare acknowledge with his supposed literal language. But this is to presume that the author is not aware of his own intentions and that only the deconstructionist diagnosis of his language can be applicable. Such is the dubious foundation the deconstructionist stands upon when he criticizes metaphoric texts and foundationalism.

The second controversial claim with regards to metaphoric language concerns the supposed death of the author, and with it presumably the demise of the author's imagination. In the same manner that Nietzsche proclaimed the death of God, Derrida, Paul de Man and others proclaim the death of the author. To the myth of "logocentrism" - the belief that there is meaning, a presence, in the word - the deconstructionist responds, to borrow from Gertrude Stein, that "there is no there, there." Since all readings of the text are necessarily misreadings - that is, since no full and final understanding of the text can be claimed, then there is no end to what the deconstructionist can read into the text, and hence the playfulness of much of deconstructionist prose. Aristotle's "zoon logon echon" becomes replaced by "homo ludens." This is why the deconstructionist imagination is usually celebrated to the neglect of the author's imagination which is being scrutinized, why the metaphors that deconstructionism employs are used to dissect the text while

those of the text itself are thought to be confused and misleading.

I do not wish to dwell too long here on the subject of imagination (which is the subject of the last chapter), only to point out one salient feature that remains unacknowledged in deconstructionist prose: that the author or the artist creates his work in response to the world - that is to say, to the already created world which the author finds himself inhabiting, he responds by an act of counter-creation of his own: namely, the text. The deconstructionist position that the author is merely the conduit in which the prejudices of society express themselves is itself blind to the presence of the "Other" to whom the author addresses his text. The artist and author respond to the world in a certain way, and this response is a rival creation to nature's or to God's. And although his response may in large part consist of the dominant metaphors of his time, and hence displaying the dominant ideology in which the text was written, these metaphors are nevertheless the author's creative - active as opposed to passive - response to that world.

There is what can be generously described as "commonsense deconstructionism": a belief that the meaning in the word reveals a displacement of language, one where meaning is never housed in the word itself but contextualized, never fixed or even readily apparent. Yet at the same time our commonsense deconstructionism might also want to hold that all language is in essence playful, that words should never take themselves too seriously, that discourse should strive never to fall into the trap of logocentrism. After all, it is possible to view metaphor both as a tool of concealment and as a creative response to the world. As the work of genius, as Aristotle

recognized, metaphor imaginatively combines the objects of this world to produce insight into how the world works and into how we perceive the world working. Our commonsense theory of deconstruction would then view metaphor as part of our imaginative response to the world. Metaphor should be seen as something revealing and not always as something sinister.

The case for commonsense deconstructionism can be found in pockets of the Anglo-American philosophical tradition and, in particular, in the work of W.V. Quine. In his article "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" published with a collection of essays entitled From a Logical Point of View, Quine argues, with respect to the traditional analytic/synthetic distinction, that one can no longer "hold the belief that each meaningful statement is equivalent to some logical construct upon terms which refer to immediate experience."⁶⁷ Boiled down, Quine's thesis means that the Kantian belief that some statements correspond to reality (synthetic propositions) while others refer only to the meaning of the terms used (analytic propositions) cannot be adequately differentiated. Synthetic statements such as "Britain is surrounded by water" cannot be true simply by pointing out how the world is constructed. The terms "Britain," "surrounded" and "water" all have to be analytically explained in order for this statement to make sense. So Quine's collapse of the analytic/synthetic distinction in philosophy would suggest that a purely rational or empirical form of discourse could not be said to be privileged over others as being necessarily true. This would also entail that rhetoric and poetic language would not necessarily be inferior to so-called literal discourse.

At the heart of Quine's philosophy is the acknowledgement that

there is no foundation to the meaning of words. Instead of being fixed in their correspondence with the world, the meaning of words can only be conventionally agreed upon, or rather fall into an infinite regress of prior meanings and prior contexts. (We seem to have rediscovered here the world of Plato's Cratylus.) What can be considered to be literal and what can be thought of as metaphorical is only a difference of degree and not of kind. "It is a mistake, then," Quine argues in the brief article on the subject of metaphor originally published in 1978, "to think of linguistic usage as literalistic in its main body and metaphorical in its trimming. Metaphor, or something like it, governs both the growth of language and our acquisition of it."⁶⁸ At the same time, however, Quine also stresses the playfulness of metaphoric language in the same manner that the Continental deconstructionists do: metaphor "flourishes in playful prose and high poetic art, but it is also vital at the growing edges of science and philosophy," Quine argues.⁶⁹

The deconstructionist, Nietzschean, Quinean point that has been voiced on both sides of the Atlantic is that language is hopelessly metaphorical and, to this end, it is extremely difficult to maintain the classical-Aristotelian distinctions between the form and the content of sentences, between the rhetorical and the non-rhetorical elements of speech, between the metaphorical and the purely literal components of our language. Richard Rorty, for instance, has recently placed great emphasis on the ocular metaphors of philosophy, pointing out that these, too, have a hidden epistemic purpose. Once these metaphors have been seen for what they truly are, Rorty suggests, then it might be possible to entertain a non-foundational or even a Rawlsian-style political philosophy.⁷⁰

It is beyond the scope of this work to evaluate such claims for future political projects, if only to assert that there is an obvious tension between constructing a theory of the state without also providing the metaphorical grounds for its existence. On the other hand, a purely deconstructionist critique of, say, the metaphors of Thomas Hobbes might be fruitful if done with caution. The caution is necessary because the deconstructionist sometimes assumes that since the study of epistemology has little merit for the late twentieth century mind, then the same holds true for the seventeenth century philosopher as well. The fallacy of this position is that for the seventeenth century thinker the subject of being, which required a construction or foundation of some sort, was inseparable from that of epistemology and of language. For Hobbes and others the concept of mind could only be made intelligible in language. Logos could never be divorced from nous because that was what the logos was for. Otherwise we were merely bundles of sense impressions without any cognitive knowledge of what they were. The subject of metaphors simply came as an afterthought. The twentieth century philosopher and the seventeenth century thinker operate in two different worlds. The deconstructionist attempt to superimpose its philosophical view onto the seventeenth century might occasionally end up producing arguments that, for example, Hobbes, Bacon and Locke were philosophically naive or were inconsistent with what we now know to be true. Not that these propositions are untrue, only that they are not always the most arresting things that one can say about these thinkers.

It might be apparent by now that metaphor, truly a subject of baroque complexity, has many diverse applications. We have identified four

differing traditions of metaphoric thought, but it should be made clear that this number can easily be quadrupled. Each of these four traditions has been identified because, it will be argued a little later, each touches upon some aspect of Hobbesian or of political thought. Moreover, these approaches to metaphor speak to the larger problem of trying to construct a system of political knowledge which is not metaphorical, a problem that Hobbes himself was to confront.

For the present let us remind ourselves of the ubiquitousness of metaphoric models in both science and social science, their genesis in Greek thought, their metaphorical importance to Romantic ideology, and their troublesome existence for the twentieth century thinker. If all thought is metaphoric, as Nietzsche suggests, then it makes little sense in trying to rid language of its most constitutive element, particularly with regards to political thought. Perhaps it is the impossibility of our discovering a purely literal, logical, or rational discourse which abandons imagination and creative insight that prevents us from consulting our darker political instincts. As long as we are aware that metaphor pervades our discourse then no language can claim to have a monopoly on the truth. In this way metaphor gives birth to political and philosophical possibility.

CHAPTER TWO:
WHAT POLITICAL METAPHORS MEAN

Metaphor creates a reality from which the original appears
to be unreal. —Wallace Stevens

The twentieth century has witnessed two conflicting accounts of metaphor and in many ways these two accounts parallel the classical and Romantic debate outlined in the previous chapter. The first, what can be called the ontological view, argues that metaphor occasions most of our imaginative mental processes and that the seat of man's poetic and philosophic existence expresses itself in metaphor, bridging the gap between thought and speech. In the "ontological" view, metaphor is not simply a figure of speech but an emergent way of being. The second account of metaphor, what can be called the "literal" view, argues that metaphors mean only what their literal interpretations mean, that attempts to philosophize usually end in a bewitchment of metaphoric expressions, and that metaphor is a make-believe truth, dazzling us with its brilliance like shadows dancing on the walls of Plato's cave. The following is only intended as a sketch of these contrasting viewpoints. It is argued that the ontological view, although imaginatively arresting, fails to command the ground of commonsense. There is no reason to assume that some metaphoric expressions are privileged over others as intimating what Hannah Arendt labels as the "ineffable" of the human condition. The literal view, however, with its focus on the language to the neglect of the metaphoric image, equally fails to offer an adequate account of what is special about metaphor.

Appropriately, the ontological and the literal view occupy the first two-thirds of this chapter and an alternative "common sensory" view is tentatively offered in the last third. Although this last section may only be partially successful, the hope is to retain the main strengths of the ontological and literal views whilst at the same time leave some room to appreciate man's need to order and create a

political reality, even if that reality is ultimately grounded upon metaphor. It will be argued in the next chapter that this is indeed Hobbes's own program; one that is neither ontological nor literal but a combination of the two. At the heart of Hobbes's political philosophy, it will be argued throughout the remainder of this thesis, is an account of political knowledge that makes heavy use of the metaphoric image, occupying the middle ground between the two rival accounts of metaphor briefly sketched in this chapter.

"For every real being," Plato wrote in his Seventh Epistle, "there are three things that are necessary if knowledge of it is to be acquired: first, the name; second, the definition; third, the image." Although Plato's authorship of this letter has been contested, this tri-partite division of knowledge, it will be argued, is Hobbesian to the core, and it is to the third part, the image - or more to the point, the metaphoric image - that the following addresses itself.

Section One:

The Ontological-Cognitive View

The ontological-cognitive view of metaphor holds that this particular figure of speech has a meaning and function that goes beyond any ordinary discourse. Indeed, it is thought by the holders of this view that metaphor best captures the essence of what the human condition entails. Appropriately, an entirely new vocabulary has been created in order to understand its use. The pioneer of this new vocabulary was I.A. Richards who suggested in his The Philosophy of Rhetoric that in metaphor an "interaction" occurs between the "tenor" of the metaphor and its "vehicle."¹ Following in I.A. Richard's footsteps, Max Black has more recently argued that this tension between what

Black alternately labels as the "focus" and the "frame" of metaphor, creates, what Black calls, a "parallel implication complex," one where the metaphor's subject and predicate are combined to establish an entirely new meaning.²

What Black has attempted to do, following Richards, has been to expand Aristotle's criteria of metaphor to include a third element. As seen in chapter one, Aristotle believed that metaphor either "transferred" one term for another (what Black calls the "substitution" theory) or combined unlike terms which for Aristotle was a "sign of genius" (what Black calls the "comparative" theory).³ Black has insisted that if metaphor is to be adequately understood, then Aristotle's criteria needs to be amended to include a third description of metaphor, what Black labels as the "interaction" theory. Black's well-known (and well-worn) example of a metaphor that falls into neither of the two Aristotelian categories is "man is a wolf." Here, Black argues, the focus of the metaphor ("man") interacts with the frame ("wolf") so that the hearer is then introduced to a new insight. The term "wolf," Black contends, cannot be reduced to a more literal translation without a subsequent loss of meaning. It stands to reason then, Black concludes, that this metaphor has a special cognitive meaning that is beyond a mere substitution or comparison of terms.⁴ Something cognitively new is created by such metaphors, Black argues, and he has suggested elsewhere in his Models and Metaphors that this new meaning explains⁵ the frequency of metaphoric models in science.

Now several political theorists, citing Black's celebrated explanation of how metaphors function, have suggested that political metaphors also have a special cognitive meaning that cannot be reduced

to literal language. Giuseppa Saccaro-Battisti argues that political metaphors "have a unique cognitive function quite different from the logical function of abstract concepts."⁶ This cognitive function, Saccaro-Battisti adds, serves as a "moralistic message" directing people to how they ought to live.⁷ Zashin and Chapman argue that in some ways Black's account of cognitive metaphor does not go far enough to explain what they call metaphor's "anomalous assertion of identity,"⁸ and Richard Brown suggests that social theory in general is composed of these "cognitive aesthetic" metaphors.⁹ Cognitive metaphors create political reality, the argument goes, since, as Murray Edelman declares, "language does not mirror an objective reality, but it rather creates it by organizing meaningful perceptions abstracted from a complex, bewildering world."¹⁰ This presupposes that there is an intelligible structure to the political world, one that is ultimately knowable to us, and which can be deciphered by means of metaphor.

As can be imagined, Black's thesis would be a boon to political theorists for it would necessarily entail that for each and every political metaphor a cognitive meaning could be attached, creating a new political reality that cannot be reduced to literal propositions.¹¹ What exactly this new political reality is would be difficult to gauge, for as Saccaro-Battisti has affirmed, "the same metaphor may acquire various, even contrasting meanings in different writers."¹² Nevertheless, for those who follow in the path first cleared by Richards and Black, the idea that interactive political metaphors create political reality is highly attractive. Monroe Beardsley, though himself not a political theorist, suggests that all metaphors are cognitively interactive, although some are more interactive than

others - a statement which, if taken to its logical conclusion, would mean that the interpretation of political metaphors could never be exhausted.

The ontological-cognitive view of metaphor, then, like its Romantic counterpart, holds that this figure of speech articulates more than what ordinary discourse can, that deep within the metaphoric phrase rests an irreducible insight, expressing something that cannot be captured in any other way. Colin Murray Turbayne, for example, groups political metaphors into a basket which includes myths, fables, allegories, and parables. They all, Turbayne argues in his Myth and Metaphor, express what is otherwise inexpressible.¹³ "We cannot say what reality is," Turbayne contends, "only what it seems to us, imprisoned in Plato's cave."¹⁴ "Can we not say," Paul Ricoeur replies to Turbayne in his Rule of Metaphor, and echoing Black's thesis, "that the strategy of language at work in metaphor consists in obliterating the logical and the established frontiers of language, in order to bring to light new resemblances the previous classification kept us from seeing?"¹⁵ Ricoeur, too, whole-heartedly accepts Black's thesis that metaphors express a cognitive insight, articulating that which literal language lacks.¹⁶

Now the philosophical presumption that cognitive metaphors somehow enable us to glimpse at the truth of the political world has had a noble lineage. Perhaps the most succinct statement on the singular failure of simply lexis to express what lies hidden in human experience belongs not to a philosopher but to Virginia Woolf who wrote, in that perfect sentence: "Words fail." Woolf could not have written "Words fail because..." since that would be the very denial of the force of the utterance, whose meaning, if it could be adequately

spoken of, is that words alone act as poor substitutes for our thoughts, leaving us often inarticulate in the face of our deeper emotions. Language, as Arendt tells us in her Life of the Mind, is the medium through which our mental activities (nous) expresses itself (logos).¹⁷ But since our mental life cannot always be adequately expressed verbally, Arendt contends, we must use metaphor in order to express that which is "ineffable."¹⁸ Where words alone may fail, in other words, metaphors succeed. Metaphors bridge that gap between our mental discourse and our social discourse, Arendt argues, revealing in our logos the true life of the mind.¹⁹

This is the implicit ontological argument at work in the cognitive account of metaphor. "The place of metaphor," Ricoeur would have us believe, "its most intimate and ultimate abode, it is neither the name, nor the sentence, nor even discourse, but the copula of the verb to be."²⁰ Does this mean that hidden within the metaphor is an ontological truth? The answer, in this cognitive account, would seem to be "yes." Although Martin Heidegger, for instance, makes little mention of metaphor, many theorists like Arendt and Ricoeur certainly take their cue from Heidegger's thesis that propositions are not in themselves the custodians of truth, rather the essence of truth resides within, what Heidegger calls, a full "ontological unfolding."²¹ If, as Heidegger asserts, man is forever "housed in language" and if "language is the locus of man's being," then one is led to ask, since it is argued that propositions themselves do not contain any such truth, just where in language does this truth or being emerge? Metaphor seems to be the likely and natural candidate here, the ontological view maintains, given the noticeable inability of philosophers to formulate in non-rhetorical language a coherent

metaphysics. In his article on political metaphors, Eugene Miller contends that "the ancient question that has been raised anew by Heidegger - What is a thing? - must eventually be raised of political things." ²² This ontological question, Miller maintains, is answerable in metaphor.

Arendt argues that the failure of philosophers to come to terms with philosophical discourse reveals that nous cannot be adequately expressed in logos except by means of metaphor. "The results of philosophy are the uncovering," Arendt quotes from Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations, "of bumps that the intellect has got by running its head against the limits of language." ²³ Metaphor, subsequently, is the philosopher's way of running around the limits of language. Arendt also reproduces Nietzsche's remark that his philosophy cannot be communicated, at least not in print. ²⁴ This inability to describe in literal language a philosophy of being is, according to Arendt, common to many philosophers, including her favorite thinker, Immanuel Kant. "All thinking," Kant declared in the Critique of Pure Reason, is a means of reaching intuition." ²⁵ That which we intuit from cannot be grasped by the mind, Kant believed, since it "is an art concealed in the depths of the human soul, whose real modes of activity nature is hardly likely to ever allow us to discover, and to have open to our gaze." ²⁶ It is by the metaphoric image, Arendt then reads into Kant's statement as meaning, that this insight is given a name, that is made visible in the world of appearances.

How, then, does this ontological insight work? What is the mode in which the meaning of a political metaphor reveals itself? Assuming that these are not two entirely different questions, the ontological

account of metaphor holds that in either case metaphor functions by committing a category mistake. Borrowing from Gilbert Ryle's description of a category mistake in his Concept of Mind (a concept which, loosely described, means that it is a fallacy to use language belonging to one category when talking of another) the ontologist maintains, using the terminology developed by Black and Richards, that the tension created by the frame and focus of a metaphor springs from the association of two entirely distinct identities.²⁷ In this way Turbayne is able to proclaim that the meaning of metaphors, myths, parables, and fables comes from asserting a "category confusion,"²⁸ and Riceour that "the idea of category mistake brings us closer to our goal" of understanding how metaphors function.²⁹

While one may doubt whether Ryle would approve of the way in which his phrase has been co-opted, it can be argued that the idea that metaphor consists of a cross-pollination between categories existed even prior to Ryle's description. One hundred years ago Max Muller wrote in his Lectures on the Science of Language that "there was, necessarily and really, a period in the history of our race when all the thoughts that went beyond the narrow horizon of our everyday life had to be expressed by means of metaphors."³⁰ In his critique of Muller's comments, Ernst Cassirer wrote in his Language and Myth that metaphor "involves not merely a transference, but a real metabasis eis allo genus; in fact, it is not only a transition to another category, but actually the creation of the category itself."³¹ Cassirer's suggestion here is the ultimate ontological argument: by creating its own category metaphor gives birth to its own descriptions. The insight of metaphors, Cassirer wrote, is that we can "thereby recognize them for what they really are: forms of [the mind's] own

self-revelation." ³² If we describe the "state as a machine," in other words, what we have created is the identity or the category of the machine-state. A mistake or confusion of categories therefore becomes one and the same with the ontological argument, identical to Ricoeur's copula to be. In his Speaking and Meaning James Edie argues the metaphor is that "which creates and brings similarities to be rather than merely formulating them." ³³ The ontological theorist, therefore, argues that not only is there an intelligible structure to the political world, but that this structure is composed of the metaphorical, or at least reveals itself in a metaphorical manner. In the ontological account, metaphor is the nearest tool we have in language to excavate the grounds on which we dwell.

Now it would seem that the ontological-cognitive account of metaphor is related to the Romantic notion that man's true home is in non-literal language. ³⁴ The ontological-cognitive idea that we must enter into - that is, metaphorically participate in - the world in order to understand our place in it is Romanticism redux. Black's thesis that metaphor is a privileged description of the world does not, therefore, contend with the ontological argument but reinforces it, suggesting to political theorists like Hannah Arendt that metaphor is the key which unlocks the ineffable of the human condition. This theory of metaphor appeals to our sense of wonder; both wonder of ourselves and of ourselves-in-the-world.

There are serious flaws in the ontological-cognitive account. It remains to be seen that there is something "ineffable" in the human condition, or whether this condition truly manifests itself in metaphorical discourse. Ever since the discovery of language

philosophy theorists have become enthralled with the prospect that language may hold the key to understanding the mind.³⁵ For instance, as John Searle points out, we know that there is something called the "unconscious" but we curiously believe, without any evidence to support this view, that the unconscious is composed of language or language-like activity. In reality, Searle argues, this can only be an educated guess for it is the character of the unconscious never directly to reveal itself. Similarly, it can be said here that even if we assume that there is an "ineffable" undercurrent running through the human condition, there is no reason to suppose that it manifests itself in metaphor. By definition, the ineffable, if it exists, must always remain silent. The obverse of this may only be a Romantic illusion.

Arendt's contention that this impulse has expressed itself throughout the history of philosophy is also seriously flawed. Metaphor may share with myth, fable, parable, and allegory the same impulse, as even Turbayne avers, but this inclination may simply be the philosopher's pedagogic device, not an expression which can find no home in literal discourse.

When Arendt points to Plato, Nietzsche, and Wittgenstein as philosophers who have understood the truth which resides within metaphorical discourse she is engaging in a serious misreading of these thinkers. Plato, for instance, did not hold that literal language was suspect and figurative language self-evidently true. In fact, a closer examination of the Platonic quotes that Arendt reproduces reveals just the opposite. The relevant passages are these: "For this knowledge is not something that can be put into words like other sciences...[it is] like light flashing forth when a fire is

kindled, it is born in the soul and straightaway nourishes itself";

"On this account no sensible man will venture to express his deepest thoughts in words, especially in a form which is unchangeable, as is true of written outlines."³⁶ Contrary to Arendt's reading, the argument in these passages is not directed at language per se, and therefore against literal discourse, but against written speech as opposed to oral. In Platonic thought truth was logos which was written on the soul rather than on parchment. The difference here is between living speech and the dead, or calcified speech as found in books, rather than between literal discourse and metaphorical.

Finally, Arendt quotes Nietzsche as saying "my philosophy... can no longer be communicated, at least not in print"; here she similarly draws the wrong conclusion. Nietzsche's point was that his philosophy could be communicated but that books can never convey the requisite knowledge.³⁷ As Socrates argues in the Phaedrus, the problem with written speech is that it is impossible to interrogate books; when you ask of them something they just fall silent.³⁸

If there is a philosophic tradition in regards to language it would, perhaps, sound something like this: that words, definitions, and images rub up against one another, and that knowledge is the end product of this jostling back and forth - or what is known as the dialectical process. Philosophy, to paraphrase from Wittgenstein (who again Arendt misconstrues), is had when the intellect bumps up against the limits of language, metaphorical language included. This does not mean that metaphor by-passes the limits of discourse - in fact, Nietzsche believed that the philosophic enterprise was near impossible because the metaphors just kept getting in the way.

To conclude then, it may be possible to say, along with Richards, Black, Turbayne, Arendt, and Ricoeur that metaphor is a distinctive form of utterance, but it seems highly implausible, given the arguments put forward so far, that the ontological-cognitive view that metaphors capture some special, ineffable element of human existence is equally correct. The second section narrates the "literal" manifesto in regard to this debate, and suggests that it too is found wanting. It only remains for the third and final section on the politics within metaphor to piece together that which is salvageable from both positions, and to argue for a rival, "common sensory," account of political metaphor to be considered.

Section Two:

The Literal Argument

A proper critique of Black's cognitive view of metaphor has been left until now. The reason is that for the refutation of Black's thesis to succeed the literal account of metaphor needs to be enunciated. The most persuasive opponent of the cognitive view is Donald Davidson, who argues that "metaphors mean only what the words, in their most literal interpretation, mean, and nothing more."³⁹ Davidson's position is a tonic to the anti-foundationalists in political thought. If all metaphors can be read literally, as Davidson suggests, then there remains little impulse to derive philosophic premises from their construction. Richard Rorty, for example, contends that a cognitive account of metaphor is simply an attempt to smuggle metaphysics back into philosophy after it had been thrown out.⁴⁰ The goal of philosophy, Davidson and Rorty both agree, should still seek to clean up the language, and it should begin by treating metaphors as merely poetic

expressions that engage our imagination, and not as figures of speech which somehow capture the essence of knowledge (epistemology) or of our existence (the ontological argument). The literalists and the classicists thus have this idea in common: if our "words fail," then it can only be because we are not thinking clearly enough or because there is nothing there to be said.

As we have seen, Black's theory is that metaphor cannot be reduced to literal interpretations without a subsequent loss in meaning and that this necessarily entails that there must be some cognitive content that is particular only to metaphor. As Black argues, "One of the points I wish to stress is that the loss in such cases is a loss in cognitive content; the relevant weakness of the literal paraphrase is not that it may be tiresomely prolix or boringly explicit; it fails to be a translation because it fails to give the insight that metaphor did."⁴¹ The argument, then, is that metaphors contain a special truth or insight that literal language does not possess, and it is this insight, Arendt, Ricoeur and others believe, which enables us to glimpse into what it means to be-in-the-world.

Davidson's refutation of the above held view is contained in his essay "What Metaphors Mean" printed in the anthology On Metaphor. His argument throughout is simply that metaphors have no special meaning beyond what can be stated in literal propositions.⁴² This does not mean, however, that metaphors in literature, science and philosophy serve no purpose, only that literal interpretations can get us to see the same things. Davidson's purpose is to eliminate the mystique that metaphor holds for thinkers. Where Black and his adherents err, Davidson writes, is that when "they think they provide a method for deciphering an encoded content, they actually tell us...something

about the effects metaphors have on us." Their error, Davidson continues, "is to fasten on the contents of the thoughts metaphor provokes and to read these contents into the metaphor itself." ⁴³ Metaphor may provoke in us a particular insight, then, but it is folly to assign a meaning to metaphor where it more properly belongs in the realm of our imagination. ⁴⁴

According to Davidson, metaphors can be understood by an appeal to the meaning of the literal language which they employ. "We can learn much about what metaphors mean by comparing them with similes," Davidson suggests, and the "most obvious semantic difference between simile and metaphor is that all similes are true and most metaphors are false."⁴⁵ But beyond this distinction, Davidson points out, "critics do not suggest that a simile says one thing and means another - they do not suppose it means anything but what lies on the surface of the words." Similes "may make us think deep thoughts, just as metaphor does," Davidson argues, but then why is it that "no one appeals to the 'special cognitive content' of similes?"⁴⁶ The answer is clear: metaphors themselves contain no special cognitive content because the special cognition resides in our imagination and not in the metaphoric statement. Therefore, Davidson concludes, "the theorist who tries to explain metaphor by appealing to a hidden message, like the critic who attempts to state that message, is then fundamentally confused." ⁴⁷ No such message in the metaphoric expression exists.

Now if Davidson's critique of the cognitive theory of metaphor is correct, then it stands to reason that the ontological argument put forward by Arendt and Ricoeur would equally become impoverished. What Davidson adds to this debate is the acknowledgement that no

description of the world, literal or metaphorical, is privileged over others, and, more importantly, our metaphorical descriptions contain no hidden secrets about how the world or the human mind works. All meaningful language, Davidson argues, can be flattened out into literal propositions, although the concept of truth would still be as elusive as ever.

In his book Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature Richard Rorty, following Davidson, states that political and philosophical thought have continually been bewitched by metaphorical expressions, with the unfortunate consequence for the subject of epistemology that our philosophical attempts to discover the "grounds" or "foundations" to knowledge can no longer be seriously entertained.⁴⁸ As the philosopher John Dewey pointed out, our "theory of knowing is modelled after what was supposed to take place in the act of vision."⁴⁹ Subsequently, what Rorty succeeds in arguing in his Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature is that this epistemic process is composed either of one or two metaphorical distinctions. The first is the appearance/reality distinction which argues that truth is discovered through perceptual experience, chiefly through the act of vision. The second is the inner/outer distinction which locates truth through mental images and sense impressions. Both distinctions serve as "foundations" to knowledge, as they entirely depend upon the metaphoric act of how we "see" the world.⁵⁰

Rorty declares, with respect to philosophers attempts to uncover grounds or foundations to our knowledge, that

"...for Plato it was reached by escaping from the senses and opening up the faculty of reason – the Eye of the Soul – to the World of Being. For Descartes, it was a matter of turning

the Eye of the Mind from the confused inner representations to the clear and distinct ones. With Locke, it was a matter of reversing Descartes's directions and seeing 'singular presentations to sense' as what should 'grip' us - what we should not escape from." ⁵¹

Kant was the first philosopher, Rorty suggests, to reject this visual metaphorical vocabulary as leading to knowledge. The Kantian "foundations" of knowledge are to be found in propositions and not in sensing objects in the Eye of the Mind. For Rorty, Kantian truth does not inher in visual images and representations in the mind but in language, or rather in "a search for the rules the mind had set up for itself."⁵² However, as we have seen in the last section of the previous chapter, Kant's analytic/synthetic distinction between propositions has been little comfort to epistemologists since Quine's deconstruction of it in the 1950's.⁵³ The result, Rorty contends, is that unless we wish to be trapped in the limiting world of ocular, spatial and foundational metaphors, we must lose our obsession with establishing the grounds for our knowledge. To choose one set of metaphorical images in which to interpret experience is to presuppose that there is but one method to derive at the "truth." But the elusiveness of this truth soon becomes apparent when a different set of metaphors is chosen, revealing the inadequacy of our earlier metaphorical descriptions.

This same theme of disestablishing the metaphors of political and philosophical thought is echoed again in Rorty's latest book Contingency, Irony and Solidarity.⁵⁴ In it Rorty argues that Davidson's theory of metaphor "does for the theory of culture what the Mendelian, mechanistic account of natural selection did for evolutionary theory."⁵⁵

Rorty borrows from Davidson's attack against the cognitive theory of metaphor to suggest that human history should be viewed as a succession of metaphors - metaphors that have been either cast aside if they are found to serve no function, or co-opted into literal discourse if they do.⁵⁶ "Neitzsche's history of culture," Rorty writes, "and Davidsonian philosophy of language, see language as we now see evolution, as new forms of life constantly killing off old forms."⁵⁷ Again, there is no concept of an ontological truth or insight here, only the general acknowledgement that metaphors continually bewitch us, sometimes temporarily leading us astray, othertimes nudging us to make an imaginative leap in thought. The end product, as far as Rorty is concerned, is a treatment of philosophy as literature rather than as a system of true postulates leading to knowledge.

This, then, is the literalist attack against the cognitive or ontological view: Arendt, Riceour, and others cannot be correct in their view that political metaphors contain a special meaning or hidden truth about language or human existence. Metaphor may provoke us into making an insight but that does not mean that that insight resides in the metaphoric expression itself. Similarly, to believe that some forms of expression can be valued over others for revealing the ineffable is equally absurd. Rorty's critique of the inner/outer metaphorical distinction not only reveals that Plato, among others, had fallen into this linguistic trap but that political theorists like Arendt have subsequently taken Plato's mistake and, together with a few misreadings, inflated it into a metaphorical theory of human political existence.

It should be stipulated that the boundary lines between the opposing

sides in this debate are not as clearly defined as it has been set out here. For instance, David Cooper, in an otherwise excellent book simply entitled Metaphor, argues that Davidson's theory is by far superior to Black's account, but then he strangely goes on to suggest that Heidegger's concept of ontological truth closely resembles that of metaphor's.⁵⁸ Yet the issue I wish to address is not whether the above held views are consistent with one another, but rather whether Davidson's literal interpretation of metaphor is entirely satisfactory.

The problem with Davidson's theory can be set out by reproducing a few of the remarks he has made with regards to the subject of metaphors versus similes. As the reader will recall, Davidson suggests that all metaphors are absurd and all similes are true. Metaphors are absurd because, to borrow from Ryle, the speaker is making a category mistake. However, all similes are trivially true because, as Davidson argues, "everything is like everything, and in endless ways."⁵⁹ But beyond this discrepancy, Davidson continues, there is no reason to believe that the two serve entirely different functions or have radically different meanings. It is this Davidsonian position, I shall argue, which is misleading.

Let us consider for a moment the example that Davidson himself uses, namely the metaphor "Tolstoy is a great moralizing infant."⁶⁰ Here, Davidson proclaims, there is an absurdity at work, but one that nonetheless enables us to make propositions on how Tolstoy might be like a great moralizing infant. The metaphor and the simile in this case serve the same function, and the meaning behind them both can be derived from whatever their literal interpretations mean. We might be able to make a list, for example, of ways in which Tolstoy and a

moralizing infant might be similar. Now as far as this goes Davidson is correct, but there is one essential element that, for the purposes of the next few chapters, needs to be articulated. What Davidson neglects in his literal theory is the role of the metaphoric image.

The notion of absurdity, as Thomas Hobbes would be the first to point out, can only be an attribute of speech and not of things.⁶¹ To claim along with Davidson that the proposition 'A' is 'B' is absurd is, on a linguistic level, probably true. Thus the metaphor "all planets flow into rivers" strikes us as a linguistic absurdity for this reason. On the other hand, if we were able to visualize this metaphoric image - if, in other words, the metaphor was to have an iconic content - then it remains to be seen how this could also be considered to be equally absurd. If I have an image of an "artificial man" (Hobbes's metaphor) on what authority can Davidson say that it is an absurd image. Or to borrow from another philosopher, Aristotle, let us say that I have an image of a "goat-stag." What Aristotle quite rightly points out is that the image of a "goat-stag" is not an example of alogos, which means nonsense or absurd speech.⁶² Such images can only be counted as absurd, Aristotle argues, if we add "being" or "non-being" to them - that is, if we make the mistake of infusing the imaginary image with an ontological argument. Such images, as Aristotle reminds us, are like prayers: they are neither true nor false.⁶³

Returning then to Davidson's example, if Tolstoy and an infant are in the same room and I state out loud for all to hear that they are one and the same, I might, on a purely linguistic level at least, be taken as someone who is prone to making nonsensical utterances. However, and this is the crucial distinction, if I have in my mind the

image of a Tolstoyian infant, then on what criteria can Davidson claim that this image is any more absurd than any other I might currently be entertaining, say the image of a coffee cup resting on the table? The answer that Davidson invokes is Wittgenstein's concept of Seeing As where we learn to see one thing as another, as in the famous example of a duck-rabbit.⁶⁴ (The reader will no doubt notice that Wittgenstein's example of a duck-rabbit bears a marked similarity to Aristotle's goat-stag, as in both cases we see one species as belonging to another.) According to Davidson, "Metaphor makes us see one thing as another by making some literal statement that inspires or prompts the insight."⁶⁵ This is no doubt true. As we have seen, there is nothing within the metaphoric expression itself which has a cognitive meaning, it is only our imagination that can be said to possess this power. However, the problem of invoking Seeing As as a criteria for understanding metaphors is that by itself it is fundamentally deficient.

Now Wittgenstein's well-known theory that the meaning of a word is its use in the sentence, and vice-versa, necessitates that language be considered as a public phenomenon, operating like the observable rules of a game. The problem is that there can be no appeals here to a privately held image for, as Wittgenstein observes, "an inner process stands in need of an outward criteria," and as he remarks elsewhere, "the characteristic signs of [the game is] in the player's behavior."⁶⁶ If this is indeed true, then it can be argued, pace Davidson, that not all metaphors automatically lend themselves to psychologically observable data. How can we ever interpret such privately held images? We might, as Davidson avers, have a way to interpret metaphors on a linguistic level by ironing them out into

their literal interpretations, but we are still left without a criterion, even if we include Seeing As, for evaluating our metaphors qua images.

If we were to follow this thread a little further, we might want to differentiate Seeing As from Seeing That, as Davidson himself does.

"Seeing As is not Seeing That," Davidson points out, by which possibly he means that Seeing That is purely the locus of propositions, whilst Seeing As is the domain of images.⁶⁷ Thus, metaphors enable us to make Seeing That propositions even though they themselves contain no propositional content - which is a point with which even Max Black concurs.⁶⁸ Here, however, Davidson's theory encounters another problem, for if we wish to adopt Seeing As as a criterion for understanding metaphoric images, as Davidson wants us to do, then we are led back to the unhappy assertion that metaphors contain cognitive meanings. Davidson's original intention was to prove that only literal propositions can be cognitive, rather than metaphorical statements. But, as Marcus Hester observes in his discussion of Wittgenstein's theory of Seeing As, "Seeing As is a cognitively significant act," with the meaning of the metaphor residing within the Seeing As object.⁶⁹ However, this is to deny the whole point of Davidson's critique of the cognitive-ontological argument.

Davidson gets into this muddle precisely because he does not consider the role of metaphoric images, only that of metaphoric expressions. Subsequently, his adoption of Seeing As leaves him at a dead end. As Wittgenstein states rather cryptically, "You will see it this, now this? What way? There is no further qualification?"⁷⁰ In other words, there seems to be no way in which to elaborate the Seeing As image. Thus Seeing As does not preclude the possibility that we

can 'cognitively see' the metaphoric image, only that we have no other criteria in which to qualify this image. By his focussing on metaphoric expressions rather than images, Davidson leaves room for Black, Riceour and others to argue that the cognitive-ontological element of metaphor actually resides in the images themselves.

Davidson only addresses himself to one half of the metaphoric equation, that of the Seeing That, the locus of propositions. What is missing from Davidson's critique is the understanding that images and words are not the same thing. Words can be located; they refer to something. Images, on the other hand, can only be inferred; they are like ideas or concepts, they are located only in the mind. Significantly, if our images were like words - that is, if like words our images could be pinned down along Davidsonian lines - then images would no longer hold any interest for us. It is precisely due to the fact that understanding images is much more problematic than that of understanding words that they continue to hold our attention.

Could it be possible that our words may fail and yet our metaphoric images still succeed? If so, then Rorty's deconstruction of political metaphors on the basis of their literal-Davidsonian content needs to be re-evaluated, which is the theme of the following section. Indeed, all we are able to safely conclude so far with any assurance is that metaphoric expressions betray no ineffable-ontological identity, which is certainly important to bear in mind when discussing political metaphors, but this alone does not comprise the most interesting thing one can say about political metaphors.

Section Three:

The Common Sensory Account: How Political Metaphors Are Used

Poets and philosophers alike, when addressing the contents of the mind, speak in metaphor. The mind, Gerald Manley Hopkins writes, is composed of "cliffs of fall / Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed."

In the Theatetus Socrates invites us to "suppose that every mind contains an aviary stocked with birds of every sort, some in flocks apart from the rest, some in small groups, and some solitary and flying in any direction among them all."⁷¹ It was this curiosity that led the cognitive-ontological theorists to conclude that metaphor itself contained the key to unlocking the recesses of the mind, but the only thing they had managed to uncover, the literalists have since pointed out, is the extent in which metaphor pervades our philosophical discourse.

What remains missing from both arguments, however, is the central role that the image plays in both our concept of knowledge and in our understanding of political metaphor. If metaphor were only a linguistic device, then it would be easy to dismiss it as a category mistake or confusion. But along with the linguistic statement that metaphor makes, it can also be said to contain an attendant image, and it is the image, rather than the metaphoric language, that has animated philosophers since the Greeks. To understand this, we must attend to how metaphors are used in political thought and not to just what they might mean.

Knowledge, the author of Plato's Seventh Letter observed, is not something that can be articulated directly into language like the other sciences, but is "like light flashing forth when a fire is kindled, it is born in the soul and straightaway nourishes itself."⁷²

The image of a fire inside the body is, of course, a metaphoric image. So too, we might add, is the concept of soul. Yet the insight here is that there is a foundation of sorts to our knowledge and that it does not necessarily reside only in language. "For every real being," the author continues, "there are three things that are necessary if knowledge is to be acquired: first, the name; second, the definition; third, the image."⁷³ Because language alone is not sufficient for knowledge, language and images act in concert with one another "making clear the particular property (to poion ti) of each object and the being (to on) of it."⁷⁴ Our images bump against language, in other words, and the outcome, behaving like the dialectical process, serves us as knowledge.

Aristotle, in his De Anima, argues that "without sensation a man would not learn or understand anything, so at the very time he is actually thinking he must have an image before him."⁷⁵ We think in language, or logos, Aristotle affirmed, but even our simple notions, noemata, cannot be divorced from the image. "I reply that neither these nor the rest of our notions are images, but that they cannot dispense with images," Aristotle continued.⁷⁶ Boethius writes in his critique of Aristotle, Librium De interpretatione editio secunda, that "for sense and imagination are certain first shapes [figura] upon which as a kind of foundation supervenient intelligence is shone."⁷⁷ Our language, Boethius proclaims, sharpens our images, which then produces in us knowledge.⁷⁸ The analogy Boethius uses to describe how our images and language combine to form this "supervenient foundation" is one of painting:

"As painters are used to outline a body and to lay in the under-painting of the body where they portray any face with colors, so

sense and imagination are naturally laid in like colors in the perception of the soul. For when anything falls under sense or thinking [cogito], it is first of all necessary that some imagination be born. Afterwards the more complete intellect supervenes, explicating all of its parts which were taken up confusedly by imagination. Wherefore imagination is something imperfect." 79

The images come first, sprung from our imagination, Boethius suggests, and then the intellect follows, transforming our imperfect imagination into a more perfect knowledge. Here, sense and imagination are used interchangeably, and our intellect is composed of reasoning, or ratio. Since we are oftentimes confused by our sense and imagination, we need our intellect to make a thing intelligible. This is what Abelard referred to as "confusa animae perceptio." It was only by the tool of ratio, Abelard believed, that the confusion between our senses could be sorted out.⁸⁰

Aquinas, believing that metaphorical images were common to most discourse, also thought that it was the intellect's responsibility to make sense of these images and award them their proper place in knowledge. Theology, according to Aquinas, was the highest form of knowledge since it "is not able to deceive," whilst poetry formed the "lowest of all kinds of knowledge."⁸¹ Both, however, make heavy use of metaphoric images. The chief difference between the two, however, Aquinas maintained, was that the images in poetry were liable to confuse the reader while those in theology, since theology was entirely logical, transports him into a higher plane of cognition.⁸²

What are we to conclude, therefore, when we replace the metaphoric expression which may indeed be without any "cognitive

content" with that of the metaphoric image - or with images in general - which seems to have animated thinkers throughout the ages? First of all, we might admit that it seems pointless to treat metaphoric images as if they alone expressed an ontological state or the ineffable since, if there were such a condition in man, then, as the above philosophers have suggested, it could only be understood if the image acted in concert with language, and not apart from it. Secondly, it seems equally difficult to hold that these images are necessarily absurd, for if perception precedes cognition - or in other words, if images come before speech - then the notion of absurdity belongs to the domain of language. It is only once we have achieved a rational discourse do we then turn to our images to decide which are true and which are false, and that is only if we add the notion of "being" or "non-being" to them, as Aristotle points out. Thirdly, a criterion for understanding what metaphors mean, along Davidsonian lines, is not the same as understanding how the metaphoric images are used. Indeed, there probably is not a simple criterion that will enable us to distinguish true perception from false. As Hobbes points out, when we are dreaming we think that we are awake, and when we are awake we know that we are not dreaming.⁸³ That is all we can probably say when disentangling our conscious perceptions, unless the science of neurophysiology can somehow develop a more scientific criterion for discerning true images from false. For many philosophers, however, this was not such a problem. Images added together with language and then mixed with our intellect or reason, it was thought, could still do the job quite nicely.

If I have present in my mind, say, after pondering the subject of human anatomy and the invention of machines, an image of an artificial

man, I can be said to be entertaining a metaphorical image. It is from this image that I can proclaim the metaphor "the human body is a machine," and then from this metaphor deduce, as Davidson would have us do, various propositions along the lines that "both bodies and machines function on certain, knowable laws" or "like a machine, the human body has internal movements," and so on. Here, it is the image which is arrived at first, followed by the attendant metaphoric expression, and then lastly by our literal interpretations which call our attention to whatever insights the image may contain. Note that the genesis begins with the image and ends with the literal paraphrase of the metaphoric expression - or in other words, it is only once the image has been articulated in language that the true insight that our imagination lets loose begins to do its work.

Of course the genesis of the image that I have plotted here might be entirely different. One might begin, for instance, by positing a category mistake (say, "all planets flow to the sea") and then go on to derive whatever propositional insight that this metaphor may hold, entirely by-passing the issue of images altogether. But it seems just as likely as not that without a corresponding image binding in some way the two categories together (or maintaining the requisite "tension," as Black and Richards would say) we would be fortunate if we were to derive much satisfaction from this metaphor. It seems equally problematical that our best metaphors are created in this way, for engaging in the willy-nilly combination of any two unlike objects to see what might be gleaned would be too haphazard a method to be of much use. Pure chance would then be governing our choice of metaphoric expressions. Contrary to what Davidson and Rorty would suggest, it is the image, as Michael Walzer points out, which

"provides the starting point for political thinking."⁸⁴ The reason why our images might come before thinking, as Susanne Langer points out in Philosophy in a New Key, is that

"...if the material of thought is symbolism, then the thinking organism must be forever furnishing symbolic versions of its experience, in order to let thinking proceed. As a matter of fact, it is not the essential act of thought that is symboli-
zation, but an act essential to thought, and prior to it."⁸⁵

From this we might conclude that, although not all images lend themselves to metaphors or vice versa, a metaphor joined with an image becomes a highly charged combination, even if there might be something chicken and eggish about which would come first.

Indeed, it might be essential to clarify which does come first, the image or the word, to avoid making the same philosophical mistakes. The lurking danger in accepting the above account is that it could lead to a radical apriorization of the image. If symbolic images come prior to thought, as Langer avers, then the very philosophy of language which situates discourse at the core of human experience would have to be marginalized. This danger can be averted, I believe, by the underscoring of the following two points: firstly, there is no need to shun the belief that our world is, above all else, discursively constituted or that man is forever housed in language, as the deconstructionists remind us. But secondly, and this is the relevant point, the language which man has at his disposal is not altogether given to him, like a family tradition handed down from age to age. Rather, language is like a tool which can be imaginatively used in varying ways. If we were only to accept the first proposition that our world was discursively constituted, as a Derrida or a de Man

would claim, then we would be forced to come to the unhappy conclusion that there exists nothing in the world except language and that man is only the passive receptor of the linguistic utterances over which he has no control. There is no other way in which to use the tools given to us, in other words, other than for what they were designed. But this cannot be the entire story. New ways of looking at the world are continually being articulated. New metaphoric models are being imagined, new languages are being born. Now the seat of all this activity would have to rest in the imagination - that is, the imaginative recombining of the discursive utterances and practices that may already exist. There is no radical apriorization of the image here, only the insistence that in addition to language there is the symbolic representation from which it is imaginatively born and which enables man to create new political forms out of old.

Now we might agree with the statement that there are no foundations to our knowledge because a) language itself is not an adequate tool to lay this foundation, b) sense or image perception also fails to satisfy this need, and c) rationality, or any other methodological procedure, alone equally does not secure a foothold on knowledge. It might be argued, furthermore, that the closest one may come to establishing foundations to our thought might entail a combination of a, b, and c, but given Quine's and Derrida's deconstruction of epistemology and of Davidson's and Rorty's critique of metaphors in ordinary language such an attempt would also fail. The inadequacy of the modern world to secure foundations to our thought may be no great loss, indeed, it may be only for the good. The crucial point, however, is this: we cannot begin to understand what political metaphors mean unless we take the trouble to

investigate their use - that is, their relationship with their manner of expression, their attendant images, and the method in which they are articulated. In short, we must consider the combination of a, b, and c above. That we might not today accept that this serves as an adequate grounding for our beliefs should not color our interpretation of those theorists who in the past did in fact think this way. The instinctive cultural materialist impulse in us must be put in check.

According to Davidson in his "What Metaphors Mean," there can be "no instructions for devising metaphors; there is no manual for determining what a metaphor 'means' or 'says'; there is no test for metaphor that does not call for taste."⁸⁶ If metaphor contains an element of surprise or novelty, Davidson suggests, then it is due to its "built-in aesthetic feature" akin to our joy in hearing a symphony, whether or not we have heard it before.⁸⁷ Taste, of course, implies judgment, and if we can take Davidson at his word then the proper explication of a metaphoric utterance would involve our capacity for rendering judgment. Now the last great philosopher to speak seriously of judgment and the process of intuition was Immanuel Kant. In invoking the name of Kant at this point I do not wish to imply that Davidson is by any means a Kantian. As it is that Davidson aligns his thought closely to that of Quine's it would be absurd to conclude that Kant's critique of judgment fulfills the Davidsonian program for understanding the meaning of sentences.⁸⁸ However, the problem of judgment in regards to understanding metaphor, as Davidson would agree, does present itself here. If understanding the meaning of metaphor calls for judgment, then it might be said to be possible that we can share a judgment on metaphor - or in other words, that a

shared metaphorical "common sense," although not being a foundation itself, might still act in the place of a foundation.

In section 59 of his Critique of Judgment, entitled "Of Beauty as the symbol of Morality," Kant distinguishes between two forms of intuition: one, that of empirical concepts (what he calls "examples") and the other, that of Understanding, which he calls "schemata."⁸⁹ Whenever we attempt to make intelligible or illustrate in a sensible form the nature of our own intuition, Kant believed, we do so either schematically, which is to say we have some a priori intuitive understanding of what our examples are, or we do so symbolically, which Kant says "are either words, or visible (algebraic, even mimetical) signs, as mere expressions for concepts."⁹⁰ When we speak of the discursive, therefore, we do so by either pairing it with the demonstrable "examples" or with the symbolical signs that stand in place of some concept. The art of intuition which enables us to glimpse something before it is present to our senses is therefore one that is a priori. According to Kant,

"All intuitions, which we supply to concepts a priori, are therefore either schemata or symbols, of which the former contain direct, the latter indirect, presentations of the concept. The former do this demonstratively, the latter by means of analogy ...in which judgement excoercises a double function."⁹¹

The reason why we require judgment to understand what is symbolic, according to Kant, is that we must be able to apply the concept of sensible intuition "to a quite different object of which the first is only a symbol."⁹² The example Kant uses to illustrate this point is one of considering the state to be a machine:

"Thus a monarchical state is represented by a living body, if it

is governed by natural laws, and by a mere machine (like a hand-mill) if governed by an individual absolute will; but in both cases symbolically. For between a despotic state and a hand-mill there is, to be sure, no similarity; but there is a similarity in the rules according to which we reflect upon these two things and their causality." ⁹³

So contrary to what Davidson would allow, Kant declared that there are "rules" governing our symbolic concepts and that these rules could be discernible.

These rules governing analogy, like rules governing the meaning of metaphor, are only symbolic presentations - what Kant called "hypotyposis" - and are not to be taken literally. As Kant explains, "Thus the words ground (support, basis), to depend (to be held up from above), to flow from something (instead of, to follow), substance (as Locke expresses it, the support of accidents), and countless others are symbolical hypotypes and expressions for concepts, not by means of direct intuition, but only by analogy with it." ⁹⁴ If we were to use these terms as if they were literal, Kant warns, then our symbolic concepts like "God" would lapse into "anthropomorphism...by which nothing at all is cognised, not even in a practical point of view." ⁹⁵

Judgment, of course, is also required to understand our non-symbolic language, but Kant's point is that if we can render judgment upon that which is evident (the schemata) we should also be able to do the same for the symbolic. For example, we can judge an object to be beautiful and we can similarly come to some understanding or judgment on a higher plane on the idea of the beautiful. "Hence," Kant proclaims,

"...both an account of this inner possibility in the subject and

of the external possibility of a nature that agrees with it,
[judgment] finds itself to be referred to something within the
subject as well as without him, something which is neither nature
nor freedom, but yet is connected with the supersensible ground
of the latter." ⁹⁶

Kant concludes by saying that the rules governing the meaning of metaphorical concepts such as "grounds" and "substance" can only be understood on the symbolic level and not on the literal.⁹⁷ There is, therefore, such a thing as a symbolical grounding, something that we all constitutionally possess, that works on the "supersensical" level. "In this supersensical ground," he observes, "the theoretical faculty is bound together in unity with the practical, in a way which though common is yet unknown."

In the Kantian scheme of things, therefore, it is possible to reach a common sensory agreement about the foundations of symbolic forms. This common sensory experience would have to exist in the noumenal world. Although the vehicle in which we can share in this common judgment "is yet unknown," we can nevertheless claim its existence, Kant argued, and by this "supersensical" judgment bridge the gap between the sensory world and our ethical world. As Kant argues, "Taste makes possible the transition, without any violent leap, from the charm of Sense to habitual moral interest."

Now it would be difficult to maintain that Kant had managed satisfactorily to establish the foundation of common sensory judgment, either in the sensory realm or the supersensory realm, the noumenal world or the phenomenal one. All he had managed to do, after pointing out that Locke and others had used symbolic language which should never be taken literally, was then to suggest that it was still

possible to achieve agreement upon "supersensical grounds," which, far from clarifying the problem, merely serves further to obscure it. Kant simply replaced one set of metaphors for another. However, the relevant point of his critique is this: for Kant it was possible to render a judgment about the nature of the world based upon our intuitive understanding of it. This intuitive insight is something we all share. All that remained was to establish the adequate "grounds" from which our common sensibilities can conflate with our "moral interest."

Now of what can this common sensory ground consist? With the possible exception of the sense of smell, all other senses at one time or another had been put forward as candidates for reaching a common judgment on knowledge. Aristotle, for example, insisted that it was the sense of touch. In the De Anima Aristotle argued that touch "is the most exact of man's senses," without which "there can be no other sense."⁹⁸ "This may be seen from the fact," Aristotle went on, "that it is the organ of sense and nothing else which makes all the difference in the human race between natural endowments of man and man. For hard-skinned men are duller of intellect, while those who are soft-skinned are gifted."⁹⁹ When Aquinas refers to this passage in his Summa theologiae he repeats Aristotle's argument that touch governs all of the other senses.¹⁰⁰ From touch we are able to discriminate between the animate and the inanimate, Aquinas argued, and thus differentiate between various modes of intellect. For Plato, obviously, the chief sense of understanding was that of vision in which there were two types, that of ordinary vision of the world of appearances and that of the philosophical vision of the world of the Forms.

In the Old Testament the common ground of touch or vision was thought of as being secondary to the sense of hearing, where Yahweh was never seen but only revealed himself by the sound of his voice ("I am Who I Am" the burning bush told Moses). In passages in the New Testament, on the other hand, the common sense of hearing was occasionally replaced with that of taste, as in belief that "those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost" [Hebrews 6:4]. Saint Antoninus, when he refers to this passage in his Summa theologica, points out that taste is linked to wisdom, the latin word for taste being sapor from which the Italians derive sapere, meaning to know.¹⁰¹

Of all the metaphors of knowing in the Western philosophical tradition, however, the strongest concerns the common sense of vision, either the vision of objects as they appear to us, or the imaginary vision of what our sense of sight does not immediately perceive. The use to which visual metaphors are put in political thought, then, is frequently in terms of establishing a common sensory basis for understanding knowledge. Political knowledge, of course, must be a public knowledge. It is possible to obtain this knowledge, philosophers have argued, precisely because we all share in the same capacity for sense. Our collective judgment of sense enables us collectively to "see" the truth of a proposition, moderating what we might falsely perceive if all our images were simply privately held ones. This, of course, is exactly what the Latins had believed. For the Romans it was important to instil a sensus communis in the population - that is, a universally shared virtue. Quintilian even suggested that a young man's education be conducted in public, for if he were to retain a private teacher he would not receive that "sensus

which we call communis." ¹⁰²

The important and obvious thing about common sense, then, is that it is publicly shared. It is the gate through we come to know one another and ultimately ourselves - a public language game, if you like. But for those philosophers who were not content to reach agreement on the world of appearances, however, an agreement on another plane of sensory experience was needed.

Metaphor is the tool in which our political imagination manifests itself, where that which is present to our senses is transformed into a discourse about the nature of political knowledge. Locke, for example, points out that if we are to have a concept of knowledge, we must attend to

"...how great a dependence our words have on common sensible ideas; and how those which are made use of to stand for actions and notions quite removed from sense, have their rise from thence, and from obvious sensible ideas are transferred to more obtuse significations, and made to stand for ideas that come not under the cognizance of our senses." ¹⁰³

Metaphorically, then, many political philosophers believed that we must first ascend the ladder of common sense in order to arrive at political knowledge.

The insight of political metaphors, then, goes beyond their literal meaning for the purpose for which they are used is often to instill a common sensory ground for understanding. In the history of political thought, this ground or foundation was never thought to be sufficient by itself for establishing knowledge, only in conjunction with language and the world could that foundation be laid. Like in Plato's Seventh Letter, many theorists reasonably believed that

knowledge was composed of the "word," "the definition," and the "image" which, when once joined together, could be shifted by the intellect to reveal truth.

Today it might seem more reasonable to accept the literalist position with regards to the meaning of metaphor - a position which contends that our political discourse would be doomed to failure if we were to ever take our figurative discourse for anything other than a replacement for ordinary language. Consequently, many theorists, like Davidson and Rorty, would consign to flames our prescriptive, cognitive, and ontological metaphorical utterances in deference to a descriptive, more truthful, language. Indeed, this is exactly how William James describes pragmatism as a pursuit to abandon apriori reasoning. Yet the problem with this pragmatist response, as we have seen, is the lack of appreciation for the role of the imaginary or the super sensory, that which appears as a handmaiden thought, making thought possible.

We do not have to conclude with the ontological camp that metaphors express that ineffable condition of human existence. Nor do we have to agree with the cognitive school that metaphoric expressions are privileged over others. On the contrary, metaphoric images reveal nothing except our imagination at play, and the metaphoric expression itself may be nothing more than a poetic response to this imaginary image, an expression which we are free to interpret literally if we choose to do so. However, we would be poor interpreters indeed if we were to dismiss metaphor's prevalence in political thought as fanciful embroidery. The political theorist who creates a metaphor is presenting us with a ground for common sensible agreement, inviting us

to share in his vision, nudging us closer towards that realm of political knowledge which his imagination has prepared. Thus the problem with proclaiming metaphors to be absurd is that this is too crude a judgment to apply to political thought. Political philosophers carve out in a language - a language which is literal, figurative, and image-laden - their concept of the state. As we do not judge Michelangelo a failure because his stone refuses to come to life, so too we might refrain from condemning political philosophers for chiseling out theories which seem to continually limp when they are set afoot. Such is the very nature of statecraft.

"When one looks at political metaphors, Judith Sklar writes in her Men and Citizens, "one wants to know how they work within the context of a writer's general purpose. One does not want to judge their legitimacy or validity or grammatical correctness."¹⁰⁴ We might want to add, then, that our attempts to interpret political metaphors should not lapse into simply a deconstructionist attack on how they betray the text. We should read the metaphors of political thought in terms of how they were written and, possibly, how they were intended, rather than conflating them into an ontological argument or reducing them into whatever their literal interpretations mean.

CHAPTER THREE:
HOBBES'S GROUNDING OF METAPHOR

For it is not the bare words, but the scope of the writer, that giveth the true light, by which any writing is to be interpreted; and they that insist upon single texts, without considering the main design, can derive nothing from them clearly; but rather by casting atoms of scripture, as dust before men's eyes, make everything more obscure than it is. —Thomas Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes has been called the first modern political philosopher, a revolutionary thinker, even a genius by those who have studied his work; he has also been labelled a moral defective, an atheist, an advocater of tyranny, and, to believe T.S. Eliot, one of the most dangerous little men that history has ever put forward.¹ Although it has been over three hundred years since his death, Hobbes's theories are still widely debated, with books and articles continually written offering new interpretations of Hobbesian thought. He was, among other things, a philosopher and a political theorist, an early anthropologist and psychologist (in the manner of most contract theorists), a scientist and a historian, a scholar and translator of classical texts, and a rhetorician as well as a sometimes poet. If one wants to be generous, his controversial and stimulating attacks upon religious matters might also qualify him as a theologian, albeit of an anti-religious disposition. Hobbes also considered himself to be a first-rate geometrician, although during his own day many had claimed otherwise.² In short, there was hardly a subject that Hobbes did not have some expertise or opinion upon and which did not prove to be influential in at least some quarters. In some of these areas his theories were more successful than others, but in all things Hobbes never lost his particular flavor of wit and style for which he was renowned.

Born in England in 1588, the year of the Spanish Armada, Hobbes claimed that he entered into a world full of fear, and even though for the first half of his life Europe enjoyed a remarkably peaceful spell, Hobbes nevertheless was to witness the terrible violence brought about by the English Civil War, thus reinforcing his belief in the fragility of the commonwealth and the basic contentiousness of those who inhabit

it.³ If fear and restlessness were what plagued the commonwealth and those who dwelled in it, Hobbes argued, then a political order which guaranteed peace and security would provide the antidote. What was needed, Hobbes postulated, was for the subjects of the commonwealth to agree to surrender their rights to an all-powerful sovereign who, in exchange, would promise them peace and security. But before arriving at this, for the seventeenth century at least, remarkable conclusion, Hobbes had argued that his civil philosophy was simply the natural outgrowth from a study of the natural sciences. He was, he claimed, the first philosopher ever to offer a "civil science," thus unifying all of human knowledge into a coherent whole.⁴ Emanating from a single premise, like the spokes of a wheel, were for Hobbes the varied disciplines of optics, astronomy, geometry, ethics, logic and poetry, to name just a few examples - in short, all that can be subsumed under the heading of human knowledge - and at the hub of this wheel was Hobbes's materialist claim that the world consisted of matter and motion.

What has animated most thinkers since Hobbes's day has been his pronouncements upon civil philosophy, with his other writings on optics, geometry, poetry and the like treated as parochial interests.

Now Hobbes's "civil science" did not emerge gradually over the span of his long life (he died in 1679 at the age of ninety-one) but seemed to have begun early in his intellectual development. Thus we find that in 1628 he engaged in a translation of Thucydides's History of the Peloponnesian War because, he had said, he wanted to warn the English people against the temptation to listen to rhetoric and to favor democracy.⁵ With his scholarly, if not anti-democratic credentials firmly established, Hobbes travelled for three years around the

Continent beginning in 1634 where he met Galileo and various other scientists who were to greatly influence his own work. So by the time Hobbes came to write his Elements of Law Natural and Politic in 1640, most of his theories on natural and civil science were squarely in place. He writes, for example, in his Epistle Dedicatory to this work that his design was to lay a foundation from which to build the laws of nature and of politics. His aim, he said, was simple:

"To reduce this doctrine to the rules and infallibility of reason, there is no way, but first to put such principles down for a foundation,...and afterward to build thereon the truth of cases in the law of nature..."⁶

The foundation which Hobbes created was partially derived from his premise that the world consisted of matter and motion, a theory which was to inform almost all of his subsequent works. Thus in his Tractatus Opticus, published in Paris in 1644, he reinforces his own theory of sense impressions which was outlined in his Elements of Law. Hobbes had intended that his main body of work be presented in three separate volumes, De Corpore, De Homine and De Cive, but the English Civil War upset the planned publication of these books so that De Cive, which was to be the culmination of his writings, was actually published first in 1642. Leviathan, which is generally regarded as his masterpiece, was written between 1649-51 while he was in Paris and is in many ways a brilliant restatement of what he had said earlier in De Cive and Elements of Law. But along with a synopsis of his earlier work, Leviathan also contained a masterful review of almost all of human knowledge. Beginning with the subject of sense impressions, which was explained by Hobbes in a suitably materialist fashion, Hobbes devoted the first part of Leviathan to the subject of man; the

second, the commonwealth; the third, the Christian society; the fourth, a critique on the fallacies of religious doctrine. Along the way Hobbes managed to tackle such diverse subjects as the nature of speech and language, reason and science, imagination and psychology, as well as an extremely controversial exegesis of the Old and New Testaments. What may surprise the student of Hobbes is not just his diversity of interests - he also managed to write books on geometry (1656 & 1672), rhetoric (1637) and translate all of Homer (1675) - but the consistency of his thought.⁷ For a man whose written work spans fifty years, such a consistency of interlocking ideas can only be marvelled at.

Recently some interpreters of Hobbesian thought have begun to look elsewhere for clues to more accurately gauge his civil philosophy. Richard Peters and J.W.N. Watkins have written of Hobbes's grounding of civil philosophy upon a scientific reasoning, particularly upon the brand of methodology offered by Galileo and Harvey.⁸ Quentin Skinner and Richard Tuck have stressed the historical milieu of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century.⁹ According to Skinner and Tuck, Hobbes's concept of political obligation should be viewed in terms of Grotian theories of natural law and of the scientific principles offered by the Continental anti-sceptical philosophers. From a study of the language of other thinkers of Hobbes's day, Skinner and Tuck suggest that Hobbes's political philosophy was far from unique. Leo Strauss, on the other hand, has written of the evolving nature of Hobbes's philosophy.¹⁰ According to Strauss, Hobbes strove to provide the grounds for political obligation, thinking that, at first, the subject of history could provide us with an explanatory science of human behavior. Hobbes then

abandoned this historical project, according to Strauss, in favor of a science of politics with which, in turn, he gradually grew disenchanted. Finally, Strauss contends, Hobbes settled for a synthesis of history, political philosophy, and fiction as a means of providing the grounds for human behavior and scientific explanation.

In addition to the above attempts to view Hobbes's political doctrine in terms of a scientific or a historical setting, other recent thinkers have stressed Hobbes's ethical doctrine, drawing from a distinction between natural rights and moral obligations.¹¹ Their arguments are both subtle and persuasive, but by focusing solely upon Hobbes's concept of political obligation a host of other Hobbesian interests recedes into the background. Hobbes's interests, as just mentioned, were practically universal. He was justly proud not only of his political doctrine but also of his theory of optics and of his geometrical discoveries. It is therefore in the spirit of Hobbes's warning that unless one examines "the scope of the writer...nothing can be derived clearly" that the following addresses itself, attempting to draw together some of Hobbes's other concerns.¹²

One should not be too surprised to find that the subject of metaphor forms the basis for much of what follows. In light of the account of political metaphor advanced in the previous chapter, this present chapter suggests that metaphor connects such disparate Hobbesian concerns as history, rhetoric, judgment and even political obligation. Metaphor, the reader will recall, is the means by which the theorist translates the vocabulary of our immediate sensations into a super-sensory realm; collectively we can metaphorically "see" the truth of a statement or of a state of affairs, and we can render a common judgment upon some fact even though that fact may not be

immediately present before us.

Now the "standard account" of Thomas Hobbes's meaning and use of metaphor is one of proclaiming that Hobbes was highly inconsistent in his denunciation of metaphor (considering his liberal use of such tropes) and that his rhetorical flourishes are less relevant when compared to his towering political and philosophical achievements. This standard account has led to a marginalizing of Hobbes's metaphoric thought: whenever the subject is spoken of, as in an occasional article in a journal of political thought, the argument usually takes the line that Hobbes's treatment of metaphor acts best as a heuristic device. One recent attempt to deviate from this standard account can be found in David Johnston's The Rhetoric of the Leviathan, yet Johnston makes only a passing reference to metaphor in an otherwise excellent book devoted to Hobbes's use of language. Clearly this is not enough.¹³

This standard account, it will be argued, is in error when it suggests that Hobbes's metaphoric thought was inconsistent or even that the subject is relatively unimportant when contrasted to Hobbes's concern for, say, political obligation. This is to posit a false dichotomy between the content of Hobbes's theory of political obligation and the form in which it is uttered. If we take the trouble to read Hobbes's thoughts on the subject in their proper context we soon discover that Hobbes was in fact largely dependent upon metaphor as a means to, first, derive his political philosophy, and, second, to articulate it to the general reader. Not surprisingly, we find that Hobbes was to make continual remarks directed toward the reading of metaphors throughout his fifty years of written work, regardless of whether his subject at the time was

concerned with political obligation, history, poetry, science or rhetoric. Whatever we might today believe, Hobbes himself never considered the subject of metaphoric thought to be marginal.

It is argued in this chapter that the errors of the standard account of Hobbes and metaphor are due to a twentieth century misreading of political metaphor - as intimated in the previous chapter - and that, consequently, Hobbesian metaphor can only be read as he understood and used the term. Secondly, it is suggested that from this contextualization of Hobbesian metaphor a host of other Hobbesian concerns begin to emerge, namely optics, rhetoric, language, judgment and political obligation.

Finally, it will be argued that if this reading is so far correct, then many of our contemporary accounts of Hobbes's political thought will therefore need to be amended, for Hobbes's political thought is oftentimes erroneously viewed through a lens that distorts Hobbes's own political and philosophical intentions. The argument frequently leveled against Hobbes is that he "fails" to convince us of the need to surrender our rights to the sovereign in exchange for security.¹⁴ From an adequate understanding of Hobbes's theory and use of metaphor, it is hoped that this rather reductionist attack on Hobbes can be corrected. It is argued that Hobbes knew very well that argument alone could never convince us to surrender our rights to the sovereign. He knew that not every man was capable of working out a theory of political obligation by himself; he needed to have help. At the same time, however, Hobbes argued that individual members of a commonwealth should not take it on "authority" that a particular theory was correct. For too long had citizens sheepishly followed the dictates of this or that political, philosophical, or religious

"authority" to the detriment of truth, Hobbes complained. The problem for Hobbes was that, since not every man could work these things out for himself, and since it was too dangerous just to accept a claim based upon the authority of the claimant, then another tool was needed by Hobbes to convince the people of the correctness of his political doctrine. That tool, simply put, was metaphor.

Section One:

The Standard Account

The common line on Hobbes's treatment of metaphor has been to point out that while Hobbes expressly argued that metaphors were dangerous to the propagation of scientific and political knowledge he nevertheless found room to make heavy use of his own metaphors in order to get his ideas across to the reader. This most consistent of political theorists, it is often pointed out, was remarkably inconsistent. In an article entitled "Metaphor and Political Knowledge" - where it is observed that metaphors are indispensable to political thought - Eugene Miller points out that one of the most striking examples of metaphoric thought can be found in Hobbes's Leviathan.¹⁵ According to Miller, "the contradiction between Hobbes' principle and his practice [of metaphor] teaches an important lesson about metaphors and models in political science."¹⁶ Miller contends that it remains unclear whether Hobbes had actually intended to contradict himself but that in either event we should not fail to conclude from Hobbes's glaring "contradiction" the central importance of metaphor in articulating political knowledge. Another advocate of the standard account is Frederick Whelan who argues that Hobbes's treatment of metaphor was not consistent. According to Whelan,

"Hobbes himself is paradoxically forced to resort to the eloquence which he otherwise condemns, and his observations on language provide us with grounds for doubts about the success of his enterprise."¹⁷

In other words, the very basis of Hobbesian thought is suspect, Whelan suggests, simply because of this central rhetorical paradox contained in his writings.

So common is this reading of Hobbes and metaphor that Richard Ashcraft, who often writes from a radical political perspective, has also written of Hobbes's paradoxical professed disdain for metaphors which are nevertheless coupled with his frequent use of them throughout his work.¹⁸ "Despite the fact that Hobbes made extensive use of metaphor in the elaboration of his own political theory," Ashcraft argues, "he maintained that the application of the principles of science to politics did not require the use of 'deceptive' language, which he attributed to the theologically centered political theories advanced by his contemporaries."¹⁹ For Ashcraft, then, as for Miller and Whelan, Hobbes's frequent use of metaphors, when combined with his professed disdain for their existence in science and philosophy, presents us with a remarkable paradox. Whilst for Miller this paradox or "contradiction" merely highlights the invaluable need for metaphor in political thought and for Whelan leads us to doubt the soundness of Hobbes's "enterprise," Ashcraft sees this Hobbesian paradox as the basis for the modern ideological bias against certain ways of expressing oneself. According to Ashcraft,

"...Hobbes is a figure of some importance, since he associates the tendency to employ metaphorical language not only with political deception, but, more importantly, with the making of

revolution. This tendency, to link metaphor, ideology, and revolutionary political objectives, which, I believe, constitutes the ultimate socio-political standard for the modern negative attitude toward such language, has its origins in Hobbes' efforts to purge 'scientific' political theory of socially disruptive terminology."²⁰

In other words, Ashcraft contends that Hobbes's anti-metaphorical proclamations are part of the ideologically tinged language of control, legislating which linguistic utterances are acceptable to political thought and which are dangerous to a received political program. While Miller's, Whelan's and Ashcraft's conclusions from Hobbes's use of metaphor are wildly divergent, they all agree that Hobbes had indeed contradicted himself with his use of metaphors in order to articulate his political thought and yet, at the same time, with his damnation of metaphor's prevalence in scientific and political discourse.

Now many serious students of Hobbes have no doubt noticed this seeming inconsistency in Hobbes's work, though few might, following Ashcraft, conclude that Hobbes marked the sinister beginning of a linguistically controlled ideology. "It is striking," Don Herzog declares, "that Hobbes bitterly condemns metaphor and himself develops an elaborate body-politic metaphor."²¹ Perhaps the most "striking" Hobbesian passage which best reveals this so-called contradiction is found in chapter five of Leviathan where Hobbes argues that

"To conclude, The Light of humane minds is Perspicuous Words, but by exact definitions first snuffed, and purged from ambiguity; Reason is the pace; Encrease of Science, the way; and the Benefit of man-kind, the end. And on the contrary, Metaphors, and

senslesse and ambiguous words, are like ignes fatui; and reasoning upon them, is wandering amongst innumerable absurdities; and their end, contention, and sedition, or contempt."²²

As Miller points out, despite these harsh words condemning metaphor and linking their use to treason, "Hobbes does not hesitate to embody a metaphor in the title of Leviathan."²³ Moreover, Miller continues, the above passage is itself scattered with metaphorical allusions - namely, that the search for scientific truth is a following of a path. This, then, can be said to be the standard account of Hobbes and metaphor - one where, on the surface at least, Hobbes was flagrantly failing to practice what he preached, and where the implications of his failure lead inexorably to the undermining of at least a portion of his overall thought, if not (via Whelan and Ashcraft) of his entire philosophic enterprise.

Appealing as the standard account might initially sound to us - mainly for its simplicity and, on the surface, self evident justification - there remains a serious obstacle: how could a man of Hobbes's intellect fail to notice such a glaring contradiction? To this question the adherents of the standard account largely remain silent. Indeed, theorists like Miller, Whelan, and particularly Ashcraft have a stake in insuring that Hobbes's supposed "contradiction" is not resolved, for that would mean a re-evaluation of their own primary concerns would be in order. For Ashcraft especially, since he claims that Hobbes's inconsistency on metaphor forms the starting point for subsequent ideological prejudices against various modes of political expression, a resolution of Hobbes's contradiction might jeopardize this very project. So if the price

that the standard account pays for its accusation is the belief that Hobbes was not entirely honest - either with himself or with his readers - then so be it. The cost is small, particularly if the dividends in holding such a view serve to reinforce one's own political theory.

The problem with the above standard account is that it reads Hobbes's pronouncements upon metaphor only through a twentieth century perspective. Since for us there appears to be a contradiction between using metaphors in political discourse and then claiming that such metaphors are dangerous to political stability, then we assume that that contradiction would have been evident to the seventeenth century reader as well. And in Ashcraft's case, since Hobbes's attack upon metaphors is interpreted as forming the starting point of an ideological tradition, then Hobbes's treatment of metaphoric language is analyzed solely in terms of a tradition of which Hobbes himself could never have been aware.

Now the antidote to this ad hoc theorizing is a good dose of historical context, so let us first begin with the relevant passages where Hobbes writes about metaphor, and then move on to consider just how these pronouncements might have been intended by Hobbes and understood during his own time.

In the early 1640's Hobbes wrote a critique of Thomas White's book De mundo dialogi tres, which was written in 1642. White had modeled his book on that of Galileo's work Dialogo...sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo, written ten years earlier, and where Galileo had set forth his theory regarding matter and motion - a theory which Hobbes himself found impressive enough to borrow as a starting point for some of his

own theories. According to White's De Mundo, human liberty is caused by a motion from which it is possible to move from doubt to certainty on religious and political principles. Insofar as this goes, broadly speaking, this was also Hobbes's program, but White had then gone on to argue that it was possible to reconcile the principles of the Catholic faith with those of Galilean science, a suggestion which was antithetical to Hobbes's own doctrine.

Hobbes's attack upon White's book, entitled Thomas White's De Mundo Examined, is centered upon White's claim that it is possible to analyze philosophy without using logic.²⁴ For Hobbes, this erroneous dismissal of logic in philosophy was due to White's unfortunate confusion between the discourse of science (or logic) and theology. According to Hobbes, "if we are to judge whether philosophy should not be treated logically it is useful to know what the following are: philosophy, logic, and the other arts by which we expound upon, any kind of subject."²⁵ Since White confuses these categories of discourse, Hobbes argued, it is necessary for us to distinguish the various functions of speech from one another and describe how each is used. Logic, declared Hobbes, is used "to demonstrate the truth of some assertion universal in character"; history is used "to narrate something"; rhetoric aims "to move our hearer's mind towards performing something"; finally, poetry's purpose is "to glorify deeds and, by celebrating them, to hand them down to posterity."²⁶ So much for the general purpose of each form of discourse, but Hobbes then surprisingly went on to suggest that the salient feature in each form of utterance is how it uses metaphor.

Logic, Hobbes observes in his answer to White, should be entirely free of metaphor "for every metaphor has by its very nature a double

significance and is ambiguous." If logic - or a philosophy which uses logic - were to use metaphors, then it would be impossible to "proceed from definitions... which are employed deliberately in order to avoid equivocation and ambiguity." On the other hand, Hobbes states, it is perfectly acceptable to use metaphors in historical discourse so long as they seek "not to move the mind but to shape it." More appropriate still are the metaphors in rhetoric, Hobbes says, for they are "of service in moving the mind." Finally, with regard to poetic discourse, metaphors are quite suitable as a kind of "ornament." In short, what distinguishes philosophy, history, rhetoric and poetry from one another is not simply their subject matter but their use of metaphor.²⁷

Now it is not very difficult to understand why Hobbes would outlaw metaphors in logic or a logically based philosophy. What is striking, however, is the reason why Hobbes would have it so: metaphor occasions a "double significance" or "ambiguity" of words. Here Hobbes defines metaphor solely in terms of words and not of images. For Hobbes, logic and philosophy were impossible if the signification of names were "equivocal." The subject of metaphor, therefore, was understood by Hobbes in the 1640's as a confusion of names rather than of images, borrowing from Aristotle's description of metaphor in Poetics as "the application to one thing of a name belonging to another."²⁸ As the reader might recall, it was not until several hundred years after Aristotle, with the Rhetorica ad Herrenium and Hermogenes of Tarsus, that the Greeks realized that metaphor created a vivid mental image in addition to a transference of names. Hobbes, then, in his answer to White's De Mundo was simply reiterating what Aristotle had said, only this time he was adding the proviso that

metaphor could also be used as the litmus test in measuring various forms of discourse.

In his Elements of Law, written a couple years before his attack on White's De Mundo, Hobbes argued that the grounds of human nature cannot be derived if there were an equivocation of names. Any scientific undertaking to understand human nature, Hobbes declared, must be free of metaphor since "all metaphors are by profession equivocal." Since true "ratiocination" or reasoning can only be achieved once the exact meaning of names are nailed down, then metaphors in this instance should be avoided, he insisted. But again, Hobbes is speaking here of metaphoric names and not of metaphoric images.

In the first part of his De Corpore, originally published in 1655, Hobbes changes his mind about the danger of metaphor as an equivocation of names. Hobbes argues in his chapter "Computation or Logic" that syllogistic reasoning may be in error if the meaning of names are not settled, but he then goes on to suggest that metaphors, since they wear their equivocation on their sleeve, as it were, are not as dangerous as are other forms of equivocation:

"And though there may be fallacy in equivocal terms, yet in those that be manifestly such, there is none at all; none in metaphors, for they profess the transferring of names from one thing to another. Nevertheless, sometimes equivocals (and those not very obscure) may deceive."²⁹

The shift in Hobbes thinking about the danger of metaphor's equivocation occurred sometime earlier - that is, between the writing of his attack on De Mundo and of the Elements in the early 1640's and his De Corpore in 1655 - and probably took place around the time he

wrote his Leviathan. In Leviathan, published in 1651, Hobbes points out that words such as "fear," "justice," and "cruelty" have different meanings dependent upon the speaker, and he then argues

"...therefore such names can never be true grounds for
ratiocination. No more than can metaphors, and tropes of speech;
but these are less dangerous, because they profess their in-
constancy; which the others do not."³⁰

Therefore, in the passages encountered thus far, spanning from 1640 to 1655, Hobbes continually refers to metaphors only as "names" rather than as images. Moreover, his only inconsistency in these passages appears to be a waffling on whether metaphors equivocate names and deceive the reader - his position prior to Leviathan - or whether metaphor's equivocation is so obvious to the reader that it poses no serious threat to logical thinking - his post-Leviathan position.

Now if we recall the standard account's argument we soon realize that it must therefore be in error, for the standard account holds that Hobbes attacked metaphors as being dangerous whilst at the same time using metaphors to decorate his discourse, particularly in Leviathan. This is, afterall, Hobbes's supposed "contradiction" which leads to an undermining of his entire philosophic "enterprise." But a closer examination of Hobbes's statements regarding metaphor reveals that Hobbes was remarkably consistent on the subject - that is, he continually damned metaphor solely in the Aristotelian sense of names rather than as images. If we take the trouble to read Hobbes as he no doubt intended us to read him, then his highly image-laden Leviathan is not at odds with his pronouncements upon metaphor. Hobbes's supposed "contradiction" is only our twentieth century confusion that since we presently understand metaphors as both words and as images,

then it must have always been understood in the same manner. If we return to the celebrated passage in Leviathan (quoted earlier) which states that metaphors are like ignes fatui which mislead the scientific wanderer and lead to sedition, we find that, again, Hobbes is speaking here of metaphors only as words. Metaphoric images, on the other hand, were never considered by Hobbes to be dangerous, and he would freely employ them whenever he wished us to 'see' a particular point.

At first glance Hobbes's denunciation of metaphor as a confusion of names might seem to be only of parochial interest; his concern fitting squarely with the classical insistence that the meaning of words is conventionally agreed upon, having no real link to the world other than as an individual denotation of an object. Hobbes preached that there was nothing universal in the world except names and that in reality each name denoted only an individual substance rather than a universal concept.³¹ Moreover, Hobbes felt, it was extremely difficult to fix the meaning of names for the same word which might be used differently by various speakers. If political philosophy was to become truly scientific then a political, philosophical, and logical language must abandon words which had equivocal meanings, and it is for this reason Hobbes occasionally wrote that metaphors were dangerous to his nominalistic science of philosophy. Again, this is only to speak of metaphors as names rather than as images. If we bracket what Hobbes has to say about metaphors qua names, therefore, we find a remarkable consistency of thought. Yet this is only one half of the equation, for what is left entirely unresolved is the subject of Hobbes and metaphoric images.

Section Two:

The Value of the Image

In 1637 Hobbes decided to write his own treatise on rhetoric, entitled the Whole Art of Rhetoric, which proved surprisingly popular as it was not only published in 1637 but had a second printing in 1651 and was published again shortly after his death. Hobbes's own Rhetoric seems to be a shortened version of Aristotle's Rhetoric with additional references also to Aristotle's Poetics. In his Whole Art of Rhetoric, for example, we find that Hobbes shortens Aristotle's description of metaphor:

"Aristotle, in the twelfth chapter of his Poetry, defines a metaphor to be the translation of a name from one signification to another; whereof he makes four kinds, 1. From the general to the particular. 2. From the particular to the general. 3. From one particular to another. 4. From proportion." ³²

Hobbes then insists that for metaphors to be "graceful" there must be an aptness to the subject at hand, which is a warning that Aristotle also makes on the prudential use of metaphor. However, having reprinted in condensed form Aristotle's suggestions regarding metaphor, Hobbes then immediately argues that metaphors also make inanimate objects into animate ones and that this "animation is that expression which makes us seem to see the thing before our eyes." ³³ In other words, Hobbes was aware, although Aristotle was not, that metaphor occasioned a visual mental image (that which is "before our eyes") in addition to an Aristotelian transference of names.

Hobbes did not just happen to alight on the vivid mental image which metaphor occasioned all by himself, nor was he even remotely the first to notice this phenomenon. In the late sixteenth and early

seventeenth century several texts appeared on the subject of rhetoric, almost all discussing metaphor in terms of its image making capacity. Most of these works were loosely based on the Greek Rhetorica ad Herennium or leaned heavily upon Cicero's and Quintilian's neo-classical account of rhetoric and metaphor, as discussed in chapter one. Quintilian, for instance, remarks that "there are certain experiences which the Greeks call fantasia, and the Romans visions, whereby things absent are presented to our imagination with such extreme vividness that they seem actually to be before our eyes." ³⁴

Indeed, Hobbes's foray in rhetorical studies can be seen as part of a neo-classical revival of the subject which was largely due to, and in response to, the pre-Elizabethan theory and practice of rhetoric. ³⁵ In what had been labelled at the time the "metaphysical conceit," the pre-Elizabethan poets of the fourteenth and fifteenth century had used metaphors to adorn their prose and poetry without any thought, or so it was argued, to the aptness of these images to their discourse. The art of poetry was considered to be that of revealing the poet's imagination, even if that meant using tropes more for their dramatic and startling imagery than for their clarifying or logical content. In the late sixteenth century, however, Peter Ramus had persuasively argued that poetry should have a logical premise. ³⁶ No longer, Ramus and his followers argued, should poetry be based upon the free-association of images, but should instead be directed towards a particular purpose, illuminating that which might seem at first obscure, or simply revealing the order of God's natural design.

It was with this insight that Hobbes and the other neo-classical rhetoricians of the sixteenth and seventeenth century had argued that metaphor, like rhetoric, should serve a particular function. The

subjects of rhetoric and poetry were thus carved up in Aristotelian fashion and divided into their various functions. The perennially studied Rhetorica ad Herennium, a still widely-used and influential text at the time, had divided rhetoric into thirty-five figures of diction, nineteen figures of thought, and ten tropes as an "ornament" to speech; by Hobbes's day these categories were whittled down to the five elements of Invention, Disposition, Elocution, Memory, and Delivery.³⁷ The Ramists, similarly, proclaimed that various modes of rhetoric could be further divided into two sections: the Dialectic (which included invention, disposition and memory) and the purely Rhetorical (namely, the subject of elocution and delivery).³⁸ Of course Hobbes, as we have seen in his attack on Thomas White's De Mundo, similarly declared that there were four forms of discourse - the logical or philosophical, the historical, the rhetorical, and the poetic. Each, according to Hobbes, can be discerned by how they use metaphor. The gist of this neo-classical revival of rhetoric and metaphor, then, broadly speaking, was one of stipulating that metaphors should be above all apt expressions to their various modes of discourse, and that metaphoric images, used sparingly, could be used to place vivid mental images "before the reader's eyes."

This, indeed, was the rhetorical milieu in which Hobbes wrote. There was little or no argument directed against metaphors qua images so long as they were apt to the discourse at hand. Metaphoric images were viewed as one of the best tools at the writer's disposal to inform and persuade his audience. More importantly, as we shall see, from the very first example we have of Hobbes's written work - starting with his translation of Thucydides in 1628, and finishing with his translation of Homer almost fifty years later - Hobbes would

continually comment upon the importance of the metaphorical image in enabling the reader to acquire historical, political and philosophical knowledge. Although Hobbes stressed that a metaphorical equivocation of names may lead to confusion, he also believed that the use of metaphorical images can lead to clarification and to knowledge.

Although believing that his flirtation with poetry and the fine arts during his youth was a waste of time, Hobbes was justly proud of his translation of Thucydides's History of the Peloponnesian War in 1628.³⁹

Hobbes had proclaimed a great affinity for Thucydides's work. His purpose in translating the Greek had been, he claimed, two-fold: firstly, so that Thucydides "should speak to the English in their own tongue and warn them against temptation to listen to rhetoric," and secondly, so that the English could come to know by reading Thucydides "how stupid democracy is and by how much one man is wiser than an assembly."⁴⁰

Some commentators have questioned whether Hobbes's reading of Thucydides in these two regards was entirely accurate.⁴¹ What does remain certain is that the anti-rhetorical and anti-democratic impulse in Hobbes's philosophy was strongly felt. By the term "rhetoric" here Hobbes meant simply the persuasion of the populace by means of pandering to their baser instincts. Accurate political reasoning and knowledge, Hobbes believed, could only be obtained if the rhetorical arts were combined with the search for the truth, and that meant marrying rhetoric to some scientific method. Thus, in his answer to White's De Mundo, Hobbes declared that while rhetoric should seek to persuade the audience, in historical discourse such overt persuasion should be omitted. Since history aims to narrate past events, Hobbes argued, metaphor should never be used to "move" the hearer's mind -

or, in other words, to overtly persuade the audience. On the other hand, Hobbes believed that metaphor could be used to "shape" the mind of the listener in historical writing.⁴²

Now the twentieth century reader might want to quibble over Hobbes's distinction between the "moving" of the mind of the hearer and the "shaping" of it in historical discourse, yet the distinction for Hobbes was of some importance. By "shaping" the mind of the reader Hobbes meant that it was important for the reader to see shapes and images in his mind's eye in order to understand how the historical events unfolded. The most important tool at the historian's disposal, for Hobbes, was his ability to enable the reader to picture the events narrated. Not only was this crucial for the understanding of history, but it was also instrumental in the reading of poetry and philosophy as well. It was for this reason that metaphor became such an important topic for Hobbes, for although metaphoric language might lead to an undesirable equivocation of names, it could also enable the reader to picture events in his mind and, in doing so, lead the reader more accurately to judge history, politics and philosophy.

Returning to his translation of Thucydides, it is clear that the most prominent feature in historical discourse for Hobbes was the historian's ability to create mental images in the reader's mind. According to Hobbes, the distinguishing feature of Thucydides's History was that he "so clearly set before the men's eyes the ways and events of good and evil counsels, that the narration doth secretly instruct the reader."⁴³ In his Preface to the translation, Hobbes even quotes Plutarch's observation that "Thucydides aimeth always at this; to make his auditor a spectator, and to cast his reader into the same passions that they were beholders."⁴⁴ The historian, according to

Hobbes, should offer the reader a picture of historical events, "secretly instructing" him on the truth of what transpired. Not only was this Thucydides's own purpose, Hobbes had claimed in his Preface, it was also his own. "And if a man consider well the whole discourse of [Thucydides]," Hobbes declares, "he shall plainly perceive the image of this present history."⁴⁵

It is not surprising to find Hobbes here echoing the classical rhetorical tradition of Cicero, Quintilian and Plutarch for all three of these thinkers had written of the need to offer images for the reader and listener to contemplate. Most important of all was for the speaker to use vivid mental images in a court of law, the classical school held, for then the court could visualize and understand the events narrated and come to some kind of judgment upon the case under review. Metaphor, because of its strong imaginary content, thus was the most powerful tool at the speaker's disposal, and Hobbes had vociferously concurred with this neo-classicist account of the metaphoric image.

Almost fifty years after his translation of Thucydides Hobbes decided to embark upon a fresh translation of Homer because, he had cheekily claimed, in his old age he had "nothing else to do."⁴⁶ In his Preface to the reader Hobbes commented that the poet's use of metaphor was one of the chief virtues of poetry. But, Hobbes warned, because of metaphor's tremendous visual power it should be used by the poet sparingly. "A metaphor also," Hobbes wrote, "...is not unpleasant; but when they are sharp and extraordinary, they are not fit for an heroic poet, nor for public consultation, but only for an accusation or defence at the bar."⁴⁷ In his old age, then, Hobbes became even more

aware of the visual power of metaphor, particularly as a pedagogic device. The 'sharper' the metaphoric image, the more potent its use.

In his translation of Thucycides, we find Hobbes suggesting that it is this visual mental image which had been most lacking in early translations of the Greek. Referring to the French and Italian versions of the work, Hobbes complained that they failed to allow the reader to "continually see his way before him, and by that which goeth before expect what is to follow."⁴⁸ Hobbes even included in his translation "convenient pictures of the countries involved" - ie. detailed maps of Greece and Sicily - so he could help the reader picture in his mind the events that the History narrated.⁴⁹ The overall effect, Hobbes intended, was to echo the great achievement of Thucydides's History in allowing the reader to see "before his eyes" the truth of what transpired. According to Hobbes,

"Thucydides aimeth always at this; to make his auditor a spectator, and to cast his reader into the same passions that they were in that were beholders...these things, I say are so described and so evidently set before our eyes, that the mind of the reader is no less affected therewith than if he had been present in the actions."⁵⁰

Ten years after completing his translation of Thucydides's History Hobbes had written in his Whole Art of Rhetoric of the visual-persuasive function of metaphor which "makes us seem to see the thing before our eyes." But it is not until we turn to Hobbes's highly metaphorical work Leviathan (which is the subject of the chapter five) that we discover the central importance of mental images in his political philosophy, for here again Hobbes explicitly tells us that his goal was to posit images for the reader to contemplate.

Often overlooked, for example, is the fact that Hobbes ends his Leviathan with the comment that his only purpose was "to set before mens eyes" the true nature of the commonwealth.⁵¹ If that was indeed his purpose behind the design of Leviathan, as well as his design for many of his other writings - that is, to set the metaphoric image "before mens eyes" - then he was certainly successful as well as consistent. What is puzzling is why so many commentators have misunderstood Hobbes's visual and metaphorical theory of discourse, often erroneously claiming that he had contradicted himself.

Section Three:

Hobbes and the Judgment of Sense

As discussed earlier in the second chapter, metaphors are commonly based upon our primary senses, and in particular our sense of vision. But because the nature of politics is that it be a public phenomenon - that is, because a political community (almost by definition) must be more than simply a gathering of individuals - then the political theorist needs to establish a common sensory grounding for a civil association. As it is that every person's sense experience is different from everyone else's, then another level of sensory experience needs to be established in order to create unity.

Political discourse is often directed towards members of a community, even if that community is made up of warring factions. The political philosopher succeeds if he is able to make the collective members of a community 'see' the desirability of engaging with his theories. And it is largely for this reason that political philosophers frequently lapse into metaphorical descriptions, for when a community is divided or when a new political order cries out to be

established, then one of the most potent linguistic weapons the philosopher has at his disposal is that of metaphor. The subject of understanding political metaphor, therefore, cannot be divorced from the problem of judgment. Instead of an individual judgment which is based upon our private sensations, however, metaphor invites a public judgment to be made on a super-sensory level (what Boethius called a "supervenient foundation," Kant "the supersensical ground," and Locke "obtuse significations"). As Hobbes would say, how could we ever ignore that which is "before our eyes?" We can only do so, Hobbes warns, at our peril.

If there was a chink in Hobbes's methodological armor, however, it was in finding a way in which to convince others of the truth of what he wrote. Hobbes even refers to the minds of common people as a piece of "clean paper" waiting for some imprint to be placed upon them. Not only must he persuade others, therefore, but they must also be able to 'see' the truth for themselves.⁵² This was not simply a matter of being eloquent for Hobbes knew that those who felt differently could be equally eloquent in arguing their case against his. Hobbes certainly endeavored to make his reader see the truth of the matter "before his eyes," but it was equally important to him that the reader arrive at a similar judgment on his own. "Words are wise mens counters," Hobbes observed in Leviathan, "they do but reckon by them." "But," Hobbes quickly added, "[words] are the money of fooles, that value them by the authority of an Aristotle, a Cicero, or a Thomas, or any other Doctor whatsoever, if but a man."⁵³ This "authority of...a Thomas" which Hobbes scorns probably refers to Thomas Aquinas, but Hobbes might also have been referring to himself in a jesting manner. Do not take even what I have to claim as the

gospel truth, Hobbes is saying, but see for yourself the truth of what I am saying by using your own judgment.

Hobbes accepted the sceptic's argument that sensory experience differed among individuals, but the problem remained that since his iconoclastic attitude towards authority prevented him from proclaiming that others should follow his lead solely based upon what he had discovered, then a common judgment, leading of course to the same conclusions as himself, was required on the part of the populace - that is, a judgment based upon our common conceptions. "Judgment," Hobbes stated, is used "to discern what means to conduce an end, which is gotten by experience."⁵⁴ But experience will always vary depending upon the individual (or, as Hobbes states, "Experience concludeth nothing universally") so the only way to avoid further contention was to remind people of that which they cannot deny: namely, that we do share in our having common conceptions of objects which appear before us and which seem to be continually in motion.⁵⁵

As we have seen, other philosophers have spoken similarly about a judgment springing from sense experience, and about society's need to establish a sensus communis. Cicero, for instance, remarks on the ability of men to discriminate between objects which are before them, and points out that this gift is even more prevalent with words "since these are rooted in common senses and of such things nature has willed that no one should be altogether unable to sense and experience them."⁵⁶ Kant, likewise, speaks of a sensus communis where "we must include the idea of sense common to all, ie. of a faculty of judgment which, in its reflection, takes account of the mode of representation of all other men in thought...."⁵⁷ Hobbes's pronouncements upon judgment are not in the same flavor of either of these two thinkers. Yet although

Hobbes does not specifically comment upon the need to establish a sensus communis, he nevertheless ties the faculty of judgment directly to the ability to have visual sensations about the world around us.

Hobbes argues that our capacity for sense and our ability to render judgment are the same for in both instances we must distinguish objects which appear before us. This capacity to render a judgment on sense experience first appears in the Bible, Hobbes explains in Leviathan, when Adam and Eve eat the forbidden fruit.⁵⁸ According to Hobbes, by disobeying God's judgment and by taking upon themselves the ability to judge good and evil, Adam and Eve are forced to exercise their own judgment, however faulty. But because sense experience varies, individuals will not always agree with one another. Mankind thus finds itself in a bind. Since men have refused God's government in favor of their own, they are left to fend for themselves outside Eden, with the unhappy result of contention, sedition and war. On the other hand, Hobbes suggests, by opting for the safety of an all-powerful sovereign, man can replace his imperfect judgment with that of the sovereign's, the mortal god who replaces the God of Genesis. Until we can reach that stage of having the sovereign decide upon the value of our respective judgments, we must fend for ourselves; we must be able to render a judgment based upon our imperfect sense experience. In short, Hobbes's program is one of trying to convince us to judge for ourselves the need to surrender our collective judgment to the sovereign, who is the only one who can provide us with individual security and political stability.

Hobbes believed that if it were possible to render a common judgment on our conceptions then it might be possible for us to share a common judgment or vision on the nature of politics. Now Hobbes

offers us several descriptions of judgment. Sometimes he speaks of judgment as that which "is not distinct from sense or perception properly so called," sometimes he defines judgment as "the virtue of the mind whereby men attain to exact and perfect knowledge," and other times he refers to judgment as that which "finds out the differences in things like another."⁵⁹ What these differing pronouncements upon judgment share is the belief that from our sense of vision we can distinguish objects from one another, even though these objects may be nothing more than phantasms occurring in the mind. Hobbes thought that the ability to see clearly was the ability to see distinctions. This, however, does not by itself lead to a common vision - in fact, it might even lead to further contention as the members of the commonwealth may 'see' things differently and thus make entirely divergent distinctions. Hobbes therefore had to occasionally turn to a common, super-sensory field of vision in order to unite the populace in a common judgment. It was not enough to simply declare some philosophical truth or other; that truth had to be adorned in some visually arresting similarity or metaphor.

Hobbes tells us in his Preface to Thucydides's History that the genius of the Greek historian was his ability to create mental images so that his readers could render a proper judgment on the truth of the events narrated. Obviously if there is to be judgment there must be something there to be judged, whether it be a mental image, a description, a picture, an analogy, or whatever. Thucydides shows good judgment, Hobbes states, when he orders his narrations in such a way as to make them intelligible to the reader. But it is an error of judgment when we assume that others will see the same worth in the History as we do ourselves. Hobbes does not concern himself with

these people for he says their judgment is poor; nevertheless he proclaims that in order to aid the judgment of those who read the History he has attached maps of the places mentioned by Thucydides.⁶⁰

By focussing our judgment of sense experience upon the places (ie. maps) described by Thucydides, Hobbes hoped that we can more readily agree with the observations made in the History.

Since it is the genius of metaphor to "make us seem to see the thing before our eyes," as Hobbes declares in his Whole Art of Rhetoric, it would stand to reason that this gift would similarly be useful in binding a populace together. The ability to create a publicly shared image is one of the most powerful tools at one's disposal. When the metaphoric image is particularly "sharp," as Hobbes writes in his Preface to Homer, it is better used for defence at the bar. In other words, a particularly strong metaphoric image requires a superior judgment of the kind that only a Judge can deliver. But this is not the only way in which metaphor and judgment are combined. If we define judgment, as Hobbes does, as taking things apart to observe the differences in things, then in a common judgment it is required that these similarities and differences between things be observed by all. If we read Hobbes's program in this manner, then metaphor, being the tool which draws out the similarities between objects, becomes indispensable in the pursuit of articulating this common political judgment.

In chapter eight of Leviathan, entitled "Of the Virtues Commonly Called Intellectual and Their Contrary Defects," Hobbes writes that those who are able to "observe differences...are said to have good judgment," while those who "observe their similitudes" have "good fancy."⁶¹ [Here fancy, according to Hobbes, is an image in the mind

which springs from sense.] Hobbes prefers judgment to fancy, claiming that the ability to judge clearly does not necessarily entail adorning the prose with fanciful images and metaphors. On the other hand, Hobbes argues that images should be regulated with good judgment or else one would get carried away in a "kind of madness."⁶² When images and judgment are combined, however, that is best of all. In poetry, for example, "good judgment and fancy are required," Hobbes claims. Similarly is fancy and judgment required in history, provided that the fancy is kept to a minimum and used "only in adorning style." In what he calls "orations of praise" and "hortatives and pleadings," Hobbes argues that images and judgment are both necessary to educate the reader. Finally, Hobbes writes, in the

"...rigorous search for the truth, judgment does all, except sometimes the understanding have need to be opened by some similitude; and then there is so much use of fancy. But for metaphors, they are in this case utterly excluded. For seeing they openly profess deceit; to admit them into counsel, or reasoning, were manifest folly."⁶³

If we want to engage in a "rigorous search of the truth," in other words, we must use our judgment in order to distinguish words and objects from one another. But if we want to convey this information to others, then we should be prepared to offer similitudes to the reader for him to comprehend the subject matter. Hobbes's warning about metaphors here is one of admonishing us that metaphoric words cannot be used in "reasoning" as they "openly profess deceit," but, again, this is an injunction against metaphoric words rather than images. What we have in Hobbes's account of judgment, therefore, is the admittance of metaphoric images (or fancy) in all forms of

discourse in order to persuade the audience, and provided that they are apt to the discourse at hand.

In his Review and Conclusion to Leviathan Hobbes is more explicit in his endorsement of combining fancy with judgment in order to make the reasoning more palatable. According to Hobbes,

"The Severity of Judgment, they say, makes men Censorious, and unapt to pardon the Errours and Infirmities of other men: and on the other side, Celerity of Fancy, makes the thoughts lesse steddily than is necessary, to discern exactly between Right and Wrong. Again, in all Deliberations, and in all Pleadings, the faculty of solid Reasoning, is necessary: for without it, the Resolutions of men are rash, and their Sentences unjust: and yet if there be not powerfull Eloquence, which procureth attention and Consent, the effect of Reason will be little." ⁶⁴

Here Hobbes begins by pointing out that judgment and fancy are separate. Judgment discerns the differences between things and fancy combines them in an image. But having noted that judgment and fancy have two different roles to play, Hobbes then points out that the only way in which one is able to convince others of one's "solid reasoning" is by combining the two. This combination, moreover, not only captures the people's "attention" but also their "consent."

Therefore for Hobbes the importance of judging images works on two levels: the first as a means for visualizing objects which are dissimilar; the second, as a means for instructing others so that they too can visualize the truth of the matter. Our images should be publicly shared to prevent disharmony from erupting in the commonwealth. The starting point in escaping from scepticism, for Hobbes, was in finding an image or a proposition that we all can agree

upon, whether it be the artificial-man or the proposition that 'it is wrong to take another's life' or 'the world consists of matter in motion.' Working from these images and first principles, Hobbes believed, we could be spared from the sceptical onslaught to our scientific and civil laws. The historian, the philosopher, the rhetorician, the poet as well as the trial lawyer, must always endeavor to set the image "before men's eyes." What sets each discipline apart from the others is how its images are used. Only once we are led by the philosopher and the scientist, Hobbes argued, to 'see' for ourselves what the truth of how things are can we then render a common judgment upon their worth.

Section Four:

The Sovereign, Judgment, and Political Vision

As pointed out at the start of this chapter, Hobbes derives his civil philosophy from his materialist premise that the world consists of matter and motion. Just as there are external motions - that is, we can observe that there are objects about us which transport their images through the air, thus stimulating our senses - there are also internal motions. An example of an internal motion is the blood which circulates thorough our bodies, but equally our passions and desires are nothing but internal movements within us, Hobbes argues. "There is no such thing as perpetuall Tranquility of mind," Hobbes explains, "because life it selfe is but Motion and can never be without Desire, nor without Fear, no more than without sense."⁶⁵ We are governed by these movements: we rely upon the external movements of sense experience to feed us information and we depend upon the internal movements to dictate our desires and passions. The latter kind we can

do little about. It is part of the basic psychology of man that he suffers from passions. The reason why man suffers from these passions rather than enjoys them is that, for Hobbes, they can be particularly destructive. These internal, psychological movements are part of "a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetuall and restless desire of Power after power, that ceaseth only in Death."⁶⁶ We become the victims of our own desires. We compete against our fellow man for power, wealth, fame and honor. Moreover, this contest is not like the one that the Dodo presided over in Alice and Wonderland - where it was declared that "everyone wins and all must have prizes" - this particular human race that Hobbes has in mind here is one where there are few winners and a great many unhappy losers. This, then, is man in his natural state; a state where our competing appetites are in perpetual conflict.

Hobbes's description of this state of nature in Leviathan is justly famous: "In such condition, there is...no knowledge of the face of the Earth; no account of Time; no Arts; no Letters; no Society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death. And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, bruttish, and short."⁶⁷ Since it is impossible to change human nature, Hobbes suggests that the only escape from this bleak predicament is for man to acknowledge that it is in his best interest to opt for peace and security, and that entails erecting a civil society which would be governed by an all-powerful sovereign. Since "it is not possible that there can be a greater" benefit than "the peace and preservation of every particular man," as Hobbes declares in the Elements of Law, then a sovereign which guaranteed such security is in everyone's best interest.⁶⁸ This is what can be called Hobbes's prudential argument:

that every prudent man, when faced with the stark reality of existence, would, if given the chance, gladly surrender his rights to be his own sovereign in exchange for peace and a life free from fear.

But Hobbes is not content to let it rest there; other arguments are summoned to the cause. The problem with the prudential argument is that it is not alone a sufficient reason to surrender one's rights. There are, after all, many examples of individuals who would gladly take their chances in a Hobbesian state of nature. A religious zealot, for example, might want to dictate his beliefs to others, or a Cromwell might happily engage in a civil war if he thought that his chances of succeeding were high. Our individual appetites and desires are sometimes too strong to let us act in our own rational self-interest. That is why Hobbes employs a second argument in addition to the prudential one briefly described above: the argument from ordinary language.

Hobbes insists that the basic contentiousness of mankind is not only reflected in the language which is used, but that that language is itself the cause of further strife. We misuse words, Hobbes maintains, and because we cannot agree on the signification of terms our interests will always come into conflict. This is the reason why Hobbes makes continual attacks against metaphors. Metaphors are an equivocation of names which, when used in philosophy and scientific reasoning, can be dangerous (although in De Corpore he declares that metaphor's equivocation is harmless because it's equivocation is self-evident). Thucydides in his History makes a similar complaint about the misuse of words, and Hobbes, since he had translated the text, was no doubt well aware of the Greek historian's contempt for those who misused words. According to Thucydides, as "...revolutions

broke out in city after city...to fit in with the change of events, words, too, had to change their literal meanings." ⁶⁹ Hobbes translates the above passage on the misuse of words as "the cities being now in sedition," sedition being for Hobbes the worst that can befall a civil society.⁷⁰ Likewise, in his Elements of Law Hobbes specifically links sedition with the misuse of language:

"The authors of sedition be such, as names things not according to their true and generally agreed-upon names; but call right and wrong, good and bad, according to their passions, or according to the authorities of such as they admire as Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, and others." ⁷¹

In his Philosophical Rudiments concerning Government and Society, which was Hobbes's own English translation of De Cive, he strengthens his claim that civil unrest is caused by misusing words. In this passage Hobbes drops the prudential argument and claims that all human discord springs from this linguistic abuse:

"All controversies are bred from hence, that the opinions of men differ concerning meum and tuum, just and unjust, profitable and unprofitable, good and evil, honest and dishonest, and the like; which every man esteems according to his own judgment." ⁷²

Here Hobbes declares that the reason why men misuse words is that their "judgment" varies. Now judgment, as we have seen, is defined by Hobbes as being no different than "sense or perception properly so called." Our ability to judge springs from our capacity to sense dissimilarities. Since our sense, and therefore our experience, varies, we end up using words which may have the same sound but carry an entirely different meaning, thus leading to sedition.

Hobbes's answer to the problem of ordinary language is to create

an arbitrator who will dictate the exact meaning of words. Indeed, in his Philosophical Rudiments Hobbes has a section entitled "It pertains to the civil authority, to judge (when need requires) what definitions and what inferences are true."⁷³ In other words, since our individual judgments differ, we must surrender our collective judgments to a sovereign who will do the judging for us. According to Hobbes,

"It belongs to the same chief power to make some common rules for all men, and to declare them publicly, by which every man may know what may be called his, and what another's, what just, and what unjust, what good, what evil."⁷⁴

Hobbes therefore offers us two separate reasons why we should surrender our rights to the dictates of a sovereign: the basic psychology of man makes it necessary that every person is protected from mankind's excessive appetites and desires; men cannot come to any agreement on the signification of words. In fact, Hobbes argues that if we were to use words as they are properly defined, then we would have no choice but to agree to create an all-powerful sovereign; a "sovereign," properly defined, according to Hobbes, is necessarily someone who has complete authority over his subjects. Anything less, in Hobbesian terms, could no longer correctly be called a "sovereign."⁷⁵

Hobbes repeats the above same arguments in his first two books of Leviathan. Again we are treated to a description of the state of nature and are offered a compelling reason why the type of security guaranteed by a sovereign can be the only remedy. In addition we are told that this very same sovereign can prevent us from misusing words, thus freeing us from unnecessary future conflict. In the beginning of the third book of Leviathan he summarizes these two arguments by saying:

"I have derived the Rights of Sovereigne Power, and the duty of Subjects hitherto, from the Principles of Nature onely; such as Experience has found true, or Consent (concerning the use of words) has made so; that is to say, from the nature of Men, known to us by Experience, and from Definitions (of such words as are Essentiall to all Politicall reasoning) universally agreed on." ⁷⁶

Now I do not want to go into too much detail here on whether or not Hobbes's arguments are entirely satisfactory. Suffice it to say that the prudential argument does not compel us to surrender our rights to a sovereign because we might simply decide to take our chances in the state of nature. Similarly, the argument from ordinary language is not entirely persuasive. It seems rather dubious to say that by legislating language one is able to end conflict. Our experience has been that Orwellian societies are not particularly peaceful and, in any event, they do not last. Moreover, Hobbes's appeal to using exact definitions is unimpressive: if one wants to define a sovereign in a Hobbesian sense then that is just fine, but we can equally define a sovereign in another manner which does not make him out to be an all-powerful mortal god. In fact, if Hobbes were to rely solely upon the prudential and ordinary language arguments they would not get him very far; not only for the reasons just mentioned but because, as Hobbes himself points out, our judgment conflicts. Assuming that Hobbes was not just proposing some elaborate thought experiment, how could he ever hope collectively to persuade us of the correctness of his views? The answer, not surprisingly, concerns the use of the metaphoric image.

The word vision has two primary uses.⁷⁷ The first is on the order of reporting what our eyes tell us, and is often accompanied by some description of what the process of vision entails, like Hobbes's own work in optics. For Hobbes, the color and shape of objects are transported through the air and then impact upon our retina, which then enables us to assume that what we are seeing actually corresponds to what the objects are themselves. Descartes had a similar theory of vision or optics, but Hobbes claimed to have improved upon the Cartesian account by suggesting that these objects send out waves or pulses to the human eye, which of course reinforces his materialist theory of matter and motion. On occasion Hobbes calls this first type of vision "natural vision," the importance of which will be seen shortly.

The second type of vision is of an altogether different order and sometimes carries with it the synonyms of "dreams," "fancy" and "imagination." Loosely defined, this kind of vision is the visualizing of a state of affairs other than what they appear to be to the senses. Hobbes, for instance, often ridicules theologians for believing in, and encouraging others to believe in, phantasms and ghosts - not that this kind of vision does not occur, but, according to Hobbes, it is nothing but the inward motions of the brain and is not caused by some outward object. The relevant point here is that when Hobbes visualized and described the state of nature as a war amongst men he was not reporting what his senses told him (which is natural vision), rather he was imagining what such a state of affairs would look like and then drawing from this image the necessary conclusions (ie. he was engaging in political vision). Plato's republic, Rousseau's General Will, and Locke's social contract are all

familiar examples of philosophers describing a state of affairs other than what they appear to be to the senses, with these political visions forming the foundation of their political thought. This, then, is a vision of a political order, vitally necessary to the art of political theorizing. What would a Platonic republic look like? or how did Rousseau view the workings of the General Will? are questions we frequently ask, often ignoring the fact that what we are discussing is the philosopher's imagination and not some physical entity which he has constructed. This is what Hobbes called "political vision" (as opposed to natural vision); it is the philosopher's second sight, as it were.

The benefit to Hobbes of holding this dual distinction between natural vision and political vision is quite simple. Firstly, if Hobbes was only to embrace a theory of natural vision then he would be unable to offer us an account of the state of nature or even of political obligation. Given only his theory of optics and natural vision, all Hobbes could provide us with would be better descriptions of our political selves. It is clear, however, that Hobbes's political philosophy is as much normative as descriptive. By hypothesizing a state of nature as a war amongst men, Hobbes was informing us how we ought to live given this rather bleak vision of the world. Secondly, given the constraints placed upon natural vision - that is, it simply reports what is before one's eyes - the sovereign's maintainance and defense of the commonwealth would necessarily be impaired. Put simply, he would be no wiser than the common man. The chief difference between natural and political vision is that the former can never give the sovereign the knowledge necessary to render prudent judgment; it can never inform him how he

ought to rule or what would be the best method for the preservation of the state. Only a political vision can do these things.

Now one might argue that it is not necessary for the sovereign to act prudently, nor does he have to be a particularly wise judge. All that is required is that he rule and that his subjects obey. But remember, Hobbes has already told us that the sovereign must "judge (when need requires) what definitions and what inferences are true." We cannot do it for ourselves for civil war would erupt. Moreover, something else is required of the sovereign, for not only must he judge but he also is saddled with the defense of the commonwealth. Hobbes points out that the sovereign cannot judge and defend the state by using natural vision. Hobbes is very clear on this point: if the commonwealth is to be preserved, then only political vision would do. According to Hobbes in the Philosophical Rudiments,

"It is therefore necessary to the defense of the city, first, that there be some who may, as near as may be, search into and discover the counsels and motions of all those who may prejudice it. For discoverers to ministers of state, are like beams of the sun to the human soul." ⁷⁸

So for Hobbes the defense of the state depends upon those who can peer into the motives of those who are its enemies. However, one cannot simply observe these enemies of the state by employing natural vision, for one must be able to see into their very "soul." Hobbes then continues in an illuminating passage:

"And we more truly say in vision political than natural, that the sensible and intelligible species of outward things, not well considered by others, are like air transported to the soul; that is to say, to them who have supreme authority: and

therefore are they no less necessary to the preservation of the state, than the rays of light are to the conservation of man." 79

This is not a literal description of an object sending out an image to the retina, this is a metaphorical description of how those in charge of the commonwealth must "search into" the "soul" of those who would be the commonwealth's enemies. Natural vision cannot tell the sovereign or his ministers what to do, only political vision can do this. Although political vision operates upon the same principles as natural vision - like natural vision, political vision is "transported" through the air - it is nevertheless reserved for only a special few. This insight is not given, like it is for Lear's Fool, to all who have the eyes to see, but is granted only to those who are "necessary to the preservation of the state." This is the closest Hobbes ever gets to the romantic notion of metaphor. In order for the sovereign and his ministers to protect the city they must metaphorically project themselves into the soul of their enemies. Or to put the matter another way, they must be prepared to visualize and imagine a state of affairs other than what it would appear to be to the immediate senses.

Now Hobbes's account of natural and political vision is instructive for two reasons. The first is that it is vitally necessary for Hobbes that we visualize along with him the state of nature - that is, that we share in his political vision. By using our own political vision we too can observe Hobbes's mythical state and we can be persuaded by his arguments precisely because we are able to "see before our eyes" the truth of what he says. We cannot take what he has to tell us

solely on authority, nor can we be persuaded by his rhetoric. Other authorities will differ, and other speakers will be more eloquent, but we can see for ourselves the image of the world he has created and then follow closely his arguments which prove this or that fact.

So when Hobbes's critics point out that he "fails to justify his conclusions" they do so under the assumption that Hobbes's prudential argument and the argument from ordinary language can be isolated from one another and then analyzed purely on a logical basis. This is only partially correct. Hobbes not only offers us these two arguments he combines them with a third argument which support the first two: the argument from imagination. We are constantly being bombarded with images, Hobbes tells us, with no method for distinguishing true images from false, literal images from metaphorical ones. However, if we can share in the same image it might be possible to make the same common sensory judgment upon its worth.

The second reason why it is instructive to separate natural from political vision, as Hobbes himself does, is that although our collective sensory judgment is vital to convince us of the truth of his arguments before we have opted for the sovereign, it nevertheless becomes unimportant after we have done so. Once we have achieved our secure and peaceful status in the commonwealth, political or metaphorical vision is no longer required of us. Political vision, that which is necessary to the defense of the commonwealth, is only required of the sovereign or of his ministers of state. Along with all our rights, therefore, we surrender our capacity to engage in a common sensory judgment.

If our judgment is based upon sense experience, as Hobbes tells us, and if our sense experience is unreliable, this would necessarily

create a severe hardship for any science of politics. So Hobbes does not rely solely upon images to convince us of the truth of what he says. Along with the images which he presents us with are theories of language, psychology, science, optics, and a geometrical method which are meant to convince us of the correctness of his views. But the image remains primary. Natural vision offers us images of the world around us. Although we can be fooled about the content of these images, we are nevertheless certain that they exist either internally or externally. Our metaphoric images are another matter. We know that they do not exist, but then again we have no formal way of distinguishing the image of, say, an artificial man from a real one. Although the metaphoric image is troublesome in discourse, as the "standard account" avers, it can also "secretly instruct the reader." The image enables us to see the thing before our eyes, it draws out similarities which would have gone unnoticed, it creates a common conception which we can collectively see and render a judgment upon, and it can propel us out of the state of nature and into a Hobbesian civil society. And once we are in that civil society, by doing double-time as political vision, it can help us remain there. This is the reason why Hobbes concludes his Leviathan with the following remark:

And thus I have brought to an end my Discourse of Civill and Ecclesiastical Government, occasioned by the disorders of the present time, without partiality, without application, and without other design, than to set before mens eyes the

Mutuell relation between Protection and Obedience." ⁸⁰

If we join in Hobbes's vision of the political world, if we too are able to see before our eyes the true nature of mankind and of the

commonwealth, then we cannot help but agree with the arguments
contained in his political philosophy.

CHAPTER FOUR:
HOBBES'S VISUAL THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

The first principle of knowledge is that we have such and
such conceptions... —Thomas Hobbes

The last chapter has shown that Hobbes's theory of discourse, whether it was historical, forensic, philosophical, rhetorical or poetic, had been partly driven by the necessity to create vivid mental pictures for the reader, throwing him into situations as if he were a spectator of the events being narrated. This is the reason why Hobbes employed metaphors so freely, and why he made continual remarks towards the reading of metaphors although, as we have also seen, Hobbes's comments on metaphor have been frequently misunderstood.

Hobbes's over-reliance upon the image could, of course, prove to be a highly dangerous method of instruction. The conveyance of knowledge along pictorial grounds can mislead the populace by constructing a false image of events, and a population governed by opinion rather than knowledge could easily fall prey to religious superstition or to the captivating charms of a demagogue. Into a world covered in such language, unanchored by the certitudes of truth, Hobbes felt he had been born. Truth and justice had been words parried back and forth in so many different contexts that if they had held any meaning then it would only be located in conventional agreement. Yet Hobbes also knew that the doctrine of nominalism alone could have no purchase on a political order which had cried out for stability. The ground of certainty, the foundation of knowledge rather than opinion, had to be established before a new political order could be constructed, and that meant not just finding any image by which the population could render a judgment upon, but locating the correct one. Like the monarch in Dryden's Absalom and Actitophel, Hobbes understood the necessity to "scatter his Maker's image through the land," but Hobbes also knew that if it was to be a true foundation¹ of knowledge then that image had to be scientific.

Those who were able to establish a society that was based upon knowledge rather than opinion (that is, the scientists and philosophers) were a select few. Not all in the commonwealth would have the appetite or the ability for the scientific method, but yet, although largely ignorant of those scientists and philosophers who had this aptitude, the population could nevertheless be ruled by the principles established by these self chosen deliverers, of whom Hobbes considered himself to be at least a member, if not the only one. New pictures had to be created in order for others to grasp the importance of what he was trying to say: the artificial man, the Leviathan, the Behemoth, to name just a few examples. The first principle of knowledge, as Hobbes wrote in his Elements of Law, was to have the appropriate conception.² But, as if echoing the remarks contained in Plato's Seventh Letter, the initial image would not survive as a foundation of knowledge if it were not accompanied by the appropriate vocabulary and scientific method. Hobbes clearly thought that he could lay the foundation for knowledge. The metaphor of a foundationalism in terms of knowledge and truth was one that Hobbes took seriously. A foundation is something which is man-made and, above all, is visible to all those who can see, even to those who are naturally "mistrusting." From what would this foundation be constructed? Or to put the question in another way: a foundation is only a metaphor for form, so then what could be said to be its content?

It is argued in this chapter that the content of Hobbes's theory of knowledge was primarily visual. I realize that in arguing such a case I am sailing against a fairly strong and wide current. Most

commentators on Hobbes, when speaking of his theory of knowledge, focus on his scientific method, his theory of propositional truth, his nominalistic vocabulary, and so on.³ But few, if any, ever make the connection between the act of vision and scientific truth, a connection that, I believe, Hobbes implicitly if not explicitly makes in his theory of knowledge. Consequently, the first section situates Hobbes's theory of knowledge within the general context of the "post-sceptical" philosophers. It is argued here that the ability to have conceptions is what differentiates Hobbes and other Continental theorists from their sceptical counterparts. The second section returns to Hobbes's theory of optics, for it is argued that his treatment of natural vision forms the starting point of his theory of knowledge. The third section analyzes Hobbes's theory of "knowledge of fact," which, again, is primarily visual; the fourth his theory of "scientific knowledge." The fifth and final section is more of a speculative venture. Could it be that Hobbes employed his geometric method of philosophical reasoning because it, too, was primarily visual? If so, then Hobbes's theory of knowledge has a stronger visual content than has yet been realized. It might be argued then that Hobbes's theory of knowledge begins with the individual having conceptions or images, reflecting these images in a nominalistic vocabulary, and then shifting both images and language together through a geometrical method which is, again, an elaborate system of images.

Section One:

Hobbes's Response to the Sceptics

Every age has its sceptics; this present one is no exception. Analytic

philosophers are sceptical - in fact, are highly dismissive - of speculative metaphysics, as are many deconstructionists of much of traditional Anglo-American thought.⁴ One counterpart to our present times occurred in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century when a troubling scepticism emerged which threatened the very foundations of human knowledge. This, indeed, was partly the reason why Hobbes employed metaphorical images in his discourse: in order to combat the sceptical (dare one say, deconstructionist?) impulse during that time; where Hobbesian metaphor establishes a common sensory ground for judgment, scepticism must retreat.

At the start of the seventeenth century, philosophy was at a cross-roads. On the one hand there was the theological school made up of Catholic scholastic philosophers who held that faith combined with reason revealed a christianized truth, and they were joined with the even more dogmatic Protestant movements founded by Calvin and Luther which argued that truth did not need the handmaiden of logic or natural science for it to be conveyed. For the Protestant dogmatists, truth was a reward from God delivered unto the true believers by divine revelation. On the opposite spectrum, however, there were the sceptics who, borrowing from the Greek philosopher Pyrrho, believed that no single criterion of knowledge, either of the natural world or of the theological, could ever be established. These seventeenth century Pyrrhonians argued that the concept of truth was simply an infinite regress of prior causes, with no firm foundation of knowledge ever being attainable. These two wildly divergent schools of thought, the dogmatists and the sceptics, were not only poles apart philosophically but their mutually exclusive claims were partly legitimated by what they were arguing against; as Pascal observed, as

long as there were dogmatists, the sceptics should be considered to be right. Not surprisingly, towards the first quarter of the seventeenth century a new school of thought began to emerge which offered a compromise between the dogmatists and the sceptics, and among the adherents of this "post-sceptical" movement, for want of a better phrase, was Thomas Hobbes.

Following the deaths of Plato and Aristotle, the tenets of scepticism began to seep into the Greek academy, beginning with the philosophy of Pyrrho in the third century B.C. and then continuing much later with that of Sextus Empiricus in the second century A.D. It can be said that the sceptics' main point of contention concerned the Aristotelian claim about the accuracy of sense experience as a ground for knowledge. In his De Anima Aristotle spoke of a sense experience in which "no error is possible" and that "each sense has one kind of object it discerns, and never errs in reporting...."⁵ To this positivistic claim the sceptics replied that sense experience varied with each individual and that, therefore, no common judgment upon sensory experience could ever be reached among men. In 1601, for example, Pierre Charron asked in his treatise Of Wisdom, since sensations vary depending upon the age of the receiver and his mental and physical health, "in this diversitie and contrarietie what shall we hold for certain?" Charron's answer, unsurprisingly, was that

"...there is no opinion held by all, or current in all places,
none that is not debated and disputed, that hath not another
held and maintained quite contrarie unto it...."⁶

In other words, since there can be no certitude or agreement on sense experience, then the same would hold true for society as well since each member of a society would only 'see' the same thing differently.

This sceptical reply to the argument for common sensory judgment and knowledge had the initial merit of appealing to common experience. Indeed, few natural philosophers ever tried to directly dispute the sceptical contention that sense experience would vary among individuals. On the other hand, to conclude with the sceptics that no knowledge could ever be possible was anathema to those very same thinkers for it would mean that establishing the foundations of natural science and, in Hobbes's case, civil science would then prove impossible.

In this post-sceptical project to establish at least a minimal agreement upon sensory knowledge the figure of Martin Mersenne ranks of some importance. Mersenne was a highly influential French philosopher who, apart from publishing some works on optics, had an informal entourage of followers which included the likes of Descartes, Gassendi, Galileo and, most importantly for our purposes, Thomas Hobbes. Mersenne's clarion call to combat the sceptics first appeared in 1625 in a book entitled, appropriately, La Verite des Sciences Contre les Sceptiques ou Pyrrhomiens. In his book Mersenne argued that, contrary to Charron's claim,

"...it does not matter that there are differing opinions
concerning the principles of nature, for all contain something
true, even though they have not considered all the causes,
circumstances and effects." ⁷

In other words, what matters is not that there is an infinite regress of causes but that there is "something true" which is present and which we can all observe. What, then, is the exact nature of our observations? Mersenne suggested that while we may not know for certain whether what we see actually corresponds to what is out there,

we nevertheless can claim that we do 'see' something. According to Mersenne,

"Physics, which seems to be one of the sciences most infected by doubt, has its known subject-matter: for who can deny that there are bodies and motions? Are there not light, quantities, causes, and a thousand other things which are available to the senses, and which physics treats?"⁸

For Mersenne and the other post-sceptics, the study of optics (or "physics") enables us to make reports about our sensations even though these sensations themselves do not necessarily have to correspond to their objects for us to have some limited knowledge of them. Indeed, for Mersenne it was still probable, as he suggested later in 1636, that our sensations are in error when they describe what is simply on "the surface of nature," but with God's help we still might be able "to open our eyes by means of the light that He reserves for his true admirers."⁹ In short, the sceptics were wrong precisely because we are able to observe objects which are around us. These images might be true or they might be false, but in any event we know that we are sensing something.

In 1637 we find Descartes arriving at the same conclusion as he similarly insisted that the middle ground between scepticism and dogmatism was possible. In his Discourse on Method, Descartes argued

"Though we see the sun very clearly, we should not for that reason judge that it is of the size of which it appears to be...

For Reason does not insist that whatever we see or imagine thus is a truth, but it tells us clearly that all our ideas or notions must have some foundations of truth. For otherwise it could not be possible that God, who is all perfection and truth, should

have placed them within us."¹⁰

This middle way between dogmatism and scepticism looked promising to the post-sceptical philosophers for while the central claims of both schools had been co-opted there was nevertheless room to argue that there were some kind of, what Descartes called, "foundations of truth" which were available for us to build a body of knowledge. For example, from the science of optics we can know that there are objects in the world and that these objects are continually in motion.

The post-sceptical philosophers never denied that our judgments upon sense experience varies. Their only claim was that our ability to have sense experience never varies. Embedded within their contention was the possibility that we can come to some common understanding or judgment upon our sensory experience. Thus Pierre Gassendi, another pupil of Mersenne, argued in his Syntagma that through our experience of the world we can come to some common judgment upon what our senses tell us.¹¹ While we may not know everything about an object our sense of vision can give us some truths about how we perceive things. What is needed, Gassendi argued, is a rational and scientific method with which to uncover these truths and which can be coupled with a nominalistic vocabulary which accurately describes our sensations. Moreover, Gassendi thought it possible to draw from our common sensations inferences towards a moral science. Gassendi's inspiration came from the Greek philosopher Epicurus who had argued that since man suffered from fear and could also observe others suffering from the same, then it was natural for men to band together for mutual protection. Thus, according to Gassendi, there are some truths which our sense experience tells us that are common to both natural and to moral science.¹²

This was also Grotius's reply to the sceptics. Grotius argued in his De Iure Belli Pacis in 1625 that the sceptics were correct to point out that different societies had differing practices and beliefs, but, Grotius went on, this did not necessarily preclude the possibility that various communities might share something in common from which a moral science could be built.¹³ According to Grotius, all men and all times have commonly judged that there is a universal right to self defense and that there is a general agreement that it is morally wrong capriciously to inflict pain on fellow human beings. "If I cannot otherwise save my life," Grotius observed, "I may, by any Force whatever, repel him who attempts it, tho, perhaps, he who does so is not any ways to blame."¹⁴ This right, Grotius argued, is granted by nature because it "does not properly arise from the other's Crime, but from the Prerogative with which Nature has invested me, of defending myself."¹⁵ So contrary to the sceptical account of the impossibility of moral science, Grotius replied that from basic universal principles it is possible to construct a moral philosophy based upon natural rights.

Now Hobbes was not immune to the early seventeenth century debate surrounding the tenets of scepticism; indeed, the reader may have already noticed certain similarities between Hobbes's pronouncements upon sense experience and moral philosophy and the post-sceptical comments upon the same. Hobbes's involvement with this school probably sprung from his travels around the Continent between 1634 and 1637 where he met some of the very same thinkers just mentioned. In fact, Hobbes had commented that during his travels he was beset with some of the claims made by the sceptics and that he had tried to reason out a

middle course that also steered clear of scepticism and dogmatism.

Hobbes wrote that while travelling through the Continent

"I thought continually about the nature of things, whether I was traveling by boat or coach, or on horseback. And it seemed to me that there was only one true thing in the whole world, though falsified in many ways: one true thing, which is the basis of all those phenomena which we wrongly say are something (such as we get fleetingly in sleep, or with the aid of lenses can multiply as we choose) – the phenomena of sense impressions, which are the offspring of our skull, with nothing external. And in those internal regions, there could be nothing but motion." ¹⁶

The grounding of our knowledge – the "one true thing" for Hobbes – is the "phenomena of sense impressions," according to Hobbes. We might be in error when we describe what our sense impressions are, for instance when we "sleep" or when we use "lenses" which alter our perception, but we cannot be in error when we say that we are visualizing something. Characteristically, Hobbes does not credit Mersenne, Gassendi, or Grotius for having arrived at almost identical conclusions more than ten years earlier. After all, Mersenne had twelve years earlier posited the anti-sceptical reply that the existence of bodies and motion was both irrefutable and irreducible. We might also want to add that Hobbes's insistence upon using the method of nominalism to accurately describe "sense impressions" seems to echo Gassendi's own advocacy for the same.

The precise content of the "phenomena of sense impressions" did not excite Hobbes for he believed that it was impossible to come to any understanding on the objects which surround us. Hobbes consistently refuses to separate the images which appear before our

eyes from those phantasms that we just imagine we are seeing. There was no simple criteria to distinguish true images from false, Hobbes insisted. The only irrefutable statement that one can make is that we do perceive images and that therefore there is something which causes these conceptions in our mind. The cause of all our conceptions was the motion of the object travelling through the air and impacting upon our senses. This was the core of Hobbes's refutation of the sceptic's philosophy. Yet equally our conceptions could also be caused by the internal motions in our mind, making us believe that our mental images are true ones. Hobbes does not invoke divine guidance as a yardstick to measure our impressions by, as Mersenne, Descartes, or even Gassendi had done, for he further believed that the matter of divine intervention could also be subject to doubt. But like Gassendi before him, Hobbes maintained that true knowledge could be attained if we combined the proper understanding of bodies in motion with a nominalistic vocabulary shorn from ambiguity. Thus in De Homine (1658) Hobbes argued that our

"...conceptions or apparitions are nothing really, but motion in some internal substance of the head; which motion not stopping there, but proceeding to the heart, of necessity must either help or hinder that motion which is called vital; when it helpeth, it is called DELIGHT...but when such motion weakeneth or hindreth the vital motion, then it is called PAIN." ¹⁷

In other words, a proper understanding of our language entails that we retain a nominalistic vocabulary which simply reports our conceptions, even if those conceptions are but internal motions.

Hobbes clearly did not align himself with the dogmatist position that our senses never deceive us because God would not have it so.

Hobbes considered the Aristotelian claim that our senses "never err in reporting" as being self-evidently absurd, for he frequently pointed out, like Descartes had done, that it is merely illusory that the sun and the moon appear to us as being objects which are of a certain size, shape and distance. Even by glancing at the sun's reflection in the water, he pointed out, our senses give us entirely different information.¹⁸

If all our images are phantasms, or if all our sensations are but inward motions occurring only in the mind, as Hobbes argued, then it would be impossible to contend along with the dogmatists that they are true images. Yet Hobbes's position also means that no one image can ever be privileged over others. A metaphoric image can be no less true than a real one. Indeed, it might even be profitable to posit a metaphoric image, for instance an artificial man, in place of a real object since any conception could be used as a starting point for knowledge. The only essential component to images is that they be imagined, and the more that they are imagined by others the better. As it is that all men can recognize that they perceive objects which are continually in motion, there is no need to further examine the exact content of those images. What is knowledge, after all, Hobbes asked, if it is not a process of combining images with a nominalistic vocabulary in order to create true propositions. Shifted together, the image, the name and the definition will reveal knowledge. As Hobbes proclaims in his Elements of Law,

"The first principle of knowledge is that we have such and such conceptions; the second, that we have thus and thus named the things whereof they are conceptions: the third is, that we have joined the names in such a manner, as to make true propositions;

and fourth and last is, that we have joined those propositions in such a manner as they be concluding."¹⁹

Vital to Hobbes's account of knowledge, therefore, is that we must originally share in the same conceptions, whether they be metaphorical images or so-called real ones. Otherwise we might find ourselves making entirely different, perhaps even contradictory, conclusions.

In chapter four of Leviathan Hobbes tells us that speech is used to register and communicate our thoughts, turning our mental discourse into verbal. Knowledge and understanding is achieved by a correct ordering of words. Words correspond not to things, we are told, but to thoughts. Our thoughts - which might also include concepts and ideas - come before language, making judgment possible. As we saw in chapter three, in the Hobbesian state of nature, therefore, the two traits that man holds in his possession are thoughts, which are fired by the imagination, and words. When Hobbes writes of metaphors in this chapter, then, he condemns metaphors as words, not as thoughts or images. Metaphors equivocate names, Hobbes insists, and thus fouls up the process of correct understanding. But if we assign the domain of metaphoric images to thoughts rather than to words, then it is clear that for Hobbes the genesis of knowledge begins with the consequence of thoughts, concepts, or the "train of imagination."

Of course Hobbes also argued that metaphors and ambiguous words could never satisfy as reports of our sensations. As it is that the reliability of what is "before mens eyes" is subject to doubt, a coupling of these images with an unreliable vocabulary would lead us further away from knowledge. But, again, this is to speak of metaphors as words rather than as images. The sceptics are wrong,

Hobbes and the post-sceptics argued, precisely because we do have conceptions, whether or not they are true images or false, and this was the "one true thing" which he had discovered during his trip to the Continent.

Section Two:

Hobbes's Theory of Optics

Hobbes had always been proud of his work on optics, claiming that his discovery of the mechanics of vision was not only superior to Descartes's own efforts, but was second only in importance to his philosophical discoveries.²⁰ Given the central importance of the act of vision in discourse as outlined in the previous chapter, Hobbes's boast was more than simply hubris on his part. Vision for Hobbes did not just entail the communication of information to the reader, although he had considered such communication to be important. Vision, as Hobbes understood it, partially underscored the theory of knowledge which was to be the foundation to his political order.

Hobbes consistently argued that all knowledge was originally sense - "the first beginnings of are the phantasms of sense and imagination."²¹ There may be external bodies, Hobbes insisted, but any knowledge of their existence only occurs in the brain. The color and shape of the external body, as well as the light which the object throws off, travels through the air "pressing upon the proper organ." However, when we think that we see an object, Hobbes maintained, all we are really doing is imagining that we have such a vision. In other words, once the sensory organs have been stimulated, the internal motions of the brain activate the senses so that we are led to believe that a vision which is actually occurring internally appears to us to

exist externally. From all "lucid, shining and illuminate bodies," Hobbes argued, "there is motion produced to the eye, and, through the eye, to the optic nerve, and so into the brain."²² Having described this method that outside objects interact with the senses, Hobbes then argues, in a rather good metaphor, that "the brain is the fountain for all sense."²³

The obvious question to ask then is how can the brain be the "fountain of all sense" when we have just been told that our senses can sometimes be activated by external bodies? If his account of optics appears to be a case of a circular definition then it can only be said in his defense that Hobbes may have intended it to be so. One of the great triumphs of scientific progress, according to Hobbes, was Harvey's theory of the circulatory system which Hobbes may have used as a model for his theory of optics. The model of the circulatory system where the heart pumps out blood whilst at the same time is fed by blood flowing back into its chambers might, if one were to be generous, be said to be analogous to an account of optics where the brain is both stimulated by the senses and is also the "fountain" of all sensation.²⁴

Hobbes's metaphor the "brain is a fountain" might appear startling to the wary reader who might recall Hobbes's bitter denunciation of metaphors in science. Taking into account the previous chapter's discussion of Hobbes's theory of metaphor in discourse, it is worthwhile remembering that for Hobbes the danger of metaphor lies in its equivocation of names. As a pedagogic device, on the other hand, the metaphoric image is almost unrivalled; what is required is that the image be apt to the discourse at hand. Here the proposition that the "brain is the fountain of all sense" captures,

for Hobbes, an accurate picture of how the science of optics works. Metaphors and pictures are only to be despised when they are false. It should also be pointed out here that on occasion Hobbes felt that metaphoric images could be dangerous, as when he insists that "sharp" metaphors only be used in a court of law. It seems that the chief danger of the metaphoric image for Hobbes was in its ability to offer a rival description of an object - rival, that is, to a metaphoric description grounded in science. Remember that Hobbes was totally dismissive of those who practised the "metaphorical conceit." The only stipulation that Hobbes makes in regards to metaphoric images is that they be apt to the discourse at hand.

There are a few obvious problems with Hobbes's theory of optics, some of which Hobbes succeeds in ignoring and another of which he is forever having trouble overcoming. Firstly, not having recourse to a theory of light and sound waves, Hobbes's account of optics is left fundamentally deficient. Hobbes never manages to explain to us just what this "motion" that is transported from external bodies to the organs of sense is. The second problem, one which Hobbes was well aware of, was that if all knowledge of the external world had its source solely inside the mind, then how could one distinguish between a dream and reality? Although the issue of dreams appeared in almost all of his major works in one form or another, Hobbes never satisfactorily explained how one could distinguish dreams from reality.²⁵ The best that he could do was to argue that when a person is dreaming he believes that his visions are real, but when he is awake he knows that his waking visions are real because he is not dreaming. Yet Hobbes readily admitted that "I know no...mark by which he can

discern whether it were a dream or not, and therefore do less wonder to hear a man sometimes to tell his dream for a truth, or to take it for a vision."²⁶ This problem that Hobbes had with dreams did afford him ample scope, however, to apply his theory of optics to religious supersitition. Religious visions, according to Hobbes, happened only inside the mind, having no direct link to physical bodies, and were like the dreaming of dreams or the viewing of ghosts.

Thirdly, it would seem that Hobbes's theory of optics would necessarily throw into incredulity any theory of knowledge which was to spring from it. After all, how could one ever differentiate between the propositions "last night I had a dream that God spoke to me" and "last night God spoke to me in a dream?" Although Hobbes would claim that all instances of the latter proposition were really examples of the former, he would still have no firm basis, given only his theory of optics, for asserting just why this was the case. What was needed by Hobbes, therefore, was a complement to his theory of optics that did not just describe external objects as "facts" which might be misconceived, but a theory of knowledge which would embrace the relationship between facts as the criteria for truth.

Section Three:

Natural Vision as the Knowledge of Fact

In chapter nine of Leviathan Hobbes tells us that, although the subjects of knowledge may be "severall," they nevertheless fall into two broad categories: the first is the knowledge of fact, the second is what is called the knowledge of science.²⁷ Knowledge of fact, according to Hobbes, is "nothing else but Sense and Memory, and is Absolute Knowledge; as when we see a Fact doing, or remember it done:

And this is the Knowledge required of a Witness." Knowledge of fact, therefore, stems from the act of natural vision, and this is connected to a proper understanding of optics or else we would then be reduced to taking our dreams and fanciful images as facts.

Because of a theory of optics which had led him to conclude that vision was simply a matter of observing motion, Hobbes could no longer argue that facts simply exist, lying motionless on the ground waiting to be observed. Facts had to be active and could never be passive. By observing an object "doing," as Hobbes calls it, one can proclaim, say, that the book one is reading has a red cover or, based upon memory, that what one had for dinner the night before was veal.

On several occasions, as in the above passage, Hobbes compares the knowledge of fact with a witness's testimony. A witness, of course, is simply called upon to report as explicitly as possible on the event he has observed. He is seldom, if ever, asked to render an opinion or interpret the facts which he presents before the court. A knowledge of fact is not demonstrable, nor is it the sort of political knowledge or vision as discussed in chapter three which the sovereign needs in order to defend the state. It is always particular, never universal, and in the political world which is constructed from propositions and general principles the knowledge of fact has a meager existence. As Hobbes explains, knowledge of fact, of which natural vision can be said to be a prime component, is entirely circumscribed by "sense, and ever after memory."²⁸ It is part of our day-to-day experience, an experience which "concludeth nothing universally" and is non-transferable to the world of politics. Although political or metaphorical vision may make use of facts such as "the enemy is well armed," the fact by itself cannot dictate to the sovereign what he

should do in such a circumstance. Knowledge of fact is only a report that our senses, given a proper understanding of optics, tell us.

Hobbes is often described as an empiricist based upon his assertion that all knowledge is derived from sense experience, but unlike some other empiricists of this time, Hobbes's brand of empiricism is in reality a thin end of a very thick wedge.²⁹ The fact of what one had for dinner the night before, for example, would be extremely difficult to prove given only Hobbes's theory of facts. One may be in error; the knowledge of what was once a fact may succumb to a sea full of faulty memories. Moreover, in the political world, a population whose sole knowledge is derived from "sense, and ever after memory" is in constant danger of getting it wrong. One answer to this problem, in regards to the general population, might be to guarantee that the object or image is always present to the observer, that it is never allowed to lapse into the morass of memory, that, in other words, the image of the political world is always before one's eyes. But to what degree the average man could attain the knowledge of fact did not concern Hobbes. Opposed to a scientific knowledge that only a handful could ever achieve, the knowledge of fact would seem to be available to all who wanted it. All that was required was the ability to set down an accurate description of what was before one's eyes.

When the knowledge of fact is recorded it becomes history. Hobbes states that there are two kinds of history: natural history which has "no Dependence upon mans Will" and "Civill History; which is the History of the Voluntary Actions of men in Common-wealths."³⁰ In both cases all that is required is a true record of sense experience. But although Hobbes thought that men could learn from history, and in particular learn the much valued art of prudence, he nevertheless also

thought that the subject of history held limited leverage in transforming society. Natural history could only be used to catalogue the history of "Metals, Plants, Animals, Regions, and the like" and so increase the store of knowledge that one had of one's surroundings; civil history could only chronicle man-made events.³¹ The best civil history, as we saw in the previous chapter, was Thucydides's write-up (the Greek "syngraph") of the Peloponnesian War. The genius of this kind of history, according to Hobbes, was its ability to transform the reader into a spectator of the events which were narrated. Any man who was thus a reader could own this historical vision, regardless of temperament or intelligence.

Hobbes's claim that the knowledge of fact is a register of natural and civil history begs the question of whether this is any kind of knowledge at all. Given that the knowledge of fact relies upon reporting sense experience, given also that vision is only an internal motion in the mind, and given that sense experience can either be deceptive or subject to a faulty memory, one would be hard pressed to make any great claims for its application. It can be argued that the best books, like Thucydides's history, which are the record or the register of facts, are in reality nothing other than visible objects which might simply be the objects of fancy. What is more, Hobbes explicitly warns us elsewhere against taking the testimony of books as facts:

"Nor that which is gotten by Reasoning from the Authority of Books; because it is not by Reasoning from Cause to the Effect; nor from Effect to Cause; and is not knowledge but Faith."³²

In other words, if the information contained in books is not arrived at by some other criteria, or if it is merely a jumble of reported

"facts", then the knowledge contained therein soon lapses into opinion and faith. If Thucydides escaped this injunction he did so only because he ventured to conjecture upon the causes of men's motives and actions in his history, and no doubt Hobbes would add that the best books on natural history speculate upon natural causes and effects.³³ The point however is that books, those 'registers' of the knowledge of fact, must conform to a criterion other than the straight forward reporting of sense data if they are to carry the valued currency of knowledge.

The limits of historical knowledge, or the knoweldge of fact, for Hobbes also becomes manifest when one considers that it is something that all men possess. Even animals have sense experience and therefore could be said to "know" or at least understand something on some sensory level. All creatures can be said to possess the faculty of natural vision, or as Hobbes says, "Sense and Memory of things [are] common to man and all living creatures."³⁴ But without the method of reasoning from cause to effect, or vice versa, all this is merely a description of appearance rather than of reality. If the truth of propositions cannot be demonstrated then one can only take them to be true on trust, but then again this is how Hobbes defines the word "belief."

In short, in spite of Hobbes's declaration that a witness's testimony is a knowledge of fact, given his theory of optics and the limits that he places upon sense experience, it would be difficult to imagine that the knowledge of fact could ever play a significant role in the life of the commonwealth. The population which relies upon the knowledge of fact can be said to be no different from those who dwell in Plato's infamous Cave.

This is the limit of Hobbes's so-called empiricism, and is the reason why his knowledge of fact has such a meager existence. In spite of Hobbes's attempts to the contrary, there can be no theory of knowledge which relies solely upon perceptions. If Hobbes's theory of knowledge is to remain coherent, then the seat of knowledge will have to be founded upon some other premise.

Section Four:

Hobbes's Theory of Scientific Knowledge

The first thing one notices when examining Hobbes's account of scientific knowledge is that science does not hold the same meaning for Hobbes as it would for us today. As we have just seen Hobbes describes the knowledge of fact as including the histories of "metals, plants, animals, regions, and the like" - subjects which today might encapsulate a plurality of what we mean when we use the word "science" - and yet for Hobbes these are the subjects which are created by God and hence are ultimately unknowable to mankind.³⁵ Science, as Hobbes understood the term, applies to the knowledge of those things which man creates, a theory which sometimes leaves him with a rather curious and occasionally unbalanced list of scientific topics. Philosophy is therefore a science which was ultimately knowable because, Hobbes believed, it was created by man, and so it can be said for architecture, navigation, mathematics, geography, and meteorology. At the same time, however, the subjects of optics, music, poetry, rhetoric and logic all fall under the umbrella of science for the same reason, although few might today find it easy to describe just what else navigation and poetry have in common. Hobbes was able to achieve this mixed-marriage of objects of scientific understanding by arguing

that some were concerned with quantity, like mathematics, and still others were concerned with quality, which for Hobbes encompassed the study of the variations in a single body.

There are hints here of Francis Bacon's idea of science echoing throughout Hobbes's account of scientific knowledge for Bacon had urged, in his De Augmentis Scientiarum, that "it [was] the duty and virtue of all knowledge to abridge the circuits and language of experience...by collecting and writing axioms of science into more general ones, and such as may comprehend all individual cases."³⁶ For Hobbes this meant collecting and collating all the subjects which can be said to be man-made into the two broad and not very well delineated categories of quantity and quality. But there is another comparison which we can make here for Bacon had also urged that "knowledge is worthiest which least burdens the intellect with multiplicity" - or in other words, rather than wielding a scientific Ockham's Razor the scientist should seek to provide a general explanation for all scientific phenomena.³⁷ It was this that Hobbes believed to be his chief contribution to the subject, for the science of all things, he argued, could be explained by the universal principle of causation.

Hobbes defines the knowledge of science as the "knowledge of the Consequences of one Affirmation to another." Science is therefore "conditional" (as opposed to "absolute") because it relies upon man's ability to reason properly. This also separates the scientist from his fellow man since few would be able to master this "small power" of the knowledge of scientific causation.³⁸ Science is called the "knowledge of consequences" because

"...when we see how anything comes about, upon what causes, and by what manner; when the like causes come into our power, we see

how to make it produce the like effects."³⁹

Thus it is the scientist who alone can delve into the causes of things and, based upon this knowledge, re-create the objects of science. Moreover, Hobbes thoroughly politicizes this scientific knowledge as he intends the scientist, armed with this "small power," to increase the Sovereign's power by adding to the sovereign's instruments of war and to his ability to reason effectively. This knowledge of causation, in other words, acts as the political vision which the Sovereign uses to protect the state.

Hobbes believed that "the causes of universal things...have all but one universal cause, which is motion" and so we come full circle to the idea that the world solely consists of bodies in motion.⁴⁰ However, Hobbes occasionally offers conflicting accounts of the method one uses to reach this conclusion: on the one hand he argues that the search for causes can be carried out by analytically breaking down an affirmation and then synthetically reconstituting it, and on other occasions he argues that "ratiocination," or reasoning from definitions will lead to the same result. The latter technique is sometimes referred to by Hobbes as simply the "Method" and bears a striking resemblance to the method used in geometrical reasoning. Although Hobbes was a little inconsistent in his methodological techniques there was no inconsistency in what he claimed as to their importance: simply put, the scientific knowledge of causation, together with a rational method of uncovering the meaning of words and their application, would offer a true science bridging all the subjects which can be said to be man-made.⁴¹

It would be difficult to describe Hobbes's knowledge of science as stemming solely from the act of vision in the natural sense. Here

the senses play a limited role. Unravelling the string of causation calls for more of a rational method than optical accuracy. And yet the act of vision in the second sense of the word is strongly implied in his account of science - that is, a political or imaginary vision which the sovereign uses to defend the commonwealth. The scientist, after all, imaginatively sees the connection between things that a mere optical account - "the knowledge of fact" -alone cannot record. Gilbert Ryle, for example, in his Concept of Mind suggests that with Galileo's and Descartes's mechanical world-view influencing so many of the seventeenth century thinkers, a new vocabulary of "consciousness" was created which was "to play in the mental world the part played by light in the mechanical world." Metaphorically then, Ryle continues, "the contents of the mental world were thought of being self-luminous or refulgent."⁴² This, of course, is the picture of scientific knowledge based upon optical metaphors, or vision in the second sense of the word, and was occasionally adopted by Hobbes. In chapter five of Leviathan, for instance, which is devoted to reason and science, Hobbes compares the workings of the mind to these scientific illuminations:

"To conclude, The Light of humane minds is Perspicuous Words, but by exact definitions first snuffed, and purged from ambiguity..."⁴³

Here the word "perspicuous" means "transparent," so one might say, to paraphrase Hobbes, that the light of human minds is optically transparent words (or to put it less formally, what illuminates the workings of the mind for Hobbes are words easily understood). Crucially, Hobbes's argument is that words should be made to be visually clear. Only then can we proceed in attaining knowledge. Scientific knowledge, in other words, was likened by Hobbes to either

a true or a false illumination in the mind.⁴⁴ How then, one may ask, was one ever to know the difference?

The difference between a true and a false scientific illumination is akin to that of a true and a false optical vision, or even the distinction between dreaming and observing reality. In all three cases the only distinction that one can make is with the method one uses in acquiring and demonstrating the truth of the mental image. If the method employed can lead one to "demonstrate the truth thereof perspicuously to another" then the knowledge which is derived necessarily becomes "certain and infallible." The equation that one is therefore left with in Hobbes's theory of knowledge looks something like this: Perception + the Scientific Method = Knowledge.

Section Five:

The "Knowledge" of Geometry

For Hobbes all knowledge is thus originally sense appearing only in the mind. Thereafter, he argued, it is only memory and, because of the limits of our capacity to remember things, our knowledge, like our memories, fades. Since our experience of the world is only our memory of it, and since, as Hobbes tells us, experience concludes nothing universally, then it is only logical to conclude that all our knowledge be of a limited, particular - rather than universal - capacity. Yet this was not Hobbes's entire position on the matter, for he also believed that there could be foundations to our knowledge, that one could break out of the vicious cycle of sensations - phantasms - memories, climbing out of the Cave, as it were, to stand on the firm foundation of truth. This was the reason for Hobbes's comments in De Cive that there were "principles...for a foundation"

which could be "buil[t] thereon on truth."⁴⁵ It was a foundational metaphor which Hobbes took literally: our various trains of thoughts can be regulated, can be ordered, if they were based upon the methods that geometry had to offer us. The methods of geometry, like the foundations of a building, lead directly to knowledge and truth.

The most valuable insights, Nietzsche once observed, are arrived at last, but, he quickly added, these most valuable insights are methods. The insights that the geometric method had offered to philosophers are a case in point. Hobbes was not the first to see the possibilities that geometry had for philosophy and science, nor was he the last to do so. The first Greek geometrician, Pythagoras, who Herodotus tells us learnt his trade from the Egyptians, argued that the methods of geometry could form an umbrella method for the other disciplines, and in Aristotle's account, Pythagorean geometry was closely related to a Pythagorean system of ethics. The idea of structuring a system of ethics along the geometric method also appealed to Spinoza who, perhaps borrowing from the structure of Euclid's Elements, also began his Ethics with a series of propositions, followed by a number of related axioms, and concluded with demonstrable proofs - all echoing the geometrician's trade. That a rationalist like Spinoza and an alleged empiricist like Hobbes had both become enchanted with the idea of structuring a system of knowledge along the methods of geometric reasoning testifies to the power that geometry had held for the seventeenth century mind. But perhaps the choicest comparison with Hobbes's claims for geometry is to be made with Descartes's own claims. According to Descartes,

"Those long chains of reasoning...of which geometricians make use
in order to arrive at the most difficult demonstrations, had

caused me to imagine that all those things which fall under the cognizance of man might very likely be mutually related in the same fashion...."⁴⁶

Here Descartes's claim is a reprise of Pythagoras's own hopes: that the geometric method could act as an umbrella method for other disciplines. Both Descartes and Hobbes believed that the problem of causation could be understood by examining this metaphor of, what Descartes called, "chains of reasoning;" that is, that there is a fundamental link to everything and that the geometric method would be able to discover those links in the long chain.

This is, of course, a classic example of the metaphor of causation.⁴⁷ The very concept of causation is itself an attempt to impart a series of links to events, or to what is often perceived as a chain of events. Descartes's belief that "all those things which fall under the cognizance of men" could be finally understood by first breaking down each event into its individual components, and then rebuilding these items into building blocks or links in a long chain is man's metaphorical way of structuring reality. Hobbes also believed that for knowledge to be derived one had to break down the components of a proposition analytically and then rebuild these building blocks of knowledge again into a synthetic whole. "In searching out of causes," Hobbes declared, "there is need partly of the analytic partly of the synthetic method."⁴⁸ Hobbes's rather curious insistence that one could add and subtract propositions is another example that one could "add on" or build the components of sentences into true propositions.⁴⁹ In fact, this metaphorical way of building or breaking down propositions was the way Hobbes marks the difference between opinion and knowledge as "knowledge slowly admits a

proposition after it has been broken into pieces and chewed, faith swallows it whole and entire." ⁵⁰

But there is a double metaphor involved here, for the method of geometry is claimed to be transferable to an altogether different discipline. According to Hobbes, geometry, together with astronomy, is "the mother of all sciences" and all "natural philosophy must begin with geometry." ⁵¹ Not only does natural philosophy conform to the methods of geometry but also moral philosophy, for why else, Hobbes asks, "have the writings of geometricians increased science, whilst those of ethical philosophers have increased words only?" ⁵² If, as Aristotle suggests, metaphor involves a "transference" from one name to another, then a transference of the vocabulary and methods of geometry to moral and civil philosophy can also be said to be metaphorical.

In stark contrast to the Hobbesian and Cartesian claim that most, if not all, knowledge could be metaphorically illuminated by geometric reasoning is Aristotle's sober warning. Aristotle argued in his Posterior Analytics that "one cannot prove by geometry...the concern of a different [subject]" unless that subject was already closely related to geometry. ⁵³ Perhaps significantly, the example that Aristotle gave of where geometry could be applied to a closely related subject was the discipline of optics. Indeed, to read Hobbes on the subject of optics is to read a series of geometrical proofs. Hobbes's Tractatus Opticus is a prime example of reasoning first from definitions, then propositions, then general axioms, and then concluding with geometric demonstrations or proofs of the validity of propositions. ⁵⁴

Parenthetically, this fundamental difference between Hobbes and

Aristotle on the application of geometry to other disciplines is a telling argument against the general theme of Thomas Spragens's otherwise interesting book The Politics of Motion: the World of Thomas Hobbes.⁵⁵ Spragens argues that Hobbes's theory of science moved within the Aristotelian "paradigm" of science (Spragens borrows from Kuhn's use of the word) even though Hobbes frequently renounced all things Aristotelian. Spragens quotes Hobbes as saying in De Homine that "by this we may understand, there be two kinds of knowledge, whereof the one is nothing but sense, or knowledge original,...and remembrance of the same; the other is called science."⁵⁶ Spragens claims that this is not very far from the Aristotelian formula for knowledge. "Hobbes's account of the natural history of science," according to Spragen, "his generic epistemology, as it were, is virtually identical to Aristotle's."⁵⁷ The problem with this interpretation of Hobbes's theory of knowledge is that it does not take into account Hobbes's claims for his geometric method. Hobbes maintained that only the method of geometry could produce real science. In fact, he was rather dubious of the claims made by those who advocated an experimental method for science. "Not every one that brings from beyond the seas a new gin [engine], or other jaunty devise, is therefore a philosopher," Hobbes remarked rather caustically.⁵⁸ In actuality Hobbes thought that geometry would prove to be the basis for scientific and philosophic knowledge, whereas Aristotle clearly thought that geometry could only be applied to very similar disciplines, like optics.⁵⁹

According to Hobbes, "the Greeks and Latins appear to have held that, except in geometry, there was no reasoning certain and ending in science."⁶⁰ This was, of course, a misreading of the Greeks. Aristotle, as we have just seen, had a rather narrow opinion of the

uses of geometry, and he complained of those students of science who never listen to their teachers unless they speak mathematically. Hobbes was perhaps more aligned to the Platonist response to geometry. As Socrates stated during his argument with Glaucon, when geometry concerns itself with the "knowledge of the eternal" it will be able to "draw the soul towards truth, and create the spirit of philosophy."⁶¹ But unlike the Socrates of Plato, Hobbes felt that geometry could be used in the day-to-day world of appearances rather than be consigned to some vaulted plane untouched by this world.

Hobbes originally fell in love with geometry, according to Aubrey, when he found himself in a gentleman's library where Euclid's Elements lay open

"...and t'was the 47 El libri I..By G—, sayd he...this is impossible! So he reads the demonstration of it, which referred him back to such a proposition, which proposition he read. That referred him back to another, which he also read. And so on, [until] at last he was demonstratively convinced of the truth. This made him in love with Geometry."⁶²

The reason for Hobbes's love affair with geometry is not hard to fathom. As we have seen, perceptual knowledge (or natural vision) for Hobbes had severe limitations, but to that other strain in philosophy which had argued against sense experience altogether Hobbes believed to be the sin of extreme rationalism. The geometrician's method, on the other hand, offered a middle course - neither rejecting perceptual knowledge entirely nor totally embracing extreme rationalism. The gift of the scientific method for Hobbes was its ability to reason from shapes and figures, deriving demonstrable and rational conclusions

based upon man-made, visible pictures. That geometric shapes and figures were instantly visible and recognizable as such meant that reasoning from them could never stray into the imaginer's fancy; that a seemingly rational method could be outlined meant that visible conclusions could be reached and the truth of propositions easily demonstrated.

Contrast this with Hobbes's understanding of algebra and one immediately sees why the visual element geometry is so important to Hobbes. When Hobbes described the subject of algebra he said it was "to the theory whereof two or three Days at most are required, though to the Promptitude of Working, perhaps the Practice of months is necessary."⁶³ Far from being instantly recognizable, as geometry was to Hobbes when he discovered Euclid, algebra might take months to master. Algebra presented no images for the reader to ponder, but was a "slab of symbols" which looked to Hobbes "as if a hen had been scraping there."⁶⁴ So just as knowledge was defined by Hobbes as original sense, it appears that geometry offered visual knowledge of the mathematical world, or as he describes the subject of geometry, "the philosophy of figures."⁶⁵

This geometrical method was also employed by Hobbes, like it was by Spinoza, in the presentation of his works. Not only do many individual works by Hobbes begin by the stating of propositions, followed by axioms, and then with a demonstration of the proposition's validity, but the overall production of Hobbes's opus conformed to these very ideals. Hobbes complained that "most men wander out of the way, and fall into error for want of method" and so he set out to publish his major works in a parallel geometric order.⁶⁶ De Corpore (on bodies) was thus published first with the declaration that it was the

first ever example of the philosophical method in practice. Afterwards, Hobbes intended his work on bodies to be followed by that on man (De Homine) and then to reach a crescendo with a treatise on society (De Cive). As remarked earlier in the previous chapter, this pattern flowed from the idea that once a foundation had been built, logical scientific proofs could then be discovered. Unfortunately for Hobbes, the English Civil War prevented him from publishing these three works in such a neat geometric order, forcing him to publish De Cive soon after De Corpore and leaving De Homine to appear much later.

The definition that all knowledge was originally sense dovetails quite nicely with Hobbes's definition of geometry. Indeed, with a few swift linguistic moves Hobbes was able to prove that geometry was intimately connected with his theory of knowledge of sense impressions, or more to the point, was even identical with it. Since the world was made up of matter in motion and since science was a search into causation, Hobbes maintained that geometry, properly identified, revealed the underpinnings of scientific knowledge. Thus, Hobbes defined a geometric line as simply being "the motion of a point" and argued that the geometrical surface of an object was "the motion of a line."⁶⁷ Scientific knowledge, therefore, was not just a matter for Hobbes of adopting the methods of geometry. Since geometry itself was now defined by Hobbes as if it were matter in motion, the metaphor of scientific knowledge as the geometric method could now be taken literally. Descartes's discovery that geometry was "mutually related in the same fashion" with the scientific and philosophical disciplines was therefore strengthened by Hobbes. For Hobbes, geometry was not just related to the other sciences but was what all the scientific disciplines had had in common. According to Hobbes,

"The science of every subject is derived from precognition of the causes, generation, and construction of the same; and consequently where the causes are known there is place for demonstration, but not...where the causes are to seek for.

Geometry is therefore demonstrable, for the lines and figures from which we reason are drawn and described ourselves; and civil philosophy is demonstrable, because we make the commonwealth
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ourselves."

"The science of every subject," if it is demonstrable, can therefore be said to be a geometry. But in the above passage Hobbes also makes it plain that this holds true in civil philosophy as well since it, too, can be said to be man-made.

If all knowledge is "original sense," it must be asked then from where does the knowledge of geometry spring? Hobbes did not share in the Cartesian intuitionism that human beings 'just know' that the geometrical shapes and patterns were true ones, or in Kant's belief that the principles of mathematics are known to us as synthetic apriori truths. Hobbes clearly states that geometry is man-made, accurately reflecting the world. Geometry comes after man, not before, and neither is it part of what it means to be human, for Hobbes, since not all men wander around naturally knowing geometric theorems. At the same time the methods of geometry were for Hobbes the true foundations of knowledge, with direct application to the natural and moral sciences. No longer did one have to contend with the defects of natural vision in order to arrive at a rather limited knowledge of fact. The geometric method could offer true knowledge to the philosopher and the scientist. Yet the very basis for concluding that geometry revealed scientific knowledge is left unresolved.

Hobbes's claims for geometry only looked correct to him because there seemed to be a direct correspondence between geometric patterns and the problem of causation in science. On what basis, then, did Hobbes alight upon Euclidean geometry as a model for all the sciences?

On this question one can only speculate - but the strong likelihood is that geometry conformed to Hobbes's theory of scientific knowledge precisely because it was a visual medium when other systems of mathematics and logic were not. In every sense of the word, geometry offered Hobbes a "picture" of knowledge. Geometry, indeed, was "the philosophy of figures." Hobbes's theory of optics left him with the "knowledge of fact" which was, at best, incomplete as it was impossible to demonstrate a proposition's truth to another person by pointing to an internal picture of a 'fact' in one's mind. One could, however, demonstrate a truth which corresponded to a visual geometric image which was to be shared by all knowledgeable men.

Hobbes theory of knowledge is an act of double vision. The equation that ended the previous section said that for Hobbes "Perception + the Scientific Method = Knowledge." Yet, as we have seen, the content of the scientific method - or geometric reasoning - was itself primarily visual, thus rendering Hobbes's theory of knowledge in distinct visual sensations. In the primary sense his theory of optics had led him to conclude that natural vision, or the knowledge of fact, cannot be dismissed from claims of knowledge. To see something is at least to know that one is seeing something, as Hobbes and his fellow post-sceptics averred, although it might only be a phantasm. But in the more elaborate second sense, in the ability to see causal connections between things, the act of vision becomes equally

fundamental.

Based upon the insights that the geometric method had offered, Hobbes felt that the components of objects in motion could be broken down into their constituent causes and then geometrically synthesized again back into a whole. This was the purpose of science: to show the consequence of one affirmation to another. But the model used in this second sense of knowledge was also visual. Geometry is nothing more than reasoning from visible shapes and figures. It is significant, in that respect, that Hobbes did not claim that mathematics alone was the algorism of all our scientific knowledge. During his days in Oxford Hobbes would have been introduced to elementary maths, but he clearly did not 'see' the possibilities that mathematics could have until he was visibly struck in that gentleman's library by the figures and shapes of Euclid's geometry. For Hobbes, geometry rather than mathematics, held the key to knowledge. Geometry can be tied down to physical shapes and figures whilst mathematics might fly off into the spheres of absurd fancy like the logic for which the rationalists and the scholastics were renowned. But geometry was "the philosophy of figures" and it was impossible to conduct natural philosophy without it. And civil philosophy, since it was created by man like the geometrician's shapes and figures, also falls prey to the geometric method.

Moreover, it can further be said that Hobbes uses the study of optics and of geometry as metaphors for human knowledge. In this regard Hobbes was not very different from some of his seventeenth century brethren, many of whom also believed that diverse fields of study had a single unifying, geometrical theme - albeit a theme composed of metaphoric notes and phrases. This is not meant to be a

claim that Hobbes believed that all knowledge was at root only visual. Hobbes explicitly stated that only one form of knowledge was visual: the knowledge of fact. But this should not prevent us from noticing the implicitly strong visual and even metaphorical basis of much of Hobbes's theory of knowledge.

CHAPTER FIVE:
THE IMAGES OF LEVIATHAN

By his metaphor of the Leviathan he provided an ingenious framework on which there was some peg or other to hang every question of philosophy, psychology, government, and economics.

—T.S. Eliot

The following examines the content and form of some of the images contained in Hobbes's Leviathan. It is a highly metaphorical work; indeed, an entire thesis could successfully focus solely upon the images contained in Leviathan.¹ Since time and space do not allow for there to be a list of all of Hobbes's metaphorical images - which seemingly leap from every page of Leviathan - a few remarks towards the reading of these images will have to suffice. Since any student of Hobbes could see for himself the highly metaphorical character of the work, a detailed description here of every metaphorical phrase in the book would not be a very profitable venture. And though this should in no way be taken as an exhaustive study of the meaning behind the metaphorical images contained in Leviathan, this chapter attempts to highlight what may not be immediately evident to the initial reader of Hobbes's work.

Ideally we will have by now already come some way in understanding the use of metaphor in political thought: the need to create a common sensory political judgment; the necessity of adorning literal propositions with imaginatively arresting images (thus persuading the populus); as a means of throwing the reader into the same passions and situations as if we were a spectator of the events being narrated; as a partial response to the sceptics and the starting point for a theory of knowledge - to name just a few of the themes already covered in the last few chapters.

Accordingly, the sections which follow offer some concrete examples of Hobbes's metaphoric images in use and explains how they dovetail into various elements of his political philosophy, making manifest some of his concerns expressed above. The first section examines the biblical theme of Leviathan in accordance to Hobbes's

desire to offer new images, borrowing from the dominant Christian orthodoxy. It is argued that Hobbes's theory of images and idolatry which is expressed in Leviathan sheds some light on why Hobbes chose Leviathan as a title for his work and not others. The second section examines the contents of the title page the Leviathan and argues, firstly, that Hobbes had to be the designer of the illustration, and secondly, the title page reinforces Hobbes's theories of optics and political judgment as outlined earlier. The third section looks at Hobbes's use of the word "soul" in relation to the image of the artificial man. This section suggests that Hobbes's image of the soul of the commonwealth was intended as a rebuttal to other popular theories of the social contract. The fourth section briefly sketches Hobbes's use of the image of the artificial man throughout the book. The penultimate section examines more closely the metaphor of bonds and chains, which, for Hobbes, connected his concept of liberty with a theory of obligation. Finally, the last section addresses the last book of Leviathan. Although not often read by students of Hobbes, this last book further illustrates Hobbes's use of metaphoric language and his concept of political vision.

Section One:

The Biblical Theme of Leviathan

Of all the images which were available to Thomas Hobbes to convey his political message to the educated seventeenth century reader he chose that of the Leviathan, the mythological monster of Hebrew poetry best known from its description in the Old Testament books of Job, Psalms and Isaiah. It is an odd metaphor. The name, perhaps coming from

Arabic origins, refers to something twisted, coiled or having folds.² The book of Job refers to the Leviathan in tandem with that of Behemoth, which was reputed to be its counterpart. Together, Leviathan and Behemoth were said to be created by God at the same time as the creation of man ["Behold now behemoth, which I made with thee"].³ The two monsters were thus part of nature, God's grand design: the Leviathan the lord of the seas, Behemoth that of the land. The Leviathan is sometimes referred to as a sea serpent, a crocodile, a dragon, and even a great whale; it has the ability to swallow up the day, eclipsing the sun and stars ["By his breath the heavens become bright..."]. The Behemoth, on the other hand, was said to resemble a hippopotamus.⁴

What is occasionally missed by commentators on Hobbes's grand metaphor is the fact that the Leviathan, although created by God, is also set against God in order to fulfill His promise to the people of Israel. In Isaiah we are told of that day when God's judgment will befall man:

"In that day the Lord with his hand and great strong sword will punish the Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent, and he will slay the dragon that is in the sea."⁵

In the book of Job Jehovah confronts Job with the forces of nature and of evil, symbolized by Leviathan and Behemoth, and invites him to take command of these creatures. The moral of the story is that Job obviously cannot confront these monsters, is humbled before the twin powers which only God can control ["Who then is he that can stand before me?"].⁶ The images of the Leviathan and Behemoth are therefore associated with the brute force of nature and with unchecked evil. In the Old Testament the Leviathan, an enemy of God, is also the natural

enemy of man.

There is no counterpart to the image of the Leviathan in the New Testament - that is, if one discounts the wild imaginings of John on the Isle of Patmos. The only near resemblance is with Satan's temptation of Christ on Mount Hermon. Here Satan, that first angel of creation, asserts his authority over the material world by offering the Son of Man a multitude of earthly riches, but we already know how the story is going to end: Jesus refuses, and Satan, in the last book of the New Testament, is imprisoned in the earth for a thousand years just as Jehovah had slayed the Leviathan to fulfill his promise to the Israelites in Isaiah. It would be absurdly unthinkable then, given this New Testament comparison, for Hobbes to name his philosophical work "Satan" or the "Whore of Babylon" but this is exactly what is conjured forth by the Old Testament image of the Leviathan: the Leviathan which is set against God, which threatens man in his world, and which only the Lord can tame.

During the Middle Ages and thereafter, the image of the Leviathan had lost its teeth. Gradually it became less of a symbol of natural evil and of earthly power which God would ultimately smite on the day of judgment. According to the OED, in 1555 Eden, the author of Decades, merely refers to the monster as "the great serpent of the sea Leuiathan to have such dominion in the Ocean."⁷ In the same vein Milton in Paradise Lost called the Behemoth "the biggest born of earth" and its companion the "Leviathan, Hugest of living Creatures, on the Deep Stretcht like a Promontrie." Spencer renders the Leviathan even more innocuously: the Old Testament symbol of worldly evil became, in the poet's hand, "The huge Leuiathan, dame Natures wonder." The Leviathan, disassociated from its connection with evil,

became a description of anything that was simply big, even at times only a human. Around 1630 Sanderson reportedly sermonized against powerful men calling them "great...leviathans of the world." And Middleton in 1624 used the word to describe neither a beast nor a man, but a raging controversy: "This leviathan-scandal that lies rolling Upon the crystal waters of devotion...." The best known usage of the word is, of course, Hobbes's, but the point is that by the time of Hobbes's writing of the book in the middle of the seventeenth century the evocative Old Testament metaphor had become a watered-down image, applicable to just about anything which seemed larger than life, albeit slightly menacing.

The widely-held view that the Leviathan was Hobbes's metaphor for the state thus requires qualification. Although Hobbes refers to the book of Job where he says he got the title of his book, the language and usage which he inherited was more that of a de-natured metaphorical beast. So the meaning of the image of the Leviathan has altered throughout the ages, from that of the "Leviathan the fleeing serpent" of Isaiah to the more modern day reference to the great Dr. Johnson as "the Leviathan of Literature." As testimony to the changing meaning of the metaphor in Hobbes's own time one need only to be reminded that Hobbes, even though he was often accused of being an atheist, was seldom, if ever, accused of employing an image for his philosophical work which was against the power of God, a complaint which certainly would have been leveled against him if the Leviathan had maintained its Old Testament meaning. Put simply, Hobbes was able to remake the metaphor in his own image.

In spite of its prominence in the title Hobbes seldom refers to the image itself, and in those few passages in which he resurrects the

image he does so chiefly by alluding to what he considered were its synonymous images. The Leviathan was thus compared by Hobbes to a "mortal god" (which of course is yet another image) or to that of the "artificial man" which enables Hobbes to make an elaborate comparison between an artificial human body and the commonwealth.⁸ Thus we find the Leviathan's image is not commented upon by Hobbes; its potency lies in its ability to spawn other, seemingly more instructive, images. This should not surprise since by the time of the seventeenth century the image was at the very least partially worn, a metaphor which was in danger of being taken to be literally true as the name of anything which had immense size. Why then did Hobbes not choose the alternate images of the mortal god or the artificial man for his metaphoric title, seeing how these other descriptions had also captured his imagination?

It was Hobbes's belief, as he argued in the last book of the Leviathan entitled "The Kingdom of Darkness," that all images must first be sanctioned by God. If God Himself was not the creator of images then their establishment could only be perceived as idolatry on the part of its creator - that is, by man. Hobbes defines idolatry in Leviathan as the creation of an image "by private authority, and not by the authority of them that are our sovereign pastors."⁹ Only if God or His representatives on earth commanded that an image be created would then the use of that image be justified. In fact Hobbes takes very seriously - and literally - Jehovah's commandment to Moses on the creation of images:

"...the words of the second commandment, thou shalt not make to thy self any graven image, & c., distinguish between the images that God commanded to be set up, and those that we set

up ourselves. "

Hobbes's rather lengthy commentary on idolatry in Leviathan turns on whether the author of the created image is God or a man.¹¹ Since the law as handed down to Moses forbids the creation and belief in man-made images, then only those images which are already provided in the Old and New Testaments are permitted. Clearly then the more elaborate image of the artificial man and its attendant comparisons which are made throughout the Leviathan between human anatomy and the workings of the commonwealth was not a suitable metaphoric title for Hobbes to, as T.S. Eliot complained, "peg or to hang every question of philosophy...."¹² Since the artificial man is created, as Hobbes explains, by man rather than by God, and since the artificial man obviously does not make an appearance in the Bible, then by his own standards Hobbes would have left himself open to the charge of idolatry by using it as a symbol for his work. Although the keen eye of a more critical reader might recall that the Leviathan was once a symbol for evil, by choosing an Old Testament sea monster which was directly created by God as a metaphor for society, Hobbes was implicitly stating that his image of the state was sanctioned by God. The more elaborate and more extensively used images of the mortal god and the artificial man could never have made the same claim.

By tradition the law as handed down to Moses on top of Mt. Sinai constituted for the Jews a verbal contract between Yahweh and themselves. The characteristic trait of Jewish revelation was that their God was always heard and never seen. However, that which was for the Hebrews a verbal contract became for Hobbes explicitly visual, as if the Jewish auditory tradition had been subsumed under the Christian faith where the Christ figure was always represented by

visual images. In Hobbes's treatment of the Bible, seeing and hearing are sometimes confused as if they sprung from the same sense. According to Hobbes,

"...it is not declared in what consisteth the preeminence of the manner of God's speaking to Moses, above that of his speaking to other prophets, as to Samuel, and to Abraham, to whom he also spake by voice (that is by vision), unless the difference consist¹³ in the clearness of the vision."

In Hobbes's interpretation then, hearing the voice of God becomes measured by "the clearness of vision," an equation which would have struck the Old Testament prophets as being blasphemous. It is not difficult, however, to understand why Hobbes could have confused the sense of hearing for seeing since Hobbes was living in a Western tradition which valued the sense of sight over the sense of sound as the road which best led to knowledge. Thus in the same passage Hobbes suggests that the knowledge of God's revelation to the Old Testament prophets may well have been visual since "face to face, and mouth to mouth, cannot be literally understood of infiniteness, and incomprehensibility of the Divine nature."¹⁴ Since what we are dealing with is the Almighty, in other words, it would seem absurd to ascribe divine revelation as only to that which the sense of hearing could grasp. Even with divine revelation, the image can be said to be all.

In arguing along the lines of the more visual Christian tradition Hobbes was echoing a way of perceiving the world that started with the Greeks - a curious combination of both Platonism and Aristotelianism.

As C.S. Lewis argues in The Discarded Image, the revival of Platonism in the Middle Ages led many to believe that the images which inhabited

the heavens could quite reasonably be mirrored here on earth, or at least that there was no apriori reason why this should not be the case.¹⁵ That there existed in the heavens a more perfect counterpart for everything on the earth - a Christian version of the Platonic Forms - is also one of Hobbes's justifications in the Leviathan for the citizens to owe their allegiance to their sovereign. In his long commentary on what exactly constitutes an image, Hobbes argues that:

"...in the larger sense of the word [an] image is contained also, any representation of one thing by another. So an earthly sovereign may be called the image of God: and an inferior magistrate, the image of the earthly sovereign."¹⁶

Apart from the strong metaphorical definition of a religious image as "any representation of one thing by another," Hobbes also seems to be saying that there is a correspondence between the images of heaven and earth and that the earthly images are sanctioned by God. So even though the Old Testament Leviathan is set against God and man, the newer, more Christianized version of the beast is proof of God's direct sanctioning and guidance of a political system which is built upon such images. "This is the generation of the great Leviathan," Hobbes declares, and as if we were in any doubt of the direct correspondence between the images of heaven and those of the earth, Hobbes quickly adds, "or rather, to speak more reverently, of that mortal god, to which we owe under the immortal God, our peace and defense."¹⁷

This leaves some room to speculate on whether Hobbes intended to visually supplant Christianity, towards which he was to a large extent antagonistic, with a more civil religious image, or was he merely playing off familiar biblical images in order to bolster his own

arguments about the nature of the state. Perhaps there is room to agree with both positions. Certainly Hobbes would not have complained too bitterly if Christianity, at least of the form practised by the Catholic Church and various Puritan sects, simply folded up and left town. On the other hand, as Michael Oakeshott points out in Hobbes on Civil Association, many of the elements in the Leviathan are but a re-working of the Christian creation myth, with the doctrine of original sin necessitating that the sovereign protect the people from one another.¹⁸ Here then, Hobbes is not just replacing the images of Christianity but building upon those very same images and myths which speak directly to his political philosophy. It should be added that in doing so Hobbes was borrowing from the standard practice of utilizing well known biblical images in order to score political points. Even in Hobbes's own lifetime, for example, it was not uncommon to find that the biblical image of King David had been appropriated by the followers of Cromwell, as seen in Marvell's late poetry, and also by those, like Dryden, who portrayed Charles II in the same manner.¹⁹

If Hobbes's use of the image of the Leviathan echoed the Christian Platonists, then his theory of the importance of images in the life of the mind was distinctly Aristotelian. For Aristotle, and indeed for a great many philosophers up until rather recently, the activity of thinking was comprised chiefly of seeing a series of images in the mind. According to Aristotle in De Anima:

"Since it seems that there is nothing outside and separate in existence from sensible spatial magnitudes, the objects of thought are in sensible forms, viz., both the abstract objects and all states and affections of sensible things. Hence no one

can learn or understand anything in the absence of sense, and when the mind is actively aware of anything it is necessarily aware of it along with an image; for images are like sensuous contents except that they contain no matter."²⁰

Aristotle, like Hobbes, believed that sense was the mother of all knowledge. Since words naturally attach themselves to images, thinking was a matter of organizing the images in the mind.

If we were to expand the Greek conception of logos to include images, therefore, we might also want to include a definition of "coherent images" along with that of "coherent speech." In present day terms, thinking in this way can be likened to a reel of film playing in the mind and where each word is represented by a single frame of that film. So prevalent was this view in the long history of Western philosophy, that it was only until rather recently that it has been put into question. It was Wittgenstein's rather commonsense objection to this tradition, for instance, that when a person uses, say, the word "blue" in a sentence he doesn't necessarily have an image of "blueness" in his mind when he is saying it.²¹ Frequently the words we use when we speak are divorced from their images, and such is the obviousness of Wittgenstein's observation that it perhaps needs no further illustration.

That Hobbes, a philosopher who otherwise displays a commonsense theory of language that is sometimes remarkable for its modern day-sounding insights, nevertheless had also thought along similar lines to Aristotle testifies that it was the predominant view in Western philosophy that images and words were inextricably bound. For Hobbes, the mind was never without cognitive images. In the Leviathan Hobbes defines what he means by the word "image": in the strictest

sense of the word, Hobbes declares, an image

"...is the resemblance of something visible: in which sense the phantastical forms, apparitions, or seeming of visible bodies to the sight, are only images...."²²

But in the much larger sense of the word, Hobbes explains, an image is simply the "representation of one thing by another" whether real or imagined. In his Elements of Law Hobbes is more explicit about how images and thinking are connected:

"For the understanding of what I mean by the power cognitive, we must remember and acknowledge that there be in our minds continually certain images or conceptions of things without us, insomuch that if a man could be alive, and all the rest of the world annihilated, he should nevertheless retain the image thereof, and all those things which he had seen or perceived in it; every one by his own experience knowing, that the absence or destruction of things once imagined doth not cause absence or destruction of the imagination itself. This image and representations of the qualities of the thing without, is that we call our conceptions, imagination, ideas, notice or knowledge of them; and the faculty or power by which we are capable of such knowledge, is that I here call cognitive power, or conception, the power of knowing or conceiving."²³

We "continually" see certain images, in other words, and regardless of whether these things really exist or not, our perception of them is what constitutes our thought processes. Now in Leviathan Hobbes himself makes the connection to the Greek philosophers by stating that "these are the images, which are originally and most properly called ideas, and idols, and derived from the language of the Grecians, with

whom the word eido signifieth to see." ²⁴

The importance, then, for Hobbes of establishing the image of the Leviathan from around which his political philosophy could revolve cannot be overstated. For the reader to see the image of the Leviathan meant that the idea that the Leviathan represented would always be in his mind, "secretly instructing" and convincing him of the truth of what was being argued. Not to have an image driving the discourse of the book would leave his philosophical work impoverished. Since the reader can only think in terms of images, then it was up to Hobbes to provide him with those images which would have, what Hobbes called, the "cognitive power" to guide him through the treatise. The biblical image of the Leviathan holds such a power for, as Francis Bacon pointed out, certain "abstractions" will always be able to "seduce and forcibly disturb the judgement." Hobbes unleashed the "abstraction" of a mythological beast upon the world, using it as a guiding metaphor for his political philosophy. ²⁵ Although the contents of this work ended up provoking a great deal of controversy during his own lifetime, the aptness of his image was seldom ever in dispute.

Section Two:

The Title Page

Broadly speaking, the images of Leviathan occur in two separate forms: the verbal or metaphorical images embedded in the text and the pictorial illustration on the title page of the book. Each is meant to reinforce the other. When Hobbes states that the Leviathan is like a mortal god or an artificial man the reader can turn to the title page and see an illustration of that which is being described. This may strike some as a common occurrence – many books are adorned with

evocative covers which are meant to intimate or reveal that which is enclosed. What distinguishes Leviathan from other books is the fact that Hobbes's theory of sense perception, as shown in chapter four, dovetails into his larger theory of judgment, so that the uniqueness of the images which adorn Hobbes's title page to Leviathan illustrates, both literally and figuratively, Hobbes's theory of knowledge and of judgment.

The identity of the artist who engraved the first edition of the Leviathan is disputed. It has variously been attributed to Abraham Bosse, William Faithorn, and to Wenceslaus Hollar, among others - all of whom were master engravers at the time and whose artistry suggests that they were capable of such an engraving.²⁶ Since the title page itself was unsigned (which was not an uncommon occurrence) its attribution has remained a mystery. What does seem certain is that the design of the title page was done by the author, which was also a common occurrence, since the illustration reveals a complete knowledge of the book's contents to a degree which only Hobbes could have had. Many of Hobbes's works were published with an engraved title page; the only major work of his that was published which did not contain a cover illustration was Behemoth and this anomaly was probably due to its being published after Hobbes's death and also at a time, 1681, when the tradition of having an engraved title page to a book was beginning to die out.²⁷

A second, perhaps more compelling, argument pointing to the probability of Hobbes's designing the title page himself has to do with the uniqueness of the central figure in the picture. On the top half of the page overlooking a city and its surrounding countryside is

the figure of a man, reputed to resemble either Cromwell or Charles I (and sometimes even considered to be Hobbes himself), with arms outstretched and holding a sword in his right hand and a bishop's crook in his left, which respectively symbolize civil and ecclesiastical authority. His torso is composed of the population of the commonwealth, all of whom are depicted as facing him and with their backs toward us. This image of a monarch who is symbolically made up of the bodies of his subjects is surprising chiefly because it occurs nowhere else - that is, with one major exception. Hanging in the Louvre in 1647 was a painting of Cardinal Richelieu which Faithorn had described as

"...presenting to the common Beholder a multitude of little faces, (the famous ancestors of that noble man); at the same time, to him that looks through a Perspective, there appears only a single portrait in great of the Chancellor himself."²⁸

The point of the image presented, according to Faithorn was in "demonstrating how the Body Politick is composed of many Natural Ones."²⁹ Since Hobbes wrote the Leviathan when he was residing in Paris at that time, it is possible he may have drawn his inspiration for the design of the title page from Richelieu's portrait, thus suggesting another argument in favour of attributing the title page's design to Hobbes.

On the bottom half of the title page are three long panels, the middle of which contains the title of the work: "LEVIATHAN Or The Matter, Forme, and Power of A Common Wealth Ecclesiasticall and Civil by Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury." Flanked on both sides of the middle panel are a series of pictures which depict various aspects of civil and ecclesiastical authority. On the left panel are five small images

of civil power. The top image is of a castle on a hill, symbolizing the home of civil authority. Below that a picture of a crown, symbolizing the authority of the monarch. Below that is a silent cannon, symbolizing peace through strength. Fourthly appears a collection of weaponry stacked together and presumably ready for use, and finally the last picture is of a raging battle with both sides bearing what appears to be almost identical standards, which symbolize the state of nature as a war of men against men. On the right sided panel appears the images of its ecclesiastical counterpart. Again, the top picture portrays a cathedral or a church, the home of religious authority. Below that is of a bishop's hat symbolizing the authority of the bishop. Beneath that is a cloud emitting thunderbolts, showing, perhaps, the religious authority's power of excommunication. Fourthly we have the weapons of the church: three- and two-pronged spears symbolizing the divisions within the church. The writing on each prong reads "syl-," "logis-," "me," "Spiritual," "Direct," "Indirect," "Temporal," "Real," and "Intentional." The spears are connected by a pair of horns which are labeled "Dilemma." Finally, on the bottom picture, is an illustration of a church council debating a doctrinal dispute - the religious counterpart to a civil war.

Clearly these images are meant to be metaphorical. Although each illustration is of a concrete object, their meaning is also abstract. Moreover, their explanatory power resides in their relation to one another, which is why they are presented in such a precise order of appearance.

As mentioned earlier, Hobbes believed that we are constantly being bombarded by images, some true and some false with no method of

separating which from which. His theory of optics informs us that the object that we perceive sends out pulses which are captured by the human eye and which are then interpreted by the brain. The heart, in turn, sends out its own pulses so that the brain is then stimulated (which is the meaning behind Hobbes's metaphor that the "brain is the fountain of all sense"). Hobbes's theory of optics necessitates that objects, or at least our perception of objects, be always in motion. What the human eye is registering is the fact that object 'A' has moved from position 1 and is now at position 2, and so on. It is as if our role of film images which metaphorically play in our mind were to advance slowly frame by frame. The judgment which is the end product of this motion is dependent upon the change which has occurred and which the eye has registered. The judgment that is gleaned, in other words, from each single image or frame does not reside in the image itself but is derived from its association with what has come before it and that which comes after. As Hobbes points out,

"For by sense, we commonly understand the judgment we make of objects by their phantasms; namely, by comparing the distinguishing those phantasms; which we could never do, if that motion in the organ, by which that phantasm is made, did not remain there for some time, and make the same phantasm return."³⁰

Since our memory allows us to retain what has come before the image, we are able to distinguish the progress or change which the image has made. Judgment, as we might recall, is defined by Hobbes as the³¹ ability to sense the distinction between things.

Now if we turn to the title page of Hobbes's Leviathan we are given a perfect illustration of Hobbes's theory of judgment upon sense perception. Each image depicted (the five pictures of civil authority

and the five of ecclesiastical authority) stands in relation to one another. There is a linear progression in each panel. The eye moves from one image to the next, registering what the image portrays, and distinguishing one image from the other. The judgment of the meaning of each panel only becomes clear once the eye has registered and understood all the images in their relation to one another. The movement of civil authority between, say, position 1 and position 2 and position 3 (that is to say, between weapons being used in combat, being stacked together waiting to be used, and simply standing silently all by themselves) reveals to the reader the overall meaning of the engraving. Man rises from the depths of a state of nature, which is one of perpetual conflict, to the apex of security and peace. And only by registering each image in this movement, like arguments piled on a page, do we come to understand what is being said to us.

We can say, therefore, that in the title page of Leviathan Hobbes theory of judgment, images, optics and even his highly visual theory of knowledge are represented, each illustrated, literally, by the design of the author and the hand of the engraver.

Section Three:

The Soul of the Artificial Man

Knowledge of human anatomy in Britain was just developing when Hobbes wrote the Leviathan in 1651. In the sixteenth century very few works on anatomy existed in the vernacular, with the main exception being John Banister's The historie of man published in 1578.³² The explosion of information on human anatomy did not occur in Britain until well into the seventeenth century (as opposed to far earlier on the Continent) and to give some indication of the extent of the scientific

work being carried out at this time it is instructive to note that between 1600 and 1650 only fifty books were published in Britain on anatomy, but between 1650 and 1700 that number had increased to 230.³³ The topics of these texts ranged from the circulatory system and bone structure to the design of muscles. Perhaps the most influential of these was William Harvey's De Motu cordis et sanguines, published in 1628, which set out to offer a proof of the workings of the circulatory system - a proof, rather than a discovery, based upon the scientific method of hypothesis, observation, testing and verification. As noted earlier, Hobbes was greatly impressed with Harvey's method. This explosion of anatomical information of the sort that Harvey introduced provided Hobbes with a ready-made metaphor for his work, an elaborate comparison between a natural and an artificial body which he used not only as a rhetorical device to communicate his ideas but as the scientific underpinning for his political thought.³⁴

Previous comparisons of human anatomy with the state had of course been made. One of the more famous is John of Salisbury's twelfth century identification of the state as comprised of a king as the head of a human body, the clergy as its arms, the people as its stomach, and the army as its feet.³⁵ Going back further one encounters the early Christian tradition of indentifying the body of Christ with the community of believers, and even further back than that one finds that the fifth century B.C. Greek conception of the health of the polis was often contrasted with that of the healthy individual.³⁶ However, these earlier anatomical comparisons were not scientific in the same way that Hobbes's was: while they were based on a rather naive and somewhat superficial understanding of human anatomy, Hobbes could boast that his concept of anatomy actually mirrored precisely

what was scientifically known about the human body. Indeed, anything new that was discovered about the body could simply reinforce Hobbes's overall argument, especially since it, too, was founded upon and designed from scientific principles.

Aubrey tells us that whilst Hobbes was in Paris - presumably just before writing the Leviathan - he "studied Vesalius' Anatomy." "This I am sure was before 1648," Aubrey says, "for that Sir William Petty...studied and dissected with him."³⁷ Fresh from his anatomical studies, Hobbes wrote Leviathan heavily borrowing from the study of human anatomy. Now the metaphoric image of the artificial man is set out by Hobbes in the first paragraph of the Leviathan. As it is that God is the author of nature, man may consider himself to be the author of all that he creates "by the art of man." All life is but a motion of the limbs, Hobbes informs us, and the movement is directed from within, in the same manner that a watch moves by its internal motions of its springs and wheels. In both cases, whether it be man or man-made machine, the "principal part" is the heart "for what is the heart, but a spring; and the nerves, but so many strings; and the joints, but so many wheels, giving motion to the whole body, such as was intended by the artificer."³⁸ Hobbes states further that this "art of man" is more important than that of God for man can create his from a rational design. This, then, is one of the differences between Hobbes's image of the artificial man and John of Salisbury's body politic: the latter's is reflective of God's creation; the king is the head because it corresponds to a natural order of things which is divinely inspired. Hobbes's metaphor, on the other hand, is neither natural nor divinely inspired; since it is based upon a rational

construction of man's own making, then this particular "art goes yet further, imitating that rational and most excellent work of nature, man."

At this point Hobbes presents us with what he considers to be the crux of the image of the artificial man, an image which plays itself out in various ways throughout the rest of the book:

"For by art is created that the great Leviathan called a Commonwealth, or a State, in Latin Civitas, which is but an artificial man; though of a greater strength than the natural, for whose protection and defence it was intended; and in which the sovereignty is an artificial soul, as giving life a motion to the whole body; the magistrates, and other officers of the judicative and executive, artificial joints; reward and punishment, by which fastened to the seat of the sovereignty every joint and member is moved to perform his duty, are the nerves, that do the same in the body natural; the wealth and riches of all particular members, are the strength; salus populi (the people's safety) its business; counsellors, by whom all things needful for it to know are suggested unto it, are the memory; equity, and laws, an artificial reason and will; concord, health; sedition and sickness; and civil war, death. Lastly, the pacts and covenants, by which the parts of the body politic were at first made, set together, and united, resemble that fiat, or the let us make man, pronounced by God in the creation." ³⁹

Each part of the artificial body corresponds to that of the artificial civil society as outlined through the remainder of the book. Before showing how some of these elements of human anatomy function in the work, however, I want to briefly focus on the role played by the soul. ⁴⁰

In Hobbes's Latin version of Leviathan the word soul, as it appears in the above passage, is translated as "anima" ["In quo is, qui summam habet potestatem, pro anima est, corpus totum vivificante et movente"].⁴¹ Crucially, this is not the anima of Plato where the soul is divided between passion and reason (the myth of the charioteer in Phaedrus) or is distinct from the body (as seen in the Phaedo, Timaeus and other dialogues).⁴² Hobbes's anima is thoroughly Aristotelian. Aristotle's treatise De Anima makes it quite clear that the soul is composed of both sensations and of the faculty of movement; without the soul, Aristotle contends, there would be neither.⁴³ This anima is the soul of Aquinas's first mover, giving motion to all life and yet not being a product of motion itself. Now Hobbes similarly refuses to divide the soul, claiming, for instance, that as there can only be one soul in a single body, there is likewise only one soul in the commonwealth. Hobbes argues that the soul cannot be divided, as in Christian thought, into a three - into - one entity for that would only breed contention.⁴⁴ For Hobbes, the soul "nourishes the body" as well as enables it to function:

"For the sovereign is the public soul, giving life and motion to the commonwealth; which expiring, the members are governed by it no more, than the carcase of a man, by his departed, though immortal soul."⁴⁵

Without the soul, the body politic is but a carcass. Hobbes's soul of the artificial man is the animator of all political life.

Now Hobbes's description of the artificial man as comprising the anima of the entire civil society was in direct rebuttal to the Grotian, contractarian, theory of natural law - a theory which claimed that it was possible for the population to make a contract with the

sovereign which would be binding to both the people and the sovereign. As Grotius argued in his De Iure Belli ac Pacis, all agents of the state are subject to the same laws as the "observance of these things is binding upon all Kings, even though they have made no promise."⁴⁶

Grotius initially shared with Hobbes the Aristotelian observation that some men are born slaves, or, as Grotius observed, "men make themselves subject to the rule and power of another."⁴⁷ But for Hobbes this meant that the sovereign had complete authority over his subjects, determining the commonwealth's laws and legislating the very vocabulary of the society. The only thing that the Hobbesian ruler could not do was to take the life of the members of the commonwealth since that would invalidate the sovereign's promise to protect his subjects.⁴⁸

In the standard contractarian political theory of the community, however, the sovereign of that community had another bodily signification. When John of Salisbury referred to the image of the body politic he declared that the sovereign was the "head" of the body, not the soul. The sovereign comprised just one element of the commonwealth; indeed, in Salisbury's metaphor without the head there could still be a body politic, albeit one that was no longer governed from above. In Grotian natural law theory the sovereign is likewise the 'head' of the commonwealth. For Grotius, the binding contract between the sovereign and his subjects did not translate into a sovereign having complete, limitless control over his people. All members of the commonwealth should have an equal say in the running of the civil society based upon natural law, according to Grotius. "It is manifestly unfair," Grotius complained when referring to the competing rights of the minority and the majority in the commonwealth,

"that the majority should be ruled by the minority." The majority, Grotius continued, "has the same right as the entire body, if due exception is made of agreements and laws which prescribe the form of conducting business."⁴⁹ In other words, for Salisbury and Grotius (one could include John Locke as well) the body politic was not animated from one single, unifying force or anima but was composed of several, self-animating elements which had agreed to be joined together.

This was the impetus behind Hobbes's grand body metaphor of the state: to show that it was impossible for the commonwealth to exist without the sovereign which was its anima. Hobbes is therefore implicitly invalidating the earlier contractarian theories of the body politic. Indeed, even well before Leviathan Hobbes had written in De Cive that head of the body politic was not the locus of his authority.

The office of the head is to counsel," Hobbes proclaimed, "of the soul to command."⁵⁰ It is the soul which allows life, political and otherwise, to function; without the anima there is but a political carcass.

Section Four:

The Functions of the Body Politic

Hobbes argued that the wilful combining of unlike objects was an absurdity. One cannot intelligently speak of a round quadrangle, for example.⁵¹ Although Hobbes does not expressly state it, it is clear that the difference between the concept of a round quadrangle (which Hobbes considers to be absurd) and an artificial man (which Hobbes believes to be instructive) is that the latter can be imagined or understood by the sense of vision whilst the former cannot. The metaphoric transfer of the properties of roundness with the properties

of a quadrangle is a category mistake because it cannot be grasped by the senses. Hobbes's image of the artificial man, however, is not a category mistake - ie. it is not an absurdity - because the image does exist, albeit only in the imagination. To view Hobbes's image as only an analogy, then, is to devalue its currency. In an analogy, just as in a category mistake, whenever expressing one thing in terms of highlighting an aspect of something else, one is aware that it is the primary item, category 'A', which is being compared to a secondary item, category 'B'. But in Hobbes's complicated metaphor we are constantly aware that the larger-than-life artificial man and the state are one and the same thing. To recall the discussion of Karl Popper's definition of scientific descriptions in chapter one, the properties of Hobbes's state and those of the human body combine themselves into a single entity. Hobbes's metaphor is part nominalist, part essentialist, describing the behavior of the state and what it means to be a state. Far from being simply an analogy, then, the artificial man is an image which is so pervasive and strong, so instrumental in understanding society, that when Hobbes refers to it on the very last paragraph of his book he calls it neither an image or an analogy or an allusion, but a "doctrine."⁵² Hobbes intended the artificial man to be a "doctrine" precisely because it not only captures the seventeenth century knowledge of and attitude toward health and human anatomy, but also because it illustrates so fully Hobbes's anatomical construction of the State.

It should also be pointed out at this stage that the internal workings of Hobbes's artificial man reflect the seventeenth century understanding of bodily health and disease.⁵³ Today disease is often seen as something "out-there" which injects itself into our individual

physiologies. Germs are said to 'invade' us, viruses are said to 'attack' the human body.⁵⁴ To the seventeenth century reader these metaphors would have made little sense. Illness was not viewed as an external invasion of the human body but as an integral, almost holistic, event in the life of the individual. Then, the dominant metaphor for health was that of balance and equilibrium, which was seen as the regulatory force not only of the individual's constitution but of society's as well. Thus good health was obtained through a proper diet and even a balanced regulation of one's passions.⁵⁵ So when one reviews the internal construction of the artificial man, therefore, what one sees is a finely tuned, inter-connecting system of levers and pulleys, muscles and nerves, all working in co-ordination. And consequently, whenever one element of the artificial body fails to carry out its assigned function, the commonwealth ceases to function properly and, like a human body, is made ill.

The artificial man is a construction which is based upon Hobbes's belief that there are two types of motion: voluntary and involuntary. The organ of involuntary motion is the heart. In De Corpore Hobbes argues that the heart is the "original of life," its involuntary pumping causes a "vital motion" which can either lead to pleasure or to pain.⁵⁶ Similarly, in the Leviathan we are told that the heart of the commonwealth infuses motion to the members of that body. Harvey, whose work Hobbes considered to be "infallible," also suggested that the human heart operated like the source of political power. "The heart," Harvey stated, "like the prince in a kingdom in whose hands lie the chief and highest authority, rules over all; it is the original and foundation from which all power is derived, on which all

power depends in the animal body."⁵⁷ Hobbes, of course, in his image of the artificial man was to draw upon the same imagery as Harvey. And yet in addition to this involuntary "vital motion," Hobbes's artificial man also is composed of the voluntary relationship between its parts; an organic whole whose health is derived from a proper balance and equilibrium among its members. The metaphors of the Leviathan thus fall into two main categories: the involuntary and the voluntary. The involuntary language is based upon the precepts of rationalism and science, whilst the voluntary language is based upon an agreed-upon compact among men.

Within the artificial man, the language of the involuntary or mechanical imagery becomes the heart, nerves and joints which correspond to the springs, strings and wheels of a watch that give it its vital motion. It is once this involuntary motion is set in place, in the same way that Hobbes's argues that once God initially sets the universe in motion, that all else then follows by the mutual artifice and concord of men. Thus the analysis of sovereignty, magistrates, reward and punishment, wealth and riches, sedition and civil war, laws and covenants, all are a part of an organic construction. Each element, as in a human body free from disease, works in a state of balance and equilibrium. As in a human body, when one element is missing the organic construction falls apart.

An argument might be made that these allusions to the organic body are merely expressions which adorn Hobbes's philosophy - a linguistic device carrying no more weight than their literal interpretation. However, Hobbes is quite conscious of the metaphoric image he is providing. Indeed, it is almost impossible to separate the method Hobbes employs to instruct the reader from the content of that

instruction. In chapter twenty-two, for instance, he states that "in the last chapter I have spoken of the similar parts of a commonwealth: in this I shall speak of the parts organical, which are public ministers."⁵⁸ These metaphorical comparisons are clearly a self-conscious device. It is due to the elaborate imagery that Hobbes is able to explain what the relationships between the members of the body politic are, thereby showing their vital functions. Hobbes, continuing in the same chapter, observes that "this kind of public ministers resembleth the nerves, and tendons that move the several limbs of the body natural."⁵⁸ The comparison with the human body, far from adorning his prose, actually convinces the reader of the correctness of his observations. "These public ministers," Hobbes continues, "with the authority from the sovereign power, either to instruct, or judge the people, are such members of the commonwealth, as may fitly be compared to the organs of voice in the body natural."⁶⁰ We are partially convinced of the importance of the role of public ministers partly because of the aptness of the imagery in which they are described.

Hobbes's language of metaphoric imagery is therefore one which portrays the function, power, and authority of the sovereign and his ministers. It is a language which no other form of linguistic device can convey or capture quite as readily. For instance, when the magistrates perform their duty, Hobbes explains, then "every act they do by such authority, is the act of the commonwealth; and their service, answerable to that of the hands, in a body natural."⁶¹ Again, the coherent structure of the body metaphor not only persuades the reader but reinforces Hobbes's very claims for the authority and function of the sovereign and his attendants.

The reader may recall the discussion in chapter three of Hobbes's distinction between natural and political vision. Natural vision follows from Hobbes's theory of sense perception; political vision follows from an imaginative re-ordering of the objects one perceives and the deriving of conclusions which are often necessary in the defence of the state.⁶² In the Leviathan Hobbes, expanding upon a similar theme, makes this connection between vision and public well-being even more explicit. When a representative of the sovereign is abroad, Hobbes argues, he becomes "a minister of the commonwealth; and may be compared to an eye in the body natural. And those that are appointed to receive the petitions or other informations of the people, and are as it were the public ear, are public ministers, and represent their sovereign in that office."⁶³ The ministers act as scouts, who, by keeping their ear to the ground as it were, or by observing with their eyes, become necessary, as Hobbes says elsewhere, to "the defense of the state." Their vision, both natural and political, are the registers of information outside the commonwealth.

As it is that the body politic is an organic whole, and as it is that in the seventeenth century the body's health depends upon the balance and equilibrium of its working parts, then a just dispensation of the laws of the commonwealth in accordance with the knowledge of human anatomy becomes crucial for the body's well-being. Hobbes's description of justice is that of a balance between authority and force, and injustice an imbalance or contradiction between the members of the body. According to Hobbes, "The two arms of the commonwealth are force and justice; the first whereof is in the king; the other deposited in the hands of the parliament. As if a commonwealth could consist, where the force were in any hand, which justice had not the

authority to command and govern."⁶⁴ A just constitution of the body and of the laws requires, in other words, a balance. Hobbes then continues:

"It is not that juris prudentia, or wisdom of subordinate judges; but the reason of this our artificial man the commonwealth, and his command, that maketh law: and the commonwealth being in their representative but one person, there cannot easily arise any contradiction in the laws...In all courts of justice, the sovereign, which is the person of the commonwealth, is he that judgeth."⁶⁵

In this way Hobbes treats the idea of justice in the commonwealth as a matter of the internal relationships inside the artificial man. Force, wisdom, authority, and power are measured against each other. Where there is a "contradiction" the body breaks down and justice cannot not be dispensed. The seventeenth century concept of what is necessary to maintain a healthy body then applies equally well to a healthy body and the just society.

Perhaps nowhere is the metaphor of the body's health more apparent than in chapter 24 of the Leviathan which is entitled "Of the Nutrition, and Procreation of the Commonwealth." Here, Hobbes plays upon the connection between the circulation of blood in the human body and the circulation of money both inside the commonwealth and outside. The circulation of money inside the commonwealth is likened by Hobbes to "the artificial man [who] maintains his resemblance with the natural; whose veins receiving the blood from the severall parts of the body, carry it to the heart; where being made vital, the heart by the arteries send it out again, to enliven, and enable for motion all the members of the same."⁶⁶ In a similar manner, we might say that the

subjects of the commonwealth pay taxes to the sovereign, who, in turn, then redistributes the money for the greater health of all concerned. Outside the commonwealth, Hobbes suggests, money enables the state to "stretch out their arms, when need is, into foreign countries." Hobbes refers to this process as the "sanguification" of money which "nourisheth by the way every member of the body of man."⁶⁷

The commonwealth, then, is composed of public persons acting in the name of the state and within their capacity as members of a single body politic. In chapter twenty-two Hobbes expands the scope of the body politic to include all persons who act in their own self interest. There are thus both political persons and private persons participating within the commonwealth:

"Political, otherwise called bodies politic, and persons in law, are those, which are made by authority from the sovereign power of the commonwealth. Private, are those, which are constituted by subjects amongst themselves...no authority derived from foreign power, within the dominion of another, is public there, but private."⁶⁸

The public/private dichotomy might seem to entail that there are some members of society that act outside its prerogative. Could it be possible that the image of the artificial man, in regards to these private persons, has no direct correspondence to their interests? Could the image of the artificial man, then, be said to be incomplete?

In fact the image is all-encompassing. Public and private are simply the two hats that individuals wear. Hobbes erases this distinction simply because it is in everyone's private interest that public acts be carried out in accordance to the sovereign's dictates. In a body politic, Hobbes argues,

"...if the representative be one man, whatsoever he does in the person on the body, which is not warranted in his letters, nor by laws, in his own act, and not in the act of the body, nor of any other member thereof besides himself: because further than his letters, or the laws limit, he representeth no man's person, but his own." ⁶⁹

In other words, when a man is not acting in the public's interest, he is doing so in his own. "But," Hobbes continues, "what he does according to these, is the act of every one."⁷⁰ The reason why private persons can also be considered to be members of the public body of the artificial man is that

"...of the act of the sovereign every one is author, because he is their representative unlimited; and the act of him that recedes not from the letters of the sovereign, is the act of the sovereign, and therefore every member of the body is the author of it." ⁷¹

The metaphoric image of the artificial man, therefore, is one that binds the polity together, both the private and public. The sovereign's power is "unlimited" in this regard: without the sovereign society would be simply contentious bundles of private interests, but when the sovereign does act he does so in all men's public interest, thus binding them together for a public purpose. When an individual acts in his own interests he does so naturally, following his own natural appetites and aversions; when he acts on the public's interests he does so in the name of artificially constructed commonwealth, responding in the manner as the nerves and sinews move the artificial man.

These are just a few of the ways that the image of the artificial man is played out in Leviathan. More can be said about how Hobbes's imagery includes the functioning of the civil laws and justice, reward and punishment, and pacts and covenants - indeed, the imagery of the artificial man manifests itself in almost every chapter - yet space and time (and fear of repetition) preclude delving further into these stimulating comparisons.

Section Five:

Liberty and the Ties That Bind

Perhaps nowhere is Hobbes's use of metaphor as illuminating as in chapter twenty-one of Leviathan, entitled "Of the Liberty of Subjects." Throughout this chapter Hobbes speaks of liberty and obligation in terms of chains or binding. Natural liberty is nothing other than the absence of chains, Hobbes argues - that is, one is literally free to walk out of a room. But, not surprisingly, Hobbes has a second use of the word liberty and that is of metaphorical chains - that is, we can agree to be bound by obligations and thus lose our liberty, but, again, only if we are literally free to do so. Thus Hobbes's argument on liberty and obligation - one that is central to the text - turns on the metaphorical use of words that Hobbes insists should only be taken literally.

Liberty, declares Hobbes at the start of the chapter, is achieved when there is no external impediments to motion, "For whosoever is so tyed, or environed, as it cannot move, but within a certain space...we say it hath not liberty to go further."⁷² Any other use of the word liberty, Hobbes insists, is an incorrect usage. "But when the words Free, and Liberty, are applyed to any thing but Bodies, they are

abused," he argues.⁷³ Hobbes's contention is that whenever a philosopher discourses upon liberty he frequently and erroneously is using the term's metaphorical signification, which is to say, he is engaging in an equivocation of terms.

The concept of liberty, of course, can take on many forms, but for Hobbes all share in the same literal denotation, that of having no external impediment. C.B. Macpherson, for example, suggests that Hobbes's concept of liberty springs from economic laissez-faire capitalism; a suggestion which, if we take liberty to mean simply the absence of bonds, seems plausible enough.⁷⁴ Plausibility on this point diminishes, however, when we recall that in Tudor and Stuart England no such economic 'liberty' ever existed.⁷⁵ It turns out that the British sovereigns which Hobbes supposedly championed at one time or another, for instance Charles I, frequently had their fingers in all sorts of economic pies, and there is no reason to assume that his imaginary Leviathan would not do exactly the same. Indeed, part of the discussion on nutrition in chapter twenty-four of Leviathan turns on the sovereign's power to regulate the distribution of food and land.⁷⁶ Moreover, in the Latin version of Leviathan, such references to economic laissez-faire liberty are omitted entirely.⁷⁷ So it would seem that part of Hobbes's discussion of liberty is not intended to be taken literally, or, to put the matter in another way, Hobbes's insistence that the concept of liberty be taken only literally is sometimes itself only a hypothetical proposal.

After defining liberty as literally the absence of bonds, Hobbes then goes on to claim that all liberty springs from necessity. Just as water necessarily flows down-hill, Hobbes states, so too does liberty necessarily move in one direction.⁷⁸ It is a strange argument,

but one that is crucial to Hobbes's doctrine. Hobbes is unable to simply claim that we should all be free from external ties for that would mean that we would all be free to make whatever decisions that strike our fancy. To do that would put our collective judgment in jeopardy, making the likelihood of our voluntarily opting for the Leviathan more problematic. Hobbes therefore rescues his literal concept of liberty by suggesting that, although free, we all nevertheless have to make the same decisions. The concept of necessity, then, is rendered metaphorically: the ineluctable "chains" of necessity force us to freely choose the same course of action. As Hobbes states,

"...because every act of mans will, and every desire, and inclination proceedeth from some cause, and that from another cause, which causes in a continuall chaine (whose first link in the hand of God the first of all causes) proceed from necessity. So that to him that could see the connection of those causes, the necessity of all mens voluntary actions, would appear manifest."⁷⁹

Our "voluntary actions," or liberty, becomes metaphorically tied to the chains of causation. Hobbes's literality of liberty is thus purchased by rendering the concept of causation metaphorical. As usual with Hobbesian metaphors, such necessity is apparent only "to him that could see the connection." This vision, too, is metaphorical.

The following paragraph is even more breath-taking, considering Hobbes's literal insistence of liberty, for he then argues that there are "artificiall chains, called Civill Laws" which are "fastened" onto the members of the commonwealth. "These bonds," Hobbes continues, "in

their own nature but weak, may nevertheless be made to hold, by the danger, though not by the difficulty of breaking them."⁸⁰ This discription, of course, is pure metaphor. Hobbes wants to have it both ways: although words should be used literally they are to be shrouded in metaphorical concepts. Moreover, we are only free to do one thing: to follow the dictates of the sovereign. "The Liberty of a Subject," Hobbes repeats, "lyeth therefore only in those things, which in regulating their actions, the Sovereign hath praetermitted."⁸¹ As the soul of the sovereign determines all bodily motion, the sovereign himself regulates all bodily liberty. So, in other words, we lose our liberty when we have no sovereign to tell us what necessitates liberty. As Hobbes, echoing the idea of Aristotelian anima discussed earlier, states,

"The Soveraignty is the Soule of the Common-wealth; which once departed from the Body, the members doe no more receive their motion from it." ⁸²

When we submit unto the sovereign, we not only receive our liberty but also our obligaton to follow his decisions. This obligation only becomes void when the body of the commonwealth or artificial man becomes a carcass, or when the sovereign attempts to deprive us of our natural right to life.

Since without the protection of the sovereign we would exist in a state of perpetual war, we must freely obligate ourselves by covenant to the sovereign. This obligation either is expressed verbally (as Hobbes explains in chapter fourteen) or by a "defence against a common enemy," in which case we have no choice but to be "obliged" to follow suit.⁸³ In either event, whenever Hobbes discusses the concept of liberty or causation or obligation he does so by first stipulating

that only the literal meaning of each word applies, followed by a discussion of the literal word within a highly metaphorical context. To put it generously, this is a highly confused method of argumentation. So when Hobbes concludes his metaphorical discussion of chains, bonds, liberty and the like at the end of chapter twenty-one, he falls back upon the literal meaning as if there were no inconsistency involved. If a sovereign is held prisoner by another power, Hobbes concludes, "or have not the liberty of his own Body; he is not understood to have given away the Right of Sovereignty; and therefore his Subjects are obliged to yield obedience to [his] magistrates...." ⁸⁴

Section Six:

The Kingdom of Darkness

Less often read is the second half of Leviathan which concerns itself with theological matters. When the book was originally published this second half was what had caused the biggest controversy; today, however, it rarely piques even our interest. Hobbes begins the third book of the Leviathan "Of a Christian Commonwealth" with the admonition that we should never "renounce our Senses" when coming to terms with the nature of Christianity, for that was the sin of the "schoolmen" and others of their ilk who neglected the world of sensory experience in favour of extreme theological rationalism and other flights of fancy.⁸⁵ In the fourth and final book, "Of the Kingdom of Darkness," we are led along the same path of visual metaphors towards a correct understanding of scripture. The misinterpretation of scripture is referred to as a "spiritual darkness," whilst the correct interpretation — one that resurrects sensory experience — is likened

to that of seeing the true spiritual "light." The connection between light and darkness with that of truth and falsehood has a particular resonance with Hobbes, for Hobbes's theory of optics, and hence his theory of geometry (and, more importantly, one might also include his theory of knowledge) springs from the correct understanding of how light travels through the air and is received by the eye. Darkness is therefore, in Hobbes's thought, equated with total ignorance.

In the Christian tradition, this equation of darkness with complete ignorance is not as pronounced as Hobbes's, for those who dwell in "darkness" do have a certain kind of knowledge: it is the knowledge of this world over which Satan has dominion. However, in Hobbes's hands, "darkness" includes an ignorance of this world as well as the anticipated world to follow. "A Confederacy of Deceivers," Hobbes argues, attempts to

"...obtain dominion over men in this present world, endeavor by dark, and erroneous Doctrines, to extinguish in them the Light, both of Nature, and of the Gospell; and so to dis-prepare them for the Kingdom of God to come." ⁸⁶

The phrase "both of Nature, and of the Gospell" signals to us that light and dark battle over the minds of men both in this world and the next, over matters of earthly knowledge ("Nature") and of scriptural ("Gospell"). Without light there can be no vision, no understanding of optics, no geometry, and therefore no knowledge whatsoever, including the knowledge of the divine.

As with the secular kingdom, ignorance or darkness in the church leads to a civil war. The inability to see is marked down by Hobbes into two causes: the first being "men [who] are utterly deprived from their Nativity, of the light of the bodily Eye, have no Idea at all,

of any such light" and the second consisting of those men who are born with sight but who nevertheless do not acknowledge a vision which is beyond their natural capacity of "understanding."⁸⁷ In other words, just as there are two kinds of vision which can be labelled as "natural" and "political" - as outlined in chapter three - there are two forms of blindness, which are, again, "natural" and "theological." And as in the former instance with political vision, it is the political or spiritual blindness which drives Hobbes's main argument. Specifically, it is due to this spiritual blindness, Hobbes maintains, that civil wars have taken place within the church:

"Whence it comes, that in Christendome there has been, almost from the time of the Apostles, such justling of one another out of their places, both by forraign, and Civil War? such stumbling at every little asperity of their own fortune, and every little eminence of that of other men? and such diversity of ways in running to the same mark, Felicity, it it be not Night amongst us, or at least a Mist? wee are therefore yet in the Dark."⁸⁸

In this passage the counterpoint of ecclesiastical authority with that of civil authority could not be more clear, and even strengthens the pictorial images which illustrate on the title page of the Leviathan: spiritual darkness is the cause of disunity, competition, and civil war within the church. The reason why this is so is that men do not "see" the light of truth which governs their very nature. They are blinded to the presence of "felicity" — that constant motion inherent in all men that yearns for "power after power, that ceaseth only in death." Just as in civil authority, ecclesiastical felicity covers the light of day with a "Night amongst us, or at least a mist," and since it remains largely unacknowledged, "wee are therefore yet in the

Dark."

Hobbes maintains that a second form of the "darkness" of night hovers over the church. As we have just seen, Hobbes has argued that those men who do not know their own natures are blind and therefore ignorant of the truth which only light can reveal. Yet the fourth book of the Leviathan is also about the darkness of misinterpretation: literally the misreading of scripture. The evil wrought by the church is partially due to its concealment of the true meaning of the gospels. The church monopoly over biblical interpretation has led to a corruption of the true meaning of the word of God. By not using our sensory judgment in divining scripture we are thus rendered blind.

There are several errors or abuses, Hobbes argues, which are caused by the church and that have led to the "kingdom of darkness" in which we now dwell. The first concerns the belief that the church consists only of its officers rather than is made up of the people. The Pope and his ministers have erroneously taken on the church for themselves and, because of their natural felicity, have fallen into "a Darkness of mind, are made to fight one another, without discerning their enemies from their friends, under the conduct of mass ambition."⁸⁹ Just as the Leviathan or artificial man is made up of the members of the commonwealth, so too should be the polity of the church, Hobbes insists.

The second abuse which leads to "darkness" is the misuse of language, and it is here that we are treated to a condemnation of metaphor in the name of metaphor. According to Hobbes, when Christ said "This is my body" while offering the bread of the last supper, it was meant as a figure of speech. To take such a metaphor as literally true is, for Hobbes, an absurdity of church doctrine. Hobbes's

doctrine of the Eucharist is, of course, ultra-Protestant. "The words, This is my Body," Hobbes complains, "are equivalent to these, This signifies, or represents my Body; and it is an ordinary figure of Speech; but to take it literally is an abuse."⁹⁰ But at the same time, according to Hobbes, it is due to such abuses that we are led into "the kingdom of darkness," which is yet another metaphor. How then does one reconcile this seeming inconsistency in Hobbes's argument? If the 'body into bread' metaphor is absurd then are not the metaphors that 'knowledge is light' and 'ignorance is darkness' equally absurd?

The answer is to recall the process of vision as understood by Hobbes. A piece of bread and a human body are not the same thing, they literally do not inhabit the same category or class of object for Hobbes, and therefore to equate the two is an absurdity. It is an absurdity primarily because the two do not combine themselves into any sensory phenomenon, just as with the earlier example of a round quadrangle. Revealingly, Hobbes suggests that this error of assuming that Christ's body and bread were one and the same was due in part to the communion bread being stamped with the figure of Christ on it, thus deceiving ignorant people about what it was exactly that they were digesting. In other words, the body and bread confusion is absurd because it cannot be reconciled with sense experience, and the early belief in this absurdity was due to an attempt to impart a visual image onto the bread, thus deceiving the worshippers. Hobbes's analysis of this absurdity, then, does not interfere with the Leviathan's metaphoric images of light and darkness. In the latter case, the visual experience of light and darkness is common to all. Just as with his image of the artificial man, Hobbes's metaphors of light and darkness are instructive rather than deceiving, apt rather

than absurd.

On the first page of the Leviathan the reader is greeted with a powerful image - one that is linguistically built upon the reader's partial understanding of theology and of anatomical science: the Leviathan sea monster, or more explicitly, the artificial man. Opposite to this elaborate linguistic structure of the metaphoric image of the artificial man the reader also encounters a pictorial illustration on the title page, echoing both the contents of the work and Hobbes's seventeenth century understanding of what it means to "see" something. Words paint pictures, images dance in one's head, a vivid metaphor arrests the startled memory, and all leading one to make political and philosophical judgments about the true nature and order of the commonwealth. On the last page of the Leviathan Hobbes tells us that his sole "design" in writing the book was "to set before mens eyes" the true nature of the commonwealth.⁹¹ Confident that the intended image has been captured by us, Hobbes lets the cat out of the bag, as it were: what we have been entertaining was not a mere metaphorical image at all but, indeed, the "doctrine" of the artificial man. The image - the word - has been made flesh yet once again. It is a face staring straight at us, its distinguished head bearing a noble crown, arms outstretched, one hand holding a sword, the other a bishop's crook, the torso composed of a worshipful multitude which we, the beholders of the image, cannot help but to find ourselves as yet additional members of this congregation. And what is more, no intelligent man can shy away from the image's truth, "for truth," Hobbes finally concludes in the last line, "as opposeth no mans profit, nor pleasure, is to all men welcome." The

outstretched arms are meant to be our invitation, also.

Between the first and the last page of the Leviathan the nerves, muscles, arteries, heart and soul are woven into the fabric of the commonwealth. It is a tapestry so complete in detail, so balanced in proportion, that every function of the state, both civil and ecclesiastical, is clearly depicted for the reader to see for himself and from which to learn. The sovereign is the soul, the currency is the life-blood, the ministers the eyes and ears, and so on, until all have been accorded a place that fits both within the natural order of things and within the man-made order of science and rationality. All, that is, except for the clergy, for between the image of John of Salisbury and that of Thomas Hobbes, the anatomy of the body politic has curiously found itself de-frocked.

To borrow from Dryden, Hobbes's success was in that he was able to more fully "scatter his maker's image through the land." Man, or more to the point, Hobbes is the author of the images contained in the Leviathan, and all of life - political, religious, social and philosophical - is to be found within those illustrious and metaphorical pages, challenging us to see and judge for ourselves the truth of what is written.

CHAPTER SIX:
METAPHOR, POETRY, AND THE CONSEQUENCE OF
POLITICAL IMAGINATION

Metaphor is never innocent.

—Jacques Derrida

What does it mean to have an image? Many philosophers from Plato onwards have answered this question with varying results. For Plato, as we saw in chapter one, philosophic language centered around the twin pillars of mimesis (imitation) and imagination. By imitating the world of the Forms Plato felt that true knowledge could be obtained. For science, the image encapsulates a new way of looking at the physical world, part essentialist, part nominalist, lending insight where none had before existed. For the romantics, the imagination was a projection of the poet into his world; poetic language recorded the images the poet envisaged and the emotions that he felt as he encountered experience. For Aristotle, language when properly used mirrored sense experience, but this was an experience that forsook the Forms in favor of an essentialist description of the Platonic world of appearances. The insight that the metaphoric image provoked, for Aristotle, was a work of genius. What we have so far, in other words, is an understanding of images as if they mirrored the scientific or philosophical entities in the world around us, or of our romantic elation of being in the world. Here holding an image translates into reflecting in our mental world the world that surrounds us.

Now the twentieth century has witnessed a renewed effort to understand our images. For thinkers like Wittgenstein and Ryle, our images can only be studied from the perspective of how we speak about them, which thus sheds some light onto what it means for us to 'see' something.¹ The manner in which we express what we see tells us about our perception of the world and, in turn, the behavior of the human mind. Mary Warnock, who has written of theories of imagination from Hume to the present times, also describes imagination in terms of this process of "perception" which, again, entails an account of mimetic

imagination.² Even the deconstructionists use the concept of mimesis in perceptual language as a tool to unravel philosophic discourse. Derrida, for example, argues that the philosopher's attempt to mirror in language the images which present themselves to him lead to "a textual labyrinth panelled in mirrors."³ There is no presence in discourse - the myth the "logocentrism" - and thus there can be no real presence in the language which mirror the images that compete for our attention. When Derrida turns to Plato's Philebus he finds that the language there is "organized by this relation of repetition, resemblance, doubling, duplication, this sort of specular process and play of reflections where things (onta), speech and writing come to repeat and mirror each other."⁴ When Richard Rorty writes of the concept of imaginative mimesis in philosophic discourse in his Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature he, too, notices that "philosophers are still working out the consequences, analyzing the problems [that] it created."⁵

What I want to do in this last chapter is to surrender the ground of philosophic and optical mimesis to the above thinkers. Wittgenstein, Ryle and Warnock might be correct in saying that reports of our images, metaphoric and otherwise, tell us more about how we perceive things than about the images themselves; Derrida and Rorty are probably equally correct in surmising that the mimetic qualities of philosophic discourse lead to the eventual undermining of the text. But this is to tell us very little about political imagination. After all, mimetic imagination tells us nothing about Hobbes's image of the Leviathan or how this fits into his theory of perception. There are no sea monsters present in the world upon which Hobbes mirrored his text. Similarly, a critique of the language of mimesis in Hobbes's text would tell us that it was

hopelessly ensconced in optical metaphors, but this, also, is to say little that we did not already know. The question asked above, "what does it mean to have an image?" must therefore be asked of political things.

It is argued here that the answer to this question is both illuminating and yet at the same time disquieting. When examining the history of political thought it is political imagination, rather than mimesis, that first calls our attention. But this imagination, which in many ways is enlightening, may also prove to be dangerous. The process of political or metaphoric imagination is, in many ways, a double-edged sword, like the one Hobbes's Mortal God holds in his right hand on the title page to Leviathan.

Section One:

Promethean Imagination

Aristotle warns us that we should not commit the error of confusing images with imagination. Our sensory ability to perceive objects which surround us and our capacity for imagination inhabit two distinct areas of human understanding, Aristotle claimed, although today the means by which these two areas might be connected remains for us a mystery. Some philosophers, like Locke and Berkeley, have solved this particular dilemma by creating a world of 'ideas' through which perception plays a double role: that of sensing an object which might be before us, and that of thinking about an object which may not even be present before our eyes. Ideas, these thinkers have claimed, are both sensory and imaginative. This is a rather confusing muddle, and it shows up the dangers of straying too far from Aristotle's sound advice. In his Essay Concerning Human Understanding, for example, Locke informs us that

"ideas" share the same meaning as "phantasms," "notions," and "species," and in his Principles of Human Knowledge Berkeley unhappily repeats Locke's error.⁶ At the very start of his treatise Berkeley claims that it is evident to everyone who has studied the problem that "ideas" are "...actually imprinted on the senses" and that they are subsequently "...formed by help of memory and imagination...."⁷ For both Locke and Berkeley, having ideas and having perceptions are one and the same thing - a belief which one might say was a clumsy, if not an unfortunate, start to a prospective theory of knowledge.

Hobbes's own solution to the problem of sensory perception and imagination is perhaps more illuminating for mimesis has a limited role to play. In Hobbes's program imagination partially informs his understanding and theory of optics as well as his starting point for his theory of knowledge, as we have seen. But without repeating too much what has been argued in the previous chapters, it is worthwhile noting that although Hobbes's state of nature is depressingly bleak, he does manage to award man with the faculty of imagination and speech in a pre-political world that could boast of little else. What, exactly, does Hobbes mean by imagination? Well, in Leviathan he tells us that

"The compressions make on the organs of Sight...produceth in living Creatures, in whom God hath placed such organs, an imagination of the Object...which Imagination is called Sight; and seemeth not to bee a meer Imagination, but the Body it selfe without us." ⁸

It would seem, therefore, that Hobbes was making the same mistake as Locke and Berkeley in arguing that all perception was mimetic imagination, but Hobbes neatly avoids Locke's and Berkeley's error by claiming that all vision is, at root, imaginative, and therefore we would be poor thinkers indeed if we confuse seeing for believing.

Hobbes rescues us from our rampant imaginations by declaring that language, when accurately used and understood, could regulate our faulty conceptions. This was the basis for Hobbes's oft repeated warnings against absurd speech and the metaphoric equivocation of terms. Absurdity, that category mistake of unlearned men, thus occurs only in language. "Naturall sense and imagination," Hobbes revealing observes,⁹ "are not subject to absurdity."

There is no such thing as an absurd image; there is no mental picture that is outside the bounds of reason (reason only comes after when we use the language). Furthermore, mimetic imagination holds little currency in the purchase of political stability. The fanciful image of the Hobbesian artificial man riding atop the Aristotelian goat-stage, a compounding of image upon image, is beyond the criteria of mere truth and falsehood. The metaphoric image, the "composit concept" that the Greeks and the Latins had spoken of, cannot be disallowed even in Hobbes's mean-spirited world of the state of nature. As even the sceptics remind us, our immediate sense experience varies and, in fact, tells us nothing definitively about the world around us. One of the "diseases" of the commonwealth, Hobbes informs us, is "that every private man is Judge of Good and Evill actions."¹⁰ Let us make a collective judgment therefore, Hobbes says - a judgment upon our super-sensory experience which would mean that all our future judgments would be taken care of. The need for us to collectively see and judge the necessity of exchanging our rights for peace and security requires that we imagine a hypothetical state of nature; it necessitates that we imaginatively and metaphorically envision a state of affairs other than to which our immediate senses lay claim. We imagine a Leviathan, a Mortal God, an Artificial Man who will take care of us and regulate our

speech and future actions. The soul of the artificial man becomes the judge of all future sense. And in order to make this initial judgment we cannot be led by argument alone; we need "fancy" to adorn our prose, "secretely instructing" our judgment as if what is being spoken of was before our very eyes.

Scepticism, like its attendant doctrine nihilism, attempts to reach a point where no common meaning can exist among men. It begins by positing that all our values differ, that all our common conceptions are really misconceptions. To Vico's observation in his New Science that "Common sense is judgment," the sceptic and the nihilist insist that there is nothing out there which we can commonly judge.¹¹ Vico connects this "common sense" directly to the political community, for our common judgment is, according to Vico, "shared by an entire class, an entire people, and entire nation, or the entire human race."¹² This is a highly imaginative venture for we could never lay claim to the same judgment, the sceptic replies. We can only have our sense experience to guide us, an experience that only ends up individuating us, turning the concept of the "political community" into an impossible one. If we cannot have the same conceptions, we cannot render the same judgments, and the idea of collectively holding certain political or moral values becomes nearly impossible. Hobbes's answer to the sceptics, therefore, begins by articulating a hypothetical conception (that of the state of nature), inviting us to share in this image of man, and then positing that we all should share in holding the same regard for peace and security.

It was mentioned in chapter two that the apriorization of the image might be a dangerous concept and, indeed, Hobbes shows us where this very danger lies. We can, after all, imagine all sorts of states of affairs and then with our so-called reason show the necessity for

engaging in rather abhorrent political practices, practices which might be generously called illiberal. If our image of man is composed of fear, restlessness, contention, sedition, and an unceasing quest for power, then it would be logical for us to opt for an authoritarian, perhaps even totalitarian, sovereign who will protect us from ourselves - but only if we start from this bleak picture of mankind. Yet equally our political imagination has the marked ability to save us rather than enslave us. Imagination can free us from the stubborn rationalism that has come to be the hallmark of illiberal regimes. This is what romantics, like Shelley, suggested was the saving grace of imagination; the unconquerable imagination that will forever oppose tyranny. Extreme rationalism, for instance, tells us that man and his environment can be systematized, that the objects in the world can be used as a resource towards some given end. And in the pursuit of that rationalistic end, man himself becomes just another expendable resource. It is imagination, the Romantics tell us, which saves us from being turned into rational, expendable machines, or from echoing what the computer HAL says in Stanley Kubrick's 2001: "I'm using all my capacities to the maximum," HAL replies when asked how he is feeling, "what more could a rational entity want?"

Now what I want to do in these last few pages is to briefly examine this double edged sword of political, non-mimetic imagination.

In the world of political philosophy imagination is not so much mimetic as it is Promethean.¹³ This is the normative dimension of political thought as opposed to the descriptive; it is concerned with how we ought to live rather than how we do live. The well-known story of Prometheus, has many implications for political imagination. A Promethean

imagination is one which springs from creativity - an imaginative re-combining of the objects in the world, a metaphorical transfer of words, ideas, and images which propels us forward into a new moral and political order. Whatever else Promethean political imagination may be, it certainly is not mimetic.

There are several differing myths surrounding Prometheus, although in almost all legends the Greek demigod appears as a friend to the human race. When in Hesiod's Theogony Zeus denies the gift of fire to mankind it is Prometheus who steals it from mount Olympus and offers it to man. In other myths Prometheus tricks the gods out of obtaining the best meat in their sacrifices and, again, he ends up giving this meat to mankind. When Aeschylus tries his hand the legend Prometheus is portrayed as secretly knowing that the son of Zeus will ultimately destroy him. Rather than reveal what he knows to Zeus, Prometheus is chained to a rock where during the day a vulture pecks at his liver, and where at night his liver grows back only to be consumed again the following day. When Plato speaks of the myth of Prometheus in the Protagoras he has a slightly different story to tell. It seems that when Zeus had decreed that various gifts and talents be allocated to the animal kingdom at the beginning of creation one of his servants, Epimetheus, made an error: all the gifts had mistakenly been allocated to the brutes but with nothing left for man. According to Plato,

"While he was puzzling about this, Prometheus came to inspect the work, and found the other animals well off for everything, but man naked, unshod, unbedded, and unarmed, and already the appointed day had come, when man too was to emerge from within the earth into the daylight." ¹⁴

This is man in the Promethean state of nature: "naked, unshod, unbedded

and unarmed." It is at this point Prometheus stole the fire which the gods kept on Mount Olympus, but, just as importantly, along with fire he also stole "the gift of skill in the arts" and bestowed it upon mankind. "In this way," Plato observes, "man acquired sufficient resources to keep himself alive, but," Plato then adds, man unfortunately "had no political wisdom."¹⁵ Because men possessed no political skill or wisdom Zeus was forced to add one more quality to mankind in order to prevent men from killing one another: namely, "a sense of justice." Similarly, in his Prometheus Bound Aeschylus tells us that the Promethean gift of fire and the arts ("techne") enabled man to have a "new mastery of thought."¹⁶ Thus the arts, according to Aeschylus, which were kindled by the imagination and techne, enabled man, when combined with the "sense of justice," to establish a new moral political order.

The name Prometheus in Greek means "fore-sight" - which is the ability to imagine what will happen in the future - but the Promethean myth also symbolizes the rebellion against the natural order of things. Prometheus breaks Zeus's commandment in the same way that Adam and Eve broke Yahweh's not to eat of the forbidden fruit, but in the Greek myth this rebellion had the further consequence of instigating a war amongst men, a war that could only be settled once the concept of justice could be established. The Promethean gift of imagination, therefore, appears to be highly ambiguous. It is the revolt against a transcendent order which then leads to the founding of a new political community, and yet it establishes political order at the cost of transgressing the laws of nature. By Promethean imagination the art of God becomes the artifice of man. It is an artifice which enables man to be self-sufficient; so long as he maintains his artifice and a "sense of justice" he will never fall back into the unhappy state of nature. Although in Plato's hands

the Promethean myth is partly mimetic - by the gifts of the arts, fire, and a sense of justice man is able to mirror the divine order - nevertheless the Promethean myth also shows us the consequences of political imagination: a rebellion against pre-existing laws, the literal "fore-sight" of the way things might be, and usually coupled with a punishment for such a heavy transgression. This ambiguity of the Promethean imagination is heightened, as Shelley claimed in his Prometheus Unbound, when one realizes that the myth spoke to unswerving need for man to revolt against tyranny. We may be punished for our disobedience, the Romantics read into the myth, but like Prometheus we know that our cause is a just one.

The Promethean imagination certainly has political overtones, but it is also striking how much this myth has in common with the Hobbesian myth of the state of nature and political society. As in the Promethean myth, Hobbesian man exists in a mean-spirited state of nature, indeed, it is a state of total anarchy. What man does possess in Hobbes's world is the gift of imagination, but this talent is no buffer against the competing appetites of men which lead to perpetual conflict. Hobbesian man possesses the capacity of sense, imagination, and speech, but until he has a "sense of justice" he can have no security or peace and hence no political society. Only when once granted this political order will everything else follow: commerce, the arts, science, education, etc. Yet this new political society is in part a rebellion against the existent moral order. The art of God's design is forsaken in favor of man's artifice. Hobbes's Leviathan usurps God's authority and implants the sovereign's will in its place.

Now on a broader scale the Promethean analogy also speaks to the

agenda of the political philosopher. The political theorist takes the objects and images which are available to him and imaginatively re-combines them. When the theorist rebels against or even slightly amends the existent political order - as he often does or else he would not be saying anything of much importance - he is using his 'fore-sight' by articulating what might be if such and such a situation were to take place. He is not using his mimetic sense experience - his "vision natural" as Hobbes would say - but his political vision, borne from common conceptions which are then imaginatively engaged in the pursuit of a new vision of politics. Like Prometheus, we should also add, historically the political theorist sometimes has a heavy price to pay for this insubordination.

I do not wish to belabor the comparison for at some point all analogies must necessarily break down. The point is not to show that political theorists are in reality Promethean-style heroes, but that it is often not the mimetic qualities that concern us when reading a particular political theorist, rather it is his Promethean imagination that sets him apart from other thinkers. It is instructive, for instance, that when Bishop Bramhall denounced Hobbes's Leviathan he argued that Hobbes theory fails precisely because his vision did not mirror the true world. "A principle cause of his errors," Bramhall observed,

"is fancying to himself a general state of Nature which is so far from being general, that there is no instance to be found of it in the nature of things, where mankind was altogether without laws and without governours..."¹⁷

Similar complaints have been levelled against a multitude of other theorists from Plato to Marx who have equally failed to pass the

'mimetic test' of political imagination.

The notable feature of political imagination, then, is not its mimetic quality but its inherent Promethean instability. To visualize a world other than how it appears to be to the primary senses is immediately to invite scepticism and distrust, and hence the highly rhetorical flavor of political discourse which seeks to overcome such obstacles. The instability of political imagination resides, as the Promethean myth points to, in its dangerous overthrow of the status quo in favor of a new, untested, moral order. The common conceptions that political rhetoric establishes goes some way to alleviate the qualms of the spectators, but these images can never firmly erase the unease that one feels when knowing that they, too, are only temporary and that the images borne from another political imagination will eventually take their place. When Jacob Burckhardt refers to the myth in his Reflections on History he asks "How would the thoughts of the Prometheus of Aeschylus sound in philosophy?" His answer, appropriately, was that "In their poetic presentation, at any rate, they awaken in us the sense of the tremendous."¹⁸ In political imagination we are certainly offered a "tremendous" image of the world, but this vision can cut both ways: tremendous as in "awe-inspiring" and tremendous as in "fearful."

What I want to examine next are two decidedly different and contemporary attempts to come to terms with the "tremendous" of political imagination. They both refer to the images and language that the poet conjures forth. When we listen to the voice of poetry we are given an insight to the virtue and dangers of political imagination. The virtue of poetry, Hobbes informs us, is that it gives glory to great deeds and sets them firmly in posterity (so, too, we might add, with Promethean imagination). But there is an underside to the poetic

imagination, as with its political counterpart, and unless we take heed of the darker side of our images - metaphoric and otherwise - our political imagination may prove to be less than liberating.

Section Two:

The Image in the Conversation of Mankind

Not very long ago the world's current reigning chess champion, Garry Kasparov, played a match against what is at the present time the world's most powerful chess computer, which has been christened with the name "Deep Thought." Now the advent of chess masters playing chess computers has grown quite commonplace and, for the most part, it is not always the chess master who is the winner, although it was in this instance with Kasparov defeating the computer handily. What is worth noting, however, is the reason that Kasparov gave for his easy victory: the computer, Kasparov declared, "simply has no imagination." From this we can take Kasparov's statement to mean that it is the act of imagination, among other things, which makes us human.

To the many descriptions of man which are philosophically fashionable - that is, man as an agent, an actor, the self, or the cogito - we can include one other: man as an image making animal. The Greek concept of thinking (nous) and of reasoning with words (logos) help inform a partial understanding of man as an animal who possesses imagination, one who is able to create mental images from the stock of objects which are before him. Kant defines imagination in just this way: "the faculty of intuition even without the presence of an object," or, in other words, the ability to create and assemble in the mind what is only present outside the mind.¹⁹ Hobbes, as we have seen, has a similar description of imagination but he then relegates the objects of

our imagination to the world of what he calls "fancy," meaning that this is only our conception of the object and should never be taken for the reality of the object itself.²⁰ In either case, what the philosophical talk of imagination seems to have in common is the understanding that the world is made up of objects that are the images which we perceive and of ourselves, the imaginers (for want of a better expression) who are able to contemplate, sift, order and finally articulate upon the objects which are around or within us.

Just as we have distinguished the mimetic from the Promethean qualities of political imagination, we might also want further to divide the process of imagination into two halves: the mode of imagination which is made up of contemplating upon images and thinking or reasoning with them in an unusual way - part of what the Greeks considered to be the life of the vita contemplativa - and we might want to consider the activity of creating new images from our imagination in the dimensional world of space and time: creating a sculpture or a dance or a drama, for instance, which can be said to inhabit the world of the vita activa. But upon closer examination we find that the vita contemplativa and the vita activa, at least when it comes to the act of imagination, are not two entirely different realms. Even though it might be possible to ponder upon some mathematical formula without putting it to use, or even though it might be possible imaginatively to create a piece of artwork without consciously contemplating upon what one is doing, there seems to be a close relationship between the activity of thinking about an object in a novel way and the activity or 'performance' of our imagination.

Plato, to draw from a well known example, made no distinction between the activity of knowing what was good from the performance of that very same good. To know the good was necessarily to do good and in

the world of political ethics, as described in the Gorgias, such knowledge was tantamount to a performance. The Greek conception of techne is another example. If we chose to translate the Greek techne as "skill" then this implies that there are two different kinds of skill: there is the skill of the philosopher in formulating propositions, which brings us back to the world of the vita contemplativa, and there is the skill of the artist or craftsman which inhabits the world of the vita activa. Yet if we instead translate techne to mean a "craft" in the arts, as in the Promethean gift of techne which helps establish the political order, and not as a "skill," then I think that we can have some understanding of what the activity of writing poetry or political philosophy is about. Writing poetry or political philosophy is a techne, it is a craft - that is, it requires an activity or performance on the part of the thinker. A poem, for example, is something which is made, like a sculpture, or a building, or a speech, and the activity of crafting poetic images is therefore part of the world of the vita activa. What the poem shares with the world of the vita activa is the fact that it is primarily visual. In the world of the vita activa we see the images that are made; we participate physically in the world which we inhabit; and when we enter into the world this entrance becomes a performance in which we are actors and others see us act. Even when we only consider the world of contemplation, of the vita contemplativa, we find that this, too, is primarily visual; our mental language stems from the act of imagining the objects which are around us. The poet's craft, like the political theorist's, is thus one of the writer imaginatively using the images which he sees and then inviting us to share in his vision. As Theseus says in A Midsummer-Night's Dream,

"The poets eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,

doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,
and as imagination bodies forth
the forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
turns them to shape, and gives to airy nothing
a local habitation and a name." ²¹

To summarize then, the writing of a poem or a piece of political prose can be an imaginative performance. It is the making of a statement about the world and not just the contemplation of it, and, moreover, the statement which the thinker conjures forth out of "airy nothing" is a public statement and not just a private one. When the poet creates a poem, when the philosopher engages in a Promethean, political imagination, he is entering into the world of the vita activa in the same way as a brickbuilder or a statesman does, using his labor and his imagination.

What I want to do is to show that there is a link between the poetic and Promethean political imagination. This link, I believe, can be found by focussing on two distinct and prominent theories of poetry which have appeared in the twentieth century: Michael Oakeshott's essay "The Voice of Poetry in the Conversation of Mankind" and Martin Heidegger's own "Holderlin and the Essence of Poetry." Firstly, I will analyze the content of their respective theories of poetic imagination and briefly sketch what I think to be the chief limitations of each view. Secondly, I will highlight some of the political implications of each theory - and in particular Heidegger's which, I believe, has grave consequences for the art of political imagination. Heidegger's example should be a warning to us all to moderate political imagination lest we risk awakening the sense of the "tremendous" in our political thought.

A "conversation" for Michael Oakeshott is a meeting place where different voices are spoken, and among the most prominent voices in the conversation are those of practical activity, the scientific, and the poetic. Oakeshott considers the voice of philosophy not to belong in this realm for philosophy is just parasitic upon those voices already named. The philosopher can thus reflect upon the voice of science or of poetry, but he cannot contribute to those voices in any way. In his Experience and Its Modes Oakeshott tell us that philosophy is the only self-critical discipline as it is always undermining its own beliefs.²² Consequently in his essay "Voice of Poetry in the Conversation of Mankind" Oakeshott tells us that philosophy has no body of knowledge which could be studied like the other disciplines, and that when the voice of philosophy speaks in a conversation it does so only from the margins.

The main voices heard in Oakeshott's conversation, as just mentioned, are the voices of practical, scientific, and poetic activity. What Oakeshott means by the poetic voice is those activities which include "painting, sculpting, acting, dancing, singing, literary and musical composition."²³ The voice of poetry, therefore, speaks in the idiom of these activities, and the purpose of poetry, Oakeshott affirms, is to give us images for contemplation and to delight us.²⁴ Poetry, we are told, delights our senses whilst the other voices in the conversation seek to inform us, to persuade, to educate, or to physically move us in some way - in short, to do something other than simply entertain us, which is poetry's obligation, for Oakeshott has a particular Hobbesian account of what words should do: one of the main purposes of poetic language, according to Hobbes, "is to please and delight ourselves, and others, by playing with our words, for pleasure

or ornament, innocently."²⁵

There are two serious objections to Oakeshott's account of poetry, and, to begin with perhaps the lesser of the two objections, it is perhaps best to call to mind what was suggested at the start of this section: that man is an image-making animal, and that when he organizes or uses these images he is exercising his imagination. And yet when we continue from this simple premise we are led to the conclusion that the only thing separating Oakeshott's discourses of science, of practical activity, and of poetry are the categories in which the images attributed to each are housed. In other words, there are images which appear in one kind of discourse and yet not in others. The scientific image of molecular biology, for example, occurs only in the discipline of molecular biology and not, so far that I am aware of, in poetic discourse. Like Aristotle and Hobbes, Oakeshott believes that the vocabulary one uses in each form of utterance is particular to that medium. We know, however, that this is not necessarily always the case. It was not uncommon to find in the thirteenth century a poetic tradition which relied heavily upon the Ptolemaic conception of the universe as the images which science and poetry used had been shared, nor was it uncommon to find in the eighteenth and nineteenth century a romantic poetry which was informed by the organic models of science which had been influential at the time. If we looked hard enough no doubt we would find other examples of where the discourse of the scientific community and of the poetic community share in the same image. One need only to recall the use of metaphoric models in the social and physical sciences (as briefly outlined in the first chapter) to realize the extent to which metaphoric images cross-pollinate over differing disciplinary fields.

Oakeshott, perhaps anticipating this objection in his essay, responds by saying that the standards for evaluating each discourse in the conversation are different. Thus, from the discourse of science we can inquire whether it is a fact or not a fact, Oakeshott claims. However, we cannot ask the same question of a work of poetry.²⁶ But I think that this is to misrepresent the images that the scientist uses. The scientist never asks himself whether the metaphoric images that he uses are true or not true, or if they are factual or fictional. Rather, the scientist knows that the models he works with are just that, images or metaphoric models, and that the only thing he can ask of them is, given the amount of information that he has, whether or not these metaphoric images are apt.²⁷ Similarly, we find that the poet makes the same calculation in his work; the poet does not inquire whether the images he works with are facts (we can stipulate that on some personal level the poet takes his images to be true to his vision, but this is not the same thing) but whether they are apt expressions for his poetic vision.

There is a second, perhaps stronger objection to be made with Oakeshott's conception of poetic imagination, and it is here that we begin to see poetry's political overtones. Oakeshott's agenda is to separate one mode of discourse from another, to show that which is distinctive to that particular form of utterance. The problem is not that we do not learn anything from Oakeshott's divisions of conversation - indeed, some crucial distinctions are highlighted by them - but that when we look at some specific examples of poetic language we find that the voice of poetry in our conversation does not fit so neatly into the compartment which Oakeshott has prepared for it.

In fact, contrary to what many might believe, poetry has had a long

and distinguished career in giving voice to political matters. Rather than delighting audiences we find that poetry has had much to say about the value of political messages (to say nothing of religious matters), and we sometimes even find poetry itself contributing to the political debate, inciting people to take part in a political agenda. Poetry in this regard does not simply flirt with the public, but can and does try to lead the people to do certain things. We forget that many of the great Roman and Renaissance politicians were, in their spare time, the poets of their age.

As stated earlier, a poem, although first stemming from the private thoughts of the poet (or the vita contemplativa) enters into the vita activa by joining in public discourse, and this is certainly true of poetry which exhibits, what can be called, "political sensibilities." By political sensibilities I mean a poem which has had its impetus from a political event, or is in response to a given political situation. The poem which results from or exhibits political sensibilities is no less political than a newspaper report or a politician's speech before Parliament. A poem with political sensibilities, although choosing to swim in metaphoric or opaque language, is as much a public performance utterance as anything which can be attributed to the vita activa. What we are sometimes presented with is simply a political discourse inhabiting another form, but one that is nonetheless a political response to a given political situation.

One of the best examples of a poem with political sensibilities is to be found in Dryden's poem "Absolom and Achitophel," published in November of 1681.²⁸ In March of that year the Whigs had introduced a bill before parliament called "The Third Exclusion Bill," whose purpose was to prevent James Stuart, the Duke of York, from succeeding Charles II.

A stalemate thus ensued between Charles and parliament, with Charles responding by imprisoning the leader of the Whig party, the Earl of Shaftsbury, in the Tower of London so that he could be tried for treason and then executed. Now Dryden was the Poet Laureate at the time and also the historian to the court of Charles II so we should not be too surprised to learn that Dryden backed the king in his political struggle. The poem we know as "Absalom and Achitophel," which is regarded as one of Dryden's best, is actually a political tract aimed to bring about the conviction and execution of the leader of a political party.

A few more examples might be offered to strengthen this point. One can argue that Shakespeare's Richard III was a poetic drama which succeeded in further discrediting the House of York in favor of the House of Lancaster; or that Measure for Measure is a dramatic poem on the nature of justice and morality; or that Virgil's Aeneid was an epic poem intended to lend legitimacy to the Roman state. Or, closer to our own times, we have the poems of W.B. Yeats, in particular "Easter 1916" and "The Rose Tree." In the latter poem, the dialogue between the two Irishmen includes the following stanza:

"But where can we draw water,
Said Pearse to Connolly,
'When all the wells are parched away?
O plain as plain can be
There's nothing but our own red blood
Can make a right Rose Tree."²⁹

The "red blood" mentioned in the poem refers to the death of fifteen Irishmen killed by the British in 1916, which was the basis of Yeats's poem "Easter 1916." As Conor Cruise O'Brien has remarked, Yeats's

writing and publishing of these two poems were both political acts, and probably the bravest of Yeats's distinguished career.³⁰

Now Michael Oakeshott is a very clever and profound thinker, and presumably he would never deny that the above are valid examples of political poetry, so why does he bother to insist that the discourse of the poet is distinct from the other modes in the conversation of mankind? The answer, I believe, lies partly with the double-edged sword of political imagination. Oakeshott specifically wants to avoid the dangerous game of arguing that one form of discourse is privileged over others. Just as the apriorization of the image can lead to articulating perilous doctrines, the apriorization of poetic imagination would inexorably lead to the claim that truth is housed in poetic language, and, of course, this lies at the heart of Oakeshott's attack upon rationalism, which also claims a privileged position as a method of inquiry. There can be poetic rationalists just as there can be philosophical and political rationalists, and there is no reason to assume that the poet-king would be any less illiberal than the philosopher-king. Oakeshott could have focussed on what is common to all the voices in the conversation of mankind; however, he chose instead to tackle their differences. Yet in doing so he left himself open to the charge that he marginalizes a mode of thinking which is strikingly imaginative, and thus fundamental to at least a part of the human condition. Surely poetry does more for us than provide images for "delight" and "contemplation," and, unfortunately, it is Oakeshott's account of poetry which, partly for political reasons, refuses to speculate on just what those other components of poetry are.

To summarize thus far, then, we can say that poetry springs from the act of imagination, and yet it is not so very different from other

forms of imagination; namely, the scientific, the historical, the philosophical, or, indeed, the political imagination with which this chapter began. There are times when the poetic images and the images of other discourses merge into one, and so the distinction between poetry and other voices in the conversation begins to collapse. Finally, we can say thus far that the traditional philosophical distinction between the poetic and the political voice needs to be revised. Writing and publishing a poem with political sensibilities is a political act, and it is folly to read such poems as if their only purpose were to delight and entertain us.

Martin Heidegger, on the other hand, commits the very error that Oakeshott wants to avoid. While Oakeshott seeks to separate the function of poetry (perhaps even marginalizing it) from the other disciplines, Heidegger suggests that all thought springs from poetic imagination. These remarks about Heidegger's concept of poetry stem from two of his published essays, "The Remembrance of the Poet" and "Holderlin and the Essence of Poetry" which were both written in the mid-nineteen-thirties.³¹ The connection which I wish to make here is between Heidegger's conception of poetic imagination and his dalliance in the 1930's with National Socialism. This connection, I believe, is apparent for at least two reasons: the first simply because Heidegger's writings on poetry coincide chronologically with his association with Nazi Germany. Secondly, there is nothing in Being and Time (written in 1927) that should specifically link Heidegger with such an unappetizing regime, and yet there is much in Heidegger's account of poetic imagination which does. If this is correct, then what we have just illustrated is precisely the inherent danger in holding a poetic or

political imagination, of assuming that one voice in the conversation of mankind should be privileged as speaking the truth over others. Heidegger's account of poetry is highly Promethean in character and is in keeping with the negative Promethean elements sometimes associated with political imagination, especially the kind of political imagination as practiced by elements of the Third Reich. Indeed, for Heidegger the poet is the philosopher-king writ large.

Both Heidegger and Oakeshott believe that the model for understanding the voice of poetry is to found in a conversation. Echoing Oakeshott's pronouncements, Heidegger tells us that "we - mankind - are a conversation. The being of man is founded in language. But this only becomes actual in conversation" [all emphases in quotes are Heidegger's own].³² Oakeshott would also agree that being unfolds itself in conversation, and that poetry informs one of the basic elements of this conversation, but Heidegger has something else in mind here. For Heidegger, man is forever "housed in language" and that language itself "is not a mere tool" as any nominalist would claim, rather language encloses the possibility of a world.³³ Only when there is language is there a world, and only in the world of language can man exist historically. Thus a conversation takes on an added significance for Heidegger since a conversation is the locus of man's being. For Oakeshott a conversation is largely one where differing voices are spoken, but Heidegger stresses that this is only one half of the equation. A conversation must also be listened to, and listening to the voice of poetry, for instance, is just as much an engagement in the conversation as the writing of poetry. "The ability to speak," Heidegger writes, "and the ability to listen are equally fundamental."³⁴ Thus the full ontological significance of language goes beyond what

Oakeshott would envisage; one where the conversation of mankind is constituent of man's being, where the possibility of being is only to be found in language, and where a conversation is the essential activity, both speaking and listening, of being in the world.

Now there is another similarity that both philosophers initially share: that of construing the activity of writing poetry as being "innocent." Earlier we saw how Oakeshott claimed that poetry merely "delights" an audience, and this is similar to what Heidegger initially says about poetry, for Heidegger states that "writing poetry appears in the modest guise of play. Unfettered, it invents its world of images and remains immersed in the realm of the imagined...writing poetry is completely harmless."³⁵ Having argued that "writing poetry is the most innocent of all occupations" Heidegger goes on to question what, then, is the essence of poetry? and it is at this point that Heidegger's philosophy begins to diverge radically from Oakeshott's, and thus illuminating for us the dangerousness of the apriorization of the image.

Unlike Oakeshott, Heidegger argues that poetry, like language, is not just a tool of man nor a classification of a certain form of discourse, but has an essence all its own which reveals what it means to be human. Because man has a language he is able to situate his being in terms of a past, a present, and a future, and this means that man is able to exist historically. "Ever since time arose," Heidegger argues, "we have existed historically. Both - existence as a single conversation and historical existence - are alike ancient, they belong together and are the same thing."³⁶ So, contrary to Oakeshott, Heidegger argues that

"...poetry is not an ornament accompanying existence, not merely a temporary enthusiasm or nothing but an interest and amusement.

Poetry is the foundation which supports history, and therefore it

is not a mere appearance of culture, and absolutely not the mere
'expression' of a 'culture soul.'" ³⁷

Our existence, Heidegger continues, is therefore "fundamentally poetic."

The difference from Oakeshott could not be more clear.

A paradox ensues from this latter argument for how can poetry remain the harmless and innocent enterprise which Heidegger tells us it is and yet at the same time be the foundation of being, which must entail some amount of danger since it is so important to existence. The answer to this paradox is that Heidegger's conception of the poet is of the person who stands apart from the world and offers names for the essences of the images which the poet then encounters. The poet is the first one to name things, and in this scheme it is poetry which comes before language and not the other way around. Since the poet is the first to encounter and name images he does so uncorrupted by language, he is an innocent of the world, in other words, and hence Heidegger claims that "poetry never takes language as the raw material ready to hand, rather it is poetry which first makes language possible." ³⁸

Heidegger believes that this activity of poetic naming is the "naming of the gods," for it is the gods of this world which language calls into being. The poet, therefore, the one who stands apart from society and gives names to the essences or to the images that he encounters, stands between the gods and the people. The poet "is the one who has been cast out - out of the Between, between gods and men."³⁹ It is for this reason that Heidegger finds poetry dangerous as well as innocent for the poet must exist "between" the two realms - the essences and the world - and is therefore left dangerously exposed. This exposure is like an isolation, and can be perilous to the poet because it can lead to madness as it did with Heidegger's favourite poet,

Holderlin.

To summarize briefly then what the voice of poetry entails for Heidegger, we can say that it is the poet who first names the images and the essences of the world, and that this naming enables language to take place. Therefore, it is the poet who first makes history possible for historical man can only exist in the language which the poet has called forth, and Being, or for Heidegger "Dasein," can only be possible once this language has been articulated from this poetic vision.

Clearly Heidegger goes beyond any standard Oakeshottian conception of poetry here, and one might want to add that his idea of poetry has much in common with the German Romantic movement exemplified by Herder, Shelling, Goethe, and others. Indeed, Heidegger's explication of poetry is not so much a description as a metaphysics of poetry - and one that is difficult to take objection to without introducing objections from outside its own discourse. The easiest and most compelling complaint to make against Heidegger's metaphysics of poetry is that for it to succeed there must be real essences in the world which can be accurately named only by the poet, like Plato's philosopher is the only one who can know the Forms. For Plato, obviously, the Forms can only be seen by the philosopher, likewise for Heidegger they can only be seen by the poet - Heidegger's poet and Plato's philosopher thus perform the same job. But they can also lead in the same direction. Plato's philosopher is the dictator of the Republic. Since only the Platonic philosopher-king can visualize or know the truth then it is the remainder of the population who are forced to defer to his authoritarian pronouncements. In fact, Plato banishes the poets from his Republic because they represent a threat to the omniscient voice of the philosopher.

Heidegger does not tell us what sort of state we will be left with

if ever the poet becomes the acknowledged legislator of language, but we can certainly guess. There are some who hold the view that Heidegger's flirtation with Nazism in the 1930's stemmed from his yearning for a charismatic figure (ie. Hitler), but I think that this is only to tell part of the story. Heidegger's apriorization of poetic language and the images that the poet apprehends - a theory which he articulated in conjunction to the rise of National Socialism - also, I believe, partly explains his unappealing political beliefs and practices. At the very least we would say that his concept of poetry is not inconsistent with such politics. And at the very most, we would also say, Oakeshott's diminishment of the poetic voice saves us from following in the footsteps of Heidegger's own debacle.

This alone might not be the only criticism of Heidegger's account of poetic imagination, for we should also take into account what was said at the beginning of this paper: namely, that the world, for all intents and purposes, is divided between the objects which surround us and those of us who possess the imagination to collect and order these images in our mind. It is imagination - political, poetic, or otherwise - if one recalls, which makes us human rather than chess playing machines.

Now in Plato's world of the Forms it might seem right for the philosopher to be the only one to glimpse the true nature of the world, for in this instance the philosopher is merely the recipient of the vision and not the vision's creator. One might even imagine a philosopher-as-oracle priest within whom the voice of truth speaks like a conduit passes on electricity. Poetry, however, is a different matter altogether. The poetic voice, if it is to be found anywhere, springs from imagination, as Oakeshott so rightly reminds us at the beginning of

his essay. However, Heidegger's poet never uses his imagination, he simply names the images that he sees. The poet stands alone in a clearing - the clearing which we understand to be Heidegger's holy place of Being - and he names the imaginary essences which we will then use in our conversation.⁴⁰ The problem is that Heidegger's poet never touches us, never engages in the conversation of mankind. More sinisterly, as an oracle of truth, Heidegger's poet never gets it wrong.

The poetic imagination which is being suggested here is neither wholly Oakeshottian nor wholly Heideggerian but a partial composite of the two. What is salvageable from Oakeshott's conception of poetry is his situating the poetic voice firmly in the world of imagination; but where he errs is in then telling us that it is an imagination which is completely different from any other - that it is a poetic imagination which simply delights us rather than informs us, offers us images for contemplation but never persuades us that these images are worthwhile or of any use in practical activity. In order to avoid the apriorization of the image and of one particular mode of discourse - and hence avoid an illiberal state run by Heideggian poets - Oakeshott's poetry shows itself to be devoid of any political and historical content; his poetic imagination is a mask without a face.⁴¹

What is salvageable from Heidegger's metaphysics of poetry is his refusal to surrender the voice of poetry to the realm of the costume drama. His poetic imagination has something fundamental to say to us. The poet speaks in a tongue of the inner voice of our being, telling us who we are and what it is that we are doing. If we cannot allow ourselves to accept Heidegger's world of poetic images, or of essences and of gods, or of truth spoken through oracles in a clearing, then at least we can say along with Heidegger that the telling of history began

with poetry, and that the best poetry is a kind of history, if only a history of our imagination. As Jacob Burckhardt succinctly puts it, "history finds in poetry not only one of the most important, but one of its purest and finest sources." According to Burckhardt there are two reasons why the voice of poetry is fundamentally a historical one: the first because it provides an insight into human nature, the second because it illuminates the historical consciousness of the times. For the historical observer, Burckhardt observes, poetry "is the image of the eternal in its temporal and national expression; hence, instructive in all its aspects and, moreover, often the best or only thing to survive."⁴²

Aristotle's contribution to the subject has all but been forgotten in this debate for he tells us in his Poetics that midway between philosophy and history there is poetry.⁴³ Poetry thus occupies center stage with history on its left, as it were, and philosophy on its right tugging poetic imagination in either direction. If we can keep in mind what Aristotle says in his Poetics (and ignore what he says in the Rhetoric) then I think that this fits into what I have been saying so far: that the images contained in the voice of poetry are not necessarily concerned with different images than is science or history or philosophy or politics; all discursive utterances require the act of imagination so we should not be surprised to find, when investigating what science or history has to say, that the voice of poetry has reached there first.

What differentiates the voice of poetry from the other voices is not the what of poetic discourse (that is, what is the subject which is being spoken of), but the how of discourse - how poetry chooses to express itself and how this might differ from, say, the philosophers

chosen method of expression and I think that Aristotle's distinction mentioned above best captures this mood.

By concerning ourselves with the how of the poetic voice rather than with the what, we find that it does not always pay to maintain the calcified distinctions that philosophers have erected since Plato - that is, the distinction made between the discourse of the poet and that of the philosopher. There can be political poems just as there are historical poems just as there are philosophical poems and to maintain otherwise is senseless. All forms of utterance stem from the same imaginative impulse, and all are thus born from the vita contemplativa. But having been born from the vita contemplativa these imaginings enter into another realm, that of the conversation of the vita activa, the place where statements about the world effect our understanding of the world and of ourselves; where all utterances are a public performance of some sort about a state of affairs; where the activity of speaking and listening to a public conversation - the conversation of mankind - is one of engaging in a political activity.

Secondly, we must maintain a philosophic vigilance over those who would suggest that one mode of imagination necessarily has priority over others. For images, like words, can be dangerous tools as well as forces for liberation. It is a tension that both language and images share; a sense of the "tremendous," as Burckhardt observed, or less prosaically, an understanding that the sword can cut both ways.

Section Three:

Some Concluding Remarks

For the same reason that Plato banished the poets from his ideal state, the emperor Vespasian decreed that all philosophers should be banished

from Rome. The poet and philosopher, though oftentimes arguing that their disciplines are mutually exclusive, frequently speak in the almost identical, conversational, mythic voice, vying for the same ear of the populace. It is not surprising, then, that "when Plato and Aristotle want to give us the core of their philosophy," Huizinga observes, "and express it in the pithiest way they choose the myth-form." For Plato, Huizinga points out, the myth we are given is that of the soul; for Aristotle it is "of the love that all things have for the unmoved mover of the world."⁴⁴ Conversely, political philosophy's frequent use of the poetic form has also brought with it condemnation. When Spinoza criticizes philosophers for not attending to the description of the practical, mimetic world - or in other words, when they use their imagination at the expense of reality - he claims that they are little different from the poets. According to Spinoza,

"...philosophers have never conceived a political system which can be applied in practice, but have produced other obvious fantasies, or schemes that could only have been put into effect in Utopia, or the poet's golden age, when, of course, there was no need of them at all."⁴⁵

To the Promethean political theorist this criticism carries little currency. Plato self-consciously embarks upon the Laws with the comment "let us begin by trying to imagine the foundation of the city."⁴⁶ In the Republic he argues that this imaginary foundation need not be of the mimetic sort for, Plato says, "perhaps there is a pattern of it laid up in heaven for him who wishes to contemplate it and so beholding to constitute himself as citizen."⁴⁷

The consequence of political imagination is not dissimilar to that of the poetical, at least if we allow our imaginations to run riot over

prudent judgment. Indeed, for Hobbes the voices of poetry, philosophy and history had this much in common: there are times when they speak as one voice, instructing, narrating and persuading the listener all at the same time. In his reply to Thomas White's De Mundo, for example, Hobbes tells us that the function of poetry is to narrate great deeds so they can be transmitted for posterity. This is what Hobbes called "heroic poetry." If one wants to be a heroic poet, Hobbes points out, then he "must not onely be a poet...but also the Philosopher, to furnish and square his matter, that is, to make both body and soule, colour and shaddow of his Poeme out of his owne store...."⁴⁸ Over forty years later, when he tried his hand at translating Homer, Hobbes tells us that one of the chief virtues of heroic poetry lies in its ability to paint pictures. "For a poet is a painter," Hobbes observes,

"...and should paint actions to the understanding with the most decent words, as painters do persons and bodies with the choicest colours, to the eye...."⁴⁹

Of course Hobbes was a product of his times, and the belief that varied disciplines can nevertheless share in poetic images was not limited only to him. In his Defence of Poetry Sir Philip Sidney also remarks upon the cross-pollination of the image among the disciplines, most notably between poetry and philosophy. According to Sidney,

"Now doth the peerless poet perform both: for whatsoever the philosopher saith should be done, he giveth a perfect picture of it in someone by whom he presupposeth it was done, so as he coupleth the general notions with the particular example. A perfect picture I say, for he yieldeth to the powers of the mind an image of that whereof the philosopher but a wordish description, which doeth neither strike, pierce, nor possess the

sight of the soul so much as that other doth."⁵⁰

The image, in other words, by providing the mind with "a perfect picture," can do what no mixture of philosophical words could ever do: it can "strike," "pierce" and "possess the sight of the soul," like Hobbes's soul was possessed by the captivating images of geometry which were illustrated in the pages of Euclid. For Sidney, the author of such persuasive images was the poet, but as Hobbes well knew, the philosopher, the rhetorician, the historian, and even the geometrician could all master this devious and powerful device. Devious because in the wrong hands the image can mislead the populace; powerful because in the right hands - like Hobbes's - the appropriate image can help lead directly to knowledge.

At the heart of the poetic voice, for Hobbes, is its ability to paint a picture or offer up a metaphoric or fanciful image for inspection. "An image," Hobbes writes in his Preface to Homer, "is always a part, or rather a ground of the poetical comparision...for example, when Virgil would set before our eyes the fall of Troy..."⁵¹ Sometimes Hobbes is at pains to distinguish poetry from the other disciplines. Othertimes, as in his translation of Homer, he argues that "poems...are but so many histories in verse."⁵² This occasional blurring of the distinction among poetry, history, and philosophy occurs in each stage of Hobbes's intellectual development, from Anti-White (1641) to Homer (1674), and is even to be found in De Homine (1658). In the latter work, Hobbes comments that "Letters [fanciful language]...are useful, too, especially histories; for these supply in abundance the evidence on which rests the science of causes...."⁵³

Hobbes begins Leviathan by pointing out that "I speak not of men, but, in the abstract, of the seat of power."⁵⁴ These are hypothetical men

living in an imaginary state of nature. This is what Sheldon Wolin refers to as Hobbes's epic political philosophy, an elaborate invention of the mind "...playing upon a world, which, in mental terms at least, possesses some measure of plasticity."⁵⁵ The epic political theorist and the epic poet, for Wolin (following the line of Burckhardt and Huizinga) occupy the same space, nudging us to behold a world that does not directly correspond to the one which we inhabit, but a world in which political possibilities flourish.

For Hobbes, poetic and political imagination are not so far apart as one would suppose. "For as truth," Hobbes writes in his Preface Before Gondibert (written about the same time as Leviathan), "is the bound of historical, so the resemblance of truth is the utmost limit of poetical liberty."⁵⁶ Hobbes, too, believed that poetry and truth, fancy and philosophy, can join forces, can create a myth, which would guide men into new worlds. According to Hobbes,

"All that is beautiful or defensible in building, or marvellous in engines and instruments of motion, whatsoever commodity men receive from observations of the heavens, from the descriptions of the earth, from the account of time...and whatever the civility of Europe from the barbarity of American savages, is the workmanship of fancy, but guided by the precepts of true philosophy."⁵⁷

The extent to which mankind can progress, in other words, is due to the correct application of imagination or "fancy" to philosophy.

Imagination may originally be nothing but an optical fancy for Hobbes, yet at the same time political imagination lies at the heart of Hobbes's epic, philosophical endeavor. Revealingly, Hobbes held both views simultaneously. Again, in his Preface Before Gondibert (1651) he speaks of the "marvellous effects" that fancy produces in a

philosophical work. Imagination, Hobbes writes, does not entirely consist of motion but "in copious imagery discreetly ordered, and perfectly registered memory; which most men under the name of philosophy have a glimpse of, and is pretended to by many, that grossly mistaking her, embrace contention in her place." In other words, philosophical imagination is a tool and can be both educationally instructive and yet also politically contentious. "But," Hobbes quickly adds, "so far forth as the fancy of man has traced the ways of true philosophy, so far it hath produced very marvellous effects to the benefit of mankind."⁵⁸

A poem, Hobbes informs his readers, chiefly consists of two elements: "to know well, that is, to have images of nature in the memory distinct and clear"; and "to know much" which "...proceedeth the admirable variety and novelty of metaphors which are not possible to be lighted on in the compass of narrow knowledge."⁵⁹ When poetry fails - what Hobbes calls the "indecencies" of poetry - is when metaphors "cannot come into men's thoughts" - or in other words, when metaphors fail to spark any images in the mind.⁶⁰ More importantly for Hobbes are the various "indiscretions" of the poet which might lead to the "disturbance of the commonwealth."⁶¹ Although fancy, when joined with philosophy, can lead mankind to create new worlds, Hobbes warns us in Gondibert that an undisciplined fancy can lead to "cruelty," "discord," "fraud," "tumult" and "controversy."⁶² The progress of mankind or the destruction of the commonwealth - these are the two sides of our imagination.

As an Aristotle or even a Noam Chomsky would tell us, man is born with capacity for speech, an in-built disposition in learning to articulate meaningful sounds. But man is also born with the capacity for sense. In the state of birth, just as in the Hobbesian state of

nature, sense and speech are the two gifts bestowed upon man. From Plato onwards, philosophers have sought, either through language or from sense perception, to derive the formula for knowledge and the proper judgment upon experience. Hobbes's contribution was in arguing that unbridled language combined with imagination will lead only to sedition, and yet if we can control our language we can thus harness the power of the image, eventually arriving at a common sensory judgment upon truth, knowledge, peace, and political obligation.

Metaphor, Derrida informs us, is never innocent. In a philosophical work trumpeting logical reasoning, metaphor only betrays the text. Our linguistic utterances are borrowed currencies so nothing we say is freshly, originally minted. To many deconstructionist critics, in the text of life there is no single author, no original wordsmith who creates from whole cloth a brand new text. Authorship and meaning fall into an infinite regress of prior texts, whose principle foundation is composed of effaced metaphors. This has been erroneously taken to mean, however, that the so-called death of the author entails the death of imagination. Political, metaphorical imagination does not die, but is born anew each time a political theorist takes up a pen. Words may describe images but they are not the same thing as images, they do not fulfill the same function. The author of imagination is alive and well, imaginatively creating and re-creating, as each of us does, mental images from the stock of objects surrounding us, and translating our mental discourse into verbal.

It was partly by the "genius" of metaphor, as Aristotle described it, that Hobbes was able successfully to articulate a coherent, persuasive political and philosophical doctrine. There was little or no inconsistency in Hobbes's use of the metaphoric image; for someone who

claimed that images "secretely instruct the reader" Hobbes was amazingly overt when it came to using them for himself. Yet even Hobbes realized that the consequence of metaphor and political imagination may not be wholly advantageous. We should never be carried away with our images or phantasms, Hobbes argued; rather we should seek to apply our metaphoric images to discourse only if they are apt to the subject at hand. Hobbes was, indeed, fully cognizant of the power that the metaphoric image might hold.

NOTES

Unless otherwise indicated, all references to Hobbes's writings are to The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, collected and edited by Sir William Molesworth, 11 vol. (London: John Bohn, 1839-45); the Molesworth edition is cited as E.W., followed by the volume and page number. References to Hobbes's Leviathan, however, also include the page number to the C.B. Macpherson edition (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd, 1985). For example: Hobbes, Leviathan, 117; EW III, 37.

All references to Aristotle are taken from The Complete Works of Aristotle, edited by John Barnes, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). All references to Plato are taken from Plato: The Collected Dialogues, edited by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).

Format is based on The Chicago Manual of Style, 13th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

Chapter One: **FOUR TRADITIONS OF METAPHORIC THOUGHT**

1. For an excellent overview of Anglo-American linguistic theory see Richard Rorty's "Metaphysical Difficulties of Linguistic Philosophy" in The Linguistic Turn, edited by Richard Rorty (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1967).

2. Barry, An Introduction to Modern Political Theory (London: Macmillan, 1984), 10.

3. Macdonald, "The Philosopher's Use of Analogy" in Flew, Logic and Language, Series 1 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952), 80-100. "Philosophical problems can be solved by understanding how ordinary language is used, how certain uses of it have provoked these problems and how it has been misused in many alleged situations" [p. 100].

4. Hobbes, Leviathan, 116-7; EW III, 36-7.

5. Popper, The Open Society and Its Enemies, Vol II (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), 13-14.

6. Ibid., 14.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Harre, The Philosophies of Science (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 175.

10. Boyd, "Metaphor and Theory Change: What is 'Metaphor' a Metaphor for?" in Metaphor and Thought, edited by Andrew Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 360-1.

11. Kuhn, "Metaphor in Science," in Metaphor and Thought, edited by Andrew Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 415-16.

12. Ibid., 415.

13. Aristotle's Rhetoric, 1410b12-13.

14. Walzer, "On the Role of Symbolism in Political Thought," in the Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 82, No. 2 (June 1967), 194.

15. Miller, "Metaphor and Political Knowledge," in the American Political Science Review, Vol. 73, No. 1 (March 1979), 161.

16. See T.D. Weldon, States and Morals: A Study in Political Conflict (London: John Murray, 1962). According to Weldon, "The aim of political philosophy is to discover the grounds on which the State claims to exercise authority over its members" [p.5].

17. Ibid., 30, 48.

18. See H.M. Drucker's "Just Analogies?: The Place of Analogies in Political Thinking," in Political Studies, Vol. 18, No. 4 (December 1970), 451. Both Weldon's and Macdonald's concept of political analogy is discussed in Drucker's essay.

19. See Margaret Macdonald, "The Philosopher's Use of Analogy" in A. Flew's Logic and Language, Series 1 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952). According to Macdonald, "The method of science is justified in practice. The scientist shows that he has the correct method for discovering new facts by in disputably presenting more and more of them...the philosopher has no such means of conviction" [p.80]. See also Macdonald's essay "The Language of Political Theory" also in Flew, 176.

20. Quine, "A Postscript on Metaphor" in On Metaphor, edited by Sheldon Sacks (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 159.

21. Kuhn, "Metaphor in Science," 415-16.

22. Lakoff and Johnson, Metaphors We Live By (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 125.

23. Mac Cormac, A Cognitive Theory of Metaphor (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1985), 35-38.

24. See Charles Taylor's account of Aristotelian logos in Human Agency and Language, Philosophical Papers 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 215-223.

25. Aristotle's De Interpretatione, 16a16-18.

26. Ibid., 17a1-4.

27. Hobbes, Leviathan, 113; EW III, 32.

28. Locke, Essay Concerning Human Understanding, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1894), 105-6.

29. Thucydides, The Peloponnesian War, Book 3 (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1978), 242. In this passage Thucydides says that it is this abuse of language which leads directly to violence.

30. Plato's Thaetetus, 180a.

31. Aristotle's Rhetoric, Book III, 1404b3-6.

32. Aristotle's Poetics, 1459a5-8.

33. Aristotle's Poetics, 1457b7-9.

34. Aristotle's Poetics, 1457b9-21.

35. Aristotle's Poetics, 1411a1-b21.

36. Isocrates, Evagoras, trans. by Van Hook (London: Loeb Classical Library, 1945), 9.

37. Aristotle, Op. Cit., 1411b1-2.

38. Rhetorica ad Herennium, trans. H. Caplan (London: Loeb Classical Library, 1954), 4.34.45.

39. Quoted in W.B. Stanford's Greek Metaphor: Studies in Theory and Practice (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1936), 54.

40. Cicero, De Oratore, trans. E.W. Sutton and H. Rackham (London: Loeb Classical Library, 1942), 3.40.160.

41. Cicero, De Inventione, 1.54.104.

42. Quintilian, Instituto Oratoria, trans. H.E. Butler (London: Loeb Classical Library, 1920-22), 8.6.19.

43. Rhetorica ad Herrenium, cited in Terence Hawkes's Metaphor: The

Critical Idiom (London: Methuen, 1972), 13-14.

44. See, for example, Julius A. Elias's Plato's Defence of Poetry (London: Macmillan Press, 1984).

45. Plato's Cratylus, 384b.

46. Ibid., 435a.

47. Plato's Republic, 595c.

48. Plato's Ion, 530c.

49. Republic, 600c-601c.

50. Plato's Phaedrus, 264c.

51. For an excellent analysis of Coleridge's concept of Romantic language see Edward Kessler's Coleridge's Metaphors of Being (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

52. For a good overview of the Romantic movement see John Halsted's, Romanticism (London: Macmillan, 1969). See also Jacques Barzun's Romanticism and the Modern Ego (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1944).

53. Shelley, Preface to Prometheus Unbound, Poetical Works, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932), 203.

54. Halsted, Romanticism, 5.

55. Ibid., 6.

56. Wordsworth, "The Tables Turned" in Wordsworth: The Poetical Works, edited by Thomas Hutchinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 377.

57. Shelley, Defense of Poetry, quoted in Terence Hawkes, Metaphor: the Critical Idiom (London: Methuen, 1972), 37.

58. Ibid., 39.

59. Coleridge on Shakespeare, edited by Terence Hawkes (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), 233.

60. Nietzsche, Allegories of Reading, trans. Paul de Man (London: Yale University Press, 1979), 105.

61. Quoted in Paul Cantor's "Friedrich Nietzsche: The Use and Abuse of Metaphor" in Metaphor: Problems and Perspectives (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1982), 72.

62. Skinner, The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, 2 vol. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978). Actually Skinner argues that the word "foundation" in the title does not refer to a true starting point of modern political theory but it has unfortunately been taken for one.

63. Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953).

64. Nietzsche, Philosophy and Truth, transl. by Breazeale (Sussex, 1979), 88-9.

65. In addition to Derrida's numerous writings showing his philosophical approach in practice, there also has been several recent books analyzing his approach. See, for example, Christopher Norris's Derrida (London: Fontana Press, 1987) and Deconstruction Theory and Practice (London: Methuen Press, 1982); Richard Harland's Superstructuralism (London: Methuen Press, 1988); and Jeff Mason's Philosophical Rhetoric (London: Routledge, 1989).

66. Derrida, "Signature, Event, and Context," Glyph, vol. 1 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), 75-176.

67. Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" in From a Logical Point of View (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1953), 20.

68. Quine, "A Postscript on Metaphor," 159.

69. Ibid.

70. See Rorty's Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980). Much of what Rorty has to say concerns the historical need of philosophers to 'mirror' their language, and hence a body of knowledge, on our ocular perceptions of the world. See especially pp. 38-39, 143-144, 157-163.

Chapter Two: WHAT POLITICAL METAPHORS MEAN

1. Richards, The Philosophy of Rhetoric (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), 100. Instead of using Richards' vocabulary of "vehicle" and "tenor" Black substitutes his own of "frame" and "focus" but with the same result. See also Max Black, "More About Metaphor," in Metaphor and Thought (Cambridge: University Press, 1988), 27-9.

2. Max Black, Models and Metaphors (Ithica N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1962). See also Black's essays "More About Metaphors" in Metaphor and Thought (1988) and "How Metaphors Work" in On Metaphor (Chicago: University Press), 181-192. For a good summary of Black's cognitive arguments see Earl R Mac Cormac's A Cognitive Theory of Metaphor (Cambridge, Mass: Bradford Press, 1985), 24-26. From a wealth of literature regarding the cognitive metaphor see, for a representative example, Paul Ricoeur's The Rule of Metaphor (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), 83-99; Terence Hawkes, Metaphor: The Critical Idiom (London: Methuen, 1986), 60-63.

3. Aristotle's Poetics, Chapter 21.

4. Black, Models and Metaphors, 46.

5. Ibid.

6. Saccaro-Battisti, "Changing Metaphors of Political Structures," Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol 44, No.1, 1983, p.31.

7. Ibid., 32.

8. Zashin and Chapman, "The Uses of Metaphor and Analogy: Toward a Renewal of Political Language," The Journal of Politics, Vol.36, 1974, 299-300.

9. Brown, "Social Theory As Metaphor," Theory and Society, Vol. 3, No. 2, Summer 1976, 171.

10. Murray Edelman, Politics As Symbolic Action (Chicago: Markham, 1971), 67; cited in Eugene Miller's "Metaphor and Political Knowledge," American Political Science Review, Vol. 73, No.1. March 1973, 160.

11. See Eugene F. Miller's "Metaphor and Political Knowledge" in the American Political Science Review, Vol. 73, No.1, March 1979. "Metaphor discloses the meaning or reality of political things not by constituting them, however, but by manifesting their intelligible structure" [p.162].

12. Saccaro-Battisti, "Changing Metaphors of Political Structures," 31.

13. Colin Murray Turbayne, Myth and Metaphor (Conneticut: Yale University Press, 1962).

14. Ibid., 20.

15. Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 197.

16. Ibid. Ricoeur suggests that Black's thesis is a slight improvement upon Richards' and "whose work marks a decisive progress in clarifying the field" [p.84].

17. Hannah Arendt, The Life of the Mind (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971), 98-125.

18. Ibid., "The great philosophers...have almost unanimously insisted on something 'ineffable' behind the written words, something of which they, when they thought and did not write, were very clearly aware and which nevertheless refused to be pinned down and handed over to others" [113-114]. That is why, Arendt goes on to explain, metaphors are so frequently used in philosophical writings.

19. Ibid. "The metaphor, bridging the abyss between inward and invisible mental activities and the world of appearances, was certainly the greatest gift language could bestow on thinking" [p. 105].

20. Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 7.

21. See, for example, Heidegger's essay "Holderlin and the Essence of Poetry" in Existence and Being (Chicago: Gateway Press, 1949), 270-291. "Language is not a mere tool at [man's] disposal, rather is it that event which disposes of the supreme possibility of human existence" [pp. 276-277].

22. Miller, "Metaphor and Political Knowledge," 169.

23. Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, trans. by G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), 119, and cited in Arendt, Life of the Mind, 115.

24. Arendt, Life of the Mind, 115.

25. Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, B33, and cited in Arendt, Life of the Mind, 118.

26. Kant, Ibid., B 180-1, and cited in Arendt, Life of the Mind, 100-101.

27. Many authors have borrowed from Ryle's distinction for their own, sometimes un-Rylean purposes. See Ryle's Concept of Mind (London: Penguin Pub., 1970), 75-77 and 196-198. "We do not, consequently, have to rig up one theatre, called 'the outside world', to house the common objects of anyone's observation, and another, called 'the mind', to house the objects of some monopoly observations" [198]. Compare with Arendt who contends that this is exactly what philosophers should do [Arendt, Life of the Mind, pp. 98-125].

28. Turbayne, Myth of Metaphor, 22, 129-130.

29. Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, 197.

30. Max Muller, Lectures on the Science of Language (New York: Scribner, 1875), 372.

31. Ernst Cassirer, Language and Myth (New York: Dover Publications, 1953), 88.

32. Ibid. 99.

33. James Edie, Speaking and Meaning (Bloomington: Indiana Press, 1976), 191.

34. See "The Platonic-Romantic Tradition" in chapter one.

35. For an excellent overview of the "linguistic-turn" see Richard Rorty's introduction to The Linguistic Turn: Recent Essays in Philosophical Method (Chicago: University Press, 1967), 1-39.

36. Plato's Seventh Letter, 341b, 343a.

37. For an excellent critique of Nietzsche's philosophy of rhetoric and in particular of metaphor see Paul Cantor's "Friedrich Nietzsche: The Use and Abuse of Metaphor," in Metaphor: Problems and Perspectives, ed. by David Miall (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1982), 71-88.

38. Plato's Protagoras, 329a.
39. Donald Davidson, "What Metaphors Mean" in On Metaphor, ed. by Sheldon Sacks (Chicago: University Press, 1979), 29-46.
40. Richard Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986). "There was...no particular reason why this ocular metaphor seized the imagination of the founders of Western thought. But it did, and contemporary philosophers are still working out its consequences, analyzing the problems it created" [p.38].
41. Black, Models and Metaphors, 46.
42. Davidson, "What Metaphors Mean," 31.
43. Ibid., 43.
44. Ibid., 31.
45. Ibid., 36, 39.
46. Ibid., 43.
47. Ibid., 45.
48. Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature. "Our present notions of what it is to be a philosopher are so tied up with the Kantian attempt to render all knowledge-claims commensurable that it is difficult to imagine what philosophy without epistemology could be" [p. 357].
49. John Dewey, The Quest For Certainty (New York: 1930), 23.
50. See Rorty's trenchant discussion of optical metaphors or what he calls "mirroring" in part two of Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature, 129-311.
51. Ibid., 159.
52. Ibid., 160.
53. W.V.O. Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" in From a Logical Point of View (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1953).
54. Richard Rorty, Irony, Contingency and Solidarity (Cambridge: University Press, 1989).
55. Ibid., 16.
56. Ibid., 57.
57. Ibid., 19.
58. David Cooper, Metaphor (Aristotelian Society Series, Volume 5, 1986), 251-257.
59. Davidson, "What Metaphors Mean," 37.
60. Ibid., 31-32.
61. See Hobbes's treatment of absurdity in chapter five of Leviathan. Hobbes's discussion of metaphor here as an abuse of speech can be said to be consistent with Ryle's category mistake.
62. Aristotle, De Interpretatione, 16a4-17a9.
63. Ibid.
64. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, Ixi.
65. Davidson, "What Metaphors Mean," 45.
66. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, No. 54 and 580.
67. Davidson, "What Metaphors Mean," 45.
68. Max Black "How Metaphors Work: A Reply to Donald Davidson" in Sheldon Sacks On Metaphor, 190-191.
69. Marcus Hester, The Meaning of Poetic Metaphors (London: Moulton, 1967), 217.
70. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, Ixi, 200e.
71. Plato, Theatetus, 197c.
72. Plato, Seventh Letter, 342a.
73. Ibid.

74. Ibid.
75. Aristotle, De Anima, 342a.
76. Ibid.
77. Boethius, In Librum De interpretatione editio secundo, MPL, 64, col. 406. See also the excellent treatment of the role of images and of the senses in knowledge contained in David Summers' The Judgment of Sense (Cambridge: University Press, 1987), especially pages 184-187 and 103-106 to which I am largely indebted for much of what follows.
78. Boethius, In Librum, col. 407.
79. Ibid.
80. Cited in Summers, The Judgment of Sense (Cambridge: University Press, 1987), 187.
81. Aquinas, Summa theologiae, edited Jonathan Barnes. (London: Burns and Oates, 1921-22), I.1.9.
82. Summers, The Judgment of Sense, 191.
83. Hobbes, Leviathan, 90: EW III, 7. "And because waking I often observe the absurdity of my Dreams, but never dream of the absurdities of my waking Thoughts; I am well satisfied, that being awake, I know I dreame not; though when I dreame, I think my selfe awake."
84. Michael Walzer, "On the Role of Symbolism in Politcal Thought," Political Science Quarterly, Vol.82, No.2, June 1967, 194.
85. Susanne Langer, Philosophy in a New Key (Cambridge: University Press, 1957), 41.
86. Davidson, "What Metaphors Mean," 29.
87. Ibid., 36.
88. Davidson's program of linguistic utterances can be said to be a partial follow-up of Quinean deconstruction and Tarskian truth conditions. As Tarskian truth condiditons (e.g. "Snow is white if and only if snow is white") depend upon literal meaning, a Kantian analysis of the speaker's intuition would seem meaningless here.
89. Kant's Critique of Judgment (London: Macmillan and Co., 1914), Section 59, 248.
90. Ibid., 249.
91. Ibid.
92. Ibid.
93. Ibid., 249-250.
94. Ibid., 250.
95. Ibid., 251.
96. Ibid.
97. Ibid., 252.
98. Aristotle, De Anima, 435b2.
99. Ibid., 421a19-20. See also Summers, The Judgment of Sense, 103-104.
100. Aquinas, Summa Theologica, I.76.5.
101. See Summers, The Judgment of Sense, 105.
102. Quintilian, Institutio oratoria I.ii.20; cited in Summers, Ibid., 106.
103. Locke, Essay Concerning Human Understanding, ed. by Fraser, Vol.2, pg.5.; see also Paul de Man "The Epistemology of Metaphor," in Critical Inquiry, Vol.5, 1980, 13-30.
104. Judith Shklar, Men and Citizens (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 226.

Chapter Three: HOBBS'S GROUNDING OF METAPHOR

1. George Catlin, in his Thomas Hobbes as Philosopher, Publicist, and Man of Letters, informs us that Hobbes was a "moral defective" (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1922), 14. See also T.S. Eliot's Essay on "John Bramhall" in Essays: Ancient and Modern (London: Faber and Faber, 1947). There are two excellent references with regards to Hobbes's contemporary friends and enemies: Samuel I. Mintz's The Hunting of Leviathan (Cambridge: CUP, 1962) and John Bowle's Hobbes and His Critics (London: Frank Cass, 1959).

2. Hobbes's theories of geometry (for example, his attempt to square the circle) met with unhappy results and a general blackening of his reputation. His biographer, John Aubrey, remarked that "it was a pity...that Mr. Hobbes began [mathematics] so late, else he would not have lain so open." Brief Lives (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1982), 162. For an account of Hobbes's geometrical debate with John Wallis, who, again, got the better of Hobbes, see Arnold Rogow's recent biography Thomas Hobbes: Radical in the Service of Reaction (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1986), 196-204.

3. According to Aubrey, "his mother fell in labour with him upon the fright of the invasion of the Spaniards." Brief Lives, p. 150.

4. Hobbes frequently stressed the scientific nature of his civil philosophy. He found that by turning the general principles of human nature into "laws of nature" he could treat moral philosophy as if it were composed of scientific propositions. See Leviathan, pp. 189-201; EW III, 116-130.

5. According to Hobbes, "I made it my business that this author should speak to the English in their own tongue and warn them against the temptation to listen to rhetoric." Quoted in Rogow, Thomas Hobbes, p. 79.

6. Elements of Law, EW IV, Epistle Dedicatory.

7. In 1656 Hobbes published Six Lessons to the Professor of the Mathematics...in the University of Oxford and 1672 Lux Mathematica. His treatise on rhetoric, The Whole Art of Rhetoric, was first published in 1637 and had two subsequent publications, the last one shortly after his death in 1679. He also found time in his old age to translate all of Homer's Iliad and Odyssey in 1674.

8. See Richard Peters's Hobbes (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967) and J.W.N. Watkins's Hobbes's System of Ideas (London: Hutchinson, 1965).

9. Quentin Skinner, "The Ideological Content of Hobbes's Political Thought," Historical Journal, IX, 3 (1966), 286-317, and "Conquest and Consent: Thomas Hobbes and the Engagement Controversy," in The Interregnum: The Quest for Settlement 1646-1660, edited by G.E. Aylmer (London: Macmillan, 1972), 79-97. See also Richard Tuck's Natural Rights Theories: Their Origin and Development (Cambridge: CUP, 1979), 118-142; Hobbes (Oxford: OUP, 1989).

10. Leo Strauss, The Political Philosophy of Hobbes (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), ch. 6.

11. Among some of the more prominent examples of literature on Hobbes's moral doctrine in recent years has been Howard Warrender's The Political Theory of Hobbes: His Theory of Obligation (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957); Michael Oakeshott's "Moral Life in the Writings of Thomas Hobbes," in Rationalism in Politics (New York: Basic Books, 1962), 248-300, and Hobbes on Civil Association (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975); C.B. Macpherson, The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).

12. Hobbes, Leviathan, 626; EW III, 602.
13. David Johnston, The Rhetoric of Leviathan: Thomas Hobbes and the Politics of Cultural Transformation (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986). This is certainly the best book on Hobbes and rhetoric available, and Johnston's treatment of Hobbes's attempt to create a "speaking picture" is particularly well done. But Johnston ignores much of what Hobbes has to say about metaphor and fails to note the distinction between Hobbes's use of metaphoric language versus metaphoric images.
14. One of the strongest critiques of Hobbes's supposed "failure" in proving to us the necessity of his conclusions is to be found in Don Herzog's Without Foundations: Justification in Political Theory (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985). According to Herzog, "Hobbes fails to justify his conclusions" [p. 67]. Perhaps it would be more accurate for Herzog to say that Hobbes fails to justify his conclusions to us.
15. Eugene Miller, "Metaphor and Political Knowledge," in the American Political Science Review, March 1979, vol. 73, no. 1, 155-170.
16. Ibid., 155.
17. Frederick Whelan, "Language and Its Abuses in Hobbes' Political Philosophy," American Political Science Review, March 1981, vol. 75, no. 1, 59.
18. Richard Ashcraft, "Economic Metaphors, Behaviorism, and Political Theory: Some Observations on the Ideological Uses of Language," in the Western Political Quarterly, Sept. 1977, vol. XXX, no. 3, 313-328.
19. Ibid., 313.
20. Ibid.
21. Herzog, Without Foundations, 44.
22. Leviathan, 116-117; EW III, 36-37.
23. Miller, "Metaphor and Political Knowledge," 155.
24. Thomas Hobbes, Thomas White's De Mundo Examined, translated from the Latin by Harold Whitmore Jones (Bradford: Bradford University Press, 1976), 23.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid., 25.
27. Ibid.
28. Aristotle's Poetics, 1457b7-8.
29. Hobbes, EW I, 62-63.
30. Leviathan, 109-110; EW III, 29.
31. Leviathan. "There being nothing in the world Universall but Names; for the things named, are every one of them Individual and Singular." p. 102; EW III, 21.
32. Hobbes, EW VI, 497.
33. Ibid.
34. Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria, 4 vols., trans. H.E. Butler (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), vol. 2, 433-437. Also quoted in Johnston, Rhetoric of Leviathan, 20-21.
35. See, for example, George Watson's "Hobbes and the Metaphysical Conceit" in the Journal of the History of Ideas, Oct. 1955, vol. XVI, no. 4, 558-562.
36. Terence Hawkes, Metaphor: The Critical Idiom (London: Methuen, 1972), 16-33.
37. Ibid., 22-24.
38. Ibid.
39. According to Aubrey, "Before Thucydides, he spent two years in reading romances and plays, which he has often repented and said that

these two years were lost of him...." Brief Lives, 151.

40. Cited in Rogow, Thomas Hobbes, 79. There is also another edition of Hobbes's translation of Thucydides, Hobbes's Thucydides (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1975) with an excellent introduction by its editor, Richard Schlatter.

41. See, for example, Rogow's argument that Thucydides was neither anti-democratic nor against an orator's use of rhetoric in Thomas Hobbes, pp. 79-99.

42. Hobbes, Thomas White's De Mundo Examined, 25.

43. Hobbes, EW VIII, xxii.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid., xxxi.

46. Hobbes, EW X, x.

47. Hobbes, Ibid. "A metaphor also, (which is a comparison contracted into a word) is not unpleasant; but when they are sharp and extraordinary, they are not fit for an heroic poet, nor for public consultation, but only for an accusation or defence at the bar." [v-vi].

48. Hobbes, EW VIII, ix.

49. Ibid., x-xi.

50. Ibid., xxii.

51. Leviathan, 728; EW III, 713.

52. Ibid., 379; EW III, 325. "...the Common-peoples minds...are like clean paper, fit to receive whatsoever by Publique Authority shall be imprinted in them."

53. Leviathan, 106; EW III, 25.

54. Hobbes, EW I, 398.

55. Hobbes, Elements of Law, EW IV, 3-14.

56. Cited in Arendt, The Life of the Mind (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971), 263.

57. Ibid., 265.

58. Leviathan, chapter 20, 258-260; EW III, 194-6. For a more detailed discussion of Hobbes description of judgment and the Book of Genesis see Tom Sorell's Hobbes (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), 34-35, 124-126.

59. Hobbes, EW I, 399.

60. Hobbes, EW VIII, x-xi.

61. Leviathan, 135; EW III, 57.

62. Ibid., 136; EW III, 57-58.

63. Ibid., 136-137; EW III 58-59.

64. Ibid., 717; EW III, 701.

65. Ibid., 129-130; EW III, 51.

66. Ibid., 161; EW III, 85-86.

67. Ibid., 186; EW III, 113.

68. Hobbes, EW IV, 161.

69. Thucydides, The Peloponnesian War, translated by Rex Warner (Harmondsworth, Penguin Classics, 1954), 242.

70. Hobbes, EW VIII, 348.

71. Hobbes, EW IV, 211.

72. Hobbes, EW II, 77.

73. Ibid., 268.

74. Hobbes, EW II, 77.

75. Leviathan, 409; EW III, 359.

76. Ibid.

77. For a fuller explanation of the two types of vision found in political philosophy, see Sheldon Wolin's introductory chapter in Politics and Vision (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1960).

78. Hobbes, EW II, 169.
79. Ibid., 169-170.
80. Leviathan, 728; EW III, 713.

Chapter Four: HOBBS'S VISUAL THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

1. John Dryden, "Absolam and Achitiphel" in Dryden: Poems and Prose (London: Penguin Books, 1971), 18.
2. See the Epistle Dedicatory to Element of Law, EW IV. Hobbes says that a foundation should be built so that those who are "naturally mistrusting" should nevertheless concur with the reasoning.
3. See, for example, Tom Sorell's Hobbes (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), 26, 33, 45, 58, 135; Thomas Spragen's The Politics of Motion: The World of Thomas Hobbes (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1973), 134-139; R.S. Woolhouse's The Empirirists (Oxford: OUP, 1988), 40-44.
4. I owe much of what follows in this section on scepticism to two works: Richard Popkin, The History of Scepticism From Erasmus to Spinoza (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 129-150; Richard Tuck, "Optics and Sceptics: The Philosophical Foundations of Hobbes's Political Thought," in Conscience and Casuistry in Early Modern Europe, edited by Emund Leites (Cambridge: CUP, 1988), 235-263.
5. Aristotle's De Anima, 418a14-15.
6. Pierre Charron, Of Wisdom (London, n.d. (before 1612)), 237-8; cited in Tuck, op. cit., p.240.
7. Marin Mersenne, La Verite des Sceinces: Centre les Sceptiques ou Pyrrhoniens (Paris, 1625), 54; quoted in Tuck, "Optics and Sceptics," p. 238.
8. Mersenne, Les Questions theologique, physiques, morales et mathematiques (Paris, 1634), 9-11; quoted in Popkin, op. cit., p.137.
9. Ibid.
10. Descartes, "Discourse on Method," Philosophical Works, I, 106.
11. Gassendi, Opera, II (Paris, 1649).
12. Tuck, "Optics and Sceptics," 245.
13. Grotius, De Iure Belli ac Pacis, translated F.W. Kelsey (New York: The Bobbs-Merill Co, 1925), III, 1.2.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. I borrowed Tuck's translation from the Latin. See Tuck, "Optics and Sceptics," 248-9.
17. Hobbes, EW IV, 51.
18. Hobbes's Leviathan, 683.
19. Hobbes, EW IV, 26.
20. See Spragens, The Politics of Motion, 77.
21. EW I, 66.
22. EW IV, 6.
23. EW I, 392.
24. For a good account of Harvey's influence on Hobbes see chapter six of J.W.N. Watkins's Hobbes's System of Ideas, 2nd Ed. (London: Hutchinson, 1973), 100-119.
25. Leviathan, 90; EW III, 7.
26. EW IV, 14.
27. Leviathan, 147; EW III, 71.
28. Ibid.

29. Hobbes is frequently grouped with Locke, Gassendi, Berkeley and Hume as an example of an empiricist philosopher. See The Empiricists by R.S. Woolhouse (Oxford: OUP, 1988), 27-47.

30. Leviathan, 148; EW III, 71.

31. See the elaborate chart of scientific knowledge that Hobbes drew which accompanies chapter nine of Leviathan, p. 149; EW III, 72-73.

32. Leviathan, 683; EW III, 65.

33. An interesting account of Hobbes's theory of causation is to be found in David Johnston's The Rhetoric of Leviathan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986). Johnston argues that whilst Hobbes was always concerned with causation, he nevertheless felt free to conjecture upon what the causes were, thus turning the subject of history into a sort of science [p. 4-13].

34. EW I, 3.

35. Leviathan, 149; EW III, 71.

36. Francis Bacon, De Augmentis Scientiarum, 3 iv, 361.

37. Ibid., 364.

38. "The Sciences, are small Power; because not eminent; and therefore, not acknowledged in any man; nor at all, but in a few, and in them, but of few things," Leviathan, 151; EW III, 75.

39. Ibid., 115; EW III, 35.

40. EW I, 69.

41. Leviathan, 110-114; EW III, 29-38; EW I, 65-90.

42. Gilbert Ryle, The Concept of Mind (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1949), 153.

43. Leviathan, 116-117; EW III, 36-37.

44. Ibid.

45. Epistle Dedicatory, Elements of Law, EW IV.

46. Descartes, Philosophical Works, I, 92.

47. The metaphor of causation is treated in Lakoff and Johnson's Metaphors We Live By (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 69-76.

48. EW I, 79.

49. See chapter four of Leviathan, "Of Speech." "Subject to Names, is whatsoever can enter into, or be considered in an account; and be added one to another to make a summe; or subtracted one from another, and leave a remainder" [p. 106; EW III, 2].. A critique of Hobbes's belief that language can be added and subtracted to reveal knowledge can be found in William Sacksteder's "Some Ways of Doing Language Philosophy; Nominalism, Hobbes, and the Linguistic Turn" in the Review of Metaphysics, March 1981, Vol 34, No. 3, 459-486.

50. EW II, 305.

51. Leviathan, 686; EW III, 668; EW I, 73.

52. EW I, 9.

53. Aristotle's Posterior Analytics, 75b13-20.

54. Hobbes, Tractatus Opticus, Opera Latina, vol.5.

55. Spragens, Politics of Motion.

56. Cited in Ibid., 143.

57. Ibid., 142.

58. EW IV, 437.

59. Significantly, Spragens skirts the issues of geometry throughout his book, with not even a listing for it in his index.

60. EW I, 86-87.

61. Plato's Republic, 527b.

62. Aubrey, Brief Lives (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 1982), 152.
63. Thomas Hobbes, Rosetum Geometrum (1671), translated by Venterus Manday as Book II of Mellificium Mensionis, 4th ed. (London: 1727), 125.
64. EW VII, 316, 330.
65. EW II, Dedicatory, iii-iv.
66. EW I, 1-2.
67. EW I, 70. See also EW I, 26, 73, 40, 212 and EW III, 609.
68. EW VII, 184.

Chapter Five: THE IMAGES OF LEVIATHAN

1. One excellent, although unpublished, thesis detailing the metaphoric language of Hobbes's Leviathan is Raia Prokhovnik's The Rhetoric and Philosophy of Hobbes's Leviathan, Ph.D thesis, University of London, 1981.
2. The Book of Job, 40:15 - 41:35.
3. Job., 40:15.
4. Job, 26:13. For an exegesis of the symbol of Leviathan and Behemoth see The Book of Job: With Notes, Introduction and Appendix by A.B. Davidson (Cambridge: CUP, 1962), especially 321-32; Robert Pfeiffer's Introduction to the Old Testament (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1948).
5. Isaiah, 27:1.
6. Job, 41:11.
7. Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989, 676.
8. Leviathan, 81; EW III, ix-x.
9. Leviathan, 672; EW III, 653.
10. Leviathan, 676; EW III, 657.
11. Leviathan, 670 -681; EW III, 654-663.
12. T.S. Eliot, Essay on "John Bramhall" in Essays: Ancient and Modern (London: Faber and Faber, 1947), 34.
13. Leviathan, 725; EW III, 710.
14. Ibid.
15. C.S. Lewis, The Discarded Image (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1964), pg 52.
16. Leviathan, 669; EW III, 650.
17. Leviathan 227; EW III, 158.
18. Michael Oakeshott, Hobbes on Civil Association (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 152.
19. Dryden, "Absolam and Achitophel" in Dryden: Selected Poems, edited by Douglas Grant (London: Penguin Books, 1955), 16-50; See also James Anderson Winn's John Dryden and His World (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), especially page 82.
20. Aristotle's De Anima, 432a3-9.
21. Ludwig Wittgenstein, The Blue and Brown Books (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958, reprinted 1989), 171.
22. Leviathan, 668; EW III, 648.
23. EW IV, 2-3.
24. Leviathan, 668; EW III, 648.
25. Francis Bacon, "De Augmentis Scientiarum" in Works, Vol IV, edited by J. Spedding, R. Ellis, D Heath (London: Longman and Company,

1875), 433-34.

26. Any one of these engravers had the artistry and experience to produce the title page to Leviathan. See the Bryan's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers, 5 vols. (London: George Bell and Sons, 1903), especially vols. I, 174-5; II, 143-4; III, 65-6. See also Raia Prokhovnic's Rhetoric and Philosophy in Hobbes's Leviathan, unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of London (1981) which discusses the possible candidates for the work (pp. 152-68).

27. Ibid.

28. William Faithorn. Regrettably, I cannot locate the source of this particular quote. We do know, however, that Abraham Bosse, the artist of the Richelieu portrait, was living in Paris the same time that Hobbes was. The likelihood is strong, therefore, that Bosse was the artist of Hobbes's title page and that he borrowed the theme of his portrait of Richelieu for that of the "Mortal God." A catalogue of Bosse's work, however, which might even include the portrait of Richelieu, does exist although it is not available in this country: Catalogue de l'oeuvre d'Abraham Bosse, edited by Andre Blum (Paris: Albert Morance, 1924). For evidence of Bosse's residence in Paris at the time of Hobbes's writing of Leviathan, see Andre Blum's Abraham Bosse et la societie francaise (Paris: Albert Morance, 1924), 180-1.

29. Abraham Bosse is listed as the painter of Richelieu's portrait. Unfortunately, no copy of it can be found in Britain or it may no longer exist (see note no. 28 above). See the Bryan's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers, vol. I (London: George Ball and Sons, 1903), pp. 174-5. The similarity between Bosse's portrait of Richelieu and that of the "Mortal God" in Leviathan strengthens the argument, made by Prokhovnic in her Philosophy and Rhetoric of Leviathan, that Bosse was the engraver for both works.

30. EW I, 393.

31. EW I, 399; EW III, 57; EW IV, 55.

32. K.F. Russell, editor, British Anatomy (London: St. Paul Bibliography, 1987), 6-7.

33. Ibid., xxi.

34. See J.W.N. Watkins's Hobbes's System of Ideas, 2nd Edition (London: Hutchinson, 1965), chapter six.

35. According to John of Salisbury, "The place of the head in the body of the commonwealth is filled by the prince...." The Statesman's Book (Policraticus), Bk. 4, chpt. 3. Cited in Michael Curtis' Great Political Theories (New York: Avon Books, 1961), 170.

36. Plato's Republic, 444c.

37. Aubrey, Brief Lives, 152-3.

38. Leviathan, 81, EW III, ix.

39. Ibid.

40. I thank Quentin Skinner for pointing out to me the theoretical relevance the artificial man's "soul" has in political thought.

41. Hobbes, Opera Latina, III, 1.

42. Plato's Phaedrus, 246; Phaedo, 80, 81, 94; Timaeus, 34c, 87d.

43. Aristotle's De Anima, 431b20-434a21. According to Aristototele, "The soul of animals is characterized by two faculties, the faculty of discrimination which is the work of thought and sense, and the faculty of originating local movement" [432a15-17].

44. Leviathan, chapter 29.

45. Leviathan, 81; EW ix-x.

46. Hugo Grotius, De Iure Belli ac Pacis, translated by F.W. Kelsey (New York: the Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1925), 121.
47. Ibid., 105
48. Leviathan, 269; EW III, 204-5.
49. Grotius, De Jure, 249.
50. EW II, 89.
51. Leviathan 113; EW III, 32.
52. Leviathan, 729; EW III, 714.
53. Roy Porter, Disease, Medicine and Society in England (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987), 25.
54. Susan Sontag, Aids and Its Metaphors (London: Penguin, 1988).
55. Porter, Disease, Medicine and Society in England, 25.
56. EW I, 406.
57. Harvey, Works, trans. by Robert Willis (London: Sydenham Society, 1847), 83.
58. Leviathan, 289; EW III, 226.
59. Leviathan, 290; EW III, 227.
60. Leviathan, 293; EW III, 230.
61. Ibid.
62. EW II, 169-170.
63. Leviathan, 294; EW III, 231.
64. Leviathan, 316; EW III, 256.
65. Ibid.
66. Leviathan, 301; EW III, 239.
67. Leviathan, 300; EW III, 238.
68. Leviathan, 274-5; EW III 210.
69. Leviathan, 276; EW III, 212.
70. Ibid.
71. Ibid.
72. Leviathan, 261; EW III, 196.
73. Leviathan, 262; EW III, 197.
74. C.B. Macpherson, "Introduction," Leviathan, p. 50.
75. Keith Thomas, "The Social Origins of Hobbes's Political Thought," in Seventeenth Century England: A Changing Culture, Vol.2, edited by W.R. Owens (London: Open University Press, 1980), 205.
76. According to Hobbes, "The Distribution of Materials of this Nourishment, is the constitution of Mine, and Thine, and His; that is to say, in one word Propriety; and belongeth in all kinds of Common-wealth to the Sovereign Power" Leviathan, 295-6; EW III, 233.
77. Thomas, "The Social Origins of Hobbes's Political Thought," 205.
78. Leviathan, 263; EW III, 198.
79. Ibid.
80. Leviathan, 264; EW III, 198.
81. Ibid.
82. Leviathan, 272; EW III, 208.
83. Leviathan, 268; EW III, 203.
84. Leviathan, 273-4; EW III, 209.
85. Leviathan, 409; EW III, 359.
86. Leviathan, 627-28; EW III, 603.
87. Ibid.
88. Ibid.
89. Leviathan, 631; EW III, 608.
90. Leviathan, 635; EW III, 612.
91. Leviathan, 729; EW III, 714.

Chapter Six: METAPHOR, POETRY AND THE CONSEQUENCE OF POLITICAL IMAGINATION

1. See Gilbert Ryle, The Concept of Mind (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1949), 190-263; Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953).
2. Mary Warnock, Imagination (London: Faber and Faber, 1976), 13-34, 131-195.
3. Jacques Derrida, "The Double Session" in Dissemination, (London: Athlone Press, 1981), 195.
4. Ibid., 187.
5. Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), 38.
6. Berkeley, Of the Principles of Human Knowledge, Philosophical Works, edited by M.R. Ayers (London: Everyman's Library, 1975), 77.
7. Ibid.
8. Leviathan, 657; EW III, 637.
9. Leviathan, 106; EW III, 25.
10. Leviathan, 365; EW III, 310.
11. Vico, The New Science of Giambattista Vico, 3rd ed., translated by Bergin and Fisch (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1948), 142.
12. Ibid.
13. A general, non-political, discussion of Promethean imagination can be found in Richard Kearney's The Wake of Imagination (London: Hutchinson, 1988), 79-86.
14. Plato's Protagoras, 321c.
15. Ibid., 321d.
16. Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound in The Complete Plays of Aeschylus, trans. by Gilbert Murray (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1952), 41.
17. Bishop Bramhall, quoted in John Bowle's Hobbes and His Critics (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1969), 127.
18. Jacob Burckhardt, Reflections on History (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1979), 99.
19. Immanuel Kant, "Anthropologie," no. 28. Werke, vol VIII (Berlin: 1922), 466.
20. Leviathan, 90; EW III, 7.
21. Shakespeare, A Midsummer's Night Dream, Act V, scene 1.
22. Michael Oakeshott, Experience and Its Modes (London: Cambridge University Press, 1933), 297. For a fuller discussion of the development of Oakeshott's poetic voice see John Wendell Coates' "Michael Oakeshott as Liberal Theorist," in the Canadian Journal of Political Science, Vol. 18, no. 4, December 1985), 773-787. Unless otherwise stated, all references to Oakeshott are to his "The Voice of Poetry in the Conversation of Mankind" in Rationalism in Politics (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1962).
23. Oakeshott, Rationalism in Politics, 216. My criticism of Oakeshott here applies only to his treatment of poetry in this essay, and not to any other work in which he may have amended his theory.
24. Ibid., 234.
25. EW IV, 452.
26. Oakeshott, Rationalism in Politics, 217.
27. See the discussion of metaphoric models in science in chapter

one.

28. For an excellent overview of political poetry, see Tom Paulin's introduction to The Faber Book of Political Verse (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1984), 15-32.

29. Cited in Paulin, Ibid., 339.

30. Conor Cruise O'Brien, "Passion and Cunning" in Passion and Cunning and other Essays (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988), 28-29.

31. All Heideggerian quotes are taken from "Remembrance of the Poet" and "Holderlin and the Essence of Poetry" in Existence and Being, translated by Douglas Scott (Chicago: Gateway Press, 1949). Heidegger's other poetic essays are usefully compiled in Poetry, Language, Thought, translated by Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper and Row, 1971). For an overview of Heideggerian poetics, particularly in Being and Time, see David Halliburton's Poetic Thinking: An Approach to Heidegger (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981) and Eugene F. Kaelin's Art and Existence: A Phenomenological Aesthetic (New Jersey: Bucknell University Press, 1970), 234-280. From a wealth of books on how Heideggerian poetics fits into philosophy in general, see Steven Bindeman's Heidegger and Wittgenstein: the poetics of silence (Washington, D.C.: University of America, 1981); and Heidegger's influence on post-modern poetry is the subject of Paul Bove's Deconstructive Poetics: Heidegger and Modern American Poetry (Guildford: Columbia University Press, 1980).

32. Heidegger, Existence and Being, 277.

33. Ibid., 276.

34. Ibid., 275.

35. Ibid., 272.

36. Ibid., 279.

37. Ibid., 283.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid., 288.

40. Jeremy Conway, review article in the International Philosophical Quarterly, Vol. XXIV (1984), 98-112. According to Conway, one of the chief difficulties of Heidegger's poet is "that there exists a fundamental separation between the poet and the community" [114].

41. Howard Davis, "Poetry and the Voice of Michael Oakeshott" in the British Journal of Aesthetics, Vol., XV, no. 1 (Winter, 1974), 59-68. "One of the problems is precisely that Oakeshott seems to be imposing a single form of experience on such heterogeneous and expanding 'objects' of art - whose meaning cannot be considered chronologically specific, anyway, but will change with general sensibility. Therefore, in terms of the 'philosophy of art,' his view is likely to be considered inadequate" [66].

42. Burckhardt, Reflections on History, 107.

43. Aristotle's Poetics, 1451a37-1451b8.

44. Huizinga, Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture (London: Paladin, 1949), 153.

45. Spinoza, Tractatus Politicus in Political Works, trans. by A.G. Wernham (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), 261.

46. Plato's Laws, 702e.

47. Plato's Republic, 591a-592b.

48. Hobbes, Thomas White's De Mundo Examined, translated by Harold Whitmore Jones (London: Bradford University Press, 1976), 50.

49. EW X, vi.
50. Sidney, A Defence of Poetry, edited by J.A. Van Dorsten (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), 32.
51. EW X, vi.
52. Ibid.
53. De Homine, as translated in Man and Citizen, Bernard Gert, ed. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1972), 50.
54. Hobbes, Leviathan, 75; EW III, ii.
55. Wolin, Hobbes and the Epic Tradition of Political Theory (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1970), 34.
56. EW IV, 451-2.
57. Ibid., 449-50.
58. Ibid. Also cited in Wolin, Hobbes and the Epic Tradition, 38-9.
59. EW IV, 453 and 455.
60. EW IV, 455.
61. Ibid., 448.
62. Ibid.

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