

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

THE POLITICAL THOUGHT OF JAMES HARRINGTON

BY

DOUGLAS A. WEST

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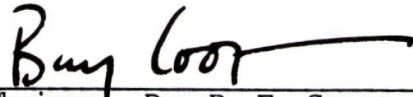
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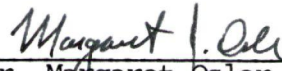
The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "THE POLITICAL THOUGHT OF JAMES HARRINGTON," submitted by Douglas A. West in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.



Chairman, Dr. B. F. Cooper
Department of Political Science



Dr. Anthony Parel
Department of Political Science



Dr. Margaret Osler
Department of History

May 25, 1984

ABSTRACT

The political thought of James Harrington (1611-1677) is often interpreted in one of two ways. To some scholars he is one of a line of republican political theorists who sought to revive the institutions of classical republicanism in seventeenth-century England. To others he is considered one of the first political theorists to have correctly identified the relationship between economics and political power. Each of these approaches to his work provides a narrow focus for the interpretation of his ideas. This thesis critically reviews these approaches and attempts to expand their range of vision to include an account of the changing attitudes toward science and religion during this period and how they may have affected Harrington's thought.

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INTRODUCTION

The pursuit of perfection, as the crow flies, is an activity both impious and unavoidable in human life. It involves the penalties of impiety (the anger of the Gods and social isolation) and its reward is not that of achievement but that of having made the attempt.

Michael Oakeshott (1)

In 1660 James Harrington was imprisoned in the Tower of London by the royal guard of Charles II. His republican ideals had become treasonable and he was forced into social isolation. His pursuit of perfection led him to this dreary end, for, although he was released from the Tower some months later, the greatest part of his life as a respected thinker ended with his imprisonment.

The most important of Harrington's works, The Commonwealth of Oceana (1656) was a pursuit of perfection that rightfully belongs in the English tradition of utopian literature alongside Mores's Utopia and Bacon's New Atlantis. Unlike those utopias, however, Harrington's Oceana was designed to reflect the political and social reality of mid-seventeenth century England. Moreover, his ambition was to establish an "immortal commonwealth," one that would last forever given the correct ingredients.

In Brief Lives John Aubrey wrote, "[Harrington's] genius lay chiefly towards the Politiques and Democraticall government." (2) At the same time, however, his noble birthright led him to defend Charles I and, according to Aubrey, he became a bedservant of His Majesty in 1647 by order of Parliament. This basic intellectual contradiction between his republicanism and his support of the monarchy animated Harrington's imagination. Indeed, his work reflected the personal tension caused by conflicting allegiances. The result was a series of shorter works and pamphlets that reiterated much of the wisdom of the Oceana but in a non-utopian style and language. Harrington's brief yet brilliant literary career lasted from 1656 until his death in 1677. Most argue, however, that after his imprisonment in 1660 his mind was changed forever. Aubrey's description of Harrington's "madness" was a telling reminder of the possible outcome of intense intellectual stress.

Anno Domini 1660, he was committed prisoner to the Tower; then to Portsey castle. His durance in these prisons (he being a Gentleman of a high spirit and a hot head) was the procatractique cause of his deliration or madnesse; which was not outragious, for he would discourse rationally enough and be very facetious company, but he grew to have a phancy that his Persperation turned to Flies, sometimes to Bees; and he had a versatile timber house built in Mr. Hart's garden (opposite to St. James Parke) to try the experiment. He would

turne it to the sun, and sitt towards
it. . . . A quarter of an hour after
perhaps, a fly or two, or more, might
be drawn out of the lurking holes by
the warmeth; and then he would crye
out. Doe not you see it apparently
that these come from me.(3)

Despite Aubrey's description of Harrington's lunacy, he was also and during this same period, the author of republican writings that demonstrated his understanding of the value of owning land and of the power associated with it. As a modern advocate of the "ancient prudence" of republican institutions Harrington sought the truth of politics in the construction of an ideal, immortal commonwealth. Moreover, his work reflected a number of intellectual themes that were converging in the general discourse of seventeenth century England.

One of the topics addressed in this thesis concerns the lack of attention paid these themes by Harrington scholars. Indeed, most commentators easily identify the affinity between Harrington's Oceana and other less mundane utopias but few venture further to investigate the significance of the emergence of this literary genre in a wider intellectual context. Seventeenth-century England was rife with new ideas; it was the site of numerous discoveries in the scientific community as well as the battleground for Puritan eschatology. Within this intellectual context, millenarian speculations merged with

science, utopia with politics, and the age of progress was born. This was the seed-time for a new and modern notion of freedom, both political and intellectual. It was a period that saw religious toleration replace the dogmatism of state religion, though officially only for a brief time during the Protectorate. Little attention has been paid to the effect that the convergence of these intellectual themes had on individual thinkers of the era whose texts have received minute attention in other respects. Moreover, we must in future concentrate on the impact that science had on politics more fully to understand the "modern" predicament; the endless search for the one best way.

I have chosen Harrington because his work reflects the convergence described above and because he represents the English revival of classical republican political thought, which later animated the minds of the great founders of modern liberal democracy. The reverence for classical political institutions did not begin or end with Harrington, but in his work we see them juxtaposed with modern interpretations of nature and thrown into the crucible of modern thought. Harrington's ideas are a link in the chain of events that gave birth to modern notions of nationalism, utilitarianism and progress. In this context I offer an analysis of the literature on Harrington (Part

A) and an interpretation of his contribution to modern political thought (Part B).

Part A, *Harrington Reviewed*, consists of two chapters. Chapter I investigates the "classical republican" approach to his work. This is by far the most widely accepted opinion on the classification of Harrington's political thought and places him in the company of Machiavelli, Bacon, Milton and others who praised republican life. This interpretation is basically correct, but I believe it is too narrowly focussed. It predominated throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when Harrington's name was synonymous with republic or commonwealth. Recent scholarship, led by J. G. A. Pocock, has revived this argument and at the same time given it its most cogent and lucid expression. Pocock has almost single-handedly rescued Harrington from the grip of the Marxists, beginning with Eduard Bernstein's class analysis of the Great Rebellion and ending, perhaps with C. B. Macpherson's "possessive individualist" account of Harrington's implicit bourgeois roots. The evolution of the discourse on Harrington's bourgeois beginnings is chronicled in Chapter II of Part A. Although it is not voluminous, the literature associated with this approach to Harrington's work is remarkably consistent and argues that Harrington's historical and political consciousness was provided by his

station in seventeenth century English society. Instead of widening the context of the classical republican line, this approach was even narrower. In summary, then, Part A reviews the conventional Harrington scholarship and points out its limitation, namely the neglect of the larger intellectual context in which Harrington lived and wrote.

Part B, Enlarging the Context, also consists of two chapters. Chapter I is an overview of some of the innovations in science, religion, and politics in pre-Enlightenment England. The object of this digression is to understand more fully the ideas and opinions to which Harrington was exposed, ideas and opinions that probably influenced his rhetorical style. This summary of the history of seventeenth century ideas in England sets the stage for the final act, a re-reading and textual exegesis of Harrington's work.

Chapter IV of Part B is not the definitive reading of Harrington; it is meant only to enlarge the context from which we understand his work. Certainly we cannot discount the importance of classical republicanism or even the Marxist analysis of property relationships to a full understanding of Harrington's contribution to political thought. These approaches have stood the test of time. For similar reasons, the textual analysis of Harrington's work that centers on religious, scientific and political

themes hitherto only mentioned in passing serves to suggest a wider perspective from which his work can more comprehensively be understood.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. Michael Oakeshott, Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays, (Totowa, New Jersey: Methuen and Company, 1962), p. 59.
2. John Aubrey, Brief Lives. Edited from the original manuscript by Oliver Lawson Dick. (London: Secker and Warberg, 1950).
3. Ibid., pp. 125-6.

PART A: HARRINGTON REVIEWED

CHAPTER ONE

HARRINGTON AS A CLASSICAL REPUBLICAN

James Harrington has been described by a number of writers as a classical republican political philosopher.(1) John Pocock and Zera Fink have said that Harrington was one of the first English political theorists to have systematically espoused the tenets of "classical republican thought," the meaning of which is clarified below.

Pocock and Fink claimed that Harrington drew his inspiration from two sources. His classical learning came from the careful reading of the works of Plato, Aristotle, Polybius, Cicero and Machiavelli, the last of whom was held in the greatest esteem. Harrington also learned much of classical ideals from his travels on the European continent between 1632 and approximately 1639.(2) Most importantly, his respect for republican Venice and its classical institutions led him to advocate similar customs in his prescriptive analysis of English politics in his greatest work, The Commonwealth of Oceana, first published in 1656.(3)

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. First, I

present in outline the main features of classical republican political philosophy as understood by Fink and Pocock. Their analysis, which is widely accepted, provides the necessary interpretative background or context to this study of Harrington. Second, a summary analysis of Harrington's major work, the Oceana illustrates his republican bias and his advocacy of the institutions of mixed government. Harrington believed that absolute monarchy was a dangerous anachronism in seventeenth-century England. Moreover, he agreed with Machiavelli that a political system based primarily on the principle of monarchical rule was doomed to failure. Indeed, Cromwell's victory in 1649 illustrated the urgency for the development of alternative political institutions.(4)

Having already discovered and observed the efficacy of republican customs, Harrington wrote the Oceana, a prolix history of the founding of an imaginary republic, but one designed as well to criticize contemporary English political order. Armed with classical analogies, Harrington endeavoured to remedy the political disorders that had followed upon the victory of Cromwell.

Because of its obvious applicability to England, the importance of the utopian character of Oceana has often been minimized.(5) The literary genre, for some critics, apparently obscures the truth toward which the author

pointed in his detailed description of an imaginary locale. Often, writings of the utopian genre are meant to parallel and satirize an existing society by positing a perfect environment. Harrington's intention, it seems was to create a "practical utopia," which sounds oxymoronic; in fact, he sought to arouse interest in his more genuine concern for political reform. The reforms outlined in the Oceana are revealed to the attentive reader who likely would have been initially attracted by its claim to have articulated an immortal commonwealth. Perhaps the Oceana was conceived at a time when Harrington feared ostracization and tried to protect himself by using a utopian style. Indeed, his later publications reiterated the principles outlined in the Oceana in non-utopian language and were written when republicanism was more or less accepted as a legitimate alternative to the monarchy. As I will argue below, however, it is a mistake to dismiss the utopian character of the Oceana simply as protective camouflage.

Harrington blended his knowledge of the history of republicanism with creative literary zeal. The result was a practical-utopian quest for an immortal commonwealth. His analysis and prescription suggested positive measures that would stabilize English political society, but he offered no final vision of the future of the commonwealth.

And yet the evocation of a perfect and realizable commonwealth allows us to place Harrington in the tradition of English messianic and chiliastic prophets. The Harringtonian synthesis joined the empiricism of the new science, mechanical philosophy, with the classical republicanism of "ancient prudence;" the resulting mixture was then seasoned with millenarian expectations. Harrington believed that he stood on the threshold of a new age. In the opening pages of the Oceana he boldly affirmed:

The Sea giveth law unto the growth of
Venice, but the growth of Oceana giveth
law unto the Sea.(6)

This opening pronouncement set the tone for his work. It may appear tedious to the uninterested, but remarkably complex to the envious.

CLASSICAL REPUBLICANISM

We begin by analyzing Fink's definition of classical republicanism, which she claims to have "recovered" from obscurity. "By a classical republican," she wrote, "I mean a person who advocated or admired a republic and who took his ideas for such government in whole or in part from the ancient masterpieces of political organizations, their

supposed modern counterparts, or their ancient and modern expositors." (7)

Many people in Harrington's time both admired and advocated republican institutions, (8) but few could defend their assertions with as carefully written a treatise on the history of English politics as did Harrington in the Oceana. Nor did republicans share identical conceptions of what constituted a republic. The theory of mixed government was the essential unifying characteristic of the republican formula, but the mixture or balance of ingredients, so to speak, varied. Some preferred the balance in favour of the people, others advocated a strong nobility, and still others leaned toward a strong constitutional monarch. (9)

Both Plato and Aristotle argued that mixed constitutions provided stability. The natural hierarchy of authority present in any society had to be tempered by a constitution that gave power to its essential elements. According to Fink, Polybius developed the notion of balance between these elements using Rome and Sparta as examples to illustrate the truth of his contention. He argued that both polities had enjoyed longevity because they maintained a balance of power among the three basic elements in every society, the monarchical, the aristocratic, and the democratic.

Cicero's Republic, which drew upon the ideas of Polybius, glorified the notion of a mixed constitution. He believed, said Fink, that the "true foundation of kingly power was virtue, not membership in a Royal family." (10) Moreover, virtue determined authority at all levels of a republican society. Harrington agreed. Cicero's On the Commonwealth argued in favour of the Polybian position that a polity composed of the three basic elements of mixed government would enjoy growth and long life. The Monarchical element would provide unity and clarity of thought, the aristocratic element would provide merit and moderation, and the democratic element would ensure freedom of participation.

Fink and Pocock both argued that Harrington's republicanism was derived from three sources. First, was the republicanism of the ancients, which Harrington discovered on his own despite his limited formal education. Second, Harrington learned of the virtues of a republican polity from Machiavelli's Discourses. According to Fink, Machiavelli taught that "the excellence of mixed government was a relative excellence, but it was so much greater than that of other forms that it was the only really desirable government." (11) To Harrington, the Discourses represented the first systematic modern attempt to recover the "ancient wisdom" of the classicals. We shall see how Harrington

derived many of the institutions of his model commonwealth, most notably the notion of the founding of a republic "for increase" by a strong Prince, from Machiavelli.

According to Felix Raab, Machiavelli was seen by monarchists as a political villain and as a hero to those who were more open minded. During the 1580's, Raab said, "Machiavelli was being very widely read in England and was no longer the sole preserve of 'Italianate' Englishmen and their personal contacts as had been the case earlier." Machiavelli's name became increasingly associated with the conflict between policy and religion.(12) Machiavelli's notion of a "politick religion," was "the prime means" by which the stability of any state can be preserved. Harrington believed, as did Machiavelli, that religion was an essential unifying force that had to be exploited to ensure the longevity of any political state.

Finally, Harrington's travels to the most serene republic, Venice, introduced him to the modern analogue of ancient Rome and Sparta. The Venetian constitution had survived for over a thousand years and, as Pocock noted, Venice had, to the popular imagination, gained a secular immortality. Machiavelli, Guicciardini, and Savonarola all pointed to Venice as a model for the reform of their native Florence.(13) Moreover, as early as the late sixteenth century many works declaring the superiority of the

Venetian system appeared in England. In this context Fink wrote that:

Until the 1640's, Englishmen could admire Venice without regard to which side they favoured in their own political differences. But as that decade advanced, it was inevitable that the republic should come to have particular interest for Parliamentarians. (14)

The "extraordinary popularity" that the Venetian republic enjoyed in England obviously influenced Harrington. According to G.P. Gooch, Harrington "alone of the distinguished thinkers of the time derived many of his proposals from it." (15) Furthermore, most works on Harrington begin by indicating his indebtedness to the Venetian system of government. In the next section Harrington's major work, The Commonwealth of Oceana, is examined for its similarity to Venice, the modern analogue of a classical republic.

THE OCEANA - Prelude

In this section we will examine Harrington's major work, The Commonwealth of Oceana, which was the most complete expression of his republican views. Charles Blitzer said of Harrington's motives for writing that "he wished a place among the masters of political wisdom and he desired to do something about the critical state of English

politics." (16) Similarly, according to John Pocock the importance of Harrington's political thought should be measured by its impact on the political scholars of the late seventeenth century:

Harrington's thought, a product of the conservative as well as the revolutionary impulses of the crisis of the mid-seventeenth century continued its role in the complex intellectual history of England, Scotland and America, and therefore in the wider context of Western historical perception. (17)

The art of politics aimed at determining the proper relations between all essential elements of any political society. To achieve this end, Harrington, in the Oceana, created a series of institutions that were designed to effect a balance between these elements. He believed that the "body politic" had a soul of human reason that clearly reflected the soul in the body of man. Harrington's polity was comparable to Plato's, in as much as it was the well-ordered soul writ large. To carry the comparison further, Harrington saw that the body politic had a psyche that required periodic treatment or "therapeia" to ensure it in a good state of health. Accordingly, Harrington developed a permanent cure for any potential physiological or psychological ailments that could weaken the immortal commonwealth. The longevity of the commonwealth was to be ensured through the administration of correct and

reasonable principles of government, which included an agrarian law, the rotation of offices and the secret ballot, a national religion and religious toleration, and a provision that would allow for the creation of a dictatorial council similar to the one found in Venice. Each of these principles will be dealt with separately. First we must describe the context in which they were employed.

John Pocock included in his analysis of Harrington an account of the intellectual context in which Harrington wrote.(18) To Pocock, the debate over the "ancient constitution" of England, which occurred in the early seventeenth century, remained central in Harrington's thought and was revived in the latter years of the century by Whigs and Tories. In short, many theorists made "a habit in many countries [not just England] of appealing to 'the ancient constitution,' of seeking to prove that the rights it was desired to defend were immemorial and therefore beyond the king's power to alter or annul." (19) In other words, the ancient constitution became a political device to be employed when questions of the legitimacy of divine right were pressing. The myth of the ancient constitution appeared in a variety of forms, of which Harrington's was just one. According to Pocock, Harrington's interpretation of the ancient constitution led

him to believe that the history of England could be understood in terms of varying patterns of land ownership characterized by his notion of balance. In the doctrine of balance, Harrington set forth the basic principles of modern republican thought. Moreover, it appeared at the centre of every Harringtonian institution. Also, he believed that ownership of land necessarily conveyed political power and endeavoured to create "balanced" institutions based on that premise.

To these two basic ideas, (1) the ancient constitution, and (2) the doctrine of balance, we add the classical understanding of the cyclical phenomenon of degeneration and regeneration, so important to Machiavelli; together these three elements constitute Harrington's political theory of classical republicanism. The basic Harringtonian thesis is that the possession of land ordered so as to ensure a balanced distribution, enhanced and protected by equally well-balanced institutions, would revive the ancient wisdom at the same time as create an immortal republic. In short, Harrington discovered that the key to immortality lay in the balance or harmonious order found in nature and understood by observation. It could be transposed from nature to politics to inform the institutions of modern government. He wished to restore the ancient wisdom of republicanism to its rightful place,

and to reconstruct the harmony of the ancient polis. The decay of the English political system was a consequence, in large part he believed, of inattentiveness of the leaders of English society to the social changes that had already taken place. In this regard Pocock claimed that:

If degeneration has ceased to be essential and become accidental, that is because Harrington has located its causes, not in man's nature, but in his situation; and he has done this by writing history in terms not of man's character, but of the social structure.(20)

Harrington thus appeared as an analyst and reformer who saw the key to political salvation in a change not of man, as Winstanley and the Puritans had suggested, but of institutions. Moreover, Harrington neglected the whole question of man's perfection and freely admitted that Oceana was to be an empire of laws and not men.

By reconstructing the institutions of ancient prudence "in which the form of government was adapted to the existing distribution of land and that distribution stabilized by an agrarian law,"(21) Harrington could also revive the spirit of classical wisdom. The Golden Age of Rome could live again and its glory spread to all because, as Harrington declared, Oceana was to be, like Rome, an empire for increase. The details of this resurrection were outlined in the orders of the Oceana.

THE OCEANA

Harrington's Oceana contained all the arguments and proposals that were elaborated in his subsequent works. It is important therefore that we understand its central focus and intention. To do so we must dissect Oceana's constitutional orders and discover the fundamental laws of the immortal republic.

The Commonwealth of Oceana was dedicated to the Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell and was divided into five main sections. Following the Epistle to the reader, in which Harrington apologized for the "crudities" of his discourse, was a short Introduction that outlined the probable geographic location of his imaginary republic as well as a brief history of its origins as a feudal state. The following two sections are titled The Preliminaries and discussed the principles of government. The main body of the work, The Model of the Commonwealth of Oceana, enumerated the thirty orders of Oceana's constitution, which were instituted by the single law-giver, the Lord Archon, who had been victorious in Oceana's recent civil war. In the Corrolary to the work, Harrington concluded with a eulogy to the dead Lord Archon. At the outset, Harrington's conviction that land was the basis for the

establishment of any commonwealth was evident when he wrote:

the plough in the hands of an owner
findeth him a better calling, and
produceth the most innocent and steady
genius of a commonwealth, such as is
that of Oceana.(22)

In declaring Oceana a commonwealth for increase, that is, an analogue of ancient Rome, he proceeded to prove, using an historical analysis of Oceana/England that its institutions must be altered to achieve this end. Moreover, Harrington divided history, the history of Oceana/England, into two distinct periods, those of ancient and modern prudence.

Ancient prudence was "just discovered unto mankind by God himself in the fabric of the commonwealth of Israel," the prototype of all new republics. Modern prudence was historically discovered by the fall of Rome and its subsequent sacking by Goths, Vandals and Huns. Government, according to the tenets of modern prudence, "is an art whereby some man, or some few men, subject a city or a nation, and rule it according to his or their private interest" and "may be said to be the empire of men and not laws."(23) The institutions of ancient prudence, which included an agrarian law designed to regulate property ownership, and a mixed constitution, appeared more prudential than those of modern prudence (which suggest a

more volatile feudal political atmosphere).

Zera Fink noted that, by recovering the ancient prudence of Sparta, Rome and the Hebrews, Harrington sought to "overturn the Gothik balance" of modern prudence. Pocock asserted that Harrington's analysis of the history of politics represented "a paradigmatic restatement of political understanding in the language and world-view inherited through Machiavelli." (24) In an attempt to reconcile the monarchy to the ever-growing tide of opposition, Harrington wished to refute the contention that the ancient constitution of England was an expression of the doctrine of mixed government. His objective in the Oceana was to prove that the real ancient constitution was feudal.

We may infer from Harrington's division of history into two distinct eras that he was aware of an impending third and final age. Henceforth there would be no further constitutional revolutions; England would have been re-formed as an immortal commonwealth. Indeed, the constitution of Oceana/England would last forever. According to J. A. Wettergreen,

Harrington's theoretical political intention seems clear: the propagation of an exact non-controversial art of politics capable of affecting the reintroduction of the whole world eternally to the republican form of government. (25)

In the first part of the Preliminaries, Harrington settled the issue of which age of politics is best, which was the ancient age. He then endeavoured to expose the true principles of government. The "goods of the mind" he wrote, included the natural or acquired virtues of wisdom, prudence, and courage. The "goods of fortune," power and empire when combined with the goods of the mind provided the foundation for a stable commonwealth. Harrington argued that the goods of fortune were external and physical, while the goods of the mind were internal and intellectual. They provide power and authority respectively and thereby the proper or balanced combination of wisdom and strength. Harrington argued that power was ultimately in the hands of the people while authority was vested in a sort of "natural aristocracy" represented by the Senate in Oceana. In principle, this natural aristocracy appeared to contradict his notion of republican balance. To Zera Fink this apparent contradiction was a source of confusion.(26) She referred to the members of the natural aristocracy as a kind of English noblesse, and was convinced that they were antithetical to true republican institutions. But a closer reading of Harrington dissolves the contradiction. For a clearer understanding of this issue we must turn to Harrington who wrote:

Wherefore, as in this place I agree
with Machiavelli that a nobility or or

gentry, overbalancing a popular government, is the utter bane and destruction of it; so I shall show in another that a nobility or gentry in a popular government, not overbalancing it, is the very life and soul of it.(27)

Harrington recognized the need for a higher intellectual authority to inform the sometimes overly-emotional opinion of the people. Accordingly, the task of the Senate was to propose and debate policy for delivery to the people for ratification. Again we encounter the doctrine of balance at work and the implicit denunciation of the notion of indivisible sovereignty, so ardently espoused by the monarchists. As James Moore wrote:

Harrington could defend the ideals of classical republicanism, but only by a repudiation of sovereignty theory as he found it in the writings of Thomas Hobbes and Matthew Wren.(28)

The King no longer acted as a source of wisdom for the people. Power and interest emanated from the people. The public, now in possession of the majority of the lands, determined the interests of the commonwealth. Harrington believed that "as the wisdom of the commonwealth is in the aristocracy, so the interest of the commonwealth is in the whole body of people."(29) The public interest, a term of increasing vogue in the seventeenth-century, was conceived as the preservation of the ability of the people to own and defend land. To be preserved is the balance of

property-ownership that lies at the heart of the new commonwealth. Harrington proposed a twofold solution: "An equal commonwealth is such an one as is equal both in the balance or foundation and in the superstructure, that is to say in her agrarian law and in her rotation." (30) Harrington's agrarian law was really an inheritance law that preserved the principle of balance in the possession of lands. His notion of rotation provided for successive parliaments. We will deal with each separately.

AGRARIAN LAW

Pocock said that the agrarian law of Oceana "seeks to limit acquisitiveness and control redistribution [of land and wealth] by enforcing divisibility of inheritance." (31) Harrington asserted that the agrarian law was designed to inhibit the persistence of a landed hereditary aristocracy. No man was to hold more than 2,000 pounds worth of land and/or possessions, and upon his death it was to be divided amongst his sons. The state was to monitor this process until it was clear that a stable balance had been achieved. Once achieved,

Oceana is free from the fear of internal subversion. She can only be destroyed from without, by earthquake, flood, plague or by a better armed army. (32)

The agrarian law initiated the practice of the Roman republic that allowed for a greater degree of political participation than had the feudal system of politics. As individuals owned the land it became their prerogative to defend it. Although the standing army of Oceana was directed by the state, theoretically it remained a "militia of freeholders." Presumably during time of War, the virtue of the commonwealth would shine at its brightest.

In summary, the agrarian law was designed by Harrington to maintain a balance of land ownership and thereby the balance of power. Indeed, he argued that the principle cause of the fall of the Roman Empire had been the disregard for this maxim of equal distribution. The citizen army would defend its possessions, so to speak, and preserve the power of the people. In alliance with one another, each individual would share the responsibility of the defense of the community from within and without. The public interest was monitored by the state, where the public was represented in a popular assembly (The Prerogative) and inspired by the Senate composed of naturally astute individuals. This balance was preserved by the spirit of the people, the spirit of the "natural aristocracy," and the spirit of the laws.

When a single person is the sole proprietor of a country's land, the government will be monarchical; when a limited number share it with him, the

government will be that of mixed monarchy; when the people own the soil, the government will be democratic. In this simple proposition Harrington saw the cause of the enormous upheaval in England and its remedy.(33)

ROTATION - THE ONE BEST WAY

Harrington's distrust of human passion caused him to institute an additional safeguard to reinforce the balance provided by the agrarian law. As a free adaptation of classical republican thought, rotation ensured that free elections, held at regular intervals, would replenish the vital humours of the body politic. The medical imagery was derived from Harrington's understanding of the discovery of the circulation of blood by William Harvey. The principle of rotation was vehemently attacked by Matthew Wren, who argued that constant rotation did not allow politicians to mature. Harrington countered this argument by stating that rotation could be seen to "resemble an orange tree; such as it is at the same time an Education, or Spring, and a Harvest too." (34) More to the point, the principle of rotation would guarantee greater representation for the people which was the basis of Harrington's system. In this context G. P. Gooch wrote:

Rotation ensures that, as the blood circulates and is prevented from becoming stagnant by being pumped through the heart, the individual

members of the community share in the government of the commonwealth.(35)

Pocock referred to the principle of rotation as the "motor" of the commonwealth that, if correctly and periodically serviced, would run in perpetual motion. Thus the language of English republicanism was influenced both by the mechanical philosophy and by the chemical philosophy of the new medicine.(36)

From the mechanical philosophy Harrington learned that the universe was a large machine composed of particles of matter in constant motion and governed by discernable laws. His goal was to apply these principles of natural order to politics in order to achieve a harmonious balance of the interests of the elements of English society. Also, from the chemical philosophy he learned the value of the curative dimension of the new medicine and concocted a cure for the diseased English body politic.

The "natural aristocracy" apparently would rise to the top as the political system of Oceana/England was constantly agitated by the institution of rotation. Self-interest and factionalism to a large extent would be contained and subordinated to the public interest. In a sense, rotation created an internal dialogue about the best means without upsetting the rigidity and perfection of the whole system of politics.

As an example of the principle of rotation and as forum for his general theory of politics, Harrington inaugurated the Rota Club in 1659. Well attended by the virtuosi of London society, its main function was to debate various proposals for the reform of the government, with individual members taking turns to speak on each issue. When debate ended, the ballot box, another Venetian device, was used to settle each question. Although the Rota Club was banned in 1660 when the monarchy was restored, it left a mark on London society if not on British politics. The secret ballot was adopted by the Royal Society, the Bank of England, and by various other private clubs and companies.

Moreover, the secret ballot, a crucial element in Harrington's system, legitimized the principle of rotation and theoretically eliminated the oligarchical tendency that had plagued England during the period of Gothic Balance or feudalism. The Ballot was described by the fourteenth order of Oceana and was defended by Harrington:

and the purity of the sufferage in a popular government is the health if not the life of it seeing the soul is so otherwise breathed into the sovereign power than by the sufferage of the people. (37)

Harrington employed the Ballot as a means for resolving every contentious question in the commonwealth including matters of state and religion. In true Venetian style, he

advocated a system of councils to enact and regulate the laws of Oceana. These councils constituted the third element of mixed government, the Magistracy. Outlined in the sixteenth and nineteenth orders of Oceana, their various functions were by no means arbitrary. For example, although the council of war was charged with responsibility for the fleet and the armories, Harrington was quick to add that it had no power to declare war without the consent of the people and the Senate. The council of state would monitor all diplomatic communications and negotiations and the council of trade would regulate internal and external commodity exchange. Most importantly, the council of religion was empowered to deal with all matters of religious dispute in a authoritative manner. Essentially, this council's mandate entailed "a right application of reason unto Scripture, which is the foundation of the national religion." (38) Let us explore, in some detail, the significance of this principle.

NATIONAL RELIGION

George Sabine commented on the phenomenon of the "national religion" in England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in his classic work, A History of Political Theory. He pointed to Richard Hooker's Laws of

Ecclesiastical Polity as having been written "to refute Puritan criticism of the established [National] church." Furthermore, Sabine argued that Hooker took the Thomistic position that:

the human law of the community is derivative, in a series of descending steps, from the external law of God and has behind it all the authority of its origin.(39)

Sabine viewed the idea of a National church as a combination of medievalism and nationalism and noted that those who disagreed in principle with the notion of a national religion argued "that royal supremacy in the church was an invasion of spiritual independence." (40) Certainly this intrusion into the spiritual lives of citizens could be challenged by those of a deeper conscience at a point in English history when the monarchy influenced religious doctrine. Moreover, the civil wars in England encouraged the royalists and the parliamentarians to claim superiority as spiritual authorities. Harrington proposed a highly democratic national religion that placed spiritual authority not in the King, Parliament, or the Pope, but in the people themselves through their representatives and their power of ordination.

Pocock described Harrington's treatment of the question of religion as "a polemic against clericalism." (41) In this context he wrote that Harrington:

shared with Hobbes the intention of bringing about a complete reduction of religion to the forms of civil authority, and a complete destruction of any independently sanctioned role for the clergy.(42)

Thus, Harrington observed, there could be priests but there was no such thing as ecclesiastical authority other than that which was vested in the republic.

In Valerius and Publicola, Harrington wrote that, "Without Liberty of Conscience, Civil Liberty cannot be perfect; and without Civil Liberty, Liberty of Conscience cannot be perfect." (43) This passage is often quoted as an example of Harrington's religious toleration. But this judgement raises the question: to what extent was religious toleration compatible with a National religion? Harrington was remarkably reticent on the content of his religion and chose only to show an historical reverence for Scripture. In other words, he used Scripture to corroborate his thesis that the commonwealth was the best form of government, and cited God as the source of the original principles of the ancient Israelite republic. Nowhere did he admit to any affiliation whatsoever; in fact, denomination was meaningless in a republic dominated by a national religion. Perhaps it was Harrington's intention to leave the substance of his religion undefined in order to emphasize the importance of establishing a

national character. His religion in effect was republicanism and Oceana's duty, as a commonwealth for increase, was to spread its wisdom to all corners of the earth. As Fink points out:

Those who saw in the Roman republic an ideal which they would establish in the modern world were fixed with the vision of an English commonwealth which could spread its rule, like ancient Rome, over the whole world. Of this group Harrington must be counted the chief.(44)

Harrington, then, was an imperialist.

Having covered the main features of Harrington's republicanism and the institutions of the immortal commonwealth, we now turn to the legacy left by Harrington to his immediate successors and to the republican theorists of the eighteenth century. His analysis of English history and politics justified his being considered a classical republican in a modern setting. His work therefore deserves a place alongside those other republicans, Plato, Aristotle, and Machiavelli.

HARRINGTON'S LEGACY - A SENSE OF HISTORY

Despite his lack of literary gifts, Harrington had considerable influence on subsequent political thought.(45) It is generally conceded that Harrington's ideas far outlived their creator; his republicanism is viewed as the

"fountainhead" of later seventeenth-century English political thought. For example, James Cotton's article on the "Harringtonian Party" defined this group as:

those amongst the republican pamphleteers and propagandists who employed, in this time of crisis, some or other of Harrington's arguments or proposals (with or without his approval) in advancing their cause.(46)

The most important of these arguments and proposals were his constitutional prescriptions and his historical analyses. Cotton noted the example of John Wildman who advocated a constitutional parliament, a bicameral legislature and a "government ruled by laws and not men." Moreover, it is argued that Wildman combined Harringtonian ideas with radically new ones. Harrington, in The Art of Lawgiving, challenged this abuse of his work and Wildman's failure to include the notion of a single lawgiver in the latter's construction of a republic.

During the period 1656-1660, many pamphlets appeared that employed bits and pieces of Harringtonian wisdom concerning the art of politics. Cotton also observed that Henry Neville argued on behalf of Harrington in Parliament for the principle of balance and that his analysis needed no correction by Harrington. Cotton argued that he has found three distinct forms of argument in the Harringtonian literature. First, there were those who argued that the

natural constitution of England had changed through a quasi-sociological process. The Second form "stresses the role of human activity in the creation of a commonwealth," that it must be built or created, and cannot simply evolve. Finally, there are those who suggested, as did Harrington in his notion of perfection, "the abolition or transcendence of the political in its entirety." These three themes, said Cotton, should be taken into consideration when examining Harrington's work and the work of his successors. We return to the last of these themes below, but first we examine a more generalized understanding of Harrington's legacy to modern political thought.

John Pocock argued that while Harrington had envisaged a "revolution of proprietors" that would prove once and for all the obsolescence of the King and parliament, his successors directed their attack "against a bureaucratic and salary-paying state." (48) The term "neo-Harringtonian" was coined by Pocock to characterize the republican thought of the latter part of the seventeenth century. Moreover, Harrington's campaign against the revival of the aristocracy was transformed into the neo-Harringtonian campaign against executive powers in the mixed constitution. While Harrington had believed in the principle that the possession of land necessarily conferred

political power, by 1688 the advancement of public credit, and the financial revolution that saw credit as the new means to power, made this principle obsolete.

Pocock also noted that John Toland, a great admirer of Harrington, prepared an edition of his works that was eventually published in 1699. Pocock wrote that "the motives of this strange intellectual adventurer and revolutionary remain obscure." (49) The "unrevelling" of the connections between "deism, republicanism, and millennialism," all evident in Toland's eclecticism, will be dealt with below. The mere fact that Toland exalted Harrington as "the greatest commonwealthman" suggested a larger role for Harrington in this context. (50)

In general, argued Pocock, the neo-Harringtonians rediscovered the notion of balance and employed it to oppose the proponents of an executive-style government that excluded the "people" from political influence. In addition, Harrington was responsible for the transmission of the notion that virtue "accompanies and controls the idea of property." This, said Pocock, lead to a kind of ethic of "possessive individualism." (51)

In an essay entitled "Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth," David Hume commented that "the Oceana is the only valuable model of a commonwealth that has yet been offered to the public." (52) However, Hume found three main defects; first

the idea of rotation was disturbing, as it was for Matthew Wren, because it threw able men out of work periodically; second, the agrarian law, ambitious as it was, would fail as men began to conceal their possessions under the names of others; finally, he noted that in Oceana there was not sufficient security for the redress of grievance against the state. Overall, Hume was pessimistic about the practicality of Harrington's enterprise. This seems to pre-figure Hannah Arendt's contention in On Revolution that Harrington, although he understood the necessity for violence in the creation of a republic, was not aware specifically of the "enormous dangers inherent in the Oceanic enterprise." (53)

That Harrington had an influence on the "founders" of the American republic has been noted by numerous writers. Pocock argued that Harrington had his greatest influence on "sophisticated colonial elites" who saw themselves as the natural aristocracy. A. E. Levett argued that, in general:

The seventeenth century builders of America knew Harrington's work, and borrowed freely from it, thereby enhancing the republican character of their institutions. (54)

America knew Harrington's work, and perhaps, too, they took from Harrington's writings their notion of a "manifest destiny" for America. Theodore T. Dwight argued

that John Adams, among others, was quite familiar with Harrington's work.(55) Despite the ease of reading Harrington's notions of the balance of power, rotation of offices, the importance of individual proprietors, and the concomitant idea of a civil militia, into the American Constitution, a more thorough understanding of that document would necessarily also consider alternative influences on its creation. Nevertheless, Harrington's legacy to his successors remains evident and his historical analysis modern political institutions. Harrington's use of history to argue the correctness of his political principles was the first great expression, in English political thought of a style that became an elementary component of modern political analysis.

The use made of history must be an important consideration to a survey of the political writing of a theorist. According to G. P. Gooch and Harold Laski, Oceana's utopian form proved nothing about the character of the work, which in reality was one of the earliest examples in political thinking that followed the historical method.(56) Harrington's approach used history to "provide the principles on which the science of politics was to be established." (57) Moreover, if the principles required to conceptualize a perfect commonwealth could be derived from an understanding of history, historical analysis could

possibly replace philosophical speculation. The recovery of the "one best way" for politics from the pages of history amounted to a sociological reconstruction of the past. Felix Raab noted Machiavelli's contention that "man's control of history is limited; change (in the form of decay) is the invariable concomitant of political behaviour." (58) Harrington, wrote Raab, "wanted more than this from history." In fact, he sought, like Hobbes, to go beyond history, so to speak, by creating an immortal commonwealth. In commenting on the historical nature of Harrington's enterprise Raab wrote:

By applying the principle of Balance he has added the element of certainty to the political empiricism of his mentor (Machiavelli); ensuring for the republican form of government to which they both aspired an eternal stability which Machiavelli had considered impossible. (59)

Following the analysis of Charles Blitzler, it would seem that, because Harrington's Oceana was perfectly ordered at the outset of the republican enterprise, and because anything perfect never need change, the republic of Oceana existed outside of the historical realm of existence in a kind of timeless perfection.

CONCLUSION

There are several possible approaches to the study of Harrington. The "classical republican" thesis, that certain early-modern political theorists employed the language of Aristotle, Polybius and ultimately Machiavelli, was only one. In a sense we have been participating in what Judith Shklar has called "ideology hunting." (60) For this reason, the chapter contained brief digressions indicated the possibility of providing alternative interpretations of Harrington's work as millenarian and as historically deterministic. We shall take up these matters below. First, I would summarize Harrington's classical republicanism.

The main features of Harrington's enterprise that revealed his republican bias were the agrarian law, the principle of rotation of office, the secret ballot, the doctrine of the balance, and the concept of a national religion. Taken separately they were important as political topics or concepts. Together, they reinforced the central thesis of Harrington's work, that the possession of land naturally conferred a degree of political power. The Oceana, as a total picture of the future of England, was written in an attempt to convince a larger English audience of the validity of its premise.

Harrington's analysis relied heavily on Bacon's history of Tudor England that pointed out the significance of the changing configuration of land possession in the sixteenth century. Upon this foundation Harrington erected his vision of how England ought to look given the character of land distribution. His contention that the cause of the monarchy's demise in 1649 lay in this basic truth was perhaps too narrow and did not take into consideration the changed configuration of English spirituality in the early seventeenth century. The agrarian law was designed to reinforce and further effect a more equal distribution of land. Only then could a real community of interests, or commonwealth, be created. Harrington attempted to bridle the spirit of a land-owning majority so that it could drive the imperial destiny of Oceana. The Senate, as the conscience of the people, directed the public interest in the quest for perfection and periodic rotation of its members ensured the pre-eminence of the "natural aristocracy."

The secret ballot assured that fairness in voting on the efficacy of policy would prevail and that the threat of factionalism would be curtailed. Only in this way could all citizens enjoy an equal voice in the commonwealth; only in this way could the doctrine of balance be maintained in Oceana's mixed constitution. Although Harrington's

attention to detail, specifically in his treatment of the administration of the secret ballot, was perhaps too great, his general intention was clear and distinct.

Finally, in Harrington's creation of a state-supervised national religion, could be detected the imperialism of his enterprise. There is no doubt that he foresaw greatness for England which is why he has rightly been identified as an early advocate of England's imperial destiny. Moreover, the national religion provided a focus for the population and prefigured the more articulate nationalisms of the nineteenth century.

In the following chapter we investigate another approach to Harrington's work. Here his work is read as part of a tradition of economic historians who view history as the ground for the unfolding of economic sophistication.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. The term "classical republican" was first used by Zera Fink in The Classical Republicans: an essay in the recovery of a seventeenth-century pattern of ideas. (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1945). See also James Harrington by Michael Downs, (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1977), Charles Blitzer, The Immortal Commonwealth, (New Haven; Yale University Press, 1960), Felix Raab, The English Face of Machiavelli, (London, Routledge and Kegan-Paul, 1964), J. G. A. Pocock, The Political Works of James Harrington, (London, Cambridge University Press, 1977).
2. See Pocock Works op.cit. pp. 1-5, Blitzer op.cit. pp. 3-62.
3. Pocock op.cit. pp. 7-10. He gives an account of the circumstances of publication.
4. In fact, it has been noted by most authors that Harrington retreated from public view at this time and assumed a "melancholic" state of mind. His allegiances were torn between his love and friendship of Charles and his love of republicanism. See Blitzer, op.cit. pp. 26-27, see also A. E. Levett's essay in The Social and Political Ideas of some Great Thinkers of the 16th and 17th Centuries, ed. F. J. C. Hearnshaw, (Port Washington, N. Y.; Kennikat Press, 1825), p. 178.
5. J. C. Davis, Utopia and the Ideal Society: A Study of English Utopian Writing 1516-1700, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), Chapter 8.
6. James Harrington, The Commonwealth of Oceana in Works ed. J. G. A. Pocock, op.cit., p. 160. Hereafter all references to Harrington will be cited in Works.
7. Fink, op.cit., p. viii. See Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince and The Discourses. (Toronto: Random House, 1950). Discourses XII and XIII, pp. 149-55.
8. In Harrington's time republican pamphleteering was voluminous, ranging from suggestions on the reform of the army to Winstanley's exposition on the millennial

Fifth Monarchy. See Raab, op.cit., p. 86 passim, and Pocock, Works, op.cit., passim.

9. Fink, op.cit., p. 23, p. 27.
10. Ibid., p. 6.
11. Ibid., p. 12.
12. Raab, op.cit., p. 56.
13. Pocock Works op.cit., p. 17. For a complete discussion of the myth of Venice see Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 83-114. See especially p. 105.
14. Fink, op.cit., p. 45.
15. G. P. Gooch, Political Thought in England From Bacon to Halifax, (London: Butterworth Ltd., 1914), p. 112.
16. Blitzler, op.cit., p. 71.
17. Pocock, "Contexts for the Study of James Harrington," Pensiero Politico, Vol. II. No. 1 (1978), p. 35.
18. To Pocock, contextual analysis is the most important task of the historian and is the first step in any historical study. Moreover, an understanding of the language of the period will necessarily, according to Pocock, reveal the paradigmatic structure of the time and will allow the historian to comment adequately without the use of dangerous anachronisms. See Pocock, Politics, Language and Time: Essays on Political Thought and History, (New York: Atheneum, 1973), chapter 1.
19. Pocock, The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), p. 16.
20. Ibid., p. 146.
21. Ibid., p. 131.
22. Harrington, Works op.cit., p. 159.
23. Ibid., p. 161.
24. Pocock, Works, p. 15.

25. J. A. Wettergreen, "Note on the Intention of James Harrington's Political Art," Interpretation, II (1971), p. 73.
26. Fink, op.cit., p. 53. See also C. B. Macpherson's essay in The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 160-91.
27. Harrington, The Oceana in Works, p. 166.
28. James Moore, "Patriarchalism and Classical Republicanism," unpublished manuscript, p. 5.
29. Harrington, The Oceana, op.cit., p. 173.
30. Ibid., p. 180.
31. Pocock, in Works p. 62.
32. Wettergreen, op.cit., p. 64.
33. H. F. Russel-Smith, Harrington and His Oceana: A Study of a 17th Century Utopia and its Influence on America, (New York: Octagon Books, 1971), p. 29.
34. Ibid., p. 47.
35. Gooch, op.cit., p. 114.
36. These themes will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 3.
37. Harrington, The Oceana in Works, p. 244.
38. Ibid., p. 251.
39. George Sabine, A History of Political Theory, (New York; Henry Holt and Company, 1957), p. 443.
40. Ibid., p. 443.
41. Pocock, Works, op.cit., chapter 5, pp. 77-100.
42. Ibid., p. 78.
43. Harrington, Valerius and Publicola, in Works, p. 489.
44. Fink, op.cit., p. 81.

45. Levett, op.cit., p. 124.
46. James Cotten, "The Harringtonian Party (1659-60) and Harrington's Political Thought," Journal of the History of Political Thought, Vol. I No. 1., (Spring 1980), p. 51.
47. Ibid., pp. 66-7.
48. Pocock, Works, p. 133.
49. Ibid., p. 141.
50. John Toland, ed. The Oceana and Other Works of James Harrington, reprinting a London edition, 1771, (Germany: Scientia Verbug Arlen, 1963), pp. xix, xxxv.
51. This term characterizes Harrington for C. B. Macpherson op.cit., and is discussed in detail in chapter 2.
52. David Hume, "Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth," in David Hume: Moral Political and Literary, ed. F. H. Watkins (Toronto: Nelson, 1951), p. 227.
53. Hannah Arendt, On Revolution, (New York: Viking Press, 1963), p. 208.
54. Levett, op.cit., p. 189.
55. Theodore T. Dwight, "Harrington and his Influence Upon American Political Institutions and Political Thought," Political Science Quarterly, Vol. II. No. 1 (1887), p. 3.
56. G. P. Gooch and Harold Laski, English Democratic Ideas in the XVII Century, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 251.
57. Perez Zagorin, A History of Political Thought in the English Revolution (London: Routledge and Kegan-Paul, 1954), p. 133.
58. Felix Raab, op.cit., p. 189.
59. Ibid., p. 191. The millenarian pretensions of Oceana are to be discussed in chapter 3.

60. Judith Shklar, "Ideology Hunting: The Case of James Harrington" American Political Science Review Vol. 53 (1959), pp. 662-97. Shklar's analysis is a vital lesson in historical accuracy and is discussed in chapter 2.

CHAPTER TWO

ECONOMIC HISTORICISM

In order to look for beginnings one becomes a crab. The historian looks backwards; at last he also believes backwards.

Nietzsche Twilight of the Idols

Imagination is the historian's medium. His work reflects personal preference and is marked by conviction. Because he chooses what to say and how to say it, the historian's commentary must be judged in the context of its claim to impartiality. Far from being simple and arbitrary juxtapositions of facts, historical analyses attempt to 'understand' history. According to E. H. Carr, the historian "must seek to bring into the picture all known or knowable facts relevant in one sense or another to the theme on which he is engaged and to the interpretation proposed." (1) In other words, the historian must consider the entire context relevant to the event or personality he studies. This consideration complicates the historian's research yet does not prevent personal or ideological biases. Ultimately, "history is the historian's experience" and the knowledge of the past known through the

language of the present.(2) An historian's claim to truth must be assessed by his consistency and his openness to criticism by his peers. As "an unending dialogue between the present and the past," history gives meaning to life to the extent that we can discern from it what Eric Voegelin has called "equivalences in experiences and symbolization" that inform our existence.

Political philosophy is also characterized by appeals to truth and must be judged in a similar way. Moreover, the language of the political philosopher, as that of the historian, is often dogmatic because it expresses ideological predispositions. In fact, ideology is the meeting-ground of history and political philosophy in the modern age. Ideology can provide the language and the perspective, the point from which the historian and the political philosopher begin.(3)

This chapter considers the economic approach to the English Civil War and to Harrington's role as an interpreter of those turbulent years. The most important historical analyst has been Christopher Hill. We examine his work along with the famous 'storm over the gentry' debate between R. H. Tawney and H. R. Trevor-Roper. Both parties owed their originality to Eduard Bernstein, a Marxist political thinker and historian who had argued that the English Civil War represented the first 'bourgeois'

revolution in history. Moreover, Bernstein viewed Harrington as a bourgeois prophet who foresaw the future of bourgeois society in the formulation of the notion that political power followed from the ownership of land.

The last section of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the work on Harrington by C. B. Macpherson, whose chapter on Harrington in The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke sought to disengage Harrington's theory "from the controversy over the gentry and show that it is better understood as having bourgeois roots." (4) As a political theorist, Macpherson reflected on the subtle messages in Harrington's political thought and looked for implicit assumptions in his works that may have escaped earlier treatments. Macpherson came to the same conclusion as Bernstein, Hill and the gentry-debaters, and argued that Harrington was representative of a bourgeois mentality that advocated a society based on capitalist market conditions.

The economic approach to Harrington's thought is inadequate in a number of ways. First, Harrington's classical republicanism was either ignored or turned into nostalgia. Second, it disregarded the millennial overtones in Harrington's work. Third, the economic approach amounted to what Judith Shklar has called the futile enterprise of "ideology hunting" insofar as it attempted to

correct history and historical analysis by placing Harrington in the middle of a bourgeois revolution. Finally, it assumed an unduly narrow context within which the analysis was undertaken. Specifically, it took no account of the fact that Harrington lived and wrote during a period of exciting and controversial innovations in politics, science, medicine and religion.

In The German Ideology, Marx wrote that self-consciousness was the end of history.(5) Consequently, activity in the Marxist's post-historical world is limited to simple re-statements of the truth revealed by Marx. History, for the self-conscious Marxist historian, who has reached the Archimedean point of objectivity is, as Marx said in the opening words of the Communist Manifesto, the history of class struggle. All events and personalities must be seen from this perspective, so that the historian's speech has simply become dogmatic. The same is true for the Marxist political theorist who sees classes and class conflict wherever he looks because that is all he can see.

I INTERPRETING HISTORIANS

In 1959, Judith Shklar entered the debate about James Harrington's significance as a political philosopher with an article entitled "Ideology Hunting: The Case of James

Harrington." She argued that Harrington and his ideas had been used in a number of instances to substantiate different ideological interpretations of English history. The most obvious of these interpretations, wrote Shklar, was that of Eduard Bernstein who had initiated the approach that is the main topic of this chapter. Bernstein's economic analysis of the English Civil War, inspired by the works of Marx and Engels, systematically uncovered the truth about the first 'bourgeois' revolution. Moreover, Harrington was cited by Bernstein for his correct analysis of the class structure of seventeenth-century England and for his understanding of history as a dynamic process moved by the motor of class struggle. Shklar observed that, according to Bernstein, "only the fact that he [Harrington] was an aristocrat prevented him from being fully class conscious, from recognizing the proletariat." (6)

In place of Bernstein's narrow economic interpretation of Harrington, Shklar argued that Harrington was the heir of Machiavellian 'classical republicanism' whose "originality was in the correlation of feudal history with the Polybian theory of constitutions." (7) But, by rejecting the economic approach to Harrington and supporting the classical republican interpretation developed by Fink and Pocock, Shklar may have committed herself to an equally narrow context.

In 1975 yet another article appeared on this same subject entitled "Interpretation in Political Theory: The Case of Harrington", in which Kathleen Toth argued that most interpretations of Harrington had missed or underestimated the importance of science and the scientific revolution for the formation of political ideas in seventeenth-century England. She also argued that economic interpretations of Harrington's work were not necessarily wrong as long as they included some treatment of the scientific revolution and the influence of Machiavelli on Harrington's thought. Furthermore, she noted that Fink and Pocock, in their respective analyses of Harrington as a classical republican, fitted him with 'an outsize toga' by overestimating "the influence of a particular tradition ... and the unity of that tradition." (8) She concluded that over-simplification showed a deficiency in methodology.

Because neutrality in the writing of history and political theory is difficult to achieve, it may be more advisable to adopt a more eclectic approach that enlarges the context, so to speak, within which Harrington lived and wrote. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to a hunt for ideology; 1) in the work of Eduard Bernstein (1919); 2) in the 'storm over the gentry' debate between Tawney and Trevor-Roper (1941-58); 3) in the work of

Christopher Hill(1957-58); and 4) in the analysis of Harrington's thought provided by C. B. Macpherson(1962). This chronological method will reveal the continuity of an approach and the evolution of an ideological statement about Harrington's place in modern political thought.

II BERNSTEIN

In Cromwell and Communism: Socialism and Democracy in the Great English Revolution, first published in German in 1919, Eduard Bernstein laid out his interpretation of the English Revolution in terms of Marx's theory of class conflict. In writing of the causes of the revolution he explained "... the middle-class and the bourgeois land-owners in seventeenth-century England were confronted with a monarch that fell far short of the brilliant absolutism of the Bourbons under Louis XIV." (9) He analyzed Ket's rebellion (1549) as an indication of "universal unrest among the agricultural population" against the enclosure movement. Ket became the English Munzer, "the people's judge," and the rebellion became analogous to the German Peasants' War. With the advent of Puritanism "frugality and thrift became social virtues" and peasants, forced off their lands by enclosure, became the latent proletariat. The scene was thus set for the

bourgeois revolution that ensued against a decaying monarchy. The peasants became the proletariat, the landed-gentry, inspired by Puritan ethics, became more interested in acquiring new wealth than in their traditional status, and the monarchy became a heavy anachronism that was inevitably displaced by the new bourgeois ruling class.

Bernstein noted that the literature of the revolutionary period in England "lagged behind events" and were more interpretations than predictions. On Harrington he wrote,

Harrington cannot be called a socialist any more than Hobbes, but he too, by his literary activity, exercised great and we may add legitimate influence on the evolution of socialistic ideas. In fact we shall show that Harrington, with his good bourgeois sentiments, has more claim to a place in the history of socialism than many builders of socialistic states of the future. (10)

In praising Harrington's contribution to the development of bourgeois society from which emerged the truth of scientific socialism, Bernstein noted that he came from a well-to-do family, spent several years at Oxford and was accepted at many courts in Europe. Thus his knowledge of the ruling class and its workings allowed him to see the bourgeois rentiers and entrepreneurs, the "industrious people" as the emerging class. Harrington's "historical

mode of treatment" was cited by Bernstein as "a notable anticipation of the materialist conception of history elaborated by Marx and Engels." (11)

Bernstein argued that in the Oceana Harrington stated the central thesis of his work that the form of government followed the distribution of property "which he tracks down everywhere in history." Bernstein stated categorically that "what he maintained was the impossibility of abolishing the political rule of the middle-classes, except by a material alteration of the balance of property, and this contention has been confirmed by history." (12) Because the seventeenth-century saw "the birth of political economy" it was the precursive age of the advent of modern scientific socialism; accordingly, Harrington was a bourgeois prophet whose work influenced eighteenth-century revolutionary thought. In fact, Bernstein concluded "authors have frequently made use of him without acknowledging it." (13)

According to Shklar, the tradition of ideology hunting, with specific regard to Harrington's bourgeois roots, began with Bernstein's attempt to discover a connection among Harrington, historical materialism, and class struggle. This tradition was enhanced by the Tawney/Trevor-Roper debate in the pages of the Economic History Review between 1941-58. Bernstein's analysis was

more directly inspired by Marx than that which emerged from the debate over the gentry. However, because the debate was firmly focussed on the correct interpretation of class configuration in seventeenth-century England, and because each party to the debate attempted to place Harrington into a class, it represents an implicit continuation of the Marxist sociological analysis of history. It did not, however, embrace any Marxist theory of revolution. Thus the economic approach to history was implicitly indebted to Marx and to Marxist historians such as Bernstein who saw history in terms of class struggle.

II TAWNEY

This section deals with one of the main problems with twentieth-century scholarship, the propensity to read between the lines for alternative explanations of the history both of events and ideas. As a result, any number of historians have been able to reach contradictory conclusions about this or that event, this or that idea, without any hope or wish to resolve any conflict. The unending dialogue of history has become a war of words and innuendo. According to J. G. A. Pocock, "because Harrington declared that a shift in the social distribution of power had made its effects felt in his time, he has

always been a target for the interpretations of those interested in relating ideas to contemporary social reality ..."(14). In other words, Pocock, like Shklar, noted that Harrington had been used to explain the present configuration of institutions and classes in modern society. This is most evident in the "storm over the gentry" debate in which the combatants disagreed about Harrington's role in the development of ideas surrounding the Great Rebellion.

R. H. Tawney's analysis of Harrington's thought is found in two major essays, 1) "Harrington's Interpretation of his Age" and 2) "The Rise of the Gentry: 1558-1640." The former deals specifically with Harrington while the latter attempted to place his thought within an economic analysis of the Great Rebellion. "Harrington's originality," wrote Tawney, "consisted primarily in his analysis of the constitutional consequences of English economic development in the century and a half preceeding the Civil War." (15) Harrington, his public life confused by allegiance to Charles I and respect for republican institutions, was seen by Tawney as an innovator in the area of political thought. He dealt primarily with the actual condition of English political society, a society in transition from a feudal to a bourgeois state, and did not arbitrarily impose "a government selected from a gallery of

ideal constitutions." Tawney's initial treatment of Harrington set the stage for his more general interpretation of the "rise of the gentry" in which he treated Harrington as a spokesman of the emerging ruling class.

Observers became conscious, in the later years of Elizabeth, of an alteration in the balance of social forces, and a stream of comment began which continued to swell until, towards the close of the next century, a new equilibrium was seen to have been reached. Its theme was the changing composition, at once erosion and reconstruction, of the upper strata of the social pyramid.(16)

With these words Tawney outlined his basic thesis that the process of transition from a feudal to a bourgeois society in England had been gradual. Furthermore, he counted four main reasons for the eventual rise of the land-owning gentry. First, the ruin of famous families by personal extravagance and political ineptitude resulted in a political vacuum. Second, the yeomanry declined because long leases were discontinued causing a dislocation of the population. Third, the loss of revenue and authority by the Crown (the traditional defender of the feudal nobility) through the sale of properties resulted in a general diminution of its influence. Finally, the mounting fortunes of the "residuary legatee" (land-owners) filled the vacuum and challenged the authority of the Crown to

rule.(17) Tawney also noted that contemporary commentators, such as Sir Walter Raleigh, had observed the changing balance of land ownership that had taken place since the Tudor period. However, Tawney was quick to add that "to speak of the transition from a feudal to a bourgeois society is to decline upon a cliché."(18) Tawney's careful disclaimer was unheeded even by himself as he then proceeded to describe a new class of "profit-making" agricultural gentry who began to depend on land management and shrewd investment to expand farming operations rather than on traditional land rents from which they had earlier derived their income. Tawney's class analysis of the changing English society included the growing group of London bankers and merchants whose investments in land were motivated by the promise of an attractive rate of return. He wrote,

The landowner living on the profits and rents of commercial farming, and the merchant or banker who was also a landowner, represented, not two classes but one. Patrician and parvenu both owed their ascent to causes of the same order. Judged by the source of their incomes, both were equally bourgeois.(19)

Accordingly, land became "an instrument of social prestige and political power" and the threat posed to the Crown by the House of Commons became more acute over time.

The ensuing "rise of the gentry" led to their dissatisfaction with the existing political institutions and their wish to change the distribution of power. At this point, Harrington was cited as a member of the new elite whose family was a part of the movement itself. Of Harrington's writing Tawney said, "In spite of its thin dress of fancy, his work [the Oceana] was not a Utopia, but partly a social history, partly a programme based upon it." (20)

Tawney's analysis of Harrington and the socio-economic movement that led to the rise of a new class of bourgeois land owners in both the countryside and the cities was misleading on two counts. First, the basic argument that land was changing hands at an ever-increasing rate, supported by Tawney with ample statistics, cannot be disputed. However, by concentrating on the profit-making activity of the industrious gentry and by believing that they saw war as cheaper than the cost of litigation, Tawney neglected other equally strong elements of social transformation, especially the changing patterns in religious and scientific thought. He too used the cliché he warned us about earlier. Second, his treatment of Harrington as a spokesman for the risen gentry does not accord with Harrington's understanding of the importance of controlling land, that it simply enhanced the well-being of

society and displayed bourgeois sentiment. Harrington saw clearly that the importance of land-ownership being diffused among a large part of the population was that it gave "an army of freeholders" an immediate interest in defending the commonwealth. Tawney never explicitly stated that the English revolution was a bourgeois revolution, but he did say that it was initiated to a strong degree by a new class, the risen bourgeois gentry. That Tawney's analysis was informed, at least in part, by the Marxist historical perspective was noted by J. M. Winter who introduced and edited a collection of Tawney's historical essays in 1978.

While Tawney never subscribed to the view that the English Civil War was a 'bourgeois revolution' for the commendable reason that the bourgeoisie was on both sides, nevertheless he came to conclusions on the nature of the Civil war which are not far removed from some explicitly Marxist interpretations. As usual he preferred an eclectic approach in which Marxism was one historical tool among many.(21)

III THE ISSUE OF THE GENTRY

In his article entitled "The Gentry: 1540-1640," H. R. Trevor-Roper attempted to refute or at least modify Tawney's thesis by showing its need of modification. His main argument stemmed from the observation that 1) Tawney's distinction between the aristocracy and the gentry was

arbitrary; and 2) Tawney's evidence did not support the gentry's alleged rise and replacement of the aristocracy as the new ruling class. He began by attacking Tawney's statistics. He noted that Tawney had excluded from the peerage all new peers created by Charles I and James I. Instead, said Trevor-Roper, they were considered as gentry because of their acquisition of former royal lands. Trevor-Roper concluded that economic decline was evident in both "classes" and that neither was rising while the other declined, given the statistical evidence that Tawney had produced.

Thus, while his aristocracy consists of a diminishing group of those families who happened to be noble at the beginning and still noble at the end of the period, his gentry consists both of the gentry who remained gentry throughout the period, and of those men who began as gentry and ended as peers, and of those who began as merchants yeomen or anything else, and ended up as gentry. No wonder the gentry, thus calculated, appear to 'rise' at the expense of the peerage.(22)

Trevor-Roper admitted that there was a transference of power and that certain families did prosper. Moreover, he discerned a "rise within the gentry" as distinct from a general rise of the whole gentry class. New fortunes were made, he wrote, in trade or by the acquisition of offices, not exclusively from the increased yield from lands. With regard to Harrington, where Tawney had argued that

Harrington himself was a member of risen family, Trevor-Roper showed that he more rightly belonged to a declining family that had risen at one time. With this Trevor-Roper introduced a new category into the debate, the "mere or lesser gentry," and noted their dissatisfaction, voiced through people such as Harrington, as the cause of the Great Rebellion. Thus, he refuted Tawney's contention that the Civil War was a cheaper method of redress of grievances than litigation would have been for the risen gentry's assertion of power over the declining peerage. Tawney, he wrote, neglected the role that the Independents, for whom Harrington was a spokesman, played in the drama of the Revolution. The Harringtonians, as Trevor-Roper called them, "hankered for a new political system." Harrington supplied a model for one based on the notion that the gentry had all the lands. He noted that Harrington's doctrine became a slogan for the mere gentry who saw "rotation," as it was defined by Harrington, as a means of ensuring their adequate representation in Parliament.

In concluding, Trevor-Roper argued that the gentry did not rise as a class, but that some were ingenious enough to survive the turmoil by buying offices and trades. They did not become a "new social elite" but were "generally unobtrusive in national affairs" after the revolution ended. Harrington, moreover, was no longer interpreted as

a voice of the rising gentry who demanded political recognition; he was now a representative of the "lesser" or declining gentry who realized that power did not automatically come from property but that "property comes from power."

This narrow interpretation of Harrington's doctrine of the balance was inadequate in a number of respects. As Tawney, Trevor-Roper viewed Harrington as an interested member of a class. He thus fell into the trap of interpreting many of Harrington's ideas in terms of a specific class interest. Second, Trevor-Roper's analysis imputed to Harrington's works a dogmatic and revolutionary flavour that was simply overstated. Certainly Harrington wished to see things change, but he chose the safer route of debate, exemplified in the creation of the Rota Club, which was designed explicitly for this purpose. Finally, both Tawney and Trevor-Roper were guilty of representing Harrington as "an observer of contemporary social processes." (23) Pocock argued that Harrington could be more correctly seen as "an historian of feudalism" whose commentary must be taken as a larger look at English history than as a narrow interpretation of the period surrounding the Civil War. Harrington wrote in the Oceana a defence of his agrarian law not in terms of a specific class interest but in terms of the public good. He said

"you give the people not only liberty, but lands; which makes your protection necessary to their security, and their contribution due unto your protection as to their own safety."(24) He was describing the perfect commonwealth where each individual would be responsible for the defense of his land, not as a member of the land-owning class, but as a member of the immortal commonwealth in which each citizen knew the predominance of the public good.

In a rejoinder to Trevor-Roper's review, Tawney questioned the validity of his opponent's statistics and the meanings of some of his terms. He did nothing to resolve the conflict and the result has been a legacy of confusion for later historians. One is tempted to dismiss the whole debate as frivolous and as "a misplaced deployment of erudition."(25) As J. Hexter wrote in his commentary "The Storm over the Gentry,"

When historians as able as Professor Tawney and Professor Trevor-Roper pile on their evidence a burden of hypothesis heavier than that evidence can sustain, we may suspect that their judgement has been clouded by over-addiction to some general conception of the historical process.(26)

This general conception of the historical process we would call the economic conception. While Tawney saw the cause of the Great Rebellion in the claims of the risen gentry for greater representation in government,

Trevor-Roper believed that it was "blind revolt of the gentry against the Court, of the provinces and economic centralization." (27) This was not a war between capitalists and mercantilists; furthermore, republican theorists who advocated the creation of a commonwealth did not use such a narrow frame of reference for the advancement of their theories. Harrington, whose name comes up as a proponent of this or that cause, was not motivated by self-interest, but from a concern for English political society as a whole. To give but one obvious instance, Oceana/England was to be a commonwealth, "a minister of God upon earth, to the end that the world may be governed with righteousness." (28) Rightly ordered, England's constitution would last forever, spreading its wisdom throughout the world. This millenarian theme was totally missed by the economic/Marxist approach to the study of Harrington.

In 1958, John Pocock wrote a letter to Encounter in which he commented on the "storm over the gentry" debate. He delineated three distinct schools of thought with respect to the study of the men and the events of the English revolution. First, the Whig interpretation of history reported that the Civil War was fought between Englishmen differing opinion on ideas of liberty and religion. Second, Marxist historians attempted to classify

the population in England, which gave way to debates over the best method of classification. Finally, there arrived the historian of ideas who "sees men thinking in a particular context," and who is "interested in the relation between the context and the thinking." (29) Moreover, the historian of ideas, and we must place Pocock himself among this group, must learn to think "un-dogmatically" and in a "post-Marxist" fashion. In this letter, Pocock hit upon one of the main problems of modern historical scholarship, the attempt to apply ideological presuppositions to historical evidence or to re-interpret history in terms of a new-found ideology. Tawney and Trevor-Roper, regardless of their individual claims to objectivity, followed Bernstein's suggestive analysis of the causes of the civil war by attempting to understand more fully the configurations of class that created the tension leading to the revolution. Consequently, their attempts at classification placed individuals of the period, such as Harrington, into this or that class, which thereby obscured anything the individual had to say. To deny that politics and economics are intimately related is to deny reality. At the same time, however, to interpret history from an economic perspective only is to avoid dealing with other more subtle issues that were extremely important in the development of modern thought.

The Tawney/Trevor-Roper debate over the role that the gentry played in the English revolution was not the final expression of a Marxist or quasi-Marxist theory of history. Trevor-Roper, in a more recent essay "Karl Marx and the Study of History", noted that Marxist historians claimed to be scientific in their approach. He described their conviction when he wrote, "Like the early Christians in the days of the pagan Roman Empire, the Marxists prophesy the collapse of contemporary 'civilization' not in a defeatist but in an exultant spirit, as men who have a positive alternative to offer." (30) Conditioned by the economic organization of society, human history is understood by the Marxist as the history of class struggle. While Marx did not discover the intimate relationship between economics and politics he was the first to posit a world revolution initiated by the self-conscious working class. It was up to his followers to apply his discovery to all of the great events in history and Trevor-Roper pointed to Christopher Hill as the most consistent Marxist historian following in this tradition.

IV HILL

Christopher Hill's historical writings have become influential in the academic world because his explicit

Marxist direction has been adopted by numerous followers. As a clear expression of Marxist historical analysis, Hill's ideas represent a vital link between the tradition of the Marxist-inspired historians and the political theory of C. B. Macpherson. For Macpherson, it was Hill who had correctly interpreted the period of the English revolution as being characterized most fully by the rise of bourgeois sentiments. Moreover, according to Macpherson, Hill's 'valuable but too brief essay on Harrington' exposing his implicit theory of class as the basis for understanding the political process, formed the basis for Macpherson's examination of certain unexamined ambiguities in Harrington's theory of politics, which are re-examined in the last part of this chapter.

In "The English Civil War Interpreted by Marx and Engels," Hill outlined his initial attraction to Marxist historiography. He noted that Whig historians had concentrated on the events surrounding the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and had "quietly ignored the bloodshed of 1642-1660 which alone had made possible the peaceful triumph of the bourgeoisie in 1688-89." (31) Marxist historians, he wrote, attempt to provide a total explanation of the period of the English Interregnum, which ultimately cannot be made "except in Marxist terms."

From a careful survey of the writings of Marx and Engels, who saw the English revolution as a classical bourgeois revolution, Hill was able to comment on the class-consciousness of the bourgeois parliamentary leaders who, "because of the inherent contradictions of their position in society," alienated themselves from the masses. Furthermore, the Glorious Revolution represented a compromise between the bourgeoisie and the defeated upper classes who supported the monarchy. The Diggers and Levellers represented the disenfranchised proletariat that was forming as a natural consequence of the rise to power of the bourgeoisie. The Restoration, by which Charles II implicitly accepted the rule of the bourgeoisie, was "inspired by the fear of popular democracy felt by the solid merchants and country gentry who had acquired all they wanted from the revolution." (32)

In 1958, Hill published Puritanism and Revolution: Studies in Interpretation of the English Revolution of the Seventeenth-Century, in which he considered the various interpretations of the Civil War. He denied that S. K. Gardiner's label of the Puritan uprising as a revolution was accurate and praised Tawney's analysis of the revolution. Chapter 10 of the book, entitled "James Harrington and the People" was designed to place Harrington firmly in the bourgeois tradition. Hill argued that

Harrington had written the Oceana as a warning against "the danger of excessive democracy" and had wished to make a science of the study of politics. Harrington, wrote Hill, introduced the "people" or the middle-class as a new actor on the stage of history. Harrington's notion of the balance, "a familiar commercial metaphor in the seventeenth-century," suggested the need for a new constitutional arrangement in the form of a republic "which would give political as well as economic power to the middle class." (33) This analysis of Harrington's intention in advocating a republican form was too narrow. Harrington's intention in the Oceana and in his subsequent works was to advocate a practical return to "ancient prudence," to revive the fundamental principles of the Greek polis and the Roman republic that emphasized a hierarchical structure in society where each citizen had significance and where the opinions of the wise were tempered by those of the majority. Moreover, Harrington's commonwealth, once founded, was to be immortal, an historical paradise of democracy unhampered by the whims of any individual or faction. Harrington was not the Marx of the seventeenth-century and thus did not perform a class analysis of English society to justify his theory. He was eclectic and understood the significance of property ownership in determining the agents of political power.

According to Hill, however, "he was a member of the ruling class who was shrewd enough to see that the old basis for feudal society was gone forever." (34) This image of the calculating bourgeois, the bane of an ardent Marxist, was reinforced by Hill's understanding of Harrington's term "people" that, according to Hill, included the yeomanry, gentry and merchants, but not servants. He added that the term "servant" in the language of the seventeenth-century included wage-labourers "all of whom were excluded from Harrington's franchise and from the army." (35) Thus, in Hill's analysis of Harrington's thought we detect the exploitative bourgeois - Harrington in conflict with and alienated from the working class. Hill was quick to add that "Harrington was no Marxist". But then, how could he have been?

Hill's analysis of the English Civil War and of the significance of Harrington's thought for the period was inspired by the Marxist approach to history. His observation that Harrington had invented a new class, the people, formed the vital link between Marxist historiography and the explicit Marxist political theory of C. B. Macpherson.

V C. B. MACPHERSON

In The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke, Macpherson argued that a unifying thread linked English political thought of the seventeenth-century to that of the nineteenth-century, which he named "possessive individualism." He wrote that in an age dominated by the ethics of possessive individualism "society consists of relations of exchange between proprietors. Political society becomes a calculated device for the protection of this property and for the maintenance of an orderly relation of exchange." (36) Compare this to Marx's analysis of the state's role in modern bourgeois society outlined in The German Ideology:

Through the emancipation of private property from the community, the State has become a separate entity beside and outside civil society; but it is nothing more than the form of organization which the bourgeois necessarily adopt both for internal and external purposes for the mutual guarantee of their property and interests. (37)

Macpherson's definition of modern society is similar to that of Marx. Furthermore, Macpherson's objective was to prove that the Marxist approach to the study of political theory can reveal "implicit assumptions" about the character of the political thought of specific early-modern theorists such as Hobbes, Harrington and Locke.

In this section we will discuss the most complete and explicit Marxist interpretation of seventeenth-century English political thought in general and Harrington's thought in particular. Macpherson's analysis was intended to be the last word on the seventeenth-century foundations of modern political thought. It also represented the maturation of the Marxist approach to the study of seventeenth-century political ideas that began with Bernstein's treatment of Harrington as a bourgeois political thinker, remained implicit in the "storm over the gentry," and that was a strong element in the historical method of Christopher Hill. Of Harrington, Macpherson began,

I shall argue that Harrington thought that the gentry in 1656 had less than half the land, and based his case for a gentry-led commonwealth on that assumption; that he saw far enough into the bourgeois nature of English seventeenth-century society to assume that the gentry did, and always would, accept the bourgeois social order which then existed and which the rest of the people wanted; and that this assumption was essential to his whole political thought. (38)

To Macpherson, the bourgeois social order was the same as the possessive market society he had described in the Introduction to the book and was characterized by the presence of an exchange market that treated man's labour as a commodity. He completed the argument by adding that each

man's labour was simply a possession and "not an integral part of his personality." We must compare this observation with Marx's notion of "estranged labour" articulated in the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 where he wrote,

Estranged labour turns thus:

- (3) Man's species being, both nature and his spiritual species properly, into a being alien to him, into a means to his individual existence. It estranges man's own body from him, as it does external nature and his spiritual essence, his human being. (39)

Macpherson has clearly adopted Marx's theory of alienation in his characterization of labour in the possessive market society. Moreover, he claimed that his society needed strong legal institutions and well-defined laws to help the state act on behalf of the new social order.

Macpherson noted correctly that Harrington's principle of balance determined the location of political power in the distribution of property. He described the outcome of the imbalance of property ownership and therefore power in terms of revolution. Furthermore, Harrington claimed that once accomplished, the revolution required a legal framework that would maintain and stabilize the balance. It was here that Macpherson uncovered the solution to the un-examined ambiguities in Harrington's writing that once revealed would make obvious his bourgeois ambitions.

Macpherson argued, and with sufficient textual reference, that when Harrington spoke of the transference of lands to the "people" which occurred by the time of Elizabeth, he cited the yeomanry as the beneficiary of the change in ownership. However, said Macpherson, because Harrington made the House of Commons the institutional benefactor of this shift, he must have been including the 'gentry', who we must assume had control of the House of Commons, as part of the people. The ambiguity arose when Macpherson noted that Harrington followed Machiavelli and placed the gentry with the nobility as a separate class from the people. Harrington's wish to establish a gentry-led commonwealth was cited as evidence of this latter sentiment.(40)

The gentry controversy, wrote Macpherson, initiated by the Tawney/Trevor-Roper debate, used Harrington as an example of both the rising and declining gentry and thus confused the issue. By clearing up the ambiguity in Harrington's writing, Macpherson hoped to alleviate this confusion. He concluded that Tawney and Trevor-Roper had wrongly placed Harrington among those who believed that the gentry had all the lands. Harrington, he argued, had never said this and had posited that the ownership of lands was to be controlled by more than just the gentry. The resolution of the ambiguity came with Macpherson's observation that "the difference in usage is intelligible,

and the two uses consistent, in view of the difference between feudal and post-feudal land tenure."(41) The disappearance of feudal tenure which had given the nobles and gentlemen the ability to manipulate the balance of government through their control of armies, reduced the old nobility to the level of an insignificant class. Their qualities of leadership, however, made them an important element in Harrington's scheme for the English constitution as the 'natural aristocracy' who possessed sufficient leisure time to form opinions on matters of great importance for the general well being of the commonwealth. Thus, wrote Macpherson,

The newly significant dividing line for Harrington was that between the 'nobility' or 'gentry' and the freeholders below that rank, who, working their land for a living, were by their very way of life incapable of political leadership and so were classed with the mechanic people.(42)

Macpherson's solution seemed to suggest that Harrington was aware of two kinds of gentry, those who were always gentry and were to lead in a spiritual sense those other gentry, the freeholders, who had recently acquired lands but had no experience in political leadership.

The ambiguity solved, Macpherson went on to note that Harrington was not aware of, and consequently could not defend, his double usage of the term gentry, because he was

not aware of his own "implicit assumption." Macpherson was the first to have discovered this "implicit assumption," namely that Harrington, when he spoke of the shift of the balance of power in England, "implicitly" included the gentry as part of the people, while in other areas of his work he equated the gentry "explicitly" with the nobility as a separate class different from the people. Macpherson concluded that Harrington did not really say what he had meant to say.

In fact, however, Macpherson had created a discovery, the implicit association of the gentry with the people, labelled it an ambiguity in usage, citing textual references where Harrington explicitly associated the gentry with the nobility, and then resolved the ambiguity by arguing that Harrington was not aware of having made an implicit assumption. To Macpherson, this made it obvious that Harrington was speaking as an unconscious bourgeois theorist.(43)

In later sections of the essay, Macpherson substantiated his claims by noting 1) that Harrington was aware of the "pervasiveness of market relations"; 2) that he defended usury as a method of accumulating public wealth by circulating greater amounts of money and was not afraid that it would have any detrimental effect on England because of its size "where money cannot overbalance land";

3) accepted the concept of upward mobility based on commercial or industrial profits; and 4) accepted the potential growth of mercantile cities.(44) These observations cleared up what was for Macpherson another ambiguity, that Harrington, in advocating an "equal commonwealth" devised an agrarian law that would distribute the land unevenly to only 5000 families. While Macpherson argued that Harrington was really stating a preference for a bourgeois social order, it is not clear that Harrington understood the implications of such a position.

Macpherson went on to argue that Harrington's imperialism, revealed in his notion that Oceana/England was to be a commonwealth for increase, and his agrarian law, that was "designed to stop the nobility from restricting increase for the middle class," were other indications of Harrington's implicit bourgeois sentiments.

The whole of Harrington's defense of the Agrarian as a sufficient guarantee of an equal balance and a sufficient basis for a popular or equal commonwealth depends, we conclude, on a concept of the economy which takes for granted or at least the superiority of capitalist relations of production, and a concept of equality which is essentially bourgeois.(45)

Macpherson saw only the imposition of power by one class over another in Harrington's work. According to Macpherson, Harrington's main weakness was his

"insufficient logical ability." In other words, Harrington was unable to state all of the assumptions in his analysis of history and of seventeenth-century society because he lacked the analytical tools that were to be developed later by Smith, Marx, Weber, Bernstein, Tawney, Trevor-Roper and finally by Macpherson himself. John Pocock responded to Macpherson's assumptions about Harrington's implicit bourgeois sympathies in 1977 when he wrote,

It need not be denied that Harrington knew there was such a thing as trade, that London provided a market for the produce of land, that men bought and sold land, or that they possessed an instinct to acquire more of it; the problem is that of the role which phenomena like this play in this thought.(46)

Macpherson's Marxism forced him to categorize political theorists according to their contribution to the development of the class struggle and missed other important features of their work. In the case of Harrington, he neglected to deal with either his classical republicanism or with his apparant millenarianism.(47)

In "The Elusive Marxism of C. B. Macpherson," Victor Svacek proposed to establish the true character of Macpherson's Marxist political theory. Svacek reduced Marxism to four essential postulates and two corrolaries and revealed their consistency with Macpherson's ideas. There is no need to deal with the specific parts of

Svacek's analysis. It is enough, for our purposes, to summarize his conclusions.

Although Macpherson understood the validity of class analysis, Marxist ethics of equality, Marx's epistemology based on his notion of historical materialism, and the inevitability of communism, Svacek calls him a five-sixths Marxist because he never advocated "traumatic revolutionary action" and concluded that Macpherson "had some explaining to do." The important question for Svacek became "Do the historical-ethical postulates of Marxism entail the acceptance of revolution?" A true Marxist would answer that the revolution is not a means, it is an end. Revolution is, said Svacek, not merely a means to the good life but is "part of the good life." Where then, he despaired, was Macpherson's theory of revolution? Macpherson's reply was that the development of a revolutionary theory was not part of his current "metier" but that it could be in future. Moreover, Macpherson made no other comment about Svacek's analysis except to state that Svacek was right in assuming that he was trying to work out "a revision of liberal-democratic theory" to make it "more democratic."

Other commentators on Macpherson's work have reached similar but not necessarily complimentary conclusions. John Dunn, in "Democracy Unretrieved or The Political

Theory of Professor Macpherson," noted that Macpherson saw possessive society as "morally ugly." (48) Jacob Viner, in "Possessive Individualism as Original Sin," argued that Macpherson's language depicting possessive individuals was merely a "new terminology for Marxism and post-Marxist socialist doctrine." (49) Macpherson's reply to Viner's criticism was that although he had adopted the sociology of Marx he was not "spoiled by a Marxist apostolic fervour." Regardless of the question of whether or not one can separate Marx's notion of revolution from his sociological analysis of history, the consensus remains that Macpherson's treatment of seventeenth-century political philosophy and specifically his treatment of Harrington's work has been obscured by the desire to remain faithful to Marx's analysis of the history of class struggle.

Harrington was neither a Marxist, nor a bourgeois. His thought cannot be categorized in that way at all, because it is simply the product of his own reflective experiences. In order to understand the context in which he lived and those things that affected him we must read what he has to say, all of it. Certainly Harrington was aware of the developing market society in England and of the changing social structure of English society. He wrote about economics and its relation to politics but he also

wrote about history, religion and to some extent science. Therefore, to concentrate on one facet of his thought is to necessarily obscure these others.

VI ARE ALL HISTORIANS REALLY CRABS?

From Bernstein to Macpherson, Harrington's thought has been almost exclusively examined from an economic perspective. Bernstein placed Harrington in the middle of a bourgeois revolution and felt indebted to Harrington for his recognition of the class differences that animated English society in the seventeenth-century. Tawney and Trevor-Roper implicitly accepted this approach and debated over which class Harrington was defending - the rising or the declining gentry. Both espoused the same general conception of the historical process, that society can be easily divided into classes and that class analysis will explain social and political change. But this is doubtful. Christopher Hill's contention that a total understanding of the period of the English Interregnum could not be made "except in Marxist terms" was equally misleading. Harrington appeared to him as a bourgeois political thinker who laid the groundwork for scientific socialism. But Harrington was an eclectic thinker who appreciated the claims of science and religion as much as he appreciated

the notion that political power rested upon the ownership of land. Finally, Macpherson's discussion of ambiguity in Harrington's language remains the most lucid statement of Marxist historiography and ideological analysis to date.

In all of this we can discern a variation on a single theme: the economic interpretation of history and political thought is preeminent or fundamental. Unfortunately, it is so enthusiastically embraced that it precludes or obscures analyses from any other perspective. John Pocock and Zera Fink, who expanded the context surrounding Harrington's life by including him in the classical republican tradition, provided an alternative perspective that did not deny the validity of the economic approach but simply added to it. It may be that they have exaggerated Harrington's classical republicanism, but they were surely correct to expand the context surrounding the development of Harrington's thought beyond the dismal science of economics and economic lust. The context should be expanded even further to include an appreciation of the rise of modern science and its influence on his work. In Part B, I will try to go beyond the superficial account of Harrington's appreciation of science that recognizes his acceptance of William Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood as a useful metaphor for the description of a healthy society, to consider as well the impact that the

'mechanical philosophy' and the 'Hermetic tradition' had on his thought.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

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4. C. B. Macpherson, The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1962), Preface p.v.
5. Karl Marx, The German Ideology in The Marx-Engels Reader ed. Robert Tucker, (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1978), p. 166.
6. Judith Shklar, "Ideology Hunting: The Case of James Harrington," American Political Science Review, Vol. 53 (1959), p. 668.
7. Ibid., p. 692.
8. Kathleen Toth, "Interpretation in Political Theory: The Case of James Harrington," Review of Politics, Vol. 37 (1975), p. 323. See also Leo Strauss's review of Classical Republicanism in Social Research, Vol. 13 (1946), pp. 393-5.
9. Eduard Bernstein Cromwell and Communism: Socialism and Democracy in the Great English Revolution, trans. H. J. Stenning, (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1963), p. 9.
10. Ibid., p. 193.
11. Ibid., p. 199.
12. Ibid., p. 201.

13. Ibid., p. 210.
14. J. A. Pocock, "Machiavelli, Harrington and English Political Ideologies in the Eighteenth Century," William and Mary Quarterly, Vol. 22 (1965), p. 552.
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24. James Harrington, The Commonwealth of Oceana, in Works, p. 241.
25. J. H. Hexter, "The Storm Over the Gentry," Encounter, (May, 1958), p. 24.
26. Ibid., p. 31.
27. H. R. Trevor-Roper, Historical Essays, (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), chapter 24, "The Social Causes of the Great Rebellion," p. 204.
28. James Harrington, Works, pp. 322-23.
29. J. A. Pocock, "Letter to Encounter," Encounter, (August, 1958).

30. H. R. Trevor-Roper, Historical Essays, op.cit., "Marx and the Study of History," p. 287.
31. Christopher Hill, "The English Civil War Interpreted by Marx and Engels," Science and Society, Vol. 12 (1948), p. 131.
32. Ibid., p. 150.
33. Christopher Hill, Puritanism and Revolution: Studies in Interpretation of the English Revolution of the Seventeenth Century, (New York: Shlocken Books, 1958), p. 131.
34. Ibid., p. 306.
35. Ibid., p. 307.
36. C. B. Macpherson, The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke, (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 3.
37. Karl Marx, The German Ideology, in The Marx-Engels Reader, edited by Robert C. Tucker, (London" W. W. Norton, 1978).
38. C. B. Macpherson, op.cit., p. 162.
39. Karl Marx, The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 in Tucker, op.cit., p. 77.
40. C. B. Macpherson, op.cit., p. 167.
41. Ibid., p. 172.
42. Ibid., p. 173.
43. Ibid., p. 192.
44. Ibid., p. 175-77.
45. Ibid., p. 188.
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47. Svacek, Victor, "The Elusive Marxism of C. B. Macpherson" and Macpherson's "Rejoinder," Canadian Journal of Political Science, Vol. 9, 1975, pp. 377-423.

48. John Dunn, "Democracy Unretrieved: A Political Theory of Professor Macpherson," British Journal of Political Science, Vol. 4 (1974), p. 493.
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PART B: ENLARGING THE CONTEXT

CHAPTER THREE

A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF ENGLISH COSMOLOGY IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

When the student reviews the vast sequence of arguments and opinions which fill our historical textbooks, he is likely to feel bewildered by the multiplicity and seeming diversity of the matters presented.

Arthur Lovejoy The Great Chain of Being

The study of seventeenth-century England exemplifies the confusing state of scholarship described by Lovejoy. There is an overwhelming array of material dealing with the world of pre-Enlightenment England. The main difficulty arises from the probability of neglecting something or someone important for the discussion. Lovejoy's observation remains a constant reminder of the inevitable incompleteness of any study of this period of English history. Any interpretation must try to synthesize the collected material in order to grasp the overall meaning of ever-changing perspectives, but the period from 1600 to 1700 presents special difficulties: it was perhaps the most confusing period in English intellectual history. It

was a period of great discovery in the field of science; here one may mention William Gilbert's theory of magnetic attraction, Boyle's gas laws, the discovery of the circulation of the blood by William Harvey, and Newton's theory of gravitation. It was a period of profound religious polemics; here one may mention the reformation, theories of religious toleration, and radical Puritan millenarianism. It was a period of political upheaval and innovation; here one may mention the English Revolution, the Restoration, five kings, and a constitutional dictator. In short, it was a period of enormous intellectual and social change and achievement.

That the art of politics was affected by scientific thought and by religious millenarianism is the main argument of this chapter. It follows that the new scientific/religious discourse of Seventeenth-century England was at least in part responsible for the flowering of political projects during this period if only because it encouraged novelty.

This chapter is divided into four sections, the first three are devoted to separate yet complimentary aspects of seventeenth-century learning. The final section provides a rudimentary integration of these major currents of thought. Section one deals with several individuals important in laying the foundations of modern experimental science, a

new approach to the study of nature. Section two investigates the evolution of religious ideas during the period and concentrates on the notion of religious toleration. In the third section the "practical utopia" is examined as a political expression of the scientific pursuit of order and as a measure for English society. By enlarging the context from which Harrington's thought emerged, a more complete framework will be established for the textual exegesis of his writing that is found in Chapter Four of this thesis. In the two previous chapters, Harrington's work was viewed from two separate but not incompatible perspectives, the first inspired by his allegiance to the principles of "classical republicanism," and the second derived from a Marxist interpretation of history. Chapter three is a necessary digression that considers the changing configuration of scientific, religious and political experiences that animated the English mind of the seventeenth-century. We return to Harrington in Chapter Four with a new and broader perspective on his thought.

SECTION I: THE NEW SCIENCE

In this section I will rely quite heavily on the interpretation of the scientific revolution by a number of

selected scholars. At the outset it must be recognized that historians of science are not in total agreement about the origins of modern scientific discourse and ideas. There exist a number of conflicting methods of analysis which, to the amateur, make the exercise of synthesizing the literature on the history and philosophy of science most confusing. The authors I have chosen represent a crude cross-section of the discipline and I must apologize for not having adequate time to deal with the dissimilarities between their approaches. My intention is to establish that certain individuals were inspirational for the development of science in seventeenth-century England. Galileo's experiments in astronomy, Bacon's "great instauration" in the practise of science in general, and Descartes radical epistemology are outlined as major events in this intellectual process. Also the Hermetic philosophy of Paracelsus is examined as a major factor in the growth of scientific speculation and in the development of the convergence of scientific and religious ideas. The impulse toward salvation that animated the minds of religious reformers in this century reinforced the scientific quest for the truth. Moreover, the convergence of scientific and religious themes, exemplified by the work of the Cambridge Platonists fed the impulse of political

reformers who wished to create a new English polity that would endure forever.

In 1957, Lynn Thorndike wrote a short article entitled "Newness and Craving for Novelty in Seventeenth-Century Science and Medicine" in which he argued that the phenomenon "was no doubt fomented and encouraged by growing opposition to Aristotle and scholasticism and the general tendency toward a modern philosophy . . . and by the increasing interest in the experimental method." (1) For the most part, the new experimental science, although its basic premises were rooted in the past, envisioned a renewal of learning hitherto unknown in history. In short, the rejection of the classical learning of Aristotle, Ptolemy and others constituted a revolution - a scientific revolution. According to Herbert Butterfield, "it outshines everything since the rise of Christianity and reduces the Renaissance and Reformation to the role of mere episodes, mere rational displacements, within the system of medieval Christendom." (2) Historians of science, including Butterfield, have attempted to discover the simple formula that would explain this movement away from classical thought. Most agree that the new science and cosmology emerged from a revolution in astronomy in the sixteenth-century.

In the scientific revolution of the seventeenth-century two major themes predominated. The Platonic-Pythagorean "tradition", which used the principles of mathematical order to explain the geometrical configurations of Nature, was challenged by the new mechanical philosophy, which sought the explanation in mechanical terms. Nature became "a huge machine" apparently designed by God in a distinctive orderly fashion. Descartes' radical explanation of nature in terms of matter in motion did not appear until 1637 in his Discourse on Method and later in his essays on Dioptrics, Geometry and in the Principles of Philosophy published in 1644. However, preceding him were Copernicus, Kepler, Tycho Brahe and Galileo, to name but a few concerned with the nature of matter in motion but reluctant to commit themselves to a total mechanical understanding of nature as was Descartes. Nevertheless, the theories and discoveries of sixteenth-century astronomy hastened the development of what was to become the dominant theme in seventeenth-century science. The Platonic-Pythagorean mathematical expression of the universe was integrated into the larger mechanical system of explaining natural phenomena.

In 1543 Copernicus published De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium in which he argued that the universe was a

heliocentric system that placed the sun in the centre of all Creation. Copernicus was no mechanist but he saw clearly enough that the Ptolemaic-Aristotelian geocentric universe no longer provided an adequate explanation of planetary motion. Influenced by Renaissance neoplatonism, Copernicus' work in turn influenced the thought of two of the greatest "mechanical astronomers", Johannes Kepler and Galileo Galilei. To Kepler, Copernicus' heliocentrism represented a bold step in the destruction of the ancient understanding of the universe. He denied the existence of Aristotle's crystalline spheres that had been supposed to hold the universe in place, so to speak, and endeavoured to perfect the Copernican heliocentric system. Kepler's impulse was fed by Tycho Brahe's observations of comets moving "through" the alleged spheres. At the same time Galileo was concerned with the problem of adequately defining the concept of motion and he posited "ideal conditions which experiences can never know" in contrast with Aristotle's notion of an experientially known world. To Galileo the ideal world represented the perfection of the material world; since that world could exist only in the mind, he concerned himself with a mathematical description of the heavens. Moreover, with the use of a telescope Galileo was able to corroborate many of Kepler and Brahe's theoretical hypotheses with observable data.

The invention of the telescope and the act of looking through it allowed the new scientists to stand further away from the earth, so to speak, closer to the hypothetical Archimedian point of total objectivity. Galileo was able to use the new technology and mathematics, which was itself a technical language, to develop a new expression of the laws of motion. Furthermore, his work encouraged the development of the mechanical understanding of the universe and provided the basis for the triumphant work of Isaac Newton. The mechanical philosophy, given its greatest expression in the work of Descartes, was also aided in its development by the work of William Gilbert and Francis Bacon.

In De Magnete (1600), Gilbert emphasized the importance of experimentation and the process of "doing science" while expounding his theory of magnetism. Magnetism was "a primordial and energetic form" which "expressed voluntary agreement and union", and to discover its secrets one must perform experiments in an orderly and constructive way. Bacon also saw the utilitarian dimension of the new science and endeavoured to express consistently its function as something useful to the public. In fact, Bacon's final work New Atlantis published posthumously in 1628, depicted a scientific utopia in which a community of dedicated scientists were given the task to construct and

keep a house of wisdom, a storehouse of truth for the benefit of the public at large.

As it is true of any intellectual movement, no one man expounded the mechanical philosophy of nature. Copernicus' heliocentric theory received confirmation from Kepler's three laws of planetary motion and from Brahe's observations of comets moving through the non-existent Aristotelian crystalline spheres. Moreover, Galileo's experiments with the telescope which led to his observation of the elliptical orbits of the planets dealt the final blow to the Ptolemaic-Aristotelian universe. Gilbert and Bacon believed in the predominance of the experimental method in scientific enquiry. Taken together, these men formed a community working to form a discourse about the nature of the universe. This discourse became synthesized in the work of Rene Descartes whose radical epistemology caused him to doubt everything until he had found one principle, one idea that was clear and distinct.

To Descartes it was thinking itself that was indubitable and it was reason that ordered the universe. This concern with establishing the predominance of reason led Descartes to the construction of his mechanical philosophy. By separating mind and matter Descartes demonstrated that the animistic understanding of the world was confused by mythical and occult language and was

ultimately useless for the development of clear and distinct ideas about the world. God, he argued, had indeed created the world in a mechanistic fashion complete with laws capable of mathematical expression. Accordingly, it was reason, which grasped mechanical links, that connected man to the truth of God. Man's capacity to think in a systematic fashion enabled him to discern God's mathematical plan for the universe. The mechanical philosophy treated the world as a machine "composed of inert bodies, moved by physical necessity, indifferent to the existence of thinking beings." (3) Matter was in constant motion and it moved in an orderly fashion that was evident to the investigative scientist. It was as if Descartes had discovered the secret philosopher's stone, the key to the total understanding of the universe.

Through the practise of experimentation, learned from his predecessors and contemporaries, Descartes began his quest for his theory of inertia. Descartes argued that in principle motion was constant and rectilinear. He explained the concept of circular motion by arguing that it was caused by the action of one body against another. Moreover, Descartes' three elements of matter were (1) that the spaces between units of matter were filled with a substance he called "aether" thereby denying the possibility of a vacuum ; (2) that the units of motion were

constantly bumping into each other ; and (3) that all motion occurs in vortices and is naturally inclined away from the centre of action. Gravity was explained in terms of a deficiency in this centrifugal tendency and magnetism was explained as the result of a causal mechanism by which units of matter were drawn toward each other. Descartes disagreed with Pierre Gassendi, who argued that the basic units of matter were indivisible and that they existed in a void, and echoed the belief of Epicurean atomism that "atoms" were infinitely divisible.

The mechanical philosophy, a term first coined by the English chemist Robert Boyle, influences science today although our understanding of mechanics differs greatly from that of earlier scientists. Most important is the fact that the mechanical philosophy encouraged a new way of looking at and living in the world. Every action of nature became a process that was minutely detailed by the scientific community. Not only was the mechanical philosophy influential for the discussion of motion and the movement of the planets, it also influenced the chemical and biological sciences which used its logic to discern the workings of their respective subjects.

Mechanical chemistry concerned itself with the detection of the "invisible mechanisms" of mixed bodies. Robert Boyle, a Baconian scientist credited with the

foundation of the modern science of chemistry, was deeply committed to the mechanical philosophy of nature and viewed matter as "a multitude of tiny corpuscles" acting upon each other.

In the field of the biological sciences, William Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood reinforced the mechanical understanding of nature. However, Harvey cannot be considered a true mechanist because he retained an occult quality in his explanation that animated the spirit of the blood moving through the circulatory system. Moreover, biology in general became during this time a serious quest to discover the "systems" of nature and to describe their interrelation. (As an aside we must mention that the word "system" originated in seventeenth-century England.) This expansion of factual information encouraged the growth of the science of taxonomy.

In general, the influence of the mechanical philosophy was widespread throughout England and on the Continent. It was concerned with the explanation or philosophy of nature that is best described as an interlocking system of mechanical processes. For the most part, it eliminated any mystical element in nature that lingered from the Renaissance. However, one major tradition survived as part

of Renaissance neoplatonism and influenced the scientific revolution by positing a chemical philosophy of nature.

THE CHEMICAL PHILOSOPHY

The Hermetic tradition was inspired by the recovery during the Renaissance of arcane Cabbalistic and Hermetic texts that had survived through the ages by word of mouth and by careful concealment from authorities. That most scientists writing during this period were familiar, at least in passing, with this literature is now widely accepted among historians of science. The Hermetic tradition and the Hermetic texts justified man's participation in the divine mysteries of the universe.(4)

Among those who professed divine inspiration gained through an understanding of the Hermetic corpus (see Appendix), we must emphasize the career and aspirations of Paracelsus. In his own lifetime he had known no great fame, but after he died his philosophical legacy encouraged, toward the end of the sixteenth-century, a great controversy in the theory and practise of medicine. The Paracelsians were Biblical scholars and derived the fundamental justification for their theories from Scripture. Following Paracelsus, they understood the creation of the world by positing that the three basic

chemical substances - salt, sulphur, and mercury - were used by God to create the world. The tria prima were discovered everywhere and the role of the physician/scientist was to discover the correct configuration that would explain natural phenomena and establish cures for disease. The sophisticated discourse of the chemical philosophy became, in a sense, the language of a new religion - the religion of the priest/physician. The earth became a "vast chemical laboratory" with the beneficent physician employing the microcosm-macrocosm analogy developed by Paracelsus to reveal the sympathies between the configurations of the universe, the macrocosm, (in the positions of the planets and their orbits, etc.) and the configurations of man, the microcosm.

Analysis of the stars influenced the physician's diagnosis and his prescriptions were applied chemically as combinations of the tria prima to afflicted areas of the body. The ensuing revolution in medical technique led to discoveries in anatomy that might not have been achieved within the linguistic paradigm of Galenic medicine. Another important development of the Hermetic chemical philosophy was its alleged discovery of the spiritus mundi or life force as the key to a healthy state of the body and mind.

In the fields of medicine and medical anatomy the influence of Paracelsus was quite strongly felt. The physician/chemist represented a new approach to the treatment of disease. The motion of the universe influenced man's constitution and the Paracelsian physician occupied himself with understanding the science of astrology so that he could more easily and efficiently effect his chemical cures. The chemical philosophy, shared with the mechanical philosophy an interest in the motion of the planets; each attempted a total explanation of the nature of the universe.

The chemical philosophy of nature, with its occult symbolism and ancient wisdom, had little influence on the mechanical philosophy, however, it did influence the development of the idea of the scientific utopia, a safe place from which to express radical and sometimes heretical ideas. For many, Bacon's New Atlantis was the model, for others it was Thomasso Campanella's City of the Sun or Jon Valentin Andreae's Christianopolis. All three depicted societies with the best conditions and were designed to allow man to attain real knowledge that could be devoted to the common good of all men. For example, Robert Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy spoke of "a just army of Rosie-Crosse men" whose task it was to show the truth of Paracelsian science to the world. He was alluding to the

alleged Rosicrucian brotherhood, a secret society of Hermetic reformers who wished to initiate an intellectual enlightenment and whose role in the development of modern science has become a contentious issue within the community of historians of science. (See Appendix) (5)

In general, scientific-utopian writers were concerned with the satisfaction of the public good, a theme not unlike that found within republican political philosophy and one that found great expression in Harrington's work. The analytical tools used to describe the perfect society undoubtedly derived from the utilitarian dimension of the new science and if, as Bacon had said, knowledge is power, then a combination of occult symbolism, knowledge of which was revealed only to the initiate, and the practical activity of investigative science represented a more complete understanding of, and command over, nature.

Because the new science elevated man's role in the discovery and control of nature it became problematic to the established doctrines of the Church, both in Rome and London. In Rome, the Catholic Church openly condemned Galileo's work as heretical while in London the Church of England was more tolerant and attempted to reconcile itself with the new science that had generated more followers in England than in most other countries.

SCIENCE AND THE NEW RELIGION

If one were to describe the dominant theme in English religious thought during the period of the scientific revolution from 1600-1700 it would be that of the development of religious toleration. One variation on this theme was a strong millenarian expectation that the world would end. (This was felt most strongly during the Cromwellian period.) Moreover, it was this theme of liberal consciousness that encouraged the growth of the scientific movement.(6) The speculative mind characteristic of the new scientist was shared by the new breed of religious reformers. Their quest was for a simplified Christianity that would ensure the predominance of Scripture as the correct message of God's intentions. This section summarily describes several millenarian speculations as well as the increasing degree of religious toleration in seventeenth-century England. It also deals with the intellectual phenomenon known as latitudinarianism, a major source of religious toleration, and its relationship to science and to the scientists of the revolution.

To understand the importance of religious thought for the study of nature we must investigate the influence of Puritan eschatology on the scientific revolution. The

Puritan millenarian themes that promised imminent salvation provided scientists and natural philosophers with a goal. To reveal God's truth was the ambition of scientists and Puritan reformers. Mathematicians began to calculate the exact date of the second coming of Christ based on their analysis of Scripture. The "millennial context" also provided the impetus for the inquisitive scientists to imagine ideal worlds, and the political utopian, whose thoughts were never committed further than to the paper upon which they were written, began to see the practicality of his efforts and the social utility of his ideal society.(7)

Among other things, Puritan eschatology encouraged a new interest in the Old Testament, the Bible of Jesus, as well as a strong sympathy towards the homeless Jews of Europe. Both sentiments predominated amongst the Biblical scholars of Cromwellian England who believed that the readmission of Jews to England would provide an opportunity for their conversion to Christianity, an event that would in turn signal the second coming of Christ.(8)

A less radical form of religious toleration was latitudinarianism, which taught of the "latitude" required to accept all forms of religion in England. One early advocate of latitudinarianism was William Chillingworth of Oxford, the teacher of Harrington during the latter's brief

stay at Oxford. In general, latitudinarianism constituted a compromise between the radical Puritan freedom and the more dogmatic Anglican perspective on limited toleration. In 1638, Chillingworth published The Religion of the Protestants A Safe Way to Salvation in response to Jesuit criticism of the Protestant religion. He argued that reason, and only reason, could be entrusted with the correct interpretation of Scripture. In other words, he, as had Descartes, believed that reason was the key to understanding the universe, but he chose, unlike Descartes, to endow Scripture with the reasonableness of God. To Descartes, Scripture was less important than clear and distinct ideas. To the latitudinarians reason was contained in Scripture and careful biblical exegesis would reveal its logical structure.(9) With the Puritans the latitudinarians shared a basic distrust of the Papal religion but they refused to accept the Puritan's radical political posture in England.

One interesting variant of the latitudinarian social theory was the school of Cambridge Platonism.(10) Benjamin Whicote, Ralph Cudworth, John Smith and Henry More were the principal founders of the school. Emmanuel College, founded during Elizabeth's reign "as a nursery for Godly ministeries", was where they lived and worked. They came to be labelled latitudinarian because their belief was that

reason must accompany faith. They believed that man belonged in community with others and so denied Hobbes' doctrine on individualism. Bacon, they argued, was wrong to distinguish between science and theology and Descartes had erred in his radical separation of body and spirit. They also believed in the social utility of science and employed the notion of "plastic nature" to explain the inner spirituality of natural phenomena. Plastic nature derived from the neoplatonic understanding of the anima mundi or soul of the world. In this sense the Cambridge Platonists represented an attempt to re-establish the role of spirituality in a world of scientific empiricism and the mechanical philosophy.(11)

In general, latitudinarianism promoted the new science as a reasonable expression of God's design of the world. Moreover, their civic consciousness led them to promote scientific enquiry as beneficial to all mankind.

God would reveal himself indirectly by two means, nature and Scripture, His word and His work, and both required close study in order to bear fruit.(12)

Science became a means to national wealth and the public good. Salvation became "an orderly progression of discoveries or enlightenment" and was no longer seen as an apocalyptic moment. The image of Christian saints and soldiers fighting for the final return of Christ was

replaced by the image of a community of scientists striving to improve the human condition. The perfection of the earth and man became a gradual process in which the goal was utilitarian rather than final. Moreover, the millenarian vision of a perfect society at the end of time became the practical utopian's search for a more efficient and comfortable community of men. In the following section we will see how the political theory of utopia was directed in this way and how the political process was subjected to the investigative mind of the political scientist searching for the one best way to regulate the public interest.

UTOPIA: THE ONE BEST WAY

Utopia was described by Sir Thomas More as having achieved a perfect legal, social and political system. As a myth, Utopia was designed to offer a glimpse at an ideal society, one that was free from internal conflict. Classic utopias, such as Plato's Republic posited strong central state apparati that predominate over the individual for the benefit of the community. In this sense the ideal of the utopia is not inconsistent with those of the republic which also sought to enhance the interest of the public. The revival of republican institutions in seventeenth-century England coincided with the creation of "practical-utopias"

or "action-minded" utopias.(13) This notion of a practical utopia as a fully realizable organization of society was also consistent with the utilitarian dimension of scientific enquiry inasmuch as both were concerned with the betterment of society. To republicans and scientists change was inevitable and so it was their intention to create optimal social conditions that would allow society to progress yet remain stable. To the practical-utopian there was no progress, their perfect system was ultimately timeless having reached its ideal state.

James Harrington was a practical-utopian who used republican institutions and principles to articulate his immortal commonwealth. He was a political scientist whose main concern was for the public interest. Indeed, the term "public interest" was a new political concept during the seventeenth-century, and was widely used by republican political reformers.(14) The calculation of interest revealed those forces in society that were disruptive to social peace and those who strove to enhance the public good. Political ideals, expressed in utopian literature such as Harrington's Oceana, were concerned with the enhancement of the public interest and the common good. Not only does this reveal the republican bias of seventeenth-century political thought but it also reveals the utilitarian concerns of the action-minded utopian. The

public spirit had to be defended against the potential tyranny of the decaying monarchy first of Charles and then the decaying dictatorship of the Cromwells. Harrington's defense of the public in Oceana constituted a timeless, perfect system of politics that would achieve secular immortality if properly ordered at its foundation.

As a political device the utopia was meant to be a set of strategies which were designed to maintain social order. The utopia exists in a world of discipline, order and stability and is characterized by its use of bureaucratic, legal and educational means to create an harmonious society. Politics is to end in utopia because conflict has been eliminated and people are freed from the responsibility of making choices. It exists, therefore, beyond morality and the public interest is motivated by centralized authorities as well as by each individual observing himself and others. Then, by necessity, utopia realized becomes dystopia. In other words, a practical-utopia cannot exist except as a system of total administration. Thomas More's Utopia was literally nowhere and for good reason; it could not exist in an imperfect world dominated by a community of imperfect men. The construction of practical-utopias was the result of the search for the one best means by which all men could live

as equals. This search continued into modernity under the category of progress.

The desire to establish the true form of political activity in a modern setting has led to the practise of experimentation. The "intelligible state of perfection" frozen in history as "an everlasting constitution" was the objective of the action-minded utopian writers of the seventeenth-century who were inspired by the Puritan brand of gnostic speculation; it remains the objective of the modern administrator who seeks social progress by eliminating sponteneity through his presumed knowledge of the future.(15)

CONCLUSION: MILLENNIALISM, UTOPIANISM, AND PROGRESS

The conclusion of this chapter is an exposition of how these three ideas, one religious, one political, and one scientific, fit together to form the essential features of seventeenth-century English cosmology. The Englishmen of the period lived in an ever-expanding universe of discourse. Aided by technology, science began to encourage the unfolding of a new approach to the study of nature and society. The experimental method, which allowed scientists to create new definitions for age-old phenomena, became increasingly sophisticated during this period. Epicurean

atomism was revived but, longer governed by chance, was controllable and demonstrable with the new technology of the mechanical philosophy. Moreover, science became a vital part of society with the growth of scientific clubs and associations whose main ambition was, as Joseph Glanvill said in Plus Ultra(1688), to enhance the "conveniences of life" and to increase man's understanding of his newly discovered universe.

In religion, attitudes ranged from radical millenarian Puritanism to conservative Anglicanism with religious toleration being espoused by all parties. The Englishman's spirit was given free rein during Cromwell's term to pick and choose from the variety of spiritual formulas with which he was confronted. In the realm of politics, the public interest and the public good became the principle motivations for good government.

Millennialism and utopianism are mutually reinforcing concepts. Both promote the creation of an ahistorical, apolitical world in which man has ceased to be an imperfect creation of a perfect God, he is now like this God and can freely create in his own world. Could it be argued that millennialism which sees perfection as an act of God, became utopianism where the search for perfection is done by man? Utopia was literally nowhere for Thomas More, and for good reason. It could not exist in our world of

imperfection. Gradually, as "action-minded" utopian writers were influenced by the general millenarian zeal reflected during the seventeenth-century in science and religion, their imaginary polities became "practical utopias." The trauma caused by the English Civil War triggered the acceptance of "programmatic utopias" by those who sought advice on the re-structuring of English society. The historical necessity of the millennium became fused to the practicality of utopian ideals for real situations. Consequently, millenarian zeal made their application all the more urgent. Enlightenment, or the discovery of the best way to truth, became "an orderly progression" not an apocalyptic moment. Science became a machine of perpetual motion characterized by the notion of progress. The future became the "arena in which the immanent process has time enough to fulfill itself." (16) Hence, progress became the way of the future, one step ahead of the present at all times. Everyman became a potential scientist as entry into the educational system or "process" became easier.

That the seventeenth-century was the seminal period for the study of modernity has been widely accepted. However, what has been traditionally characterized as an era of intellectual expansion can more easily be understood as the age during which ideas became commodities. In the next chapter we will see how Harrington was a product of

this age as well as one of its principle creators. His thought displayed the certainty of the new mechanical science, concern for the construction of an ideal, immortal commonwealth and was seasoned with a dash of millenarian expectation.

APPENDIX I

ROSICRUCIANISM

The Rosicrucian was created in the years 1614-1615, with the publication of the Rosicrucian Manifestoes, The Fama and The Confessio. Both were published anonymously in Germany and were translated at various time into English, French, and other European languages. They are Paracelsian in character and speak of an immanent general reformation in learning throughout Europe. Each pamphlet contains a combination of Paracelsian and millenarian themes; the second coming, gnostic revelations of the truth of nature, the macrocosm-microcosm analogy, alchemical symbolism and a messianic figure, Christian Rosenkreutz, the founder of the secret sect.

The attention that resulted from the publication of these pamphlets ranged from explicit denunciation of the movement, mainly by Church officials, to appeals to the brotherhood to reveal themselves in public so that more could join the movement. Robert Fludd's was a good example of the latter reaction; he publicly defended their movement.

There is a controversy over the role that the Rosicrucians, a secret society, had in the formation of the

scientific consciousness. Most commentators agree that the movement, if there really was one, was inspired by Renaissance Hermeticism and neoplatonism. However, some take issue with Frances Yates' interpretation of the movement as initiating a pre-Enlightenment enlightenment, so to speak. Also contentious is Yates' assertion that certain political and scientific figures were closely associated with the movement because of similarities in language.(1)

For our purposes the movement has been correctly interpreted as a seventeenth-century expression of Hermeticism and neo-Platonism and can be considered as part of a larger trend that saw this mystical language become integrated into scientific and religious discourse.

- 1) Frances Yates, The Rosicrucian Enlightenment.
(London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975).

APPENDIX II

HERMETICISM

The most comprehensive description of the Hermetic tradition has been achieved by Frances Yates in a number of works, most notably in an essay entitled "The Hermetic Tradition in Renaissance Science" and her book Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition. The corpus Hermeticum consists of The Pimander, The Asclepius and The Picatrix, translated by Marsilio Ficino in late fifteenth-century Florence.

The Pimander gives an account of Creation in which Hermes Trismegistus has a vision of a great light from which emerges fire and then the Divine Word that creates the earth. Pimander is the demiurge who creates the planets which are beneficial to man. Hence the importance of astrology to the Hermetic philosophy. The Asclepius is about the relationship of magic to religion. Asclepius is another demi-God and is capable of healing. The work also talks about the capability of animating statues that could do the bidding of Asclepius by combining the correct elements of the universe together. Everything in nature has some occult quality and bears a signature of that quality. Along with The Pimander and The Asclepius, The

Picatrix completes the Hermetic corpus which was designed to help man to become the master of his own destiny.

The Hermetic philosophy became instrumental for the development of new techniques of medicine, especially those of Paracelsus who used chemicals to cure disease. Yates suggested that general Hermetic principles lay behind the foundation of modern experimental science and were transmitted to England by Giordano Bruno.

In general, it has been accepted by historians of science that Hermeticism was one of the contributing factors to a new relationship between man and his environment. Specifically, it allowed man to become a magus who could more easily control his destiny.

APPENDIX III

MILLENARIANISM

According to Yonina Talmon the term is used "to characterize religious movements that expect imminent, total, ultimate, this-worldly salvation." (1) Images of a golden age of purity and perfection are used by millenarian movements to arouse the interest of potential followers. In this sense, most movements are "transnational and metapolitical." They promise a complete transformation of society and follow a pre-determined and underlying plan. The heavenly city is to be recreated on earth by an enlightened collective action. This action is often accompanied by expressions of aggression performed on behalf of a redeemer, a mediator between the human and the divine. Also, many movements took place shortly after or during natural or man-made disasters; earthquakes, wars, etc. The future becomes understandable, predictable and ultimately the focus of all attention.

For our purposes, all of these characterizations of millenarian movements can easily be read into the period of turmoil in mid-seventeenth century England. Moreover, many millenarian themes will be detected in the political writings of this age and more specifically in the writing

of Harrington. One could argue that the millenarian impulse, so to speak, was in part responsible for the burgeoning scientific consciousness of progress during this period.(1)

- 1) Yonina Talmon, "Millenarism," International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. 10, pp. 349-51. See also Norman Cohn, The Pursuit of the Millennium, New York: Oxford University Press, 1961.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. Lynn Thorndike, "Newness and Craving for Novelty in Seventeenth Century Science and Medicine," Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol 12 (1957), p. 588.
2. Herbert Butterfield, The Origins of Modern Science 1300-1800, (New York: G. Bell and Sons Ltd.; 1957), p. 7.
3. Richard S. Westfall, The Construction of Modern Science: Mechanisms and Mechanics, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1971) p. 33.
4. Allen G. Debus, Man and Nature in the Renaissance, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 11.
5. Frances A. Yates, The Rosicrucian Enlightenment, (London: Routledge and Kegan-Paul, 1975).
6. Barbara Shapiro, "Latitudinarianism and Science in Seventeenth Century England," Past and Present, Vol. 40 (1968), p. 30.
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8. Ibid., p. 28.
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11. William B. Hunter, Jr., "The Seventeenth Century Doctrine of Plastic Nature," Harvard Theological Review, Vol 43 (1950), p. 199.
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13. Judith Shklar, "The Political Theory of Utopia: From Melancholy to Nostalgia," in Frank E. Manuel, Utopias and Utopian Thought, (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1965) p.107.
14. J. A. W. Gunn, "Interest Will not Lie - A Seventeenth Century Political Maxim," Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. 29 (1968), p. 504. For Harrington's role in the acceptance of the notion of the "public interest" see J.A.W. Gunn, Politics and the Public Interest in the Seventeenth-Century (London: Routledge and Kegan-Paul, 1969).
15. Eric Voegelin, The New Science of Politics, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952).
16. Theodore Olsen, Millennialism, Utopianism and Progress, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), p. 288.

CHAPTER FOUR

HARRINGTON RECONSIDERED

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter an eclectic approach to the evolution of ideas in seventeenth-century England examined an expression of English cosmology that included religious, scientific and political innovations. Each intellectual discipline displayed a craving for novelty and each in its own way exemplified the desire to provide a rational explanation of man, nature and the universe. By contributing to the general increase in knowledge, English scientists, as a group, knew no rivals; by spreading a web of collaborative efforts, the universe came increasingly under their gaze. At the same time, theologians approached Scripture from a new perspective; they sought the truth of God's word through reasonable argument and abandoned the now hollow rhetoric of their more conservative predecessors. Religious toleration and millenarian expectation gradually replaced the dogma of the Laudian church as the foci of learned opinion. Finally, in politics, the practical utopia, a genuine innovation and no longer a simple jeu d'esprit, became the goal of zealous

political luminaries who sought the one best way to govern England effectively.

In this world James Harrington found himself in the midst of a seemingly unending dialogue. His initial exposure to the new learning came during a brief stay at Oxford where he studied with William Chillingworth, the latitudinarian divine. Indeed, Harrington's work reflected the notion of religious toleration as well as concern for the settlement of the great political questions of his day. Although his utopian commonwealth of Oceana was not guarded by scientists or mystics, it reflected the mystical qualities of neoplatonism and the mechanical philosophy. Harrington thought Oceana would be immortal if it were rightly ordered at its founding; it would be "a minister of God upon this earth," bringing salvation in the form of good government to all mankind. At the heart of his work lay the hitherto obscure notion of the public interest, which he saw as the necessary spirit of all well-ordered governments. With Harrington a bridge was created between the ancient and medieval concept of the common good as understood by the tenets of natural law, and the popular notion of the public interest, a positive legal concept that justified not only the increase of empire for popular benefit but also the protection of the private interests of individuals living in community.(1)

Harrington was well read and well travelled. His voyages exposed him to the physical destructiveness of the Thirty Years War, in which he fought on behalf of an old family acquaintance, Frederick II of Bohemia, (2) and to the intellectual destructiveness of Bacon, of the Puritan reformers and to the works of Plato and Aristotle. In spite of his lack of extensive formal training, Harrington displayed a yearning for knowledge that led him to such far away places as Venice and Rome. He believed that travelling was akin to expanding one's knowledge and intellectual ability and so he sought his fortunes abroad. Although no diaries or collection of personal correspondence have survived, Harrington was obviously a very complex individual and from his writings we can glimpse something of his intellectual personality.

This chapter is an exegesis of Harrington's writings from the perspective that was developed in outline in the previous chapter. Our aim is to expand the intellectual context within which Harrington lived and wrote and to reveal important messages in his writing that hitherto have been mentioned only briefly by Harrington scholars. The millenarian dimension of Harrington's immortal Oceana, duly noted by Pocock and others, gains greater significance when juxtaposed with the scientific connotations of such Harringtonian principles as "rotation" and the "mechanics

of nature." His notion of religious toleration revealed his latitudinarian social perspective and reinforced his concern that the spirit of the government rest within the public interest. Harrington's politics displayed a perpetual motion of the superstructures of government and expressed the hope for the reasonable calculation of the common interest of mankind. All things considered, Harrington's work, while it relied heavily on the classical republican and civic humanist tradition that was transmitted to England at least in part in the works of Machiavelli, was imbued with several recurrent and sometimes radical innovations characteristic of his age. In the conclusion of this thesis it will be argued that Harrington's eclecticism aided the evolution of modern political science, a utilitarian search for the one best way to satisfy the interests of the public, progressing naturally from one plan to the next and espousing perfection as its ultimate goal. In this chapter we will investigate Harrington's work one more time in order to substantiate this claim. The chapter follows Harrington's works in the chronological order of their publication and deals with each separately, highlighting the arguments central to this interpretation. The last section is reserved for a synthesis of Harrington's basic political

philosophy under the rubric of the enlarged intellectual context in which we are considering his thought.

I: THE COMMONWEALTH OF OCEANA

a. Summary

In this section we will examine Harrington's first and greatest work, Oceana, from the perspective outlined in Chapter III. Harrington apologized for the method of publication in the Epistle to the Reader (it was printed by three separate presses) and for this style in prose: "for though the discourses be full of crudities, the model hath perfect concoction." (3) The "model" was the immortal commonwealth that he was about to describe. The work was divided into two Preliminary essays that established the historical foundations of Ocean/England; this was followed by the main body of the work, an elaborate account of the orders of the constitution. A Corrollary, dedicated to Olphaus Megeletor, the founder of the republic, ended the work.

The genius of the commonwealth for Harrington was the people, "for where the owner of the plough comes to have the sword too he will use it in defense of his own." (4) Oceana had popular army as well as two provinces under its empire. If Oceana were a symbolic representation

of England, then the two provinces must have been Scotland (Marpesia) "the dry nurse of a populous and hardy people," and Ireland (Panoepa) "the soft mother of a slothful and pusillanimous people." Harrington thought of "planting Ireland with Jews" to increase its prosperity. At the time, many millenarians believed that Ireland could provide a perfect home for the Jews of Europe and that their conversion to Christianity would be a sign that the millennium was about to commence. At the very least, his proposal indicated that Harrington was aware of the problem and the debate that sometimes raged in Cromwell's parliament. It may indicate that he was sympathetic to the cause of certain radicals.(5) Harrington believed that Oceana was "a commonwealth for increase and upon the mightiest foundations that any had been laid from the beginning of this world unto this day."(6) It was on this note that he articulated the orders of Oceana's constitution as a model for contemporary England.

Harrington began the Preliminaries to Oceana by distinguishing between the notions of ancient and modern prudence. Ancient prudence, "first discovered unto mankind by God himself in the fabric of the commonwealth of Israel" presumed that government represented a civil society of men "preserved upon the foundation of common right or interest."(7) Moreover, the common or public interest, a

term increasingly used in the political vocabulary of seventeenth-century England, was to Harrington the very essence of republican government. According to the principle of modern prudence, however, the common interest had been surrendered to the will of "an empire of men and not laws." Of these two discordant political philosophies Harrington wrote "the former kind is that which Machiavelli (whose books are neglected) is the only politician that hath gone about to retrieve, and that Leviathan (who would have his book imposed upon the universities) goes about to destroy." (8) The proper commonwealth for Harrington contained a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy as well as institutions that clearly placed authority with the governors and power with the governed.

Power in the people was secured by the agrarian law "first fixed by God" in Israel, and authority of the governors was sanctioned by God who had diffused the natural aristocracy "throughout the whole body of mankind" for the purpose of providing wisdom and leadership for the people. The legislator who could unite the two "cometh nearer the work of God." While Harrington saw the manifestations of power in riches and empire around him and in history, he noted that to find the balance of authority "we must ascend, as I said, nearer heaven, or to the image of God which is the soul of man." (9) The soul of the

government was analogous to the soul of man; since all souls belonged to God there was a common interest or reason that should dictate the best form of government. Moreover, the soul of government was mixture of the three basic elements of any republican society, the natural aristocracy (the Senate), the representatives of the people (the Prerogative tribes) "so constituted as can never contract any other interest than that of the whole people," and the magistracy or administrative arm of the government. Harrington insisted that this order was natural, and stated: "Now whether I have rightly transcribed these principles of a commonwealth out of nature, I shall appeal unto God and to the world."(10)

Oceana's government, as that of ancient Israel, had to represent equality. For Harrington the basic institutions of an equal commonwealth were two: first, ensured agrarian equality, "a perpetual law establishing and preserving the balance of dominion, by such a distribution that no one man or number of men within the compass of a few or aristocracy can come to overpower the whole body of the people by their possessions in lands,"(11) and second, equal rotation of the offices of the commonwealth. Together they formed a kind of perpetual motion machine that would last forever. Agrarian equality was Harrington's answer to the problem of the balance of power, and equal rotation was his answer to

the problem of the balance of authority. The first was designed by God and the second designed by man to accommodate the ever-changing configuration of interests in a society in constant motion. The political process, then, was meant to mirror the natural order and to reinforce the spontaneous order of a society of individuals with their own specific interests. Indeed, Harrington wrote that any contradiction of the notion of the rotation of office that would allow one man or a group of men to administer the rules and orders of the constitution in an arbitrary fashion "destroys the natural motion of the commonwealth."

In the second part of the Preliminaries to Oceana, Harrington traced the history of the "rise, progress and declination of modern prudence." Making reference to John Selden's Titles of Honour (1631), Harrington described the evolution of English constitutional history from the feudalism of the Goths and the Teutons to the more mixed constitution of the "late monarchy of Oceana," that witnessed power dissipate slowly from the throne to the nobles and the people. The history of Oceana, he wrote, showed two types of parties, temporal and spiritual. Of the first type there were two varieties, the royalists who supported the retention of the monarchical system and the commonwealthsmen who, like himself, espoused the principles of republican government. Among the category of spiritual

parties were included those who believed in the establishment of a national religion, those who believed in liberty of conscience, and those who believed in a government of saints. Harrington showed a distaste for the third variety while displaying a wish to see the first two united in a common purpose, the good orders of a peaceful religion and a peaceful society and government.

The preliminaries ended with a brief account of the successes of Olphaus Megelator, the great general, who, having been elected Lord Archon by the universal suffrage of his charges, became the sole legislator of Oceana's new constitution. Harrington wrote "and whereas a book or a building hath not been known to attain perfection, if it had not had a sole architect or author, a commonwealth, as to the fabric of it, is of the like nature." (12) Aided by a council of legislators, Megelator (Cromwell) began to "ransack the archives of ancient prudence" to create a perfect and immortal commonwealth. The rest of the work described the process by which Oceana's constitution would last forever.

And such was the art whereby my Lord Archon, taking council of the commonwealth of Israel as of Moses, and of the rest of the commonwealths as of Jethro, framed the model of the commonwealth of Oceana. (13)

At the outset of his description of the thirty orders of the constitution of Oceana, Harrington noted that the creation of a commonwealth involved using the available materials wisely. In this context he wrote, "the being of a commonwealth consisteth in the methodical collection of the people,"(14) and so the first orders of Oceana were devoted to a description of the arrangement of the people into parishes and tribes, decentralized units of command for military and administrative purposes. The sixth order of the constitution was delivered in three parts. First, the power of ordination was restored to the people. With this Harrington defended his interpretation of the commonwealth of Israel, as found in the Bible, and the practise of electing the religious leaders of the community by a process known as chirotonia or "a showing of hands." (This is discussed in greater detail in the last book of The Prerogative of Popular Government - see below, p. 154.) Second, he described the creation of a national religion "being not Popish, Jewish or idolatrous," while advocating religious toleration of the same. Third, he outlined his notion of liberty of conscience, a cornerstone of his latitudinarian social policy in Oceana. He wrote that liberty of conscience would be secured by Oceana's council of religion, which was instructed "to raise her hands to heaven for further light, in which proceeding she

followeth that (as was shown in the preliminaries) of Israel, who, though her national religion was evermore a part of her civil law, gave unto her prophets the upper hand of all her orders." (15) Oceana's "prophets" were instructed to search "the true sense of Scripture" for the correct interpretation of God's word so as to inform the theocratic constitution of Oceana.

The eighth, ninth and tenth orders dealt with the general meeting of the heads of parishes and tribes and the eleventh dealt with a detailed account of their function to coordinate the activity of the people with the general policies of Oceana. It was the twelfth order that described the manner of selection of the "knights of the galaxy" (the Senate) and "the deputies of the galaxy" (the Prerogative) whose task it was to debate and resolve the necessary laws that emanated from the orders of the commonwealth. With the Senate debating and the representatives of the people resolving, the motor of the commonwealth was assembled. Rotation and the agrarian law ensured that the system would continue forever. Upon the completion of the selection of the knights and deputies there was "cast the great orbs of this commonwealth into annual, triennial and perpetual revolution." Harrington was referring to his notion of the rotation of offices and seemed to equate rotation with revolution as a mechanical

process. Moreover, "the motions, by what hath already been shown, are spherical, and spherical motions have their proper centre; for which cause (ere I proceed further) it will be necessary, for the better understanding of the whole, that I discover the centre whereupon the motion of this commonwealth are formed." (16) The works of the motor were the fundamental laws, the agrarian law and the rotation of office.

The thirteenth order described the agrarian law, which ensured that at least five thousand proprietors would control the land of Oceana. Harrington's intention was to outlaw the practise of primogeniture and to increase the "industry of the people." Of primogeniture he said "really my lords it is a flinty custom," and of industry he wrote "we also remember that covetousness is the root of all evil." (Is this the statement of a Macphersonian possessive bourgeois individualist?) In concluding his defense of the thirteenth order against charges that it would ruin families and the concentration of industry, Harrington argued his famous position that this order gave the people the land that they would be most eager to defend.

The fourteenth order described the ballot as the affirmation of private conscience, "the purity of the sufferage in a popular government is the health if not the

life of it, seeing the soul is no otherwise breathed into the sovereign power than by the sufferage of the people."(17) In this statement we see Harrington's preponderant claim that the art of politics was like the physician's practise, to cure the anatomy of the government with prescriptive analyses of her humoural configurations. This idea was reiterated with greater depth in the defense of the sixteenth order which established the four great councils of Oceana; war, state, religion and trade.

This order is of no other use than for the frame and turn of the councils, and yet of no small one; for in motion consisteth life, and the motion of a commonwealth will never by current unless it be circular. Men that, like my lord Epimonus, not enduring the resemblance of this kind of government unto orbs and spheres, fall on physicking and purging of it, do no more than is necessary; for if it be not in rotation both as persons and things, it will be very sick.(18)

The seventeenth and eighteenth orders dealt with the election of the ambassadors to foreign countries from Oceana and the election of magistrates and those in high level military employ respectively. The nineteenth order set the functions of the four previously mentioned councils of Oceana, the council of state receiving all communication from foreign countries, the council of war commanding forces but not entering into a war without the consent of the people and the Senate, the council of religion, the

arbiter in religious disputes, which through "a right application of reason unto Scripture, which is the foundation of the national religion,"(19) was to protect the national religion from outside influences. The council of trade was instructed to regulate the flow of business in and out of Oceana. The nineteenth order also described the selection process of a dictator who along with his dictatorial council would rule for periods of three months at a time, as willed by the Senate and the people in cases of extreme emergency. During these periods it would be understood that all private interest would cease and that reasons of state would take precedence in the decision-making process.

The twentieth order dealt with the method of debate in the Senate and argued that the "natural aristocracy" was a necessary element for the smooth running of the 'mechanic' of government which was concerned to uphold the public good. Harrington wrote,

But in general, your senate (and the other assembly, the prerogative, as I shall show in due place) are perpetual, as you have seen, not as lakes or puddles but as the rivers of Eden; and are beds made, so you have seen, to receive the whole people, by a due and faithful vicissitude into their current.(20)

The twenty-first, twenty-second and twenty-third orders of Oceana described the formation of the voice of the people,

the prerogative tribe, as well as describing its function to advocate the increase of Oceana, "to follow the example of Rome" in the public interest. The public interest, Harrington continued, "is nearest that of mankind, and that of mankind is right reason." (21) The prerogative's role in the government of Oceana was to confirm legislation and to adjudicate its enactment. Harrington added: "and that which is proposed by the authority of the senate, and confirmed by the command of the people, is the law of Oceana." (22) Harrington's famous appreciation of William Harvey formed part of the defense of this order by the Lord Archon. "So the parliament," he wrote, "is the heart which, consisting of two ventricles, the one greater and replenished with a grosser store, the other less and of a purer, sucketh in and gusheth forth the life blood of Oceana by a perpetual circulation." (23) The pages that followed detailed the pay scale of government workers and justified it by arguing that it enhanced the revenue of public industry. Moreover, the government of Emporium (London), the capital, was likened to a large corporation. At the end of the section, Harrington described the military orbs of Oceana.

To begin with the youth, or the military orbs, they are circles unto which the commonwealth must have a care to keep close. A man is a spirit raised up by magic of nature; if she do not stand safe and so that she may set

him to some good and useful work, he spits fire and blows up castles, for where there is life there must be motion or work, and the work of idleness is mischief (non-omnibus dormit) but the work of industry is health. To set men unto this, the commonwealth must begin early with them, or it will be too late; and the means whereby she sets them unto it is education, the plastic art of government. (24)

To Harrington, the plastic art of government was the education of the youth in the ways and means of maintaining a perpetual, immortal commonwealth. In the twenty-sixth order he described the erection of free schools and in the twenty-seventh he outlined the six kinds of education as "at the school, in the mechanics, at the universities, at the inns of court or chancery, in travels and in military discipline." (25) By mechanics he meant "unto agriculture or husbandry, unto manufacture, or unto merchandise." (26) In concluding the discussion of this order, Harrington commented on the role of the clergy in Oceana and stated his famous dictum that "an ounce of wisdom is worth a pound of clergy." (27) He intended to create an educational system that was state run and an army of common men that would defend their own property. To die for the good of the state was to achieve glory. "The glory of a man on earth," wrote Harrington, "can go no higher,

and if he fall he riseth, and comes nearer unto that reward which is so much higher as heaven is above earth."(28)

Orders twenty-eight and twenty-nine dealt with the establishment of provincial governments, to be run roughly along the same lines as that of Oceana, in Marpesia and Panopea, and described their civil and military parts respectively. The thirtieth and last order of the constitution described the distribution of the booty of war, which was to be divided equally amongst the treasury of the state, the soldiers, and the auxiliaries. Lord Archon spoke in conclusion of the exercise of establishing a commonwealth for Oceana/England. "My dear lords," he said, "and excellent patriots; a government of this make is a commonwealth for increase. Of those for preservation the inconveniences and frailties have been shown; their roots are too narrow . . . But you cannot plant an oak in a flower pot; she must have earth for her root, and heaven for her branches."(29) He continued with a series of insights into the nature of Oceana as compared with Venice which had lasted a thousand years, literally a millennium.

But whatever in nature is not sensible of decay by the course of a thousand years is capable of the whole age of nature; by which calculation, for any check that I am able to give myself, a commonwealth rightly ordered may for internal causes be as immortal, or long-lived, as the world.(30)

A commonwealth so rightly ordered "hath no principle of decay." The obvious millenarian understanding of the destiny of the immortal commonwealth was further enhanced by a series of statements concerning Oceana's purpose in the world.

A commonwealth, I say, of this make, is a minister of God upon earth, to the end that the world may be governed with righteousness. For which cause (that I may come at length unto our present business) the orders last rehearsed are buds of empire, such as, with the blessing of God, may spread the arms of your commonwealth like an holy asylum unto the distressed world, and give the earth her sabbath of years or rest from her labours, under the shadow of her wings.(31)

Furthermore, Oceana's task was to "put the world into a better condition than it was before,"(32) because this empire, which propagates the notion of liberty of conscience, "is the kingdom of Christ" and it, "shall assuredly govern the world"(33) once it recovered the wisdom of ancient prudence. As he adjourned the council of legislators, their task completed, Harrington's Lord Archon said, "I cannot conclude a circle (and such is this commonwealth) without turning the end into the beginning."(34)

In the Corrolary to Oceana Harrington noted that the voting of the constitution went well and with the starting up of the commonwealth the standing army was disbanded.

Upon the occasion of the death of the Lord Archon some years later, a statue setting him atop a brazen horse was erected in front of the Pantheon or Houses of Parliament. On the Eastern side of the pedestal an inscription read:

His name is a precious ointment

Grata Patria
Piae et Perpetuae memorae
D. D.
Olphaus Megaletor
Lord Archon and sole Legislator
of Oceana
Pater Patrie

Invincible in the Field.
Inviolable in the Faith.
Unfeigned in his Zeal.
Immortal in his Fame.

The Greatest of Captains.
The Best of Princes.
The Happiest of Legislators.
The most sincere of Christians.

Who, Setting the Kingdoms of the Earth at
Liberty,
Took the Kingdom of the Heavens by Violence.

b. Commentary

The Oceana was Harrington's major political work. Taken simply as an example of the utopian genre of writing it pales in comparison to such elaborate works as Bacon's

New Atlantis or Campanella's City of the Sun. It represented a departure from the purely speculative utopian form, which was often no more than a critical analysis of an author's social environment. In contrast, Harrington made concrete suggestions about how England's political system could be altered to accommodate the changing configurations of its social structure. For this reason Oceana must be considered a "practical" or "action-minded" utopia, as has been suggested by a number of scholars. The Oceana's practical reforms included progressive land reform, provided by the agrarian law, a three-tiered system of government, and controlled factionalism. Nevertheless, Oceana's utopian character is reinforced by Harrington's frequent attempts to impute an immortal life to its constitution. It was, after all, a perfect, immortal commonwealth destined zealously to spread its wisdom to all the ends of the earth. Harrington's constant reference to the divinely ordained commonwealth of ancient Israel was evidence of his belief that Oceana's religious and political elements could be combined to form an everlasting theocracy. Moreover, his council of religion, duly established to search for the true meaning of Scripture was a manifestation of the intense interest felt in Puritan England for renewed Biblical scholarship. The Oceana had other elements that also suggested the millenarian

pretensions of its author. Following Machiavelli, Harrington argued that, for the foundation of a well-ordered and immortal commonwealth, a single legislator was needed to set the constitution in motion. The Lord Archon, Olphaus Megaletor was Harrington's answer to the need for a divinely inspired creator of the laws of the commonwealth. His authority was challenged by few and his memory conjured up visions of a saintly hero, an armed prophet, who, upon leaving this world, would enter the next with a crashing fanfare. The monument erected in his honour clearly suggested his wisdom and sincerity as a prophet and founder "Who, setting the Kingdoms of the World at Liberty, Took the Kingdom of the Heavens by Violence." Harrington's founder was able to unite the power and authority in Oceana/England to create an immortal commonwealth that would prove resistant to inside pressure. Lord Archon was a political magus, an imperial wizard whose very name, "was as precious ointment," a definite allusion to the powers of a magician. At the same time Oceana's utopian character was proven as politics was reduced to a machine-like operation in which technical efficiency became the norm.

This concern with the technical means of operating government proved to be the impetus for Harrington's political anatomy as well. Because political society was

composed of units of motion in constant interaction, Harrington sought a mechanical solution to the inefficiencies of haphazard movement. The idea was to control and refine the process of political discourse so as to eliminate impediments to Oceana's ecumenic mission, which was to illuminate other unbalanced polities. The system of rotation described in the Oceana, as well as the agrarian law and the ballot - the fundamental laws of the immortal commonwealth - acted like a motor; once started, it would run forever, a perpetual motion machine for politics. That Harrington was familiar with the mechanical philosophy is likely considering the extent of his reading and his scholarly accomplishments. Without motion, or energy, his commonwealth would die, and without the perpetual replenishment of the heart of Oceana, the Parliament, the commonwealth would drift into a state of ill health. The plastic art of government was to maintain a constant flow of new blood into the offices of the commonwealth through education and practical experience. A commonwealth so formed from the plastic elements of society "hath no principle of mortality," he said, and was so blessed by God to spread its wisdom "like an holy asylum unto the distressed world." This, to Harrington, was the ultimate defense of the public interest in the modern world.

The combination of religious, millenarian, scientific and medical language in Harrington's original work helps to expand the intellectual context into which Harrington's thought should be placed. Moreover, these themes were not restricted to his only utopian work the Oceana but also appeared, as will be shown, directly in his other works.

II. THE PREROGATIVE OF POPULAR GOVERNMENT: A POLITICAL DISCOURSE IN TWO BOOKS

a. Summary

Harrington intended this work to have a two-fold purpose. Published two years after the Oceana, in 1658, it addressed some of the criticisms of Oceana's constitution and was dedicated to the "mirth and discourse of university wits or 'good companies'." (35) "Policy," he wrote,

is an art. Art is the observation or imitation of nature. Nature is the providence of God in the government of the world; whence he that proceeds according unto principles acknowledgeth government unto God, and he that proceeds in defiance of principles attributes government unto chance, which, denying the true God or introducing a false one, is the highest point of atheism or superstition. (36)

The second part of the work deal exclusively with Harrington's interpretation of the ancient doctrine of "chirotonia" or "holding up of hands," that described the

election or ratification of clergy by popular sufferage. In both sections we find Harrington testifying that his understanding of politics and religion was divinely ordained. His constant reference to the Bible for definitive statements about the correctness of his political system proved his scholarly ability and his quasi-millenarian pretensions. Although he concluded that "I never was nor am of any party," (37) he proclaimed in his defense of popular assemblies that "the voice of the people is the voice of God. Hence it is that in all well ordered policies the people have the ultimate result." (38) Presumably the public interest or the will of the people would necessarily prevail if the decision-making process followed Harrington's procedures. Following the principles of nature "the mover of the will is interest" and the public interest "is none other than common right and justice, excluding all partiality or private interest." (39)

In Chapter II of the first book, Harrington characterized the government of the people as "standing upon the earth like a holy altar, and breathing perpetual incense unto heaven in justice and piety," and as "something be something as it were between heaven and earth." (40) He was describing a government with a divine sanction, a new church-like organization that would act as

the spiritual and physical mover of the people. In Chapter III, Harrington defended his three-tiered system of government and the institution of the citizen army, "a beast with a great belly." Chapter IV dealt with the difference between domestic and provincial empires, the latter handled with great caution so as to avoid insurrection. Chapter V outlined in greater detail Harrington's philosophy of the public interest. In this context he wrote "all civil laws acknowledge that there is a common interest of mankind, and all civil laws proceed from the nature of man; therefore it is in the nature of man to acknowledge that there is a common interest in mankind." (41) By this Harrington claimed universality of purpose and imposed on England's forthcoming empire the task of spreading its wisdom abroad, "deposing passion and advancing reason unto the throne of empire." (42)

Chapters VI and VII dealt with the principle of popular consent to legislation as it was practised respectively in Rome and Israel. In Rome the Senate debated and the people ratified, and in Israel the ten commandments, proposed by God through Moses, were approved by the people. Chapter VIII answered Matthew Wren's attack on the perfect commonwealth in the Considerations on Oceana where he wrote that it resembled the perpetual motion of the mechanical philosophy. Harrington replied: "But let

me tell him that in politics there is nothing mechanic or like it. This is but an idiotism of some mathematician." (43) He went on to criticize the attempts of conjurers and astrologers to read the influence of the stars into political action. Moreover, in all of Harrington's work there was very little mention of these novel approaches to the understanding of the political system, but where there was criticism of these approaches it was meant to sting. However, in somewhat contradictory fashion, Harrington himself employed some of the mystical images he condemned, the images of perpetually flowing rivers and divinely ordained mystical founders as well as metaphors that were reminiscent of the mechanical and chemical philosophies. Ultimately, Wren's attack on Harrington's Oceana was meant to criticize a republican enterprise from a monarchist's perspective. Chapter IX of the Prerogative dealt specifically with the flaw of monarchy, that it represented an imbalance in property ownership. At least this was held to be so in England's case. For this reason in his defense of the principle of commonwealth in Chapter X, Harrington wrote that commonwealth "is the government which from the beginning of the world unto this day was never conquered by any monarch." (44) The only way to conquer a commonwealth with a monarchy was if the commonwealth first began to

disintegrate from within. This could only occur if the laws of ancient prudence, the agrarian equality and rotation, were eliminated. Harrington discussed these laws in greater detail in Chapters XI and XII respectively.

The Second Book of the Prerogative or A Political Discourse Concerning Ordination, attempted to prove, with sufficient Biblical evidence, that the election of the clergy was achieved through popular sufferage. Its five chapters dealt with different aspects of the proof of such a notion. Chapter I was a discussion of the two Greek terms "chirothesia" and "chirotonia." The former, chirothesia, was roughly translated as "a laying on of hands" and was related to the Jewish and later the Christian custom of ordaining clergy from within the body of church elders. Chirotonia on the other hand denoted "a certain lewd action of the hand" and was translated to mean the election by popular sufferage of the clergy. In Chapters II and III Harrington deduced this practise as part of the affairs of Rome and of popular governments in general. At the end of Chapter III he wrote, "Wherefore to sum up what in this chapter I conceive to be sufficiently proved, I may boldly conclude that chirotonia deriveth from popular constitutions, and that there was a way of ordination by the chirotonia." (45)

Chapter IV constituted an attempt to prove that chirothesia was derived from a monarchical or aristocratic type of political system, hence its potentially damaging effect on a balanced society. In Chapter V Harrington concluded his arguments in favor of chirotonia and against chirothesia.

Either I have impertinently intruded upon politics or cannot be said so much to meddle in church matters, as churchmen may be said to have meddled in state matters. For if the chirotonia be election by many, and the chirothesia be election by one or by the few, the whole difference between popular and monarchical government falls upon these two words; and so the question will be whether the Scriptures were intended more for the advantage of a prince, or an hierarchy or presbytery, than of the people.(46)

b. Commentary

Throughout his work Harrington attempted to prove the naturalness of popular government by direct reference to Scripture. By searching for evidence of popular political institutions he was of course justifying their presence in his immortal commonwealth. Moreover, it seemed as if the immortality of political institutions was predicted by popular sovereignty. Because the 'people' were the real voice of God, Scripture had been written in the public interest. Scripture clearly showed God's plan for his

earthly kingdom where the common man could be His agent. Although not as complete a statement of republican principles as was the Oceana, the Prerogative represented a counter proposal to the re-establishment of the monarchical system of government in England. It exemplified the character of much of Harrington's work that was published after the Oceana, largely unimaginative re-statements and defenses of the truly original work found there. Also, in the later works, Harrington's millenarianism was less overt and was couched in rhetoric designed to mollify the criticisms of his contemporaries. The most important element of Harringtonianism that emerged from the Prerogative was his calculation of the public interest in both political and religious terms. His insistence that clergy be elected by popular suffrage was an example of his attempts to portray England's constitution in theocratic fashion.

III HARRINGTON THE PAMPHLETEER

a. Summary

A series of pamphlets dealing with religion and the spirit of the nation were produced by Harrington for publication in 1659. They continued his defense of the principles of Oceana and one, The Political Aphorisms,

reduced these principles to short, easy to remember epigrams. In A Discourse Upon This Saying: The Spirit of the Nation is not yet to be trusted with Liberty lest it Introduce Monarchy; or Invade the Liberty of Conscience, Harrington wrote that the spirit of the nation was defined by the people. In describing a theocratic polity, one that combined all matters civil and religious (e.g., Israel), Harrington detected three spirits at work in the "circle of government:" 1) the spirit of a prince, 2) the spirit of oligarchy, and 3) the spirit of the free people. Once combined they ensured that the spirit of the nation would be that found in mixed government with each spirit secure in the total spirit of the nation. Harrington's intention was not to create another "Popish commonwealth"(47) but to create a theocracy in which laws were made in the interest of the public. Any apocalyptic fervour suggested by this allusion to the holy Trinity was enhanced by the final passage of the pamphlet that suggested Harrington's knowledge of the occult wisdom and alchemical symbolism.

We hope ye are saints: but if you be men, look with all your might, with all your prudence, above all with fervent imploration of God's gracious assistance (who is visibly crowning you) into the well-ordering of your commonwealth. In the manner consists the main matter. Detest the base itch of the narrow oligarchy. If your commonwealth be rightly instituted, seven years will not pass ere your clusters of parties, civil and religious, vanish, not

through any force, as when the cold weather kills flies, but by the rising of greater light, as when the sun puts out candles. These in the reason of the thing are demonstrable, but suit better with the spirit of the present times, by way of prophecy England shall be of the old metal, the earth no longer lead, nor shall the sounding air eternally renounce the trumpet of fame.(48)

The "spirit of the present times" was the key phrase of this passage. Obviously Harrington understood the significance of the occult philosophy and its importance as a key to the explanation of the new unfolding universe. What was more interesting than its purely scientific implications were its political ramifications, those that suggested the establishment of "action-minded utopias" could rely on its mystical and religious language to create images attractive to the common man.(49)

Another of Harrington's pamphlets of this period discussed, in less ambiguous terms, the spirit of the nation as its soul, the people. In A Discourse Showing That the Spirit of Parliaments, With a Council in the Intervals, is not to be Trusted for a Settlement: Lest it Introduce Monarchy and Persecution for Conscience, the well ordered commonwealth was, in Platonic fashion, analogous to the well ordered soul. This point was confirmed by aphorism XII of the Political Aphorisms where Harrington re-stated the Platonic doctrine that "The necessary action

or life of each thing is from the nature of the form." In this later work, a condensed version of his basic principles of government, Harrington stated what he thought were the important maxims of the day. Aphorism XXX, "Nature is of God," suggested God's presence everywhere in Nature and was perhaps a variant of the neoplatonic doctrine of the anima mundi which denoted a "pantheistic" universe. Other aphorisms spoke of the natural qualities of the immortal commonwealth, the people, the correct and balanced institutions and religion. "Every man," he wrote in aphorism XXXIV, "either unto his terror or consultation, hath some sense of religion" and in aphorism XXXVIII he wrote, "the prudence or government that is regardless of religion is not adequate nor satisfactory unto man's nature."

These three pamphlets, along with his response to Dr. Ferne's criticisms of the Oceana's religious parts, found in Pian Piano, reveal Harrington's thoughts on the establishment of a national religion. The people of the immortal commonwealth were empowered to select their clergy through the practise of chirotonia, and represented to Harrington the soul of the nation, its very life and breath. Through the establishment of a national religion, outlined above in the section on Oceana, Harrington had hoped to fuse the civil and religious parts of the

constitution of Oceana/England into an immortal theocracy ready to rise to "a greater light." Its political form would take its shape from the form of a well ordered soul but, unlike Plato's polis of discourse, Harrington's Commonwealth of Oceana was to have actual material existence. It existed in latent form in England, and it was up to Harrington as a political prophet to deliver the correct formula to the people that would ensure political salvation. Harrington's millenarian pretensions were perhaps not as strong as those of some of his contemporaries, but they existed all the same. Moreover, as time passed, Harrington's sympathies for the republican cause intensified.

IV THE ART OF LAWGIVING IN THREE BOOKS

a. Summary

In The Art of Lawgiving in Three Books Harrington said "I am no enemy of monarchists" and that he was dedicated to all commonwealthsmen. Of his involvement he wrote: "if this age this age fail me, it shall be testified by another. And if I perish, I perish." (50) Harrington's attitude and cautious language reflected the real political spirit of the times, where one could be suspected of treason for the most innocent of observations.

Book I of the work, showing the foundations and superstructures of all kinds of governments began by distinguishing between the two arts of lawgiving, the true and the untrue. "The untrue consisteth," he wrote, "in the reduction of the balance unto arbitrary superstructures, which requireth violence, as being contrary unto nature. The other in the erecting of necessary superstructures that is such as are conformable unto the balance or foundation; which, being purely natural, requireth that all interposition of force be removed." (51) Once again we discern the imputed naturalness of a balanced polity, found in history by Harrington and re-structured to fit his own times. "Imperfection of the balance," he said, "cause imperfect governments." (52) Thus, for England whose land was dispersed amongst a large number of citizens, a popular system of government was espoused. Chapters II, III and IV of Book I of the Art of Lawgiving were devoted to a description of the fundamental laws of the immortal commonwealth. In the conclusion of Book I Harrington outlined his intention to prove that the efficacy of the form of the commonwealth was a part of Scripture.

Book II showed the constitution of the ancient commonwealth of Israel and that of the commonwealth of the Jews. Harrington argued that political decisions in both cases were justified on a collective basis. While God and

the people elected the judges, it was God alone who elected Kings. Moreover, once established, in Israel "between the law and the religion of this government there was no difference; when all ecclesiastical persons were also political persons." (53) The rest of Book II was a re-statement of the institutions of the Israelite commonwealth including the ballot, the legislative process and the power of popular ordination of clergy.

In Book III, Harrington attempted to produce a model of popular government, confirmed by Scripture, that was right for the present balance in England. In the Preface to this book he wrote,

Certain it is that the delivery of a model of government (which either must be if none effect, or embrace all those muscles, nerves, arteries and bones, which are necessary unto any function of a well ordered commonwealth) is no less than political anatomy. (54)

In Chapter I, the Civil Part or the anatomy, Harrington followed the orders of Oceana outlined earlier, the principle of rotation, the ballot, the agrarian law and the divisions of the people. "And certain it is," he wrote, "that a well-ordered assembly of people is as true an index of what in government is good or great, as any touchstone is of gold." (55)

Chapter II dealt with the religious part, a national religion with the public leading and a reformation of the

universities so that they may search for the true meaning of Scripture. Harrington cast light on the character of this national religion when he wrote that the doctrine of religious toleration implied the acceptance of all religious worship except those "being contrary or destructive unto Christianity." Chapter III dealt with the military part, ensuring that the citizens will be "upon command in continual readiness,"(56) and Chapter IV, on the provincial part, advised caution so as not to allow the provinces of the empire to devour the mother country. In the Appendix Concerning the House of Peers, Harrington made his final statement on the naturalness of the perfectly constituted commonwealth.

A commonwealth for the matter makes herself; and where they will not bestow upon her the form necessary, faileth not to ruin or at least to disgrace the workmen. Or, to speak more properly and piously, a commonwealth is not made by men but by God; and they who resist his holy will are weapons that cannot prosper.(57)

b. Commentary

The Art of Lawgiving was more than a simple re-statement of the constitutional principles of Oceana. Harrington's intention was once again to verify the authenticity of his model republic by arguing that it was both natural and represented in Scripture. Most important

was his insistence that the people become the central focus of political and religious activity. A balanced polity consisted of a popular system of government, in which the people held the power of resolution and the majority of the lands. Immortality was once again assured by the presence of the fundamental laws of the perfect commonwealth, the agrarian law, rotation of offices and the ballot. The national religion ensured that the balance was maintained in spiritual matters as well, for while the perfect commonwealth was essentially a creation of God, His work on earth was carried out by men. As in the practise of ordaining the clergy, the people's ratification of God's commonwealth was needed to ensure longevity. Harrington's characterization of this process as 'political anatomy' further indicated his debt to the Platonic (and neoplatonic) doctrine that a well ordered polity was in reality a well ordered soul writ large. The art of lawgiving was practised by the political physician who attempted to concoct the correct balance of forces or interests in English society to ensure the lasting permanence of the immortal commonwealth.

V A SYSTEM OF POLITICS

a. Summary

In 1661, Harrington wrote A System of Politics, "delineated in short and easy aphorisms from the author's own manuscript." Its ten chapters reduced the Harringtonian system to a collection of aphorisms. However, unlike the Political Aphorisms mentioned earlier, A System of Politics was a more coherent and cohesive expression of the principles of popular government. Chapter I, Of Government, dealt with the meaning of government itself. For example, Harrington wrote in aphorism X that "National government is an effect of a natural force, or vigour" and in aphorism XI that "Provincial government is an effect of unnatural force, or violence." Finally, in aphorism XII he stated that "the natural force which works or produces national government (of which I shall only speak hereafter) consists in riches." By riches Harrington meant the materials of the commonwealth or the people and the resources, which, rightly controlled, would produce stability.

In Chapter II, Of the Matter of Government, only one aphorism need be cited as an example of Harrington's intention to constitute a popular government. "All government is interest," he wrote, "and the predominant

interest gives the matter or foundation of government." For Harrington, the predominant interest was that of the public in whose name the government at all times acted. Chapter III dealt with the privations of government in their various forms of tyranny, oligarchy and anarchy. Harrington's intention here was clearly to warn against the implementation of these imperfect systems of government. Chapter IV, Of the Form of Government, included various aphorisms that remind us of Harrington's concern for divine sanction. In aphorism IV of this section he stated "As the form of man is the image of God, so the form of a government is the image of man." Man creates his own government, in his own image and likeness. Presumably a perfect and immortal government could only be the product of a man close to God, a man with a well ordered soul. "Formation of government is the creation," wrote Harrington, "of a political creature after the image of a philosophical creature, or it is an infusion of the soul or faculties of a man into the body of a multitude." This aphorism was a re-statement of Harrington's claim that a commonwealth and its superstructures need be formulated by one great legislator and delivered to the masses. Indeed, he added that "the more the soul or faculties of a man (in the manner of their being infused into the body of a multitude) are refined or

made incapable of passion, the more perfect is the form of government." Harrington's concern for the elimination of passion in politics and its replacement by the refined spirit of the nation as the basis for good government can be taken as an allusion to the refining processes of chemistry, which seek to rid essential elements of their impurities. This was also a re-statement of Harrington's curative formula for the constitution or creation of an immortal commonwealth.

Chapters V, VI and VII were concerned with the form of government in the civil, religious and military parts of the immortal commonwealth; the delineation of the organs of the healthy political state; while chapters VIII and IX dealt exclusively with the legal and judicial parts of government. In aphorism XV of chapter VIII Harrington wrote,

God, who has given his law to the soul of that man who shall voluntarily receive it, is the only interpreter of his law to that soul; such at least is the judgement of democracy. With absolute monarchy, and with aristocracy, it is an innate maxim that the people are to be deceived in two things, their religion and their law; or that the church or themselves are interpreters of all Scripture; as the priests were anciently of the Sibyl's books. (58)

Harrington seemingly contradicted his notion of the council of religion searching Scripture for its true meaning by

implying in the passage above that God's law was received by the individual at his own discretion. His intention here, however, was to suggest that in a democracy or popular system of government, each person has the freedom to receive God's law and is tolerated by his fellow citizens.

The final chapter of A System of Politics dealt with the administration of government or "reason of state." Here Harrington reiterated his well formed opinion that a well ordered state will always act upon the principles of right of reason. Corruption of the state's reason, said Harrington, "is to be read and considered in Machiavel, as diseases in a man's body are to be read and considered in Hippocrates." Harrington completed the medical analogy in the final aphorism of the work where he wrote,

Neither Hippocrates nor Machiavelli introduced diseases unto man's body, nor corruption unto government, which were before their times; and seeming they do but discover them, it must be confessed that so much as they have done tends not to increase but the care of them, which is the truth of these two authors. (59)

b. Commentary

Harrington's system of politics can be understood as an exercise in prescription to the corrupted political body

of English society. Indeed, as we saw earlier in Harrington's Oceana, the single lawgiver, the political physician who affects a cure, acts alone out of a desire for order. His generosity is as overwhelming as is his knowledge of the history of political thought. In this sense it is hard to distinguish between the passionate yet reasonable lawgiver and Harrington himself. His own refined spirit, transmitted to the multitude in the form of a scientific analysis of the body politic, provided a model for the creation of the efficient superstructures of the immortal commonwealth. In the public's interest, the noble lawgiver communicated his system of politics so that England could return to the past glory of ancient republican wisdom. This notion of a return to the Golden Age of politics was typical of the spirit of Harrington's times. So too were his allusions to the chemical and medical processes that informed his political discourse about the ways and means of establishing and securing a healthy state. Harrington's system of politics worked in the same way as the chemical processes involved in the refining and purification of the elements, it systematically eliminated impure matter from the political process and replaced it with the fundamental laws that were his conservative prescriptions. While A System of Politics was Harrington's last known exclusively political work, one

other composition, also published posthumously, was completed by him during the period of his illness before his death. (Pocock is not sure that he wrote it and thinks that possibly Toland wrote it - if he did then was it out of respect for Harrington that he did so? It is obviously inspired by Hermeticism and neoplatonismmm.)

VI THE MECHANICS OF NATURE

a. Summary

Harrington's last known work was The Mechanics of Nature or "an imperfect treatise written by James Harrington during his sickness, to prove against his doctors that the notions he had of his own distemper were not, as they alleged, hypochondriac whimsies or delirious fancies." Published posthumously in a collection of Harrington's works edited by the mystic John Toland (who regarded Harrington as the greatest of commonwealthsmen), it was a fragmentary treatise containing millenarian, Hermetic and neoplatonic themes. If it were written by Harrington, it would explain the phraseology used by Harrington in his less fragmentary works that less directly suggest a quasi-scientific and millenarian disposition. His doctrine of rotation, for example, gains greater significance as an expression of the mechanical philosophy

when understood as part of his notion of the natural mechanics. Moreover, his consistent reference to the spirit of the nation is made more clear when juxtaposed with his use of the neoplatonic notion of the anima mundi or soul of the world, which was given clear expression in the Mechanics of Nature. Finally, his symbolic use of the chemical process of refinement and the medical analogies outlined above can be more easily understood in light of this work, which alluded to the chemical philosophy inspired by neoplatonism.

In the Preface, Harrington stated that he was "no studied naturalist" but that he understood nature to be the art of God. "Laying therefore arts wholly, and books almost aside, I shall truly deliver to the world how I felt and saw nature; that is, how she came first into my senses, and by the senses into the understanding." (60) The rest of the work was described by Harrington as being divided into two parts, the first was a collection of twenty-four aphorisms and the second part, which has never been found, was supposed to have been a exegesis of these aphorisms. The first three aphorisms outlined Harrington's basic understanding of nature.

- 1) Nature is the fiat, the breath, and in the whole sphere of her activity is the very word of God.

- 2) She is a spirit, the same spirit of God which in the beginning moved upon the waters, his plastic virtue.
- 3) She is the anima mundi, or soul of the world.

In these aphorisms we can detect Harrington's interpretation of nature as having been heavily inspired by neoplatonism, perhaps gleaned from his reading of the works of the Cambridge Platonists.(61) Aphorism number II spoke of the doctrine of "plastic virtue," sometimes understood as a representation of the neoplatonic anima mundi, which Harrington mentioned in aphorism III. Furthermore, it explained his use of the notion of the plastic art of government outlined above in the Political Aphorisms, whereby the materials of the immortal commonwealth were ordered by the single lawgiver. Indeed, viewed from this perspective, the single lawgiver seemed more like a magus or chemical physician who through his understanding of nature and the chemical philosophy could work with natural materials to affect cures for political disease. A close reading of aphorism VIII and aphorism XIII makes this interpretation more plausible.

- 8) Nature is not only a spirit, but is furnished, or rather furnishes herself with innumerable ministerial spirits, by which she operates on the whole matter of the universe; or on the separate parts, as man's body.
- 13) Between the animal spirits of the whole universe and the parts as man's body,

there is an intercourse or cooperation which preserves the common order or nature unseen; it, which is what we call presages, signs and prodigies.

These aphorisms clearly suggest Harrington's familiarity with the microcosm-macrocosm analogy of Renaissance neoplatonism. Again we can only speculate on the origins of these notions in Harrington's thought. Did they come from his exposure to Cambridge Platonism? Or was there another source, the Rosicrucianism of his familial friend Frederick of Bohemia for whom he fought in the Thirty Years War? No conclusive evidence has been found to justify either claim. If this work is indeed Harrington's, however, then these speculations as to the origins of his neoplatonism need further investigation. That Harrington was exposed to the ideas of Renaissance neoplatonism and Paracelsian mystical medical techniques is not unlikely when one considers his learning and his travels on the European continent.

The curative dimension of Harrington's prescriptive analysis of English political society, indicated by his reference to Machiavelli as a political physician was illustrated in The Mechanics of Nature in aphorisms XIV and XV.

- 14) The work of good spirits, as health for example, is felicitious and is as it were angelical; and that of evil spirits, as diseases, is noxious and as

it were diabolical, a sort of fascination or witchcraft.

- 15) All fermentation is caused by unlocking unbinding, or letting loose of spirits; as all attenuation is occasioned by stirring, working or provoking of spirits, and all transpiration by the emission or sending abroad of spirits.

b. Commentary

Harrington's concern for the refined spirit of the nation is perhaps the same concern he has expressed here for the work of good spirits and the fermentation or aging of nature. Again we detect allusions to the chemical philosophy and to chemical transformation similar to those found above in the discussion of the three pamphlets of 1659. Is he, as Craig Diamond has suggested, outlining his political vision in terms of a sort of spiritual mechanics or are his political and his ostensibly scientific works to be taken separately? These notions might also explain his concern to articulate a perfect, immortal commonwealth that existed, as it were, beyond the imperfect world of time.

VII CONCLUSION

The summary presentations and commentaries of this chapter and the recurring themes in Harrington's work that indicate the importance of enlarging the intellectual

context from which he wrote. Moreover, these themes allow us to view Harrington as a more eclectic individual, drawing on a number of obscure yet complimentary traditions for his inspiration. The strongest of these themes, the utopian, provided the unifying feature of all of Harrington's work. Indeed, he thought that he had discovered the key to political immortality in the revival of republican institutions. In his exposition he employed language that was clearly millenarian and we must assume that his intention was to attract a wider audience for his republican enterprise. When writing on the matter of religion, however, his understanding of the correct route to salvation was, perhaps deliberately, ambiguous. Harrington, like others of this period, combined religious and political ideas and institutions and created Oceana/England's constitution in a theocratic fashion. To be immortal, the republic had to have received divine sanction. It did, Harrington argued, because its laws were modelled on the constitution of ancient Israel (as well as Rome, Sparta, etc.), which had been created by God himself. The perfection of England's constitution, then, was a political action inspired by a millenarian impulse that resulted in Harrington's creation of an action-minded or practical utopia. Moreover, this utopia did not exist in the distant future as a model to which a society could

aspire indefinitely. It was easily realizable, at least according to Harrington, by a simple yet effective restructuring of the institutions, the superstructures of the English polity. In a sense, it constituted an experiment, an experiment in political science that would reveal the nature of a long-lasting polity.

In the formulation of the basic institutions and laws of Harrington's immortal polity we discovered other important innovations that suggested a scientific cast of mind. The notion of rotation of Office, cited as an ancient principle by Harrington (as it was), was remarkably similar to the cosmology created by the mechanical philosophy that viewed the particles of the universe in constant motion. The political system to Harrington represented a microcosm of the well ordered universe as well as a macrocosm of the well ordered mortal soul. Both were the handiwork of God and the perfected political system was a man-made reflection of God's natural creations. By rotating constantly, the political system more clearly reflected the nature of matter in motion. It was animated and progressive, no longer archaic and stagnant. It was designed to accommodate changing conceptions of society while maintaining a basic structure that would endure forever. Through the agrarian law and the ballot, the motor of rotation and of the commonwealth

was constantly re-fueled. As long as men held these institutions in reverence the process would continue. Politics became a process of refinement, akin to chemical purification and scientific medicine by which the body was constantly purged of its ill humours. This, among other things was the "plastic art of government."

Harrington's preoccupation with religious matters and more specifically with the establishment of a national religion and a popularly elected clergy were indications of his understanding of the religious questions of the day. The criticism of the Anglican Church, long on doctrine and short on reform, was a common preoccupation of scholars during the Cromwellian period. Harrington's solution to the problems that beset the decaying religious institution was to politicize the Church and force it to comply with the public interest, which was formed through a simple and uncluttered reading of Scripture. Rather than encouraging a separation of church and state, long considered the hallmark of modern statehood, Harrington's intention was to entrench the religious institutions of society in the constitution of England. This wish was both a reflection of his quasi-millenarian purpose and his concern for a well ordered mechanics of politics by which nothing, not even the spiritual realm was left to chance or fortune. The principle of theocracy was of course a divinely inspired

idea that in the past had gone awry. It was up to Harrington, the Lord Archon, to deliver once again the wisdom of God to the people. Like Moses, he was at once a simple messenger of God and an inspired founder of an earthly kingdom. By returning to the ideas of ancient prudence, Harrington hoped to return to a simpler state of nature in which people found their natural place in the political hierarchy. The soul or spirit of the nation was the people, that ambiguous entity that has become the champion of modern politics. The public interest, as we have seen, became the dominant political maxim of the seventeenth-century England, and Harrington was in part responsible for its acceptance as the inspirational principle for political action. Moreover, the public interest was analogous to the interest of mankind.

Oceana/England's constitution was to be delivered to all the nations of the world through an imperial political crusade. In this way the politically heathen world would benefit from the revived ancient wisdom and achieve a similar immortality to that of the English republic. The world would be saved by a reintroduction of ancient principles of republican government. A world so balanced politically would achieve lasting permanence. The world spirit, present in nature, would be released, so to speak, to inform the newly created republican institutions.

The recurrent themes of millenarianism and of the scientific mechanics of nature supplied the formula for Harrington's practical utopia. As a result, the study of politics became increasingly concerned with the articulation of the efficient techniques of government. The public interest eventually became quantifiable in the language of utilitarianism and a sociological approach to politics gradually developed, overshadowing a concern for the ends of political action with a concern for the means to achieve momentary stability in the public realm. Moreover, the ends no longer mattered because history, as the story of conflicting goals and competing purposes, was over, defeated by positive science. Political action was replaced by efficient regulation and the search for the one best way began.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. J.A.W. Gunn, Politics and the Public Interest in the Seventeenth Century, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), chapter III, pp. 109-52.
2. In Frances Yates' controversial book The Rosicrucian Enlightenment, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), she included several chapters of speculation on the role that Frederick of Bohemia played in the Rosicrucian furore that occurred in Prague and Paris between 1614 and 1620. Harrington's association with Frederick and his wife Elizabeth, daughter of James I of England, is usually regarded as part of his political education abroad and his representation of Frederick's affairs in the English court was taken to be a gesture of good faith. It seems that Harrington's uncle was the tutor of Elizabeth and had followed the Royal couple to Heidelberg after their wedding in England in 1614. Hence we can only speculate about Harrington's motivation for visits and befriending the Winter King and Queen of Bohemia and his actual fighting on their behalf. To my knowledge no one has connected Harrington with Frederick and the occult philosophy of Rosicrucianism. But it may have informed Harrington's strange phraseology and his blatantly neoplatonic "Mechanics of Nature." Obviously, given the controversy surrounding Yates' work, this interpretation is simply speculative. See Brian Vickers, "Frances Yates and the Writing of History," Journal of Modern History, Vol. 51, 1979: 287-317.
3. James Harrington, The Commonwealth of Oceana in The Political Works of James Harrington edited by J.G.A. Pocock, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 156. All of the works of Harrington cited in this chapter save one, "The Mechanics of Nature" are contained in Pocock's edition. For that reason most footnotes refer to Works and not to the specific piece under consideration.
4. Works, p. 158.
5. Charles Blitzer, An Immortal Commonwealth: The Political Thought of James Harrington, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960); Blitzer, in a footnote on page 215 wrote: "It is interesting to speculate on

the relation between this view [that the land of Ireland should be populated with Jews] and the evangelical belief that the signal for the establishment of Christ's kingdom on earth would be the conversion of the Jews an event which many predicted would occur precisely in 1656." (1656 was the year that Harrington's Oceana was first published).

6. Works, p. 160.
7. Ibid., p. 161.
8. Ibid., p. 161.
9. Ibid., p. 169.
10. Ibid., p. 174.
11. Ibid., p. 181.
12. Ibid., p. 207.
13. Ibid., p. 209.
14. Ibid., p. 214.
15. Ibid., p. 210.
16. Ibid., p. 230.
17. Ibid., pp. 244-5.
18. Ibid., p. 248.
19. Ibid., p. 251.
20. Ibid., p. 264.
21. Ibid., p. 281.
22. Ibid., p. 282.
23. Ibid., p. 287.
24. Ibid., pp. 298-9.
25. Ibid., p. 304.
26. Ibid., p. 304.

27. Ibid., p. 309.
28. Ibid., p. 312-13.
29. Ibid., p. 320.
30. Ibid., p. 321.
31. Ibid., p. 323.
32. Ibid., p. 328.
33. Ibid., p. 332.
34. Ibid., p. 339.
35. Ibid., p. 390, footnote 2. Pocock argued that this phrase referred to Wren and other members of the Royal Society.
36. Ibid., p. 390.
37. Ibid., p. 390.
38. Ibid., p. 390.
39. Ibid., p. 401.
40. Ibid., p. 403.
41. Ibid., p. 415.
42. Ibid., p. 415.
43. Ibid., pp. 430-1.
44. Ibid., p. 451.
45. Ibid., p. 528.
46. Ibid., p. 538.
47. Ibid., p. 743.
48. Ibid., pp. 744-5.
49. Rosicrucianism could be interpreted as a movement that employed occult symbolism to inspire followers.
50. Works, p. 600.

51. Ibid., p. 603.
52. Ibid., p. 605.
53. Ibid., p. 633.
54. Ibid., p. 656.
55. ibid., p. 696.
56. Ibid., p. 683.
57. Ibid., p. 704.
58. Ibid., pp. 848-9.
59. Ibid., p. 854.
60. Blitzer, op.cit., pp. 329-30.
61. We must recall that Chillingworth, an inspiration to the Cambridge-Platonist movement, was Harrington's teacher at Oxford. Pocock discounts this association as irrelevant for the study of Harrington's thought.
62. See Craig Diamond's article "Natural Philosophy in Harrington's Political Thought," Journal of the History of Philosophy, Vol. 16 (1978), pp. 387-98. This article proved to me that I was on the right track.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis has been to understand Harrington's eclectic intellectual personality. I have argued that his political thought was inspired by a variety of intellectual traditions. Utopianism, millenarianism and classical republicanism shaped Harrington's political discourse about the one best way to satisfy the public interest, and provided the intellectual context for the development of modern political thought. Each provided a clue to the mystique of liberal democracy. Moreover, influenced by the new scientific discourse, political philosophy began to deal with the utilitarian means of establishing perfect regimes. The magic of science was matched by the magic of social studies and private morality became displaced by social conscience and imperialistic nationalism.

Harrington's contribution to the creation of a scientific discourse about politics was evaluated from three historical and linguistic perspectives. The reviews of existing literature and interpretations attempted in the first three chapters, set the stage, or rather the context, for my own evaluation of Harrington's work in Chapter Four. My intention was to prove that historians have erred in focussing narrowly on one aspect of this writer's work. In

order to obtain a more complete picture of Harrington's contribution to the history of political thought, one must cover the canvas, so to speak, with careful strokes that enhance and enliven the detail of his work. In this thesis, to retain the metaphor, I have tried to accomplish a cleaner work of art, one that more clearly reflects the reality in which Harrington lived and wrote. And by enlarging the scope of intellectual vision I have tried to bring into focus some of the more obscure features that attended the birth of modernity.

Chapter One dealt exclusively with the treatment of Harrington's work from the perspective that it belonged in a tradition, inherited essentially from Machiavelli, of classical republican political thought. The work of John Pocock and Zera Fink has been most important for the establishment of the theory of classical republican political discourse. It was perhaps a safe route to take, situating Harrington in a classical republican intellectual milieu, for it was the dominant theme in his work. The revival of Roman and Greek republican institutions was indeed essential to Harrington's articulation of the immortal commonwealth. But this was where the similarities between Rome and Oceana ended. Because Oceana was conceived during the "flowering of the bourgeoisie," any analysis of his work must take the economic perspective

under consideration. As we saw in Chapter Two, another group of scholars, equally prolific as the first we considered, were responsible for the generation of an approach to Harrington that placed him firmly in a tradition of economic historians. They attached significance to the relationship between politics and economics, a significance that led most clearly to the sophisticated discourse of Karl Marx. Indeed, as was seen in Chapter Two, the clearest expression of the application of Marx to the study of seventeenth century political thought was attempted by C. B. Macpherson. He relied, however, on a tradition that began with economic historians establishing the class structure of the early bourgeois English political society.

In Part A, these two approaches to the study of Harrington's works were juxtaposed because they are similar in nature if not in kind. Both schools, so to speak, presented his work in a true light, namely that Harrington's wisdom lay ultimately in its ability to command the remembrance of future political thinkers. For example, while some historians saw Harrington's work as pre-requisite for the development of American federalism, others, equally convinced of their own sincerity, read between the lines of Harrington's prose and magically uncovered "unexamined ambiguities" or hidden messages directed toward the latent capitalist class. As we saw,

the first group ranged from those who labelled Harrington as English Machiavellian to those who recognized Polybius and Lycurgus as his intellectual mentors. In the end, all were variations on a theme of classical republicanism. The second group wished to understand the transition from medieval feudalism to early modern capitalism and as a result, Harrington was entangled in a zealous discourse about the rising bourgeoisie.

The conclusion drawn from Part A was that both approaches to the study of Harrington's thought were deficient on two counts. First, they neglected on most occasions to acknowledge each other's existence, so to speak, and became increasingly myopic in their vision. This is qualified, however, by the recognition that John Pocock did attempt to integrate much of what he read about Harrington into a unique exposition that completed the story of Harrington's significance as a political thinker. But in the end, Pocock, like the others, fitted him with an "outsize toga."

The second deficiency of these two schools of thought was their considerable neglect of the influence of the scientific revolution on intellectual thought in general and on political thought specifically. The digression of Chapter Three was an attempt to define the larger intellectual context in which Harrington lived and wrote.

Chapter Three was a summary and limited discussion of the major currents of thought in England in the areas of science, politics and religion. It brought to light a new perspective that, when taken together with the first two, considered in Part A, supplemented or enhanced their understanding of the period and of Harrington. Evidence for the validity of the scientific, the millenarian, and the utopian intellectual viewpoints was supplied in Chapter Four in which we re-read the entire works of Harrington. This exercise emphasized Harrington's unusual rhetoric and phraseology, the origins of which remain forever obscure. Basing an argument about the author's commitment to an ideological or specific intellectual discourse on seemingly consistent or inconsistent phraseology must be approached with an air of caution. For this reason, the conclusion of Part B merely confirmed Harrington's eclectism, not his commitment to occult philosophy and radical thinking. The thesis of the thesis turned not solely on the contribution that Harrington made to the blending of intellectual themes in seventeenth century England, but also on the convergence of those themes and the subsequent consequence of that convergence for the study of political thought. In this respect, Harrington was a focus, a ground from which to begin. Obviously, another thesis would be needed to investigate the full impact that this intellectual

convergence has had on modern thought in general. Nevertheless, one thing remains clear: the public and the public interest became the focus of political discussion and political science. Private virtues became public, and ultimately social, mores. In other words, sociology, the science of public behaviour began to eclipse the reality of political action as the focus of scholarly attention. The result has been the search for the one best way to satisfy the public interest, the technological solution to the human weaknesses of indecision and indiscretion. Harrington's contribution to the transition was a minor one, but it is important that we understand it because it broke ground for further inquiry.

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