

interpretation

A JOURNAL OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

September 1981

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BERTRAND DE JOUVENEL: ORDER, LEGITIMACY, AND THE MODEL OF ROUSSEAU

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I. The Preoccupation of Jouvanel's Political Thought

The political thought of Bertrand de Jouvanel may seem quaint and out of place on first reading. His writings are often greeted with cordial befuddlement: the cordiality due a wise and insightful author; the befuddlement given an obscure writer. Indeed, he is an obscure political theorist. A highly regarded contemporary—more highly regarded in Europe than America—he is not obscure because unknown. Nor is he obscure because obscurantist, although this is the gist of more than one assessment.¹ He is obscure, rather, because the sum of his major works appears to be diversified, disjointed, and to lack a coherent thread tying it together. One sees both romantic and realist, idealist and scientist, critic of income redistribution and advocate of planning, conservative and liberal.²

Jouvanel's writings first became available in the United States with the translation of *On Power* (1948) and *Sovereignty* (1957). *The Pure Theory of Politics* (1963) and *The Art of Conjecture* (1967) caused a stir among his American followers because they appeared to break with the position in the earlier books. Jouvanel has been regarded as a theorist in the "grand style"—part of the revival in political theory³—but there has been substantial disagreement over the meaning of his position. The purposes of this essay are, first, to suggest the unifying thought in the core works of Jouvanel that have been

This is a revised version of a paper presented to the Foundations of Political Theory Group, August 29, 1974, Chicago, Illinois. The author is indebted to Dante Germino and Carl Slevin for their suggestions in completing the revision.

¹See Robert A. Dahl, "Political Theory: Truth and Consequences," *World Politics*, 2 (October 1958), 89–102, and Leonard Woolf, review of *Sovereignty* by Bertrand de Jouvanel, *Political Quarterly*, 29 (April–June 1958), 186–87.

²Jouvanel's major theoretical contributions are: *On Power*, trans. J. F. Huntington (Boston, 1948); *Sovereignty*, trans. J. F. Huntington (Chicago, 1957); *The Pure Theory of Politics* (New Haven, 1963), hereafter, *Pure Theory*; and *The Art of Conjecture*, trans. Nikita Lary (New York, 1967), hereafter, *Conjecture*. *Pure Theory* was written in English and was not reissued after the first printing. *The Ethics of Redistribution* (Cambridge, 1951), addressed to a British audience, was available in the United States but not widely circulated. Also available are two volumes of *Futuribles: Studies in Conjecture* (Geneva, 1963, 1965), addressed largely to the forecasting audience, and collections of essays mainly from the *Bulletin SEDEIS in Arcadie: Essais sur le Mieux-Vivre* (Paris, 1968) and *Du Principat et autres réflexions politiques* (Paris, 1972). Other of Jouvanel's major essays are cited below, *passim*.

³Dahl, "Political Theory," p. 89; Dante Germino, *Beyond Ideology* (New York, 1976), pp.

available to the American audience, and second, to indicate several implications of this interpretation.

Most interpretations of Jouvenel emphasize a key concept or approach in one or more of his major works, but they either do not find the thread linking the works or develop conflicting interpretations. The assessment by Roy Pierce that portrays Jouvenel as moving from “the historical and the philosophical to the behavioral and the operational” is misleading. Informed by the fact-value milieu, it implies major shifts in his postwar thinking and a progress accompanying maturity, where in fact Jouvenel remains preoccupied with some basic questions, varying his emphasis on these as he develops them in different intellectual formats.⁴ Thus the “behavioral” (conceptual) *The Pure Theory of Politics* is a necessary follow-up to the “philosophical” (normative) analysis of authority in *Sovereignty* rather than a radical shift, a point noted in that earlier work.⁵ Alternatively, Carl Slevin’s initial interpretation assessing many of the early works and occasional papers indicates that there are grounds for reading into Jouvenel a yearning for the days of the *ancien régime* and for portraying Jouvenel as no more than a conservative apologist for the status quo.⁶ Thus *Sovereignty*, written in the face of what appears to be the disintegration of the traditional social ties, can be read as an essay on statism, and has been read in early reviews as a promotion of the “great man” theory. Such interpretations, however, are difficult to sustain when reading *Sovereignty* with *On Power* in the background.⁷

There is some basis for them, nonetheless: Jouvenel’s prewar works and *On Power* originated as responses to real-world problems (e.g., unemployment, political conflict), and early on he appears to have found substantial appeal in the innovative yet stabilizing role the great man might play. But subsequently he has rejected the theories of the great man and conservatism for its own sake as their implications became more explicit to him both in the real world and in his major theoretical works.⁸ *Sovereignty* and *The Pure Theory of Politics* do represent shifts in emphasis from *On Power*, which stresses a breakdown of

⁴Roy Pierce, *Contemporary French Political Thought* (New York, 1966), pp. 184–215. quotation at p. 186.

⁵See Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, pp. 294–304. Likewise, Dahl ignores this point and relegates theory in the “grand style” to theory that cannot meet the “scientific functions of political theory, rigorous criteria of truth” (pp. 89, 95–98).

⁶Carl Slevin, “Social Change and Human Values: A Study of the Thought of Bertrand de Jouvenel,” *Political Studies*, 19 (March 1971), 49–62, at pp. 51–53.

⁷See the reviews by Carl J. Friedrich, *American Political Science Review*, 53 (March 1959), 183–85, and Neal Wood, *Political Science Quarterly*, 73 (June 1958), 291–93.

⁸The author is indebted to Carl Slevin for this point and for correcting an error in an earlier draft of the paper (communication to the author). Slevin is completing an intellectual biography of Jouvenel, and his interviews with Jouvenel underscore these shifts. On conservatism and the great man, see respectively Jouvenel, “Rousseau the Pessimistic Evolutionist,” *Yale French Studies*, 28 (Fall–Winter 1961–62), 83–96; Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, p. x, fn. 2, pp. 10, 71; and his “Thoughts on a Theory of Political Enterprise,” *University of Detroit Law Journal*, 36 (December 1958), 143–53.

legitimate authority commensurate with the growth of state power. But a shift in emphasis is not a shift in theoretical position. In *On Power* the twins of power and *immobilisme* that engender Caesarism are not simply derailments from the *ancien régime*. Instead they prove essential to Jouvenel's notion of authority in the subsequent works. His broad institutional and theoretical venture with *Futuribles* is a consistent outgrowth of themes in *Sovereignty* and *The Pure Theory of Politics*. The *Futuribles* work was construed by one of his American friends and reviewers, Willmoore Kendall, as an attempt at leg-pulling, but it is overtly predicated upon the realization of conditions for "fruitful cooperation" or mutual trust, an end in itself as analyzed in these earlier works, and one that sets a standard for established authority.⁹ Jouvenel perhaps is returning to his prewar concern with real-world problems, but it is a return based on a developed theoretical position and not ad hoc.

The interpretations noted above emphasize the *dux-rex* dichotomy of *Sovereignty*—the tension between requirements for innovation and stabilization that are examined shortly—as Jouvenel's major contribution to political theory. However, they find divergent implications both to this concept and to his other works. These differences, due more to the differing normative and conceptual orientations of the interpreters than to Jouvenel's ambiguities, indicate the necessity of coming to terms with the central preoccupation of his political theory. We follow good advice when we follow Jouvenel's key to the interpretation of Rousseau: "The respect due to the author requires that his books be read in light of what he himself names as his central conception."¹⁰ Stated differently, the advice is to follow a time-honored position: to attempt to understand a theorist as he understood himself.

Jouvenel has indicated that his thinking in the major works has come to be dominated by two contrasting figures: Hobbes and Rousseau.¹¹ Thus he charac-

⁹Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, pp. 10–11, 297. The leg that was in fact pulled was that of Willmoore Kendall, review of *Futuribles: Studies in Conjecture*, ed. Bertrand de Jouvenel, *American Political Science Review*, 58 (June 1964), 412.

¹⁰Jouvenel, "Rousseau's Theory of the Forms of Government," *Hobbes and Rousseau*, ed. Maurice Cranston and Richard S. Peters (Garden City, N.Y., 1972), pp. 484–97, at pp. 486–87.

¹¹See Jouvenel, "Political Enterprise," pp. 151–52. This evidently was not the case in earlier works, including *On Power*, according to Slevin (communication to the author). That many of the early themes remained central to the major works (Slevin, "Social Change and Human Values") suggests that Jouvenel subsequently found in Rousseau and Hobbes paradigmatic statements of his own theoretical goals and their antitheses. See the contrast of these two extremes in his "Jean-Jacques Rousseau," *Encounter*, 19 (December 1962), 35–43, at pp. 41–42. The importance of the two theorists is suggested in the essay by Slevin cited above and in his "Bertrand de Jouvenel: Efficiency and Amenity," *Contemporary Political Philosophers*, ed. Anthony de Crespigny and Kenneth Minogue (New York, 1975), pp. 168–90. Their importance and Jouvenel's thematic unity are suggested also in Michael R. Dillon, "The Sensitive Citizen: Modernity and Authority in the Political Philosophy of Bertrand de Jouvenel," *Political Science Reviewer*, 5 (Fall 1975), 1–46. These essays, and that of Pierce, raise many of the themes contained herein. Our essays differ, however, in assessing the concept of authority and pure politics and, in the case of the Dillon essay, the extent of Jouvenel's incorporation of Rousseau.

terizes the political philosophy of Hobbes as a philosophy that “assimilate[s] the training of citizens to the training of dogs.” By contrast, Rousseau is “the writer I admire and love above all others,” although it is not a love affair that blinds Jouvenel to Rousseau’s deficiencies or ambiguities.¹² Jouvenel is more than an intellectual plagiarist or explicator of another’s ideas, and his major works enter conceptual and normative areas rejected or unanticipated by Rousseau. Jouvenel attempts to outline a model of politics from within the context of the large-scale, industrialized nation-state; Rousseau, for the homogeneous city-state—notwithstanding that there is no turning back in history. Rousseau must be measured as a reactionary in the light of technological progress; Jouvenel sees in these changes enormous possibilities for “fruitful cooperation”—as well as grave dangers.

The dominance of Hobbes and Rousseau suggests that the thematic coherence of Jouvenel’s political thought within the major works can be understood as an attempt to come to terms with these two extremes. In explicating the main theme, we stress those aspects that constitute the rejection of Hobbes and the acceptance of Rousseau: the foundations of legitimate authority comprise the foundations of Jouvenel’s political thought. These can be elaborated by identifying the propositions he utilizes within the logical sequences of his work. Systematic political theory begins with the establishment of certain limiting conditions: assumptions about human nature and the political. Although the two may be interdependent, logically one attempts to graft politics onto reality (human nature). Therefore, the next section develops Jouvenel’s image of man; the one thereafter, his conception of politics. These conditions then may serve as the assumptions necessary to assessing the question of legitimate authority that is taken up in the remaining sections of this essay.

II. *The Social Context of Human Nature: Man as Compliant*

Three assumptions underlie Jouvenel’s image of the social context of human nature. First, *individuals undertake goal-directed activities and hence attempt to elicit reciprocal action from others in order to achieve their goals.*¹³ A condition of such activity is that individuals can count on a degree of reliability or regularity in their relevant environment, and thereby have the ability to forecast and master change. Paradoxically, however, goal-directed activity in-

¹²See respectively, Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, pp. 231–46, at p. 242, and *Conjecture*, p. 80, fn. 1. On the problems in Rousseau, see *Sovereignty*, p. 238; “Essai sur la politique de Rousseau,” *Du contrat social* (Geneva, 1947), pp. 91–120; “Présentation,” *Discours sur l’origine et les fondements de l’inégalité parmi les hommes* (Paris, 1965), esp. pp. 12–14; and “Rousseau the Pessimistic Evolutionist.” The positive and negative aspects of technological “progress,” noted below, are addressed in Slevin, “Social Change and Human Values.”

¹³Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, parts I, pp. 4–13, II, III, cf. IV, ch. 1, 3; *Sovereignty*, pp. 16–25, 35–39, 41–45, 57–61, and ch. 4. Jouvenel states five axioms in *Pure Theory*, pp. 46–47, and the five axioms are modified to fit the argument throughout these two works.

creases the unreliability of the environment and decreases one's mastery of change since others may not be amenable to the power exerted or authority sought in seeking one's goals.¹⁴ In brief, this assumption (and its contingencies) appears self-evident, particularly as it parallels the familiar initial conditions of state of nature—contract theorists such as Hobbes and Rousseau, for whom man is acquisitive and constructed so as to seek the assistance of others. Obviously, however, how the assumption is incorporated within a theory is not self-evident, since beyond this juncture Rousseau's position parts company with Hobbes's. How Hobbes and Rousseau diverge will help illustrate Jouvenel's link with Rousseau.

While mutual assistance is useful, in the case of goal conflict, ego and the desire for self-preservation dominate Hobbes's individual with the consequent "condition of war of every one against every one" in which each man has the "right to every thing; even to one another's body."¹⁵ Against this, Rousseau argues that Hobbes's state of nature, where the right of the strongest and fear of untimely death prevail, represents nothing more than human behavior in an environment into which man already has been socialized. Hobbes did not regress far enough from the social condition to find man as we must imagine him to be (i.e., presume that he is) in the absence of social and authoritative relations. As a corrective to this, Rousseau postulates a state of nature that has two stages: a pure state of nature and a modified form, part way between state of nature as such and society. In the pure form, man is nonman: a brute; product of sensate and physical drives, of appetite (and "the mere impulse of appetite is slavery"); born with compassion, a trait shared with horses and cattle. Man is not really man until he becomes moral. To become moral, he first must become social, a condition that emerges in the second stage of the state of nature, in the transformation to society. Men may be brought together in coping with natural disasters, but this also allows them to learn that others may be useful to them. Conflict, or the exercise of the "right of the strongest," may then emerge unless men acquire "moral liberty," unless they learn the benefits (and the necessity to social existence) of controlling their drives. By thus regressing back through the state of nature concept farther than does Hobbes, Rousseau can claim that power and fear are incidental, not essential, characteristics of man.¹⁶

¹⁴Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, II, ch. 2–3; *Sovereignty*, pp. 59–61. The condition of reliability, especially as at *Pure Theory*, pp. 4–10, is the immediate backdrop for *Conjecture*, see esp. pp. 52–53, 240–47; and initially Jouvenel dealt with the economic rather than the broader sociopolitical system: *L'Économie dirigée* (Paris, 1928).

¹⁵Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Michael Oakeshott (Oxford, n. d.), ch. XIV, p. 85.

¹⁶See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The First and Second Discourses*, ed. Roger D. Masters (New York, 1964), *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality* (hereafter, *Inequality*), Preface, pp. 92–97, intro., pp. 101–03, the First and Second Parts, *passim*, esp. pp. 128–34 and notes i, 1, 0; Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Discourses*, trans. G. D. H. Cole (New York, 1950), *Social Contract*, I, i, p. 4, iii, pp. 6–7, viii, pp. 18–19. (The quotation in parentheses is *ibid.*, I, viii, p. 19.) This portrait of Rousseau draws upon interpretations such as Ernst Cassirer's,

The distinction between Hobbes and Rousseau is important to Jouvenel's position. For Rousseau, the stage of social commitment, of moral reasoning, requires that men legitimize the chains or conventions into which they have been socialized. For Hobbes, this state emerges precisely because men are naturally independent and asocial, in need of socialization rather than required to justify their conventions through a mutual act of commitment (moral liberty). For the present it is the condition of socialization alone that is important; in subsequent sections this, as against the natural man, has great implications for legitimizing authority. While Jouvenel denies that the state of nature is empirically valid and while he begins explicitly assuming a social context, his assumptions closely parallel Rousseau's, whose two-stage state of nature can be compared, first, to the moment of birth and, second, to the growth of the child, illustrations used below and in the next section. The third stage, the state of maturity, is society: the general will, or order and legitimacy for Jouvenel, where the model of Hobbes must be abandoned totally. By developing his second and third assumptions from the context of convention or of socialization, Jouvenel is permitted to move toward a model of politics that is similar to Rousseau's, away from the model of Hobbes's individualism. In short, rather than the characteristics of natural man, Jouvenel attempts to establish the typical patterns of social man.

The second assumption, therefore, is straightforward: the attempt to instigate actions from others does not take place in a vacuum. Indeed, *individuals who are the objects of instigations by others already have a propensity to comply with them, a propensity reinforced since birth*. Our experiences encourage us to expect an environment that seems to become more reliable as compliance follows instigations, less so with noncompliance. This compliant character of man is portrayed by Jouvenel with the least likely example: an isolated individual. As one drives down a road and sees a flagman ahead, one slows the automobile immediately and thus begins to comply with the signal. Only after discerning whether the flagman is a safety engineer, a policeman, or a robber does one slow down and follow directions, stop and produce identification, or accelerate, actions taken after deciding whether the actual intention of the flagman is good or harmful. Behind this example, and a point referred to below, is that from the day of birth we tend to look positively upon commands and authorities as good or beneficial; only secondarily do we analyze the instigation and form other judgments.¹⁷

The example is simple, perhaps simplistic. Presumably the driver's initial reaction could be to accelerate, but this would be explainable only on the basis of previous (negative) experience with flagmen, if the driver had listened to

Jouvenel's and Judith Shklar's, which stress the two stages of the state of nature (the second, part "natural," part "social") and the role of political socialization.

¹⁷Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, respectively, III, ch. 1, and II, ch. 2-3, esp. pp. 45-50, 62-65. See *Sovereignty*, pp. 35-39; also pp. 57-61, 82-83, 260-63.

news reports of highwaymen operating in the area, or the like. Man, that is to say, is never isolated. He is social, and as he is social he has learned, or has been socialized into, inclinations of acquiescence toward other actors and phenomena that appear authoritative. This "priority of Otherdom relatively to the individual should be remembered as the basic datum of political science."¹⁸ The compliant character of socialized man, moreover, calls into question the notion of consent as the source of legitimate authority (a point developed in subsequent sections). It implies that political analysis look not simply to the activity of individual response, but to the functioning of instigators, of those who seek to elicit actions and to have their own instigations deemed authoritative.

A tendency to comply, however, is not tantamount to compliance or obedience, particularly if an attempt to extract obedience relies largely on fear, uncertainty, or force. The third assumption, therefore, is that *an individual instigating action from another acknowledges that the other may choose to accept or reject the elicitation as necessary or useful*; had the second party no choice, he would be part of the determinant environment, the givens, for which the first party accounts in his activity.¹⁹

The third assumption implies a normative claim—one should acknowledge, ought accept, etc.—but it may serve as a descriptive proposition since it recognizes the reciprocal relationships between change, the human goal orientation, and environmental reliability. For example, A's freedom is predicated upon recognizing how his actions affect B's activities toward him. A can assume that changes he makes will induce activity from B that may affect A's goals (e.g., compulsion by B) so that he "ought" account for or reciprocate with B. A can be free, that is, by deriving a sense of his own obligations toward B (and vice versa) from the terms of the relationship. Nevertheless, the proposition does establish a normative standard insofar as it becomes increasingly difficult to observe it. In a situation where A might be able to get the information necessary to forecast the probable state of B (symbolizing activities within the relevant environment) but be prohibited from acting, or where A might be perfectly free to act but be prohibited from gaining information necessary to forecast B, the odds are so stacked against A that the assumption is rendered inoperative.²⁰ A might account for B, or comply with him (if that is the context), but there is no reason to assume that A does so (or ought to do so) out of a sense of obligation. Thus action intended to be binding on an individual is binding only through gaining his assent (i.e., force or constraint is insufficient).

Jouvenel's three limiting assumptions obviously portray tensions. While man is found in a relatively structured environment, one cannot always foresee, let alone control, that structure:

¹⁸Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, p. 57.

¹⁹Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, p. 47, where the party without choice, as part of the "givens," is developed. In general see also pp. 4–13, 62–65, cf. III, ch. 2; *Sovereignty*, pp. 62–70.

²⁰See Jouvenel, "Authority: The Efficient Imperative," *Authority*, NOMOS I, ed. Carl J. Friedrich (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), pp. 159–69, esp. pp. 160–61.

This condition is of course fulfilled in a human cluster pervaded by routines. . . [But w]henver Alter departs from the course which Ego assigns to him on the basis of precedent, this is a perturbation in Ego's Otherdom. The stability of Otherdom, necessary to Ego, is made up of a general adherence of individuals to typical behaviours, the concatenation of which forms an environment capable of being known.²¹

Ego wishes Alter to remain in his routine, yet every Alter acts as Ego. Hence "reconciliation of reliability with freedom and change poses the most difficult problems of Politics."²² These problems bring us to the heart of the political.

III. The Politics of Aggregation: Instigation and Compliance

The political relationship is a natural outgrowth of the social relationship since the "moving of man by man" is "the smallest identifiable component of any political event." Actions designed to instigate reciprocal responses from others may be additive, or performed only for some immediate goal, or aggregative. Aggregative action aims "not at some 'once for all' action, but at the establishment of some permanent condition, to which the group of men who bring it about must continue loyal." This constitutes Jouvenel's notion of pure politics.²³

The politics of aggregation, or pure politics, begins with the politics of the founding, which requires an instigator or promoter of a particular project. Similar to the role of the entrepreneur, who seeks to consolidate the forces (the wills of others) necessary to achieve his goals, this is the role of "emergent authority." Where no competitors exist within the same milieu, this phenomenon may be considered "established authority."²⁴ Though the instigating role is common to both forms of action, there is a significant distinction between action that is merely additive and the creation of an aggregation. An aggregation provides benefits—a common milieu of identity, preservation and mutual security in knowing that the safety of one is linked to the security of all, and so

²¹Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, p. 63. Compare Ego to Primus in *Sovereignty*, pp. 59–61; and see *Conjecture*, pp. 51–55.

²²Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, p. 51. See *Sovereignty*, pp. 119–30, ch. 9, esp. pp. 149–65, ch. 15–16; Jouvenel, "Order vs. Organization," *On Freedom and Free Enterprise*, ed. Mary Sennholz (Princeton, 1956), pp. 41–51, esp. pp. 50–51.

²³Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, pp. 10, 30, 82, 99, 110ff., at 10; *Sovereignty*, p. 2, fn. 1, pp. 17–20, 296, at 18–20; and "Authority: The Efficient Imperative."

²⁴The theme of entrepreneurship is central. See Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, I, ch. 1, III, ch. 1–2, IV, ch. 1, esp. pp. 105–08, and IV, ch. 3. The parallel concept in *Sovereignty* is *auctor*: ch. 1 and ch. 2, esp. pp. 26–30. See also "Political Enterprise." Emergent authority is always innovative—the *dux* capacity—but established authority must balance off innovation (*dux*) and stabilization (*rex*). One may merge into the other (see *Sovereignty*, pp. 53–55, 62–70), a point often ignored in commentaries that stress *dux* and *rex*. For *dux*–*rex* and parallel concepts, such as authority and Authority, see *ibid.*, pp. 21–23, 32–39, chs. 3–4, pp. 97–104; *Pure Theory*, V, ch. 1, pp. 131–45, VI, ch. 1; *On Power*, pp. 83–85; and citations in the preceding note. Germino, Slevin, and Pierce stress the *dux*–*rex* notions.

on—that are not had when separate individuals artificially and tenuously league with one another to pursue an end that, when realized, signals the dissolution of the organization. At a minimum, an aggregation may provide some sense of permanence in the individual's environment, and thus may allow for greater leeway in acting on one's sense of his obligations than does an organization that is additive and short term. Moreover, within an aggregation, a multitude of short term or additive initiatives are possible up to the point where these actions challenge the existence of the aggregation.²⁵ The aggregation, that is, must have some means of maintaining itself. Two conditions are necessary to the creation of the permanent organization: the establishment of order and the legitimizing of that order.

The first requirement indicates that order-as-such is the baseline goal of any aggregation; that specific goals for organizing, such as the method of property distribution or the form of limitations placed upon natural liberty, are logically and normatively secondary goals, goals pertaining to the ideological character of a particular regime. The question of order is straightforward. It involves a principle of necessity: that an aggregation provide means of self-preservation. Because conflict is possible and most conflict permissible so long as it does not challenge the constitutional status of established authority, political organizations must be capable of sorting out conflicts, regulating them, and terminating those that challenge the political order itself. Without realizing such a principle—Jouvenel terms it the Law of Conservative Exclusion, since the required action is to minimize disaggregative action with a minimum of authoritative actions—organization would be impossible, and social life a constant state of war.²⁶

The second requirement, legitimacy, is problematic. Although Jouvenel portrays the politics of aggregation as the politics of the voluntary association—individuals equally may reject or accept instigations that seek their compliance—he nevertheless denies the validity of the social contract account of consent. “‘Social contract’ theories are views of childless men who must have forgotten their own childhood.” These are strong words, if all that makes this an “intellectual monstrosity” (stronger still) is the lack of an adequate account of the spontaneity of wills necessary to generating the contract.²⁷ Spontaneity, how-

²⁵See Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, pp. 16–21, 33, and ch. 7; *Pure Theory*, III–IV. And see Rousseau, *Social Contract*, II, i, p. 23.

²⁶Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, IV, ch. 2, esp. pp. 110–17, cf. IV, ch. 3, esp. pp. 118–23, 125–28. See too Jouvenel, “The Chairman’s Problem,” *American Political Science Review*, 55 (June 1961), 368–72. On the symbolic role of a crown—or a constitution—in preserving order, see *Sovereignty*, ch. 3, esp. pp. 43–48, and p. 259.

²⁷Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, p. 45. See also *ibid.*, pp. 58–59, 71–73; *Sovereignty*, pp. 26–29. Rousseau comes closer to acknowledging the entrepreneur than Jouvenel indicates. In a significant qualification to the presumed “unanimity, on one occasion at least” (*Social Contract*, I, v, p. 13) Rousseau recognizes the instigator in a passage closely paralleled by Jouvenel’s notion of the entrepreneurial role: “The first person who, having fenced off a plot of ground, took it into his head to say *this is mine* and found people simple enough to believe him, was the true founder of civil

ever, is only a device for explaining away the original agreement and the entrepreneur, the one who instigates the meeting itself, establishing its location and agenda. His criticism to the side, Jouvenel acknowledges the intent of social contract theorists if not the structure of their arguments:

these great geniuses had very good reasons for compressing into a single day, “the day of creation” of their imaginations, a process which took a thousand years; if it is untrue that society was made in a day, it is true that it is made and unmade every day. And the myth of instantaneous creation enabled them to bring out in sharpest relief the conditions on which social life is possible.²⁸

In rejecting the substance (rational consent) and form (spontaneity) of contract theory as the product of “childless men,” Jouvenel acknowledges the rationale upon which the contract device is utilized and additionally indicates, in the view that the social contract portrays society as “made and unmade every day,” that emergent authority is ever-present.

That the “basic datum of political science” is the continual presence of individuals in a structure environment is one thing. That this presence informs their propensity to comply with the instigations of others is another, however. We may return to an earlier context:

The child grows up in a shadow of towering adults. They have forces he lacks, the ability to do what he cannot. . . . In his eyes, they are Great Powers. As such they are impressive: hence a propensity to obey them. [Moreover,] the Great Powers at whose feet the child plays are primarily helpful and beneficent. . . . The infant places itself in real or fancied jeopardy, calls out, and is unfailingly rescued. This relationship persists as the child grows up. *Such experience accustoms Man-in-formation to regard Authority as accessible to his calls, prompt to intervene in his favour. However essential the difference between the superior power of the parent and the superior power of the governor . . . , the notion of an attentive, responsive, and helpful superior power tends to be transferred from one to the other.*²⁹

This goes beyond a mere “propensity.” For obedience to the law, or to the symbols of “established authority,” is done largely out of habit. When authority prescribes patterns of behavior, our propensity to comply indicates a developed habit of acquiescence.

That all “established authority” has a presumption in its favor in the minds of men, a presumption emerging since our first day, seriously weakens consent or contract theory as the standard for legitimacy. How can we create authority when prior to articulating the basis for our consent we already gravitate toward the preserver of the status quo? Thus, by contrast to our habit of obedience, our

society.” (*Inequality*, Second Part, p. 141). More important, as “agenda setting” goes, is Rousseau’s Legislator.

²⁸Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, pp. 113–14, at p. 113.

²⁹Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, II, ch. 2–3, quotation at pp. 49–50, emphasis added; and see III, ch. 1, pp. 69–73. Also, *Sovereignty*, pp. 59–61.

tacit acquiescence, disobedience to the law, when it is not inadvertent, requires extraordinary reasons and relatively careful calculations of its potential costs. The critical point is that consent is never created out of a vacuum; the form the consent takes and the reasons used in justifying it are colored to some degree by prior habits of behavior and patterns of acquiescence.

In light of Jouvenel's portrait of the compliant individual, the notion of consent, or of the social contract, is best described as symbolic of the actual process by which legitimacy comes about; it is designed simply to formalize the process of gaining legitimacy. If consent is always contingent upon prior habits of acquiescence, then the standard for legitimacy must be found in the actions of established (or emergent) authorities: the guarantees of success they put forth for the longevity of the aggregation and the goals proposed to that end. The function of consent may be summarized as follows: *the consent one gives is not itself the source of legitimacy*—literally, the “authorizer” of authority—but *instead a derivative of that phenomenon*. Moreover, given legitimate authority (i.e., if it is present), it may be inferred that *one is under an obligation to consent to legitimate authority, since a refusal of that consent would signal a rejection of the mutuality of the aggregation*. The options of accepting or rejecting legitimate authority are similar to the choices for Rousseau found in the popular Sparta, age-of-gold models portrayed by Judith Shklar and others and in Jouvenel's essays on Rousseau. Lacking the ideal autonomy of the age of gold, individuals must come to terms with life in the aggregation.³⁰

Jouvenel's position constitutes a rejection of the Hobbesian claim that authorization creates authority. And why should it not? For authorization implies that an individual, rationally and independent of his structured environment, consents to be governed; that his action overrides the effects of socialization by which habits of deference are inculcated and molded. By contrast, to portray consent as an activity granted to legitimate authority is to emphasize an alternative proposition: the socialized and deferential individual is placed in a position of continually measuring his compliance, which he may transform into commitment, in light of the actions of established authority. This much may suffice for the origins and characteristics of legitimacy. It does not, however, account for what guarantees the legitimacy of established authority, for what constitutes the sufficient conditions for legitimacy. Legitimacy is tied to order. But how? It is one thing to say that the socialized and deferential individual may transform compliance into commitment, but he *is* socialized and deferential. In terms of Rousseau's initial question, how are our chains—not simply the chains of institutions but those of habit and custom and of our deference to someone believed to be of superior authority—to be legitimized? Although he

³⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 29–30, 35–39, 43–48, 50ff.; chs. 6–9; pp. 190–98, 200–14. See Judith N. Shklar, “Rousseau's Two Models: Sparta and the Age of Gold,” *Political Science Quarterly*, 81 (March 1966), 25–51, and the essays by Shklar, McManners, and Masters in *Hobbes and Rousseau*. See Jouvenel, “Essai sur la politique de Rousseau,” pp. 16–21, 30–45, 91–98.

rejects the form of the social contract theories of Hobbes and Rousseau, these theorists, and particularly Rousseau's rejection of Hobbes's account, raise the issues of order and legitimacy in precisely the form with which Jouvenel must come to terms.

IV. Order, Legitimacy, and Mutual Trust

The distinction between creating authority out of consent and consenting to legitimate authority has a descriptive foundation in the relatively structured environment favoring individual compliance. But what are the implications of this distinction? There must be criteria for measuring legitimacy, else deferential habits to a tyrant would be indistinguishable from those to a democratic (or beneficent) ruler—or to a mob—which has been accredited through the appropriate channels of giving consent.³¹

We are close to Jouvenel's view of these criteria if we follow Rousseau's dictum that it is necessary to link legitimacy to utility:

The undertakings which bind us to the social body are obligatory only because they are mutual; and their nature is such that in fulfilling them we cannot work for others without working for ourselves. Why is it that the general will is always in the right, and that all continually will the happiness of each one, unless it is because there is not a man who does not think of "each" as meaning him, and consider himself in voting for all?³²

This is not a notion of utility that is to be evaluated by the presence of fear or acquisitiveness (Hobbes). The notion suggests how *mutual trust*, the condition that allows for separate individual initiatives within the aggregation, may be gained. A provisional proposition, which must be justified shortly, is the following: to the degree that established authority preserves the aggregation—as such, a mutual undertaking by definition, and inculcates within it the conditions for individual self-interest initiatives that do not threaten the interests of others, authority is legitimate. Moreover, if mutual trust is the sufficient condition for individual freedom, the following proposition is implied: *individuals can formulate their obligations based on the benefits each receives through mutual cooperation within the aggregation*. Ego and Alter in Otherdom then have little basis for mutual fear and conflict.³³ Should the balance shift, however, to favor Ego—constraining Alter in routines so that Ego may pursue other initiatives—the conditions for mutual trust decline, taking with them the conditions for individual freedom. The principle of mutual trust, the standard for legitimacy, is displaced by a different norm, that of power or of mutual fear.

³¹Cf. Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, pp. 204–14.

³²Rousseau, *Social Contract*, II, iv, p. 29; cf. I, vii, p. 17, and II, vi, pp. 34–35. See too Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, pp. 263–75.

³³Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, pp. 22–24, 52–53, 59–61, 115–38, ch. 9, esp. 149–65, and pp. 296–97; cf. *Pure Theory*, pp. 46–47, II, ch. 2–3, V, ch. 1, pp. 135–38. Jouvenel has held this position beginning with his early work on economic planning, *L'Économie dirigée*.

Alter may have a propensity to comply so habitual that it can be strained for long periods of time, but compliance based on power alone ultimately degenerates into a cycle of conflict. Thus to Rousseau, Hobbes's account of the state of nature and the rationale it supplied for authorizing the sovereign does not establish legitimacy but the "right of the strongest." This is a specious right since all that matters is that one act so as to become the strongest. Organizations that exist only by virtue of this "right" are not, indeed, political. They are merely additive, created not for the sake of order-as-such and the mutual benefits (once legitimized) it provides, but for the sake of benefits accruing to the stronger party. Jouvenel's politics of aggregation and its legitimacy begins then by following the normative lines of Rousseau's critique: if power, or "nothing more than the capacity to make oneself obeyed," is all that is involved in developing organization, one may infer that there is no rationale for excluding any test of one's capacity to extract obedience.³⁴ In general, the claim for legitimacy involves the negative proposition that the *exercise of power tends to multiply conflicting instigations rather than to exclude them as required by the condition of order*. The net effect of the "right of the strongest," therefore, is to preclude aggregative activity altogether since the application of power produces responses that are involuntary or constrained, short term in intent and supportive only of additive action. Hence the development of an aggregation must be based not upon power, the ability to force compliance, but upon authority, the ability to gain assent to one's actions.³⁵

Yet because there are tolerable levels of conflict—interest group struggle as distinct from constitutional challenges—the relationship between authority's commands and the goals and instigations of an individual or subgroup within the aggregation is always a function of the expectations of the latter regarding the claims and goals and also the enforcement capacities of the former.³⁶ The following more specific propositions are thus in order. First, established authority must rely mainly not upon the institutionalization of its command or the preceptive aura of its authority, but upon *the generation and transmission of supportive attitudes among individuals within the aggregation, i.e., political socialization and consensus*.³⁷ Consensus, socialization, and the symbolic and real roles of established authority are critical. The second proposition will require further scrutiny. Because legitimacy depends upon the activities of established authority and its ability to generate support and consensus by satis-

³⁴Compare Rousseau, *Social Contract*, I, iii, and *Inequality*, Preface, pp. 96–97, First Part, pp. 128–40, Second Part, pp. 177–78, to Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, p. 32; also *Pure Theory*, p. 125, and "Authority: The Efficient Imperative," pp. 159–61.

³⁵Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, IV, ch. 1 and 3; also I, ch. 1, p. 10, and III, ch. 1; *Sovereignty*, pp. 21–25, 29–34ff., ch. 5, pp. 80–84, ch. 6, Concl.

³⁶Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, pp. 115–17.

³⁷This pervades Jouvenel's major works: *Sovereignty*, pp. 38–48, 52–53, 56–61; *Pure Theory*, pp. 49–51, 63, 135–38; *On Power*, pp. 22, 24, 88–89, 105, 194–200, 299, 366ff.; *Conjecture*, pp. 29–30, 245–47.

fyng the conditions for mutual trust, this proposition is that *the burden of proof for change and breakdowns within the organization rests upon established authority*, not upon individuals, who tend to be compliant, or upon emergent authority.

V. *The Political Battle: Established Authority and the General Will*

To emphasize pure politics as “an activity that builds, consolidates and keeps in being aggregates of men,” is to recognize that two opposing tendencies are inevitable: initiation and change, and consolidation and stabilization. Although these tendencies “do not regularly merge, and they therefore give rise to tensions more or less pronounced at different moments,” the degree to which one can say that established authority is legitimate varies with the degree to which a balance between these tendencies is approximated.³⁸ In the following, the analyses of Jouvanel and Rousseau are compared to draw out more explicitly their parallels on the questions of order and legitimacy.

Obviously, the process of aggregation would become more complex as the number of individuals involved in the organizational set, each with separate values, is multiplied. With every increase in organizational size, the difficulty of reconciling individual values with the organization as an end in itself, and hence the likelihood of success for emergent authorities within smaller milieus, would seem to increase, much as the disparity between the will of all and the general will increases with expansions in the physical and numerical size of the state.³⁹ “Every extension of the social tie means its relaxation; and, generally speaking, a small State is stronger in proportion than a great one,” acknowledges Rousseau. By the same token, one would expect that as this complexity increases, so too does the probability for established authority itself to break down into the simple, but disaggregative, exercise of power.⁴⁰

On the other hand, as size and complexity increase, so too do the number of individual wills or interests multiply. If it is not possible to have only one interest that unifies the aggregation, a multiplicity or plurality is preferable:

It is therefore essential, if the general will is to be able to express itself, that there should be no partial society within the State, and that each citizen should think only his own thoughts. *But if there are partial societies, it is best to have as many as possible and to prevent them from being unequal.*⁴¹

³⁸Jouvanel, *Sovereignty*, p. 20; *Pure Theory*, p. 108.

³⁹A basis for the parallel between Jouvanel’s language and Rousseau’s is developed in Roger D. Masters, “The Structure of Rousseau’s Political Thought,” in *Hobbes and Rousseau*, pp. 401–36. See too Jouvanel’s “Forms of Government,” pp. 490–97, on which Masters builds, and “Political Enterprise,” p. 153.

⁴⁰The quotation is from Rousseau, *Social Contract*, II, ix, p. 44; see also III, i, pp. 55–57, ii, p. 60. The point is a theme of *On Power*. On the general problem of complexity and disaggregative tendencies, see *Sovereignty*, ch. 2, ch. 5 (pp. 80–82), pp. 94–104, 119–33, 260–75, ch. 16; also “Essai sur la politique de Rousseau,” pp. 102–04, 127–32.

⁴¹Rousseau, *Social Contract*, II, iii, p. 27, emphasis added. See III, i, p. 57; and cf. II, ix, pp. 45–46, III, ix, p. 83, and IV, i, p. 103.

The recognition of pluralism is central to Jouvenel, as it is to Rousseau in light of this qualification. A multiplicity of interests may continually force established authority to come to terms with emergent authorities. But with pluralism and the absence of blatant inequalities, the following is appropriate: *the greater the multiplicity, the lesser will be the perceived threat to individuals by other interests to the degree that established authority can contain or channel these activities within the aggregative framework.* The difficulty, of course, is the establishment of an appropriate level of containment for multiple interests within the aggregation; that is, the capacity to reduce perceived threats to interests and the correlative increase of mutual trust.

Central to this difficulty is the theme that politics is a process of building authority, not of exercising power; that, indeed, power exercise within an aggregation is disaggregative. In general, "political forces" are "positive in isolation and . . . constructive in tendency." But actions taken in the name of an aggregation may have a negative effect regarding another political force. Each activity, therefore, is an exercise of power *via-à-vis* another authority—one that is established for its membership, emergent in the context of the aggregation. What "the political battle as it really is" amounts to is the emergence of a variety of instigators, some with words, some with force, and their containment within the boundaries of the aggregation.⁴² For if established authority can channel the activity, its capacity as stabilizer prevails. Should it fail, its own actions appear as nonauthoritative exercises of power, unintended causes of direct challenges to its position. What Jouvenel has called the "power of prevention" is the ability of one authority to channel another without destroying one another.⁴³ The power of prevention, that is to say, should result in a balance much like the general will of Rousseau, whereby the effects of the will of all are neutralized: "take away from these same wills the pluses and minuses that cancel one another, and the general will remains as the sum of the differences."⁴⁴ The emergence of instigators who do succeed against established authority, however, is an indication that the activity of building a consensual basis for a plurality of instigations within the aggregation has broken down.

When the tendencies toward disaggregation outweigh those toward aggregation, the conflict between succeeding emergent authority and declining established authority indicates not the superiority of the values claimed by emergent authority or its ability to rally wills and claim mandates for action—though these may be relevant considerations—but the failure of established authority. This failure of the power of prevention—the breakdown of consensus and the success of emergent authority—is the sort of situation upon which

⁴²Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, ch. 2 (quoted phrases at ch. 1, pp. 20, 21); *Pure Theory*, III–IV.

⁴³Jouvenel, "The Means of Contestation," *Government and Opposition*, 1 (January 1966), 155–74; also "Political Enterprise," p. 153, and "Authority: The Efficient Imperative." In general, see *Sovereignty*, pp. 80–82, 247–59; *Pure Theory*, pp. 104–07; and *On Power*, pp. 95–118, 157–93, 208–12, 215–37ff., 262–64, 334–36.

⁴⁴Rousseau, *Social Contract*, II, iii, p. 26.

Rousseau reflects in providing that “whoever refuses to obey the general will shall be compelled to do so by the whole body . . . that he will be forced to be free.” The provision is a metaphor for the proposition “that each citizen should think only his own thoughts,” that the cancellation of the pluses and minuses that characterize the will of all should take place within the framework of the general will.⁴⁵ Different from Jouvenel, however, Rousseau appears to be addressing the dangers of emergent authority, not the demise of established authority. Moreover, the metaphor itself is dangerous, for to the extent that “the people is never corrupted, but it is often deceived” it may be used to the advantage of prevailing opinion that is “purely particular,” a faction or partial association seeking authority for its own gain.⁴⁶ Indeed, it appears to represent an ambiguity in Rousseau and is the root of controversy among his interpreters over the “totalitarian-or-democratic” Rousseau. Yet he maintains consistently throughout the *Social Contract* that the general will is never “exterminated or corrupted”; instead “it is always constant, unalterable, and pure, but it is subordinated to other wills which encroach upon its sphere.”⁴⁷ His point need not be ambiguous: within the mutual undertaking of the aggregation individuals seek to maintain, or will, the aggregation as an end in itself.

Rousseau’s convergence with Jouvenel is straightforward. Failure of emergent authority is *prima facie* evidence that established authority has channeled it into activities that are not disaggregative. On the other hand, a declining established authority, converging in conflict with succeeding emergent authority, indicates that established authority itself has been “deceived” and has become “particular,” seeking (additive) initiatives for its own gain. Rousseau issues the warning that “the tie that binds the whole together begins to be loosened” when the will of the Prince abjures the general will and becomes “particular.”⁴⁸ The warning is reflected in Jouvenel, but more strongly still as he incorporates the theme of the “pessimistic evolutionist” through his reading of Rousseau. The decline of established authority is not simply a question of “how”; it is a question of “how *soon*.” The failing, or deception, of established authority is all the more likely since “A system of well-established Authority can be run by men of mediocre authority.” Thus it is predictable that

there should be a tendency to recruit, into anciently established systems of Authority, individuals with decreasing ability to move people on their own account. But in time this slowly rots the collective Authority of the system, while on the other hand competing authority rears its head outside the system.⁴⁹

⁴⁵Rousseau, *Social Contract*, I, vii, pp. 17–18, II, iii, pp. 26–27. Cf. Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, pp. 92–94.

⁴⁶Rousseau, *Social Contract*, II, iii, pp. 26–27. Cf. Jouvenel, *On Power*, p. 226.

⁴⁷Rousseau, *Social Contract*, IV, i, p. 103; see too Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, pp. 93–94, 164–65.

⁴⁸Rousseau, *Social Contract*, III, i, pp. 58–59; cf. IV, i, p. 103.

⁴⁹Rousseau, *Pure Theory*, p. 102 (both quotations plus the quoted phrase following this note); also pp. 107–08, 123. The emphasis on the inevitability of mediocrity rising to the top of established authority ultimately to cause its downfall is characteristic. See also pp. 105–06, and *Sover-*

This might result in a "violent change," but the change itself is momentary.

Declining established authority cannot guarantee the aggregation; successful emergent authority can. The portrait that emerges from both Rousseau and Jouvenel is of a political system that has the potential to be homeostatic or self-correcting. The fulcrum for this system is the politics of aggregation inherent in the social context of human nature: a necessity for social life; a desideratum for realizing individual initiatives. The politics of aggregation is the politics of the general will. The beginnings of an adequate political theory lie in the analysis of the effectual and the symbolic activities of authorities: the stability and instability they can initiate, the mutual trust they can engender, and the link—consensus—between their activities and the individual initiatives possible within the aggregation.

VI. *The Orientation of Political Philosophy*

As indicated previously, Jouvenel establishes the quest for political order as the baseline condition for politics—a condition that takes priority over specific and secondary, or ideological, goals such as the form of liberty and equality a regime pursues. This, in turn, supports the theme that the proper criterion of legitimacy is the character of a regime rather than (e.g.) individual or popular consent. Jouvenel's position, then, could be construed as a return to the tradition of classical political philosophy.⁵⁰ It is not, however, an unquestioned "return."

How one gains knowledge of an oak tree may serve as a model for how one gains knowledge of politics:

Even if not all acorns turn to oaks, it is important to know that all oaks arise from acorns. If we notice only oaks, and not acorns, then we shall not understand oaks.⁵¹

The analogy summarizes the qualification: classical political philosophy has too often looked to the oak tree and inferred a state of health, but ignores the acorns—the origins of that state—from which it grows. The analogy is taken explicitly from a context in which Jouvenel analyzes "preceptive," i.e., classical, political philosophy as powerless in the face of both tyranny or expediency—the world of Alcibiades—and positivist political science. It is mistaken, however, to infer that Jouvenel would recommend analysis of "dis-

eignty, pp. 263–66. On the inevitable decline of established authority, see "Rousseau the Pessimistic Evolutionist"; also "Essai sur la politique de Rousseau," pp. 16–20, 78–86, 94–98.

⁵⁰See Aristotle, *Politics* 1252b–1253b, and the conflict between political knowledge and popular consent that characterizes many of Plato's Socratic dialogues and is put graphically in *Republic*, 516e–521a, 488b–e. Cf. Leo Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing* (Glencoe, Ill., 1952), chs. 1–2.

⁵¹Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, p. 13. See too p. 39, where the microscope provides an analogy for political science: with it, we may understand the causes of disease; without it, we are limited to positing derangements from health.

ease”—of the acorn’s growth and causes of its derangement—without regard for a normative priority, the “health” or end of the oak tree, since he explicitly warns how “nefariously suggestive” may be the teachings of modern political science in the absence of this concern.⁵² His conceptions of politics—pure politics or the politics of aggregation—and of legitimate authority serve as guides to empirical analysis.

Altogether too easily, the analogy and similar inferences can lead to the reduction of political theory to the study of “psychopathology and politics,” to the analysis of “authoritarian” and “democratic” personality. This, it seems obvious, is not Jouvenel’s intent. The political actor is critical but stress is not on the “individual” as against the norms of a metaphysical “body politic.” It is on the entrepreneur, the natural give-and-take between emergent and established authority and whether established authority proves functional or dysfunctional to the maintenance of the body politic, the aggregation. To focus on individual-body politic conflict under the assumption of a “normal” or “democratic” body politic can imply stressing the sociopsychological deviance of the individual. Likewise, this focus implies interpreting the general will of Rousseau, to whom Jouvenel has been paralleled, as totalitarian, requiring the regimentation of individuals consistent with requirements of the general will. Jouvenel tells us that politics is dangerous, and this is true in part because it can be reduced to these levels and the dangers they entail for the individual. Referring to *On Power, Sovereignty*, and *The Pure Theory of Politics*, Pierce observes that it is thus “not an accident that [these works] terminate with an image of disaster.”⁵³ Significantly, in each case the disaster is brought on by the social guardian, established authority, not by the citizen.

The foundations of Jouvenel’s political thought contribute at least two major points to political theory. First, Jouvenel—as others have and as classical political philosophers did—reemphasizes the proposition that the context of the regime is the proper “level of analysis” for political theory and not individual consent, which is always the byproduct of a milieu or of socialization, and indeed not individual claims on or deviance from the regime. The study of the character of the regime takes normative and analytical precedence over studies of: personality (the authoritarian or democratic personality); the social determinants of political behavior (political sociology); and the form of instituting regime norms (political socialization) and the methods for articulating consent, dissent, and supportive norms (public opinion)—both of which Jouvenel stresses but which are instrumental to the crucial questions.⁵⁴

Second, and more important, Jouvenel’s point of departure indicates that modern political philosophy in general—and Rousseau specifically—is not to

⁵²This context is Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, I, ch. 1–3.

⁵³Pierce, *Contemporary French Political Thought*, p. 186. The danger of politics is stressed in Jouvenel, *Pure Theory*, p. 29.

⁵⁴See Jouvenel, *Sovereignty*, p. 294 *ad finem*, and above, note 42.

tally irreconcilable with classical political philosophy. Indeed, if classical political philosophy might temper the extremes of modern political philosophy—positions, e.g., such as Hobbes's—modern political philosophy can contribute a normative and conceptual preciseness lacking in aspects of classical political philosophy. Preoccupation with the best regime must not blind political philosophy to how regime norms are instituted or articulated. Thus if the paradigmatic case for proponents of classical philosophy is Plato—who could visualize consent only in a mandate or plebiscitary capacity contributing to the collapse of the ideal regime and to the ridicule of philosophy within the conventions of society—aspects of modern political philosophy from which Jouvenel builds can indicate the necessity of accounting for consent and the conceptual orientation from which this must be approached. Dissenting from Hobbes, and from rudimentary consent (contract) theory, it indicates that consent is a necessary, but not the sufficient, condition for legitimacy, that it can provide the formal symbolization for legitimacy and regime demands, but that it is articulated within a context in which norms supportive of authoritative initiatives have been established: the context upon which political theory must focus.