

A Resolutive Account of the Hobbesian Laws of Nature:
From the Body Politic to the Human Body

by

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DEDICATION

For Başak, whom I ever endeavor toward with the passion of love.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this work is to facilitate a better understanding of how Thomas Hobbes' interest in geometry and physics influenced his understanding of moral and political philosophy. He begins with sensation as a foundation, and builds a systematic structure for understanding the human condition and commonwealth. Since the Hobbesian laws of nature act as intermediaries between the state of nature and the nature of the state, they serve as the starting point for this work. Illustrative anecdotes are taken from Hobbes' *Behemoth* and his translation of Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*. The laws are then resolved to their foundation. To understand Hobbes' philosophy, it is important to understand the significant influence that geometry and physics had on his overall philosophical method. As such, this work aims to render in a resolute fashion the Hobbesian laws of nature, so that their connection to the motion of physical bodies may be better understood.

PREFACE

While working toward an undergraduate degree with a double major in philosophy and international relations, I first encountered Thomas Hobbes in two courses simultaneously: History of Modern Philosophy and Modern Political Theory. Hobbes was one of the first thinkers presented in each course, both of which focused on his most famous work, *Leviathan*. I noticed almost immediately a difference with respect to how Hobbes' thought was presented in each course. On the one hand, the universe Hobbes envisioned is resolved ultimately to moving bodies, i.e. it is ultimately explained by physics. From this perspective, everything stems from motion and is compelled by the force of the impact of physical bodies. On the other hand, the world Hobbes envisioned is composed from the power of a sovereign, whose subjects relinquish their natural rights for the sake of peace and the common defense, i.e. it is ultimately explained by politics. From this perspective, everything stems from the sovereign, who compels by force the body politic. Each perspective may be seen in exclusion of the other, but an inclusion of both together is necessary in order to get a more thorough understanding of Hobbes' philosophy. This work is an exploration from the body politic to the human body as Hobbes presented them throughout his philosophical works.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Thomas Hobbes writes in the Latin edition of his magnum opus, *Leviathan*, that geometry is “virtually the only precise science.”¹ He praises geometry for being the only science to reckon from the definitions and explications of names, alleges that such reasoning has never been utilized by philosophers, and implies that his own philosophical endeavor will not succumb to the “privilege of absurdity.”² The admiration and curiosity that Hobbes had for geometry began when he was 40 years old, after he was asked by Lord Gervase Clinton to travel with the Lord’s son to France.³ There is an account of the event reported by John Aubrey in his brief history of Hobbes’ life:

Being in a gentleman’s library, Euclid’s *Elements* lay open, and ‘twas the 47th Element [i.e. proposition] at Book I. He read the proposition. ‘By G–,’ said he, ‘this is impossible!’ So he reads the demonstration of it, which referred him back to such a proposition; which proposition he read. *Et sic deinceps* [and so on], that at last he was demonstratively convinced of that truth. This made him in love with geometry.⁴

1. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Edwin Curley (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994), 19.

2. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 24

3. Thomas Hobbes, “The Prose Life,” in *Elements of Law, Natural and Politic: Part I: Human Nature, Part II: De Corpore Politico, with Three Lives*, ed. J. C. A. Gaskin, trans. Mary Lyons (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 246-247.

4. John Aubrey, “The Brief Life: An Abstract of Aubrey’s Notes,” in *Elements of Law, Natural and Politic: Part I: Human Nature, Part II: De Corpore Politico, with Three Lives*, ed. J. C. A. Gaskin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 235; John Aubrey, “Excerpts from Aubrey’s Life of Hobbes,” in *Leviathan*, ed. Edwin Curley (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994), lxvii.

The 47th proposition in the first book of Euclid's *Elements* is known by the name of its supposed original demonstrator, Pythagoras of Samos. Pythagoras was an ancient Ionian Greek, who migrated to Croton in southeastern Italy and established there a superstitious sect of mathematicians.⁵ The Pythagorean Theorem is defined as a geometric construction such that if a right triangle is constructed, and squares are extended from each line of the triangle, then the area of the two smaller squares is equal to the area of the larger square. While the ancient Babylonians were aware over a millennium before the quasi-religious mathematician that the combined squares of the base and height of a right triangle are equal to the square of the triangle's hypotenuse, Pythagoras is supposed to have been the first to offer a rigorous geometric proof of the theorem bearing his name.⁶

The Pythagorean Theorem is similar to what Hobbes calls a law of nature, because each one is a compound proposition that is reckoned from simpler propositions. Whereas Euclid begins the *Elements* with definitions followed by a demonstration of an equilateral triangle on any given straight line—a simple geometric construction—Hobbes begins his philosophical works—*Elements of Law*, *Elements of Philosophy (De Corpore, De Homine, and De Cive)*, and *Leviathan*—with a definition and explication of the human body. He progresses from the human body to the body politic in a compositive manner by

5. G. S. Kirk, "The Development of Ideas, 750 to 500 B.C.," in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, 2nd ed., vol. 4, ed. John Boardman, N. G. L. Hammond, D. M. Lewis, and M. Ostwald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 411-412.

6. Asger Aaboe, "Babylonian Mathematics, Astrology, and Astronomy," in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, 2nd ed., vol. 3, bk. 2, ed. John Boardman, I. E. S. Edwards, N. G. L. Hammond, and E. Sollberger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 277.

defining and developing a system of physics, ethics, and politics. He bridges his physical and political thought by way of “the science of what is *good* and *evil* in the conversation and society of mankind.”⁷ Hobbes demonstrates his ethical thought by defining and explicating several laws of nature, all of which may be rendered in a resolute fashion. A resolution, or analysis, of the Hobbesian laws of nature contributes to a better understanding of Hobbes’ method for reckoning the laws’ connection to physical bodies and their derivation from them.

Hobbes’ philosophical propositions progress from the simple to the complex and involve the method of synthesis. Synthesis may be defined as “an assumption of that which is admitted ... through its consequences to the finishing or attainment of what is sought,” i.e. a bottom-up assembly of parts into their whole.⁸ It is the reverse of analysis, which may be defined as “an assumption of that which is sought as if it were admitted ... through its consequences to something admitted true,” i.e. a top-down dismantlement of a whole into its parts.⁹ While the terms “synthesis” and “analysis” have acquired new meanings throughout the intervening centuries, they were understood in the seventeenth century more or less synonymously with composition and resolution, respectively.¹⁰

7. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 100.

8. Sir Thomas L. Heath, “An Extract of the Introduction from the 1908 Edition,” in *The Elements* (New York: Barnes & Noble Publishing, 2006), xlvii.

9. Heath, “Extract of the Introduction,” xlvii.

10. Peter Dear, “Method and the study of nature,” in *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*, vol. 1, ed. Daniel Garber and Michael Ayers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 150-153.

According to Hobbes,

the *subject* of Philosophy, or the matter it treats of, is every body of which we can conceive any generation, and which we may, by any consideration thereof, compare with other bodies, or which is capable of composition and resolution; that is to say, every body of whose generation or properties we can have any knowledge. And this may be deduced from the definition of philosophy, whose profession it is to search out the properties of bodies from their generation, or their generation from their properties; and therefore, where there is no generation or property, there is no philosophy.¹¹

In order to understand Hobbes' philosophical method, it is imperative to retain the Euclidean meanings of "composition" and "resolution" as one attempts to grasp at what it was that Hobbes was trying to convey.

Hobbes defines a human as an animated and reckoning body, and he declares that his definition is analogous to the definition of a square.¹² Euclid defines a square as any figure bound by four equal-length, right-angled, straight lines.¹³ It is a concept defined from other concepts such as quadrilateral, equilateral, and right-angled. A human is also defined from other concepts, but the concepts are body, animation, and ratiocination instead. According to Hobbes, the animal and rational powers together encompass all of the human faculties.¹⁴ The human faculties considered to be fundamental to Hobbes'

11. Thomas Hobbes, "De Corpore," in *Elements of Law, Natural and Politic: Part I: Human Nature, Part II: De Corpore Politico, with Three Lives*, ed. J. C. A. Gaskin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 191.

12. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 187.

13. Euclid, *The Elements*, trans. Sir Thomas L. Heath (New York: Barnes & Noble Publishing, 2006), 2.

14. Thomas Hobbes, *Elements of Law, Natural and Politic: Part I: Human Nature, Part II: De Corpore Politico, with Three Lives*, ed. J. C. A. Gaskin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 21.

thought are reason, passion, experience, and bodily strength.¹⁵ Reason and experience are parts of what Hobbes calls the cognitive power, which as a whole conceives external bodies.¹⁶ He contends that passion is the whole motive power of the mind, which is responsible for the animation of the human body.¹⁷ As for bodily strength, he declares that it is the whole motive power of the human body, which moves bodies external to it.¹⁸ The cognitive and motive powers reckoned together with the nutritive and generative powers are considered by Hobbes to be the whole of human nature.¹⁹

Hobbes composes a system of philosophy that is similar to the geometric system of Euclid. Each system begins with definitions and axioms, formulates propositions and compounds them together, and ends with demonstrations of complex systematic constructions. Though Hobbes' composition follows a similar method of reasoning as that employed by Euclid, it must be understood that he neither is as logically rigorous as Euclid nor is as willing to make the leap from what is the "most rational" to what is "necessarily true."²⁰ Hobbes maintains that

geometry ... is demonstrable, for the lines and figures from which we reason are drawn and described by ourselves; and civil philosophy is demonstrable, because we make the commonwealth ourselves. But because of natural bodies we know

15. Thomas Hobbes, "The Citizen: Philosophical Rudiments Concerning Government and Society," in *Man and Citizen*, ed. Bernard Gert, trans. Thomas Hobbes (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1991), 109; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 77.

16. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 22.

17. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43.

18. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43.

19. See note 14 above.

20. Dear, "Method and the study of nature," 152-153.

not the construction, but seek it from the effects, there lies no demonstration of what the causes be we seek for, but only of what they may be.²¹

Though Hobbes considers geometry and political philosophy to be demonstrable, he is less convinced of the complete demonstrability of physics. Notwithstanding this discrepancy, he nevertheless bases his moral and political philosophy on physics and his understanding of physics on geometry. It is therefore imperative to keep in mind Hobbes' appreciation for geometry and how his interest in physics influenced his overall philosophical outlook and approach.

The first similarity between the systems of Hobbes and Euclid is that each is reckoned originally from definitions and axioms. The foundation of both systems are the point, line, surface, and solid, though each systematizer names, defines, and explicates them differently. Euclid defines a point as having no part at all, a line as having only length, a surface as having only length and breadth, and a solid as having length, breadth, and depth together.²² Hobbes defines a point as a body without length, width, or depth considered at all, a line as a body with only length considered, a surface as a body with only length and width considered, and a solid as a body with length, width, and depth considered together.²³ A point either is a consideration of a body at rest or is a consideration of the internal motion of a body. A line, surface, and solid are each considerations of the external motion of a body in one, two, or three dimensions,

21. Dear, "Method and the study of nature," 152.

22. Euclid, *The Elements*, 1, 943.

23. A. P. Martinich, *A Hobbes Dictionary* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishing, 1995), 120-121.

respectively. In order to help illustrate each geometric concept, a point, line, surface, and solid may be imagined with respect to a stone and water:

1. If a stone is placed beside water, then the stone rests at a point.
2. If a stone is cast over water, then the stone moves along at length.
3. If a stone lands on water, then ripples of water move across at length and width.
4. If a stone sinks under water, then currents of water move around it at length, width, and depth.

Hobbes' utilization of the basic geometric concepts of a point, line, surface, and solid is a means of considering the quantity and motion of bodies, whether those bodies are physical, ethical, or political.

The second similarity between the systems of Hobbes and Euclid is the means by which each are reckoned. They each begin with simple principles and end with complex propositions. Euclid begins with a point and ends with a dodecahedron, while Hobbes begins with a body and ends with a commonwealth. Both systems are compositions, though the Hobbesian system begins as a resolution. A compositive system is a computation from the parts of a whole to that whole. It is in contrast to a resolute system, which is a computation from a whole to the parts of that whole. For Hobbes, computation is either addition or subtraction and is equivalent to ratiocination.²⁴ The Euclidean system begins with abstract components—images—and is therefore compositive throughout. The Hobbesian system begins with concrete entities—senses—and is therefore resolute in origin. For Hobbes, knowledge of fact originates from sensation such that a

24. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 186; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 22-23.

whole object is sensed before any of its parts are conceived.²⁵ Unlike factual knowledge, knowledge of geometrical constructions is conceived first from the parts of a whole. Hobbes reckons similarly to Euclid, but must begin his reckoning empirically instead of rationally. Only after an empirical foundation is provided for sensation and recollection does Hobbes attempt to compound his natural, moral, and political philosophies into a compositive system.

The third similarity between the systems of Hobbes and Euclid is that each reckon finally to a demonstration of a complex systematic composition. A dodecahedron is a geometric construction such that there are twelve equal pentagons with equal sides and angles. What begins as a demonstration of an equilateral triangle ends with a demonstration of a much more complex construction. Similarly, a commonwealth, or body politic, is a proposed composition such that everyone in the body of the commonwealth is subject to the sovereign for peace and the common defense. What begins as a supposition about moving bodies ends with a demonstration of a much more complex proposition. Considered as a whole, geometry may be defined as the measure of body and place, and Euclid may be considered as a teacher of the foundational knowledge needed in order to demonstrate geometric constructions—particularly with respect to the Platonic solids. Similarly, for Hobbes, philosophy may be defined as the measure of causes or effects, and Hobbes considers himself as a teacher of the foundational knowledge needed in order to demonstrate philosophical propositions—particularly with respect to the commonwealth, or body politic.

25. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 195.

Hobbes defines philosophy as knowledge of the effects, or representations, endeavored through true ratiocination of their causes, or generations, or knowledge of the generations, or causes, endeavored through true ratiocination of their representations, or effects.²⁶ In other words, he defines philosophy as the knowledge of antecedents and consequences and equates it with science.²⁷ False ratiocination, though true ratiocination is defined as philosophy, is alleged by Hobbes to have been the method used by philosophers throughout history.²⁸ He accuses the philosophers predominant in his day—the Scholastics, or “Schoolmen”—of making “frivolous distinctions,” and using “barbarous terms” and “obscure language” based on Aristotelian philosophy.²⁹ He complains that words are “the money of fools, that value them by the authority of an *Aristotle*, a *Cicero*, or a *Thomas*,” and contends that it is an abuse of speech to use names undefined or defined contradictorily.³⁰ Hobbes uses the Scholastic concept of “incorporeal substance” as an example of equivocation, which he finds to be as meaningless as a “round quadrangle.”³¹ He equates both names with babble or noise—an entanglement in words—and compares them to “a bird in lime twigs, the more he struggles

26. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 186.

27. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 41; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 25; Thomas Hobbes, “On Man,” in *Man and Citizen*, ed. Bernard Gert, trans. Charles T. Wood, T. S. K. Scott-Craig, and Bernard Gert (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1991), 41.

28. See note 2 above.

29. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 480.

30. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 19.

31. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 21.

the more belimed.”³² He maintains that philosophical knowledge utilizes a method that moves through the most immediate means of causation and effectuation to a knowledge of sequential events.³³ Hobbes makes a distinction between memorizing mathematically and memorizing dogmatically.³⁴ Whereas the former may be considered as the pursuit of philosophical knowledge, the latter may be considered as an abuse of speech. He claims that memorizing mathematically is an endeavor with the power of reason, or ratiocination, while memorizing dogmatically is an endeavor with the power of passion, or affection.³⁵ The recollection of memories is nothing more than imagination, which originates from sensation.

According to Hobbes, sensation is the appearance of an object external to the body and may be represented by a light, sound, odor, savor, or bodily feeling.³⁶ An object comes into contact with the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, or body, respectively, which initiates a chain-like reaction of pressure from the organ of sensation to the brain.³⁷ The brain reacts to this pressure with a counter-pressure, which is called sensation. As such, sensation is a mode of thought because it exists only as an internal representation of

32. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 19.

33. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 194.

34. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 19.

35. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 19.

36. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 215; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 22-23; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 6-7.

37. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 214-215; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 22-23; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 6-7.

external bodies.³⁸ Hobbes asserts that sensation is “original thought,” and that it is therefore the source of all subsequent conception.³⁹ Imagination and recollection are internal motions and are together called by Hobbes, “weakened,” or “decaying,” sensation.⁴⁰ Decaying sensation is the remnant of sensation and is comparable to the ripples on a pond after a stone makes a splash. Hobbes maintains that imagination and recollection are the same in kind, except as different distinctions of the same thing.⁴¹ The difference is that an image emphasizes past sensation itself, whereas a memory emphasizes the fading of what has been sensed previously.⁴² In other words, imagination attends more to immediate content, and recollection attends more to the sequence of former content. With respect to the analogy of ripples on a pond, imagination pertains more to the shape of the ripples, whereas recollection pertains more to the order of the ripples.

According to Hobbes, imagination and recollection are synonymous with mental discourse, or the train of thought.⁴³ He claims that sequences of images and memories either may be regulated or may be convoluted, depending on a present desire or lack

38. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 215; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 22-23; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 6-7.

39. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 6-7.

40. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 218; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 27; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 8-9.

41. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 212; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 27, 29; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 8-9.

42. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 220; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 27, 29; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 8-9.

43. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 12.

thereof, respectively.⁴⁴ If a train of thought is regulated, then it is such that a cause or effect will be sought after.⁴⁵ There is what Hobbes calls ranging, which has an aimless beginning and is like “hounds casting about at fault in hunting.”⁴⁶ There is also what Hobbes calls hunting, which has a targeted beginning and is like “dogs [tracing] the beast by the smell.”⁴⁷ For Hobbes, the search for a cause or effect includes the use of certain courses of action that he calls reminiscence, prudence, and conjecture.⁴⁸ Reminiscence is the act of recalling past actions, such that one may then begin to search for whatever is sought in the present.⁴⁹ Prudence is the act of applying the past to the present, such that one may then begin to presume the future and either seek a better one or avoid one that is worse.⁵⁰ Conjecture is similar to prudence in that it is the act of applying the past to the present, but it is such that one may then begin to presume the past instead of the future.⁵¹ The different methods of seeking after whatever is desired are powers that Hobbes calls collectively the “faculty of invention.”⁵² Invention makes use of marks or signs, and is, at its foundation, “naturally planted in him so as to need no other thing to exercise of it but

44. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 31; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 12-13.

45. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 31; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 13.

46. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 31.

47. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 32.

48. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 32-33; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 13-14.

49. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 32; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 13.

50. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 32; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 14.

51. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 33; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 14.

52. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 13.

to be born a man, and live with the use of his five senses.”⁵³ Hobbes contends that the motions of the mind are only sensation, imagination, and recollection, but that the invention of speech furthers the human condition through education and production.⁵⁴ For Hobbes, the invention of speech is what allows for the distinction between humans and other animals.⁵⁵

According to Hobbes, words and speech give rise to reason, and reason gives rise ultimately to science.⁵⁶ He defines speech as the naming and linking of names, and it consists of the registering, recalling, and declaring of names.⁵⁷ A name either may be a mark of remembrance or may be a sign of conception.⁵⁸ The primary difference between a mark of remembrance and a sign of conception is that the former involves the internal application of speech—inner dialogue—while the latter involves the external application of speech—outer dialogue.⁵⁹ A mark is any arbitrary object that aids in memory, such as something to recall and therefore avoid a rock at sea.⁶⁰ A sign, also called by Hobbes a

53. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 14.

54. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 14-15.

55. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 35-36; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 15; Hobbes, “On Man,” 37.

56. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 35; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 17; Hobbes, “On Man,” 39.

57. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 35; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 16; Hobbes, “On Man, 37.”

58. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 16-17.

59. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 23.

60. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 35.

name, is a voicing imposed on a mark.⁶¹ Both kinds of speech rely on the settling of significations.⁶² In other words, definitions are crucial for any coherent and consistent dialogue, and they allow for an accounting of anything that is able to be marked or signified.

Hobbes defines reason as the accounting for sums and remainders, whether by number, figure, or letter, and equates it with syllogistic speech.⁶³ It is nothing other than reckoning, which consists of computation in general.⁶⁴ He points out that reckoning with names either can lead to absurdity or can lead to science.⁶⁵ If names are well-defined and connected in such a way as to make an assertion, and assertions are well-placed and related in such a way as to make a syllogism, then the consequences within a particular subject can be known. Hobbes defines science as the application, connection, and relation of well-defined names in such a way that the consequences of some particular subject are known.⁶⁶ In Hobbes' case, the subject he pursues is the physics, ethics, and politics of humanity, all of which are conceived as bodies in motion. Other than cognitive motion, he considers the motions of animal bodies to be either vital or voluntary. Vital motion is

61. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 35.

62. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 37; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 19.

63. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 38; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 22-23, 25.

64. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 186; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 22-23.

65. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 38-39; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 24-25; Hobbes, "On Man," 40-41.

66. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 41; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 25; Hobbes, "On Man," 41.

necessary for life and includes the generative and nutritive powers, while voluntary motion is synonymous with the endeavors of passion.⁶⁷

Hobbes claims that passion originates in imagination and is the immediate consequence of endeavor.⁶⁸ The concept of endeavor, or *conatus*, is defined by Hobbes as the initial motion by which the human body either comes or goes, whether it is driven by the pleasure or displeasure of an object, respectively.⁶⁹ Since an object may be pleasurable, painful, or indifferent, it may be described as being pleasing, displeasing, or inconsiderable, respectively.⁷⁰ An object is pleasing if it causes delight through bodily pleasure or joy. Bodily pleasure is any pleasing light, sound, odor, savor, or bodily feeling; it is also called a pleasure of sense.⁷¹ Joy is any expectation of a pleasing consequence, and is also called a delight, or pleasure, of the mind.⁷² An object of delight is good in promise, good in means, or good in effect. Good in promise is called pulchritude, while good in means is called profitable.⁷³ Good in effect is called love and

67. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 22; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 27.

68. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43-44; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 27-28; Hobbes, "On Man," 45.

69. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 28.

70. Hobbes, *Elements of Law* 44; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 28; Hobbes, "On Man," 47.

71. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 45; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 29; Hobbes, "On Man," 45.

72. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 45; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 30; Hobbes, "On Man," 55-56.

73. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 44-45; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 29; Hobbes, "On Man," 47-48.

is the presence of an object of delight that is pleasing for its own sake.⁷⁴ The absence of an object of delight is called appetite.⁷⁵ In summary, a delightful passion seeks a pleasing object, since it endeavors to its cause. An object is displeasing if it causes trouble through pain or grief. Pain is any displeasing light, sound, odor, savor, or bodily feeling; it is also called a displeasure of sense.⁷⁶ Grief is any expectation of a displeasing consequence, and is also called a displeasure of the mind.⁷⁷ An object of trouble is evil in promise, evil in means, or evil in effect. Evil in promise is called turpitude, while evil in means is called hurtful.⁷⁸ Evil in effect is called hate, and is the presence of an object of trouble that is displeasing for its own sake.⁷⁹ The absence of an object of trouble is called aversion.⁸⁰ In summary, a troublesome passion flees a displeasing object, as it endeavors from its cause. As appetites and aversions alternate, there is what is Hobbes calls deliberation—the last appetite or aversion being what he claims is the will.⁸¹ An object is inconsiderable if it

74. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 28; Hobbes, “On Man,” 48.

75. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43-44; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 28; Hobbes, “On Man,” 45.

76. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 45; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 30; Hobbes, “On Man,” 45.

77. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 45; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 30; Hobbes, “On Man,” 55-56. The term “grief” is used by Hobbes in *Elements of Law* and *Leviathan*, whereas the term “hate” is the translation of the same concept in “On Man.” For the sake of consistency, Hobbes’ usage as been retained.

78. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 44; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 29; Hobbes, “On Man,” 48.

79. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 28.

80. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 227; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43-44; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 28; Hobbes, “On Man,” 45.

81. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 70-71; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 33; Hobbes, “On Man,” 46.

neither causes delight nor causes trouble. An inconsiderable passion neither seeks toward an object nor flees away from an object, since it has no endeavor, i.e. no will to do anything.⁸² Notwithstanding objects that are inconsiderable, if there is an endeavor of passion, then there can also be the development of knowledge aimed at some delightful or troublesome object, either of which would constitute the particular end sought after.⁸³

According to Hobbes, all trains of thought that endeavor toward knowledge end in either achievement or abandonment and consist of opinions about the past or future.⁸⁴ As opinions alternate, there is what is called doubt; the last opinion is what is called judgment.⁸⁵ A judgment may pertain to either knowledge of fact, which is absolute, or science, which is conditional.⁸⁶ Knowledge of fact refers to sensation and recollection exclusively, while science includes imagination and ratiocination. Good wit, or intellect, can lead to good fancy and good judgment about the succession of thought, with the former observing what is similar, and the latter observing what is dissimilar.⁸⁷ In general, passion is the cause of the difference of wit.⁸⁸ In particular, the desires for power, wealth,

82. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 28.

83. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 44; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 35.

84. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 72; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 35.

85. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 35.

86. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 61-62; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 35.

87. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 61-62; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 38; Hobbes, "On Man," 63-64.

88. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 61; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 38.

honor, and intellect result in the pursuit of knowledge.⁸⁹ As such, there are appetites for power, worth, honor, dignity, and worthiness. Power is the present means to obtain some future apparent good.⁹⁰ The use of that power is worth and is dependent on another's need and judgment.⁹¹ Honor is worth given to another, while dignity is public worth overall.⁹² Worthiness refers to a particular ability for which one has worth and may also be called fitness.⁹³ These desires lead to the development of manners, or dispositions, which are the ways in which human beings live together in peace and unity.⁹⁴ Religion also develops from these same appetites, but is further dependent on a perpetual anxiety about the future.⁹⁵

Hobbes maintains that the natural condition of humanity begins with the fact that every human is more or less equal to every other human in both body and mind.⁹⁶ The equality of ability among humans leads to an equality of hope in the ability of each human to achieve whatever end is aimed at. As such, insecurity develops among humans, which leads inevitably to war. For Hobbes, the causal chain from equality, through insecurity, and finally to conflict is fundamental to his moral and political philosophy. It

89. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 41.

90. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 48; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 50.

91. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 49; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 51.

92. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 48; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 52.

93. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 57.

94. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 57.

95. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 63-64; Hobbes, "On Man," 79.

96. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 78; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 74-75.

is this perspective of the human condition that gives way to Hobbes assertion that “it cannot be denied but that the natural state of men, before they entered into society, was a mere war, and that not simply, but a war of all men against all men.”⁹⁷ Furthermore, war leads some to seek glory, which contributes to even more conflict. Considered together, Hobbes asserts that competition, diffidence, and glory are to be regarded as natural sources of war.⁹⁸ The first is a method of seeking gain, the second is a method of seeking safety, and the third is a method of seeking fame.⁹⁹ According to Hobbes, without some common power to keep the peace among the people, or “to keep them all in awe,” war will be the inevitable result.¹⁰⁰ War not only includes battle in and of itself but also the will to contend by battle as the means to an end. Considered with respect to what Hobbes calls the right of nature—the preservation of one’s own life by any means necessary—the natural condition of each human is a right to all else.¹⁰¹ In order to better preserve one’s own life, however contrary to one’s natural right, Hobbes puts forth twenty natural laws of reason in *Leviathan*, all of which he states should be agreed to by everyone. Hobbes’ twenty laws of nature constitute his moral philosophy, and are the bedrock of his political philosophy.

97. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 118.

98. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 78; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 76; Hobbes, “On Man,” 112-113.

99. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 76.

100. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 76.

101. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 116-117; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 79; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 79.

As may be understood from Hobbes' compositive account of the physical, ethical, and political motions of humans, there is a building up from the small to the large and from the simple to the complex. The development is geometric, systematic, and is not unlike a machine. Similar to how a machine may be put together and taken apart, or how a figure may be built up and broken down, Hobbes' philosophical system of physics, ethics, and politics may be composed into a whole or resolved into its parts. In what follows, the process from sensation to sovereignty that Hobbes formulates will be reversed in order to better facilitate an understanding of how he constructed his overall philosophical system. With respect to the laws of nature as presented in *Leviathan*, illustrative anecdotes will be taken from Hobbes' *Behemoth* and his translation of Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*.

CHAPTER II

MORAL PHILOSOPHY

Before a resolute approach to the Hobbesian laws of nature is undertaken, it may be helpful to keep in mind a general rule that Hobbes offers as a guide to his approach toward ethics: “Do not that to another, which thou wouldst not have done to thyself.”¹ In *Leviathan*, he begins with the natural law for peace and ends with the natural law for sovereign loyalty. The account that follows begins in reverse order, starting with the natural law for sovereign loyalty and ending with the fundamental natural law for peace.

WHAT IS MORAL PHILOSOPHY?

Hobbes defines moral philosophy as the science of the laws of nature.² It is considered to be whatever is good or evil throughout the various dispositions, traditions, and convictions of different societies.³ Notwithstanding that which is considered to be good or evil in different places by different people, Hobbes explicitly casts aside three different approaches that he claims cannot constitute a law of nature and therefore cannot be a foundation for moral philosophy:

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1. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 99.
 2. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 150; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 100.
 3. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 150; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 100.

1. A law of nature cannot be that which the most prudent states consider to be ethical, because no one can agree as to which are the most prudent states.⁴
2. A law of nature cannot be that which all people are against, because everyone would then act similarly against it.⁵
3. A law of nature cannot be due to passion, because the differences of passion can lead people to do what others—or themselves at different times and places—consider to be evil.⁶

Hobbes defines a law of nature as a precept resulting from rational deliberation that is meant to preserve human life through peaceful means.⁷ He claims that humans are inclined toward peace because we fear death and want to live our lives well.⁸ He argues that a law of nature is a dictate of right reason, because it rationalizes morality inasmuch as it preserves the lives of individuals who reckon from it.⁹ Moreover, he denies that there is an utmost aim or greatest good.¹⁰ For Hobbes, there cannot be an utmost aim or greatest good because the appetites and aversions of individual humans constitute what

4. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 122; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 81.

5. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 122; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 81.

6. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 122; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 82.

7. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 123; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 82; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 79.

8. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 78.

9. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 123.

10. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 57; Hobbes, “On Man,” 53-54

each of them deems to be good or evil, respectively. Though we all share similar passions, the objects of our passions are different, such that they are easily hidden, and

... the characters of man's heart, blotted and confounded as they are with dissembling, lying, counterfeiting, and erroneous doctrines, are legible only to him that searcheth hearts.¹¹

While we all may search the hearts of others by looking first into our own heart and then comparing it with their hearts, a sovereign must seek to discover what it is that moves humanity as a whole.¹²

Hobbes asserts that it is more difficult to discover what drives all humans to action than it is to learn science and language.¹³ The relative difficulty is due to the fact that his moral philosophy is an outgrowth from science and language and is therefore dependent on them. For Hobbes, the power of a sovereign to dictate good and evil is of the utmost importance, because if everyone was left to determine good and evil individually, then Hobbes claims that everyone would inevitably come into conflict.¹⁴ He maintains that the causes of war are competition over scarce resources, diffidence toward threatening enemies, or glory from defeating enemy factions.¹⁵ Gain, safety, and reputation, however they may be secured in the short-term, can only be secured in the long-term either by becoming a sovereign or by subjecting oneself to a sovereign. As

11. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4.

12. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 5.

13. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 5.

14. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 151-152; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 100.

15. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 78; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 76; Hobbes, "On Man," 112-113.

such, Hobbes maintains that we are at war without sovereignty and subjection established.¹⁶ In a state of nature, we are perpetually in danger of loss, rendered unsafe, and are of little or no repute to others.

Hobbes defines war not only as battle but also as the will or intention to contend by force or battle either in word or in deed.¹⁷ He compares war to the weather. Whereas a shower or two of rain is not sufficient to be considered foul weather, many days of rain may not be considered fair weather.¹⁸ Likewise, if there is only a battle here or a skirmish there, then such contention is not sufficient to be considered war. If, however, there is a known disposition to fight without any peaceful alternative, then at such point in time there can be only war. Hobbes equates war with the state of nature and compares it to the contention that results among those who hold opinions opposed to one another.¹⁹ He points to the differences among contending camps of legislators, philosophers, and religious advocates. Each faction contends with the contingents of other legislative, philosophical, or religious persuasions. All of the contenders within each group are involved in whatever debates serve their particular interests, which result in a war of minds among everyone involved. Hobbes admits that he does not necessarily believe that there was ever a pure state of nature the world over such that the life of everyone

16. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 117-118; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 76.

17. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 117-118; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 80; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 76.

18. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 76.

19. Thomas Hobbes, *Correspondence of Thomas Hobbes*, vol. 1, ed. Noel Malcolm (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 424.

everywhere was “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.”²⁰ Nevertheless, he points out that relations among states are equivalent to a state of nature, such as the relations among city-states during the Peloponnesian War or among factions during the English Civil War.²¹

A TALE OF TWO WARS

The Peloponnesian War was a conflict in ancient Greece between Lacedaemonia (Sparta) and Athens, each of which had an alliance of several city-states throughout the region. The war lasted for almost 30 years, and those involved witnessed the defeat of Athens. Perhaps there is no better acknowledgement of Hobbes’ interest in the Peloponnesian War other than the fact that one of his earliest works is a translation of Thucydides’ history, which was published in 1629.²² He even wrote about Thucydides in his autobiography, stating in the third-person that “of all the Greek historians, Thucydides was his source of particular delight.”²³ The Peloponnesian War offers many examples of how peace can transition into war, a topic that would have occupied Hobbes’ thoughts as much as his words of translation. During Hobbes’ life, the peace between the King of

20. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 76-77.

21. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 182; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 78.

22. Edwin Curley, “Chronology of the Life of Hobbes,” in *Leviathan*, ed. Edwin Curley (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994), xlix; J. C. A. Gaskin, “Chronology,” in *Elements of Law, Natural and Politic: Part I: Human Nature, Part II: De Corpore Politico, with Three Lives*, ed. J. C. A. Gaskin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), liii.

23. Hobbes, “The Prose Life,” 246.

England and Parliament devolved into war. This turn of events undoubtedly had a major influence on Hobbes, since he wrote a war history of his own toward the end of his life. Thucydides writes in his account of the Peloponnesian War that its cause was primarily due to the rise of Athenian power, which threatened the power of the Lacedaemonians.²⁴ Hobbes writes in his account of the English Civil War, *Behemoth*, that the cause of the war was primarily due to the rise of various factions, each of whom sought religious or economic liberties from the King.²⁵

The English Civil War was a series of conflicts in the seventeenth century between the Parliamentarians and Royalists of England. There were many factors and factions that arose during the breakdown of the Kingdom of Charles I, but in general the grievances against the King were in large part socioeconomic and religious. In *Behemoth*, Hobbes lists six different factions and describes the corresponding factors that he argues caused each to take part in sedition and civil war:

1. The Presbyterians, who claimed “a right from God to govern every one his parish and their assembly the whole nation.”²⁶
2. The Papists, who retained “a belief that we ought to be governed by the Pope, whom they pretended to be the vicar of Christ, and, in the right of Christ, to be the governor of all Christian people.”²⁷

24. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, ed. David Greene, trans. Thomas Hobbes (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1959), 14-15.

25. Thomas Hobbes, *Behemoth*, ed. Ferdinand Tönnies (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 2-4.

26. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 2.

27. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 2-3.

3. Other Protestants, who “in the beginning of the troubles were not discovered, but shortly after declared themselves for a liberty in religion, and those of different opinions one from another.”²⁸
4. The classicists, who “had been so educated, as that in their youth having read books written by famous men of the ancient Grecian and Roman commonwealths concerning their polity and great actions ... became thereby in love with their forms of government.”²⁹
5. The merchants, who “having in admiration the great prosperity of the Low Countries after they had revolted from their monarch, the King of Spain, were inclined to think that the like change of government here, would to them produce the like prosperity.”³⁰
6. The greedy and needy of Britain, either who “wasted their fortunes or thought them too mean,” or who “saw no means how honestly to get their bread,” respectively.³¹

First, religious factions were challenging the Elizabethan concept of royal supremacy in religion.³² Second, political factions were either tending to help or tending to take the

28. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 3.

29. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 3.

30. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 3-4.

31. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 4.

32. J. P. Cooper, “The Fall of the Stuart Monarchy,” in *The New Cambridge Modern History*, vol.4, ed. J. P. Cooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 544.

executive and judicial powers of the monarchy.³³ Third, economic factions were challenging the Kingdom's control of economic activities, which promoted monopolies, charter companies, and price regulations.³⁴ Finally, everyone else who was involved had likely been persuaded or forced to choose a side and fight.³⁵

Thucydides' and Hobbes' historical accounts are focused primarily on the exploits of war, but Hobbes' philosophical works are aimed ultimately at the pursuit of peace. The fundamental law of nature is to endeavor toward peace and is the origin of Hobbes' explanation of the need for a sovereign.³⁶ A natural law is a rule dictated by right reason such that not to follow it would be to put one's own preservation at risk.³⁷ As may be discerned from the laws of nature to follow, each precept is a means to remove oneself from a state of nature or war. Since we all aim at what we consider to be good, and what we consider to be good is ultimately what we are driven to by pleasure, we will target whatever enables us to survive in order to be pleased. Hobbes asserts that we must desire that the laws of nature be established in order to ensure our protection, though he admits that the laws are not always going to be enacted in practice.³⁸ Hobbes considers it a vice

33. Cooper, "The Fall of the Stuart Monarchy," 557.

34. Cooper, "The Fall of the Stuart Monarchy," 542.

35. Cooper, "The Fall of the Stuart Monarchy," 574.

36. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 119; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 81; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 80.

37. See note 9 above.

38. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 148-149; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 96-97; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 99.

not to be obedient to the dictates of the laws of nature.³⁹ In this sense, virtue, in part, is exemplified through loyalty to one's sovereign.

SOVEREIGN LOYALTY

Consider the natural law for sovereign loyalty. At the end of *Leviathan*, Hobbes puts forth a final law of nature such that everyone subject to a sovereign must protect the sovereign during war, just as the sovereign protects every subject during peace.⁴⁰ Hobbes' inclusion at the end of his work of a natural law dictating the protection of a sovereign by its subjects may be due to an extraordinary event that occurred toward the end of the English Civil War.⁴¹ In 1649, Charles I was condemned to death for his alleged subversion of the laws and liberties of England.⁴² He was accused of conspiring to establish a tyrannical government and was subsequently beheaded. Hobbes first published *Leviathan* in 1651, two years after the English regicide.⁴³ As a royalist, he had supported the King of England and had fled to Paris in 1640 to escape the war.⁴⁴ That same year, but before fleeing from England, Hobbes had circulated a manuscript of his

39. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 98; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 100.

40. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 490.

41. Martinich, A. P., *A Hobbes Dictionary*, 190.

42. R. Mousnier, "The Exponents and Critics of Absolutism," in *The New Cambridge Modern History*, vol. 4, ed. J. P. Cooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 127.

43. Curley, "Chronology," lii; Gaskin, "Chronology," liv.

44. Curley, "Chronology," l-li; Gaskin, "Chronology," liv.

first major work of philosophy, *Elements of Law, Natural and Politic*.⁴⁵ In 1642, after having been in exile at Paris for two years, he published another work of philosophy, *De Cive*.⁴⁶ It was the first part of his philosophical trilogy, *Elements of Philosophy*, to be published, though it was the last work in terms of content. The other two parts, *De Corpore* and *De Homine*, were published in 1655 and 1658, respectively.⁴⁷ The three main works of Hobbes' moral and political philosophy—*Elements of Law*, *De Cive*, and *Leviathan*—warn of the danger in not being loyal to the sovereign, as disloyalty leads inevitably to unrest, sedition, and finally civil war.

Hobbes considers the sovereign to be the soul of the body politic, sedition to be its sickness, and civil war to be its death.⁴⁸ If we were not to defend our sovereign in war, Hobbes argues, then we would contradict ourselves. The contradiction lies in the fact that our sovereign preserves us. If we were to injure the power responsible for our own preservation, then we would injure ourselves in addition to our sovereign; therefore, we must protect our sovereign in order to protect ourselves. In ancient Greece, sovereignty was enshrined in the city, and those subject to the sovereignty of the city-state would have been expected to protect it from its enemies. During the first summer of the Peloponnesian War, King Archidamus of Lacedaemonia invaded Attica.⁴⁹ The following winter, a funeral was held in Athens for Athenian soldiers killed in action throughout the

45. Curley, "Chronology," i; Gaskin, "Chronology," liv.

46. Curley, "Chronology," li; Gaskin, "Chronology," liv.

47. Curley, "Chronology," lii; Gaskin, "Chronology," liv.

48. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 3.

49. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 101.

previous year.⁵⁰ It was tradition for a prominent citizen to make an oration concerning the sacrifice and glory of the soldiers lost in battle, and Pericles was chosen to speak before the funeral audience.⁵¹ Pericles' speech focuses primarily on the greatness of Athens, "such is the city for which these men, thinking it no reason to lose it, valiantly fighting have died."⁵² He encourages other Athenians to emulate the fallen Athenian soldiers. The casualties of war are considered by Pericles to be worthier of their country than other Athenians, since their valiance made Athens powerful:

And when this power of the city shall seem great to you, consider then that the same was purchased by valiant men, and by men that knew their duty, and by men that were sensible of dishonour when they were in fight, and by such men as, though they failed of their attempt, yet would not be wanting to the city with their virtue but made unto it a most honourable contribution.⁵³

The most honorable contribution given by the valiant was life itself. Pericles' funeral speech was a rallying call for Athenians to protect Athens from its Peloponnesian invaders. It was a plea for the people of Athens to defend their city as its subjects, even if it meant risking their lives. For Pericles, to die for the sake of the survival of Athens was better than to live without it. Similarly, Hobbes considers it more rational to fight and defend our sovereign, since to live without one would lead us first to "savagery, then solitude, and for dwellings, caves."⁵⁴ Without a sovereign, there would always be

50. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 107.

51. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 108

52. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 112.

53. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 113.

54. Hobbes, "On Man," 40.

disputes, including over controversies of fact. In such a condition, there would be a perpetual impetus to engage in combat.

WITNESSES

Consider the natural law for witnesses. On December 15, 1641, Parliament sent *A Remonstrance of the State of the Kingdom* to King Charles I.⁵⁵ According to Hobbes, Parliament accused bishops, counselors, and courtiers loyal to the King in such general terms “as not to be called an accusation, but railing.”⁵⁶ They were accused of being corrupt by influencing the King’s prerogative powers in order to promote their own interests against the liberties of the people, suppressing the Presbyterians and therefore Parliament, promoting other Protestant denominations in order to undermine Parliament, and financing the King in ways not deemed appropriate by Parliament.⁵⁷ Hobbes accuses the actions of Parliament “as being a more mannerly way of accusing the King himself, and defaming him to his subjects.”⁵⁸ He questions whether or not the actions of Parliament were accusations or simply spiteful reproaches against the King and his government.⁵⁹ With accusations so generalized and vague, witnesses were of no use, and

55. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 82.

56. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 82.

57. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 82-83.

58. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 82.

59. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 83.

the natural law for witnesses was subsequently undermined where there were, at least according to Hobbes, controversies of fact.

Hobbes defines the natural law for witnesses such that credit must be given to however many credible witnesses are necessary in order to settle some controversy of fact.⁶⁰ The judge in a dispute cannot consider the cause of one litigant over the cause of another litigant, but must find a non-litigant who can bear witness to the facts. Without a settlement of factual discrepancies, the final resort by either party is to force the issue one way or the other. An unresolved controversy may devolve into further contention and conflict. Any conflict that may arise due to a controversy of fact is equivalent to a state of nature or war. If there is factual contention but with credible witnesses and a fair judge, then the dispute may be resolved and peace retained. If, however, there are witnesses but an unfair judge, then the dispute is not resolvable in a way that is conducive to peace.

PARTISAN JUDGMENT

Consider the natural law against partisan judgment. In the fifth year of the Peloponnesian War, the Plataeans surrendered their city of Plataea to the Peloponnesians.⁶¹ The Plataeans were by this point weak and starving, but the Lacedaemonian commander had been ordered not to take the city by force.⁶² The rationale for not assaulting more than the city walls was strategic. If peace could be had

60. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 146-147; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 98.

61. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 186.

62. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 186.

with the Athenians, and the Plataeans had surrendered their city voluntarily, then the city of Plataea would not necessarily have to be returned after the war was over.⁶³ If such an opportunity arose at peacetime, then a city not pillaged and plundered would be of more utility than one destroyed. Five officials came from Lacedaemon to judge the inhabitants of Plataea, but on arrival did not do so.⁶⁴ Instead, the five Lacedaemonian judges asked a single question: How had each Plataean helped the Lacedaemonians and their allies during the war?⁶⁵ The Plataeans appointed Astymachus and Lacon to speak for all of the inhabitants of the city.⁶⁶ They accused the Lacedaemonians of being partisan judges on account of their lack of any substantial accusation against the Plataeans and the brief amount of time that they had used to interrogate them.⁶⁷ Furthermore, the fact that the Thebans were present at the court undermined the impartiality of the Lacedaemonians.⁶⁸ Not only were the Lacedaemonians and Thebans allies, but the Thebans and Plataeans had a history as bitter enemies.

Before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, the Thebans had preempted an assault on Plataea with the hope that the surprise attack would undermine the Plataean

63. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 186.

64. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 186.

65. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 186.

66. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 186-187.

67. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 187.

68. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 192.

defenses.⁶⁹ The Theban attack was ultimately unsuccessful, and all of the original attackers were eventually slaughtered.⁷⁰ At the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, the Thebans allied with Lacedaemon, and the Plataeans allied with Athens.⁷¹ The Thebans and Lacedaemonians began the siege against Plataea in the third year of the war, until it ultimately set the scene for Astymachus and Lacon to question the partiality of the Lacedaemonian judges two years later.⁷² The two representatives of Plataea understood that in order to have peace the arbitrator for the dispute could not favor either party—especially the party that had no interest in the survival of Plataean sovereignty. A partisan judgment of the Plataean siege would not have led to peace but would have resulted in the destruction of Plataea as a sovereign city-state. The Plataeans understood the natural law against partisan judgment and did not want to be judged through the lens of an ulteriorly motivated bias. To have done so would have been a violation of a natural dictate of right reason.

Hobbes defines the natural law against partisan judgment such that an arbitrator should receive no profit, honor, or pleasure from the victory of one party over another.⁷³ In the case of the Plataean siege by the Peloponnesians, the Plataeans could not trust that the Lacedaemonian judges would not auction off their city-state to the Thebans, resulting in profit for the Peloponnesian League at the expense of Plataean sovereignty. The

69. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 89-90.

70. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 90.

71. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 94.

72. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 130.

73. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 146; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 98.

alliance between the Lacedaemonians and Thebans meant that the Lacedaemonians had an incentive to help the Thebans. The Plataeans were well aware of this incentive and could not trust the Lacedaemonians to judge in any way beneficial to the Plataeans—no matter how just the latter’s position. The Plataeans would not submit to certain death by surrendering to the partisan judgment of the Lacedaemonians until after making known the injustices endeavored against them. Despite the efforts of the Plataeans to convince the five Lacedaemonian judges, the Peloponnesians killed at least 200 men and enslaved all of the women.⁷⁴

SELF-JUDGMENT

Consider the natural law against self-judgment. In the sixteenth year of the Peloponnesian War, the Athenians invaded and occupied the territory of Melos, a Lacedaemonian colony that had remained neutral during the war.⁷⁵ The Athenians first sent ambassadors to negotiate with a small circle of Melian leaders.⁷⁶ The Athenian ambassadors were sent as a precursor to possible conflict, while the small circle of Melian leaders acted as a defense mechanism against any Athenian attempt to persuade the Melian people at large.⁷⁷ The Athenians warned the Melians not to get caught up in future possibilities, but only to focus on present circumstances surrounding the all but

74. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 197.

75. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 2, 364.

76. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 2, 364.

77. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 2, 364.

certain destruction of their city and lives.⁷⁸ For their part, the Melians had pointed out that the Athenians were the judges of their own cause, who would only serve their particular interests at the expense of the Melians.⁷⁹ The Athenians declared that “they that have odds of power exact as much as they can, and the weak yield to such condition as they can get,” which is a fairly accurate description of the state of nature or war.⁸⁰ The Melians understood that in order to have peace, the arbitrator for the dispute could not be party, especially since the party had no interest in the survival of Melian sovereignty. As the Athenians clearly stated, the Melians had no sway in the matter but only a choice between either surrender or death. Both choices meant the end of Melian sovereignty, which means that Melos and Athens were at war despite any supposed outcome from their negotiations. The Melians refused to surrender to the Athenians, so the Athenians laid siege against them.⁸¹ For the Melians to have done otherwise would have been to violate a natural dictate of right reason. The Melians held out for a brief time, but eventually had to surrender once their strength was finally sapped.⁸² The Athenians accepted the surrender of Melos by killing all of the adult males and enslaving every woman and child.⁸³

78. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 2, 365.

79. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 2, 364-365.

80. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 2, 365.

81. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 2, 371.

82. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 2, 372.

83. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 2, 372.

Hobbes defines the law against self-judgment, such that if one party judges for itself, then there is no reason why other parties would do otherwise.⁸⁴ Self-judgment is against a natural dictate of right reason because to judge for oneself is to allow one's enemies to do so as well; such is a state of war. The Melians understood that the Athenians would do whatever they pleased, all of which was against the interests of Melos. By not surrendering, the Melians held on to at least a chance of saving the sovereignty of their city-state, though to no avail. The Melians were faced with a dilemma: either fight and possibly survive with their power intact or surrender and lose their liberty. The Melians chose to fight, because from their perspective they were already at war with the Athenians. Unfortunately, for the inhabitants of Melos, the Athenian siege forced them to surrender, since their strength had slowly weakened to the point of capitulation. In order for us to judge or be judged—whether it be partisan, selfish, or fair—we must first be willing to submit to arbitration.

ARBITRATION

Consider the natural law for arbitration. There could not be natural laws against partisan or self-judgment without an arbitrator of some sort to judge between disputing parties. The Plataeans and Melians attempted to defend themselves from siege, because they claimed there were injustices committed against them by their besiegers. They understood that any judgment rendered in their respective circumstances would not be in

84. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 146; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 95; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 98.

their favor, because their respective judges had interests against them. The conditions of the besieged were such that the deck was stacked against them. Not only did the Peloponnesians and Athenians shuffle the decks, but they also had the power to draw the decks for the Plataeans and Melians, respectively. The Plataeans and Melians had to play hands dealt to them by enemies who threatened their sovereignty. In the game of war, when all odds are against one party, that party is left with no choice but to defend itself by any means necessary; it is their natural right. The Plataeans and Melians attempted to do so but were ultimately no match against their aggressors.

Notwithstanding the eventual collapse of Plataea and Melos as independent city-states, all parties involved in the disputes were willing to have diplomatic relations in order that justice or expediency could be served. The Plataeans may have rebuked the Lacedaemonians for allowing the Thebans to be present at their negotiations, the Plataeans and Melians may have argued against the merits of their respective enemy's justifications for war, but no party ever rebuked the negotiations in and of themselves. To have done so would have violated a natural dictate of right reason, because the aim for Plataea and Melos as city-states was to keep their respective sovereignties. The last of the Plataean and Melian inhabitants to fight fought to the last breath, as their lives and liberties were bound to the sovereignty of their respective city-states. If there had been arbitration without partisan or self-judgment, then peace might have been established as a result. The Plataeans and Melians had hoped for fair arbitration, but the Peloponnesians and Athenians were interested in only dominion. Their interest in dominion is why their judges were partisan and self-serving, respectively.

Hobbes defines the natural law for arbitration such that parties at controversy agree to have a mutually trusted party judge the outcome of their dispute.⁸⁵ The only way to settle controversies is to select a judge who is removed from any stake in the issue. In the case of the Plataeans and Melians, the fundamental controversy surrounding them was their very survival, since the Peloponnesians and Athenians only sought to further their own interests by subjecting Plataea and Melos, respectively. The Peloponnesians and Athenians were not to be trusted, because it was known by their contenders that they meant to subject them to their rule. In such cases, there can be no arbitration. There is only the decision of the most powerful faction, a point that the Athenians were keen to make to the Melians.⁸⁶ In order for us to submit to arbitration, however fair or unfair it may be, we must first be willing to allow for mediation.

MEDIATION

Consider the natural law for mediation. Throughout the Peloponnesian War, heralds from both sides of the conflict traveled within enemy territory in order to communicate official messages from their respective city-states. They had official staffs, were given safe passage, and often communicated exclusively through the spoken word.⁸⁷ Despite the fact that the heralds' city-states may be at war or near to it with whom the

85. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 145-146; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 95; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 98.

86. See note 80 above.

87. Thucydides, *The War of the Peloponnesians and the Athenians*, ed. Jeremy Mynott, trans. Jeremy Mynott (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 20n1.

heralds were being sent to negotiate, the heralds themselves were welcomed peacefully by their enemies. Before the outbreak of the war between the Peloponnesian League and Delian League, the Corinthians and Corcyraeans went to war over the city of Epidamnus.⁸⁸ The Corinthians sent a herald to the Corcyraeans in order to declare war against them.⁸⁹ At the commencement of war, the herald sent by the Corinthians would have also been at war with the Corcyraeans. Why did the Corcyraeans then not kill the herald, since he was now an enemy in war?

The beginning of the Peloponnesian War was determined from the point at which heralds became the exclusive means of communication between the two warring factions of the Peloponnese and Attica.⁹⁰ Again, why did neither side kill the heralds of its enemy, as the heralds were themselves enemies? The answer is that all parties involved in the conflict understood mediation as a natural dictate of right reason. If mediators in the court were treated as if soldiers in the field, then there could never be an opportunity for peace, except through complete and total domination or destruction of one faction by the other. In order for there to be mediation among the Greek city-states, there had to be mediators. Mediators were therefore given permission to travel safely through enemy territory, even if only by having received the benefit of the doubt from their enemy hosts that they might come with something beneficial to offer.

88. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 18.

89. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol.1, 18.

90. Thucydides, *The War*, 89n1.

Hobbes defines the natural law for mediation, such that all who mediate peace must be left to move freely and act toward peace.⁹¹ Since mediators are a means to peace, and since to seek peace is the first natural law derived from the human condition, to deny or injure mediators would be to violate a dictate of right reason. Mediation is a means to peace, and to hinder it is a means to war. In the case of the heralds communicating among enemy city-states during the Peloponnesian War—even if their communications were geared toward war—the channel of communication was too important to reject. Even if the heralds communicated declarations of war, they had the potential, capacity, and responsibility to communicate offerings of peace if so directed by their respective sovereigns. The heralds therefore served as both a means to war and a means to peace. Insofar as they served as a means to peace, they were mediators and left alone by their enemies. Notwithstanding the mediation of the heralds, there could not be mediators among warring factions without the disputing parties first making a claim to possessions or inheritances.

FIRST POSSESSION OR PRIMARY INHERITANCE

Consider the natural law for first possession or primary inheritance. There is little doubt that Hobbes had King Charles I in mind with respect to this particular law of nature, since, at the beginning of *Behemoth*, he refers to the King as having “had by right of a descent continued above six hundred years, and from a much longer descent King of

91. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 145; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 92; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 98.

Scotland, and from the time of his ancestor Henry II., King of Ireland.”⁹² Not only does Hobbes credit Charles I with having the primary inheritance with respect to the sovereignty of England, but he also credits the ancestors of the King as giving rise to his claim through their first possession of it. Hobbes defines the natural law for first possession or primary inheritance such that whatever cannot be had in common or by division should be given to whomever first possessed it or was born first into its inheritance.⁹³ The first aspect of this law is self-explanatory, but the second aspect is exemplified both by the passing on of citizenship in Athens to offspring and by the passing on of sovereignty in England. Hobbes distinguishes the lot of the first-born or first possessor from the lot agreed to by parties, considering the former natural and the latter arbitrary. According to Hobbes, first possession or primary inheritance is natural, because to first seize something or to be born into its inheritance is due to a chance of nature.⁹⁴ An agreed distribution is arbitrary, because it is purely the result of whatever the parties involved determine to be the case.⁹⁵ In order for there to be first possessors or primary inheritors, however, there must first be distributions by lot.

92. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 1-2.

93. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 145; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 95; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 98.

94. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 95.

95. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 145; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 95; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 98.

ALLOTMENTS AND COMMONS

Consider the natural laws for allotments and commons. Hobbes defines the natural law for lot such that whatever cannot be held in common or by division must be distributed either alternately or by lot, chance, or hazard.⁹⁶ Hobbes immediately makes a caveat with respect to an alternating distribution, since he views it to be similar to the lot of a first possessor.⁹⁷ Since the first one to possess something alternately has the immediate advantage to strengthen a hold on it, an alternating possession is deemed unequal for future possessors. Nevertheless, there would not be any allotments whatsoever if there were not a commons from which to distribute. Hobbes defines the natural law for commons such that whatever cannot be divided must be left for all to enjoy, whether proportionally or absolutely.⁹⁸ In order for there to be commons, natural and arbitrary allotments, mediation, arbitration, or true loyalty to a sovereign, there must first be equity among all parties involved.

EQUITY

Consider the natural law for equity. Hobbes defines the natural law for equity such that anyone who judges a controversy must be trusted to deal equally with all parties

96. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 144-145; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 94; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 97-98.

97. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 94.

98. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 145; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 94; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 97.

involved in the dispute.⁹⁹ Without equity in judgment, there could not be commons, divisions, or allotments as Hobbes defines them. There would be only partisan and self-judgment, and any loyalty to the sovereign would be undermined by endangering the stability of judging propriety in a fair manner. Unequal judgment can be settled only through war, as the judgments of the Peloponnesians at Plataea and the Athenians at Melos demonstrate. In order for there to be equity, however, there must first be modesty and humility.

MODESTY, HUMILITY, AND COURTESY

Consider the natural laws for modesty and humility. Hobbes defines the natural law for modesty such that no one entering into conditions of peace may reserve rights to the exclusion of everyone else's rights.¹⁰⁰ We all need the necessities of life and cannot be expected to relinquish them just as we cannot be expected to relinquish the right to defend our own lives. In the cases of the Peloponnesians and Athenians, their terms for peace with the Plataeans and Melians, respectively, may be considered as arrogant—especially the terms advanced by the Athenians. Hobbes defines the natural law for humility such that people should acknowledge those who are equal to them.¹⁰¹ He departs

99. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 144; Hobbes, *Elements of Law* 94; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 97.

100. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 144; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 94; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 97.

101. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 143; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 93; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 96-97.

from the traditional view held by Aristotle that some people are born to rule and others are born to be ruled. Hobbes dismisses this assertion as being against both reason and experience. Even if people are naturally unequal in some respects, all who agree to the rule of a sovereign do so on the expectation of equal terms. Furthermore, Hobbes makes the case that inequities between individuals are negligible at best, because

the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest, either by secret machination, or by confederacy with others ... [and] howsoever they may acknowledge many others to be more witty, or more eloquent, or more learned; yet they will hardly believe there be many so wise as themselves; for they see their own wit at hand, and other men's at a distance. But this proveth rather that men are in that point equal, than unequal. For there is not ordinarily a greater sign of the equal distribution of any thing, than that every man is contented with his share.¹⁰²

Hobbes points out that, while those who have a finer wit—as opposed to a coarser one—tend to be victorious, we do not endeavor peace by honoring ourselves more than others.¹⁰³ Furthermore, we should not dishonor one another unnecessarily. In order for there be modesty and humility, there must first be courtesy. Hobbes defines the natural law for courtesy such that there must not be any significations of hate or contempt against others.¹⁰⁴ The reason is that a lack of courtesy leads to quarrels, conflict, and eventually war. He admits that courtesy is not often practiced, though it may be against a dictate of right reason.¹⁰⁵ In order for there to be courtesy, however, there must first be a willingness not to succumb to cruelty.

102. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 74-75.

103. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 93.

104. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 142-143; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 92; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 96.

105. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 142-143; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 92; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 96.

CRUELTY

Consider the natural law against cruelty. In the fifth year of the Peloponnesian War, the Athenians almost massacred the entire city of Mytilene due to their anger against a Mytilenaeen revolt.¹⁰⁶ The Athenians assumed that since Peloponnesian ships had endeavored to sail through the Aegean Sea to the city in order to invade Attica, there must have been some conspiracy between them and the Mytilenaeans. Fortunately, for the inhabitants of Mytilene, the Athenians had a change of heart a day after their first deliberations and decided not to murder everyone.¹⁰⁷ Hobbes defines the natural law against cruelty such that revenge—a retribution of evil for evil—should be taken only if it will lead to some future good.¹⁰⁸ To hurt without reason is to introduce war, which is vain and not beneficial. If the Athenians had simply massacred everyone in the city, then there would have been no added benefit. In order for there to be mercy, however, there must first be a willingness to pardon.

PARDONS

Consider the natural law for pardons. After Charles I was executed during the English Civil War, all members of Parliament who had previously been against his trial –

106. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 157, 174-175, 185.

107. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 184-185.

108. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 142; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 91; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 96.

the so-called “secluded members”—were prohibited from ever returning to their seats of power.¹⁰⁹ Members of Parliament who had been in favor of the King’s trial—the so-called “Rump”—therefore became supreme in their rule.¹¹⁰ Sovereignty shifted several times after 1649, but the Rump eventually regained power ten years later.¹¹¹ The army in Scotland had previously helped Oliver Cromwell oust the Rump, but now, in 1659, it begged for a pardon from the Rump.¹¹² The army offered to submit and be obedient, and afterwards the Rump did not condemn them.¹¹³ Hobbes defines the natural law for pardons such that if those guilty of a past evil seeks repentance for it, then it should be given to them.¹¹⁴ To pardon is to grant peace and may be considered as security from war in the future. If someone repentant seeks a pardon but is denied it, then the one who denies the pardon does not grant peace. Similarly, if someone not repentant seeks a pardon, then the one seeking the pardon only seeks some advantage contrary to peace. If it is contrary to the pursuit of peace, then it is warlike. In order to pardon, however, we must first be willing to be mutually accommodating and show gratitude.

109. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 155.

110. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 155.

111. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 195-196.

112. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 196.

113. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 196.

114. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 96.

MUTUAL ACCOMMODATION AND GRATITUDE

Consider the natural laws for mutual accommodation and gratitude. Hobbes defines the natural law for mutual accommodation such that we should all attempt to accommodate ourselves to others.¹¹⁵ We are so diverse with respect to our passions that we are therefore similar to different “stones brought together for the building of an edifice.”¹¹⁶ Just as any stone that is difficult and irregular to place is cast aside of a structure, so also should anyone unwilling to give up their over-abundance for the sake of someone else’s necessity be cast out of society. Since everyone naturally seeks what is necessary, for someone to deny another’s necessities for the sake of their own greed is responsible for the state of war that inevitably follows. Moreover, if everyone was mutually accommodating, then the effect on each would be peaceful relations.¹¹⁷ Hobbes defines the natural law for gratitude such that a gift given to someone should not later be regretted by the giver on account of the given.¹¹⁸ If someone trusted another such as to give a gift, then the gift is meant for the good of both. If for some reason the giver regrets giving a gift to the given, then there will arise frustration and a lack of trust. A lack of trust leads to less help, more diffidence, no reconciliation, and ultimately war.

115. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 141; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 90-91; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 95.

116. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 95.

117. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 90-91.

118. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 140; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 90; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 95.

JUSTICE

Consider the natural law for justice. When the Athenians were deliberating between allying with the Corinthians or Corcyraeans before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, the Corinthians reminded the Athenians that they already had articles of peace with one another.¹¹⁹ The Corinthians also pointed out the fact that the Athenians and Corcyraeans had never so much as had a truce.¹²⁰ While the Athenians decided ultimately to ally with the Corcyraeans for the sake of exploiting their navy, the Corinthians were justified in making known the injury made against them.¹²¹ The Athenians violated the articles of peace, rendering their alliance with the Corcyraeans an injustice to the Corinthians. Similarly, the execution of Charles I during the English Civil War was considered by Hobbes to be a gross injustice against the sovereignty of England. The soon-to-be-executed King of England made known that he considered the actions of Parliament to be injurious to his sovereignty. Parliament had enacted a law declaring it treasonous for the King to levy war against it, but King Charles I responded at his trial

where, sitting in a chair, he heard the charge read, but denied to plead to it either guilty or not guilty, till he should know by what lawful authority he was brought thither.¹²²

King Charles met with Parliament on four separate occasions, and each time the King asked the same question. Parliament beheaded him for it.

119. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 25.

120. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 25.

121. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol. 1, 23.

122. Hobbes, *Behemoth*, 153.

Hobbes defines the natural law for justice such that covenants between parties be performed as contracted.¹²³ A covenant is a contract such that there is a promise of future performance.¹²⁴ If a contract is violated, then the violator is either considered unjust or considered to have committed an unjust act. Nevertheless, justice can only be served if there is a sovereign established to enforce it. In the case of the Athenians and Corinthians, there was a covenant of peace between them. The Athenians violated the trust of the Corinthians by allying with the Corcyraeans. Similarly, Parliament claimed that sovereignty lay in the people and that Parliament was representative of the people. In doing so, it violated its covenant with the King of England, who, being the one to call Parliament, was the one who initiated the peoples' representation by Parliament. Nevertheless, without sufficient power to awe others into submission, justice cannot be enforced and is therefore nullified. Justice is therefore dependent on a sovereign. Notwithstanding this necessity, in order for there to be justice of any kind, we must first be willing to make contracts with one another.

CONTRACTS

Consider the natural law for contracts. Hobbes defines the natural law for contracts such that all people should relinquish their natural rights insofar as everyone

123. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 136; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 88; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 89.

124. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 126; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 84; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 82.

else is willing to do the same for the sake of peace.¹²⁵ It is a limiting of one's own liberties to ensure that the same liberties of others are limited as well. Since the voluntary actions of an individual seek only the good for that individual, certain natural rights cannot be lost through contracts:

1. No one can be expected not to defend one's own life.¹²⁶
2. No one can be expected not to defend oneself against harm and incarceration.¹²⁷
3. Anyone who renounces or transfers a right cannot be understood to have forsaken life or necessary liberties.¹²⁸

The point of mutual deliberation is to promote peace and to provide for the common defense. If people were at liberty to act in whatever ways their passions were driven, then, at least according to Hobbes, the inevitable results would be quarreling, conflict, and war. Natural rights either can be renounced or can be transferred. To renounce a right is to no longer act in concordance with whatever liberty was previously had.¹²⁹ To transfer a right is to no longer act in discordance with another's liberty to act with respect to that

125. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 123; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 82; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 80.

126. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 82.

127. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 82.

128. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 82.

129. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 124; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 82; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 82.

other's newly founded right.¹³⁰ In order for there to be contracts of any kind, or any of law of nature for that matter, we must first be willing to seek after peace.¹³¹

PEACE

Consider the fundamental natural law for peace. Hobbes defines the natural law for peace such that everyone should endeavor to it and the common defense.¹³² This first and fundamental law of nature is a response to the state of nature, which is a state where everyone has a natural right to everyone and everything.¹³³ In such a state, however, everybody's right to everyone and everything amounts to a right to nothing.¹³⁴ In ancient Greece, before it was ever known by the common name of "Hellas," groups of migrants wandered around the region as necessity dictated.¹³⁵ If a group settled, then there was always the possibility that a stronger group would force them to leave. This was the case

130 Hobbes, "The Citizen," 124; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 82; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 82.

131. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 123; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 82; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 80.

132. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 123; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 82; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 80.

133. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 116-117; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 79; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 76.

134. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 80.

135. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol.1, 2.

where the land was good, such as in the Peloponnese excluding Arcadia.¹³⁶ It was not the case in Attica, where the soil was poor.¹³⁷

Since there is no common authority, no law, and no sovereign in a state of nature, all people are led by their own individual reckoning. If everyone in a state of nature acts purely on individual rationality, then any act can be reckoned to be necessary for survival. Since any act in a state of nature can be reckoned to be necessary for survival, no action whatsoever can be disallowed. In such a state, there can only be war, because interests will eventually come into conflict, whether through competition, diffidence, or glory.¹³⁸ Though purely individualized rationality cannot lead to peace, at least according to Hobbes, mutual reckoning through a sovereign can lead to peace and is the only way to divest people of their impassioned liberties in the pursuit of peace. Therefore, if there is moral philosophy, then there must first be reason.

136. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol.1, 2.

137. Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, vol.1, 2.

138. See note above 98.

CHAPTER III

REASON AND PASSION

Thomas Hobbes defines reason, or ratiocination, as the part of the cognitive power that composes syllogisms as computations of successive, connected appellations.¹ Ratiocination is equated with computation such that reckoning anything whatsoever is a kind of addition or subtraction.² Computation is not limited to arithmetic but may also apply to geometry, logic, ethics, or politics. Since right reason stands apart from the reckoner, those who reckon may not always do so correctly. Even if many people agree that something is reasonable, that is not sufficient in Hobbes' view. The only way to ensure that everyone's reckoning is in accordance with each other is to appoint someone to judge for them. The reason for this is that everyone reckons from their own understanding of words, which gives rise to an individualized rationality that is not necessarily critical or objective. Where there is controversy, individualized rationality can lead to war. The reason for this is that concepts like justice and equity can take on a wide range of meanings depending on who is doing the reckoning. Justice, equity, or any of the other laws of nature can be agreed to only if there is a body to mediate and arbitrate how those concepts are to be established, "for before covenants and laws were drawn up, neither justice nor injustice, neither public good nor public evil, was natural among men

1. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 38; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 22-23, 25.

2. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 186; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 22-23.

any more than it was among beasts.”³ There could not be ratiocination without connected appellations. Therefore, if there is reason, then there must first be connected appellations, or speech.

Hobbes defines speech as connected appellations used to register, recall, and declare concepts, “without which there had been amongst men, neither commonwealth, nor society, nor contract, nor peace, no more than amongst lions, bears, and wolves.”⁴ An appellation is a word or name, which is an arbitrary association between an internal vocalization and external sign.⁵ Marks and signs are a means to transfer our mental discourse into verbal discourse, whether for the sake of remembering or communicating, respectively.⁶ According to Hobbes, significations may be used for five different purposes:

1. To register and recall causal relations.⁷
2. To counsel and teach one another.⁸
3. To mutually help one another.⁹
4. To provide pleasure.¹⁰

3. Hobbes, “On Man,” 43.

4. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 16.

5. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 35; Hobbes, *Leviathan* 16-17.

6. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 16.

7. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 39; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 17.

8. Hobbes, “The Citizen,” 39; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 17.

9. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 17.

10. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 17.

5. To command and follow orders.¹¹

The opposites of these purposes are referred to by Hobbes as abuses of speech.¹² Since there is ratiocination, there must be connected appellations. Since there are connected appellations, there must be significations. Significations are caused by the strength of an affection as the heart endeavors either to its cause or from its cause. Therefore, if there is reason and speech, then there must first be passion.

Hobbes defines passion, or affection, as the whole motive power of the mind.¹³ It is the endeavor of the heart to or from an object sensed or imagined, since the object either helps or hinders vital motion, respectively.¹⁴ Vital motion refers to the generative and nutritive powers of the human body, such as the circulation of blood, digestion of food, and respiration of air.¹⁵ For Hobbes, curiosity and admiration are the affections immediate to ratiocination. If there is neither admiration nor curiosity, then there cannot be science. Both affections are an endeavor for the development of knowledge and intellect, and he considers them to be particular to humans.¹⁶ Curiosity is an appetite for knowledge such that the delight we derive from the invention of knowledge dominates

11. Hobbes, "The Citizen," 40.

12. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 17.

13. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43.

14. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 22, 43-44; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 27-28; Hobbes, "On Man," 45.

15. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 22; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 27.

16. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 57; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 31.

any delight we may derive from bodily pleasures.¹⁷ For Hobbes, the distinction between delighting in knowledge (for mediate pleasures) and delighting in sensation (for immediate pleasures) is what separates humans from other animals.¹⁸ While other animals consider immediate ends only, humans consider both immediate ends through immediate means and mediate ends through the knowledge of their means. The cause of curiosity is admiration, which is the joy we take in novelty.¹⁹ The promise that newer experience will be better for knowledge as it increases is an effect of the acquisition of more experience and knowledge. This promise, in turn, causes hope for the acquisition of newer experience and knowledge.

An admiration and curiosity for geometry is an example of the development of knowledge and intellect. Admiration for the Pythagorean Theorem engendered in Hobbes a curiosity for other geometrical propositions. The curiosity that Hobbes expresses for geometry is shown by his endeavor to memorize in reverse succession the propositions that afforded the construction of the 47th Proposition of Euclid.²⁰ Hobbes resolved each proposition and then compounded each memory of the propositions into an experience of geometry. New experience and knowledge of geometry were the causes of his endeavor to seek yet newer geometrical experience and knowledge. The appetite and joy in the knowledge of geometry caused Hobbes to memorize what he considered “virtually the

17. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 57; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 31.

18. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 57-58; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 31.

19. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 57; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 31.

20. Aubrey, “The Brief Life,” 235; Aubrey, “Life of Hobbes,” lxvii.

only precise science.”²¹ Whether for knowledge or something else, endeavor is the motion either toward some pleasurable object or away from some painful object, such as the memorizing of how to construct geometric figures or learning how to light a fire in the cold.

An object, such as a geometric illustration, fire, or cold air, can be pleasurable, painful, or inconsiderable.²² An object is pleasurable if it causes delight through bodily pleasure or joy. Bodily pleasure is any pleasurable light, sound, odor, savor, or bodily feeling and is a pleasure of sensation.²³ Joy is any expectation of a pleasurable effect and is therefore a pleasure of imagination.²⁴ The bodily feeling of warmth from a fire in the cold is bodily pleasure, while the image of warmth that can be had from a fire in the cold is joy. An object of delight may be good in promise, good in means, or good in effect. Hobbes specifies that good in promise is pulchritude, good in means is profitable, and good in effect is delightful.²⁵ In other words, a delightful affection pursues a pleasurable object. A fire promises warmth in the cold and is a means to warming in the cold. If it is cold, then there either is an appetite for fire or love of fire. An object is painful if it causes trouble through pain or grief. Pain is any painful light, sound, odor, savor, or bodily

21. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 19.

22. Hobbes, *Elements of Law* 44; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 28; Hobbes, “On Man,” 47.

23. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 45; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 29; Hobbes, “On Man,” 45.

24. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 45; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 30; Hobbes, “On Man,” 55-56.

25. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43-45; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 28-29; Hobbes, “On Man,” 47-48.

feeling and is a pain of sensation.²⁶ Grief is any expectation of a painful effect and is a pain of imagination.²⁷ The bodily feeling of freezing in the cold is a bodily pain, while to imagine freezing in the cold is to be aggrieved. An object of trouble may be evil in promise, evil in means, or evil in effect. Hobbes calls evil in promise turpitude, evil in means hurtful, and evil in effect troublesome.²⁸ A troublesome affection, he contends, occurs when someone avers a painful object. To be without fire promises freezing in the cold, because it is a means to freezing in the cold. If it is cold and there is no fire, then there is an aversion or hate for the cold. If the weather is warm, however, and there is no fire, then neither the cold nor fire may be considered at all.

According to Hobbes, pleasure or pain is an inward pressure on the outer surface of the heart caused by the endeavor of an object to press inward on the outer surface of an organ of sensation.²⁹ The pressure of the object causes pressure from the organ, through the nerves and brain, and onto the heart.³⁰ In turn, the heart reacts to the pressure, which causes a pressure from the heart, back through the nerves, and to the part of the human body originally impressed.³¹ The human body is therefore pressed outward, and the effect

26. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 45; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 30; Hobbes, "On Man," 45.

27. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 45; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 30; Hobbes, "On Man," 55-56. The term "grief" is used by Hobbes in *Elements of Law* and *Leviathan*, whereas the term "hate" is the translation of the same concept in "On Man." For the sake of consistency, Hobbes' usage as been retained.

28. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 44; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 28-29; Hobbes, "On Man," 48.

29. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 226; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43

30. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 226; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43

31. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 226; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43

of this outward pressure is its motion from within—whether to or from the object.³² Hobbes considers the alternation between appetites and aversions to be a matter of deliberation, and the last appetite or aversion of deliberation is what he calls the will.³³ If it is cold, then there will be an endeavor to light a fire, after the considerations of being cold and lighting a fire are deliberated against each other. If the object is absent, then either there is an appetite for it or there is an aversion against it, whether pleasurable or painful, respectively.³⁴ If the object is present, then either there is love for it or there is hate for it, respectively.³⁵ For example, there is an appetite for a fire while freezing in the cold or an aversion for the cold while warming near a fire. There is also the love of fire while warming in the cold or hate for the cold while freezing without a fire. Hobbes further contends that an object of appetite or love is considered good, while an object of aversion or hate is considered evil.³⁶ If an object neither is good nor is evil, then it is inconsiderable.³⁷ Inconsideration for an object is equivalent to non-endeavor, either since the object does press inward on the outer surface of the heart or since the activation of other senses or images obscures it. A fire may be considered good, while the cold may be considered evil. If there is a fire in the cold, for example, then the cold will be deemed

32. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 226; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43

33. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 227; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 70-71; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 33; Hobbes, “On Man,” 46.

34. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43-44; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 28; Hobbes, “On Man,” 45.

35. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 28; Hobbes, “On Man,” 48.

36. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 44; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 28.

37. See note 22 above.

inconsiderable with respect to the fire, since the warmth provided by the fire will eclipse the pain of the cold.

Hobbes claims that passion is the motivation to act for pleasure or against pain and is caused by motion inherent in imagination.³⁸ Appetite, love, and joy are different kinds of pleasure, while aversion, hate, and grief are different kinds of pain. Other passions, such as hope, despair, fear, and courage are all likewise different kinds of pleasure or pain.³⁹ Hope, for example, is an appetite with respect to acquisition, while despair involves an expected failure of acquisition.⁴⁰ Before the Peloponnesians and Athenians besieged Plataea and Melos, respectively, the Plataeans and Melians had hoped for peace. Once peace became an impossibility, they were then left in despair. Fear, on the other hand, is an aversion with respect to acquisition, but courage, Hobbes writes, shares no such “opinion.”⁴¹ Once the Plataeans and Melians knew they would suffer defeat in war, they either were afraid or were courageous, depending on those who surrendered or those who fought, respectively. Hobbes defines several other passions, and they are all rooted in imagination.⁴² An image of a past image is a memory, and many images taken together are what Hobbes calls experience.⁴³ Without experience, we would

38. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43-44; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 27-28; Hobbes, “On Man,” 45.

39. Hobbes, *Elements of Law* 51-52; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 30.

40. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 52-53; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 30.

41. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 44, 51; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 30.

42. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43-59; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 30-32.

43. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 32; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 9.

not remember what is pleasurable or painful. Therefore, if there is passion, then there must first be experience.

CHAPTER IV

EXPERIENCE AND BODILY STRENGTH

Thomas Hobbes defines experience as that part of the cognitive power which is composed of many memories, or the recollection of many successions of images.¹ Therefore, if there is experience, then there must first be recollection. A memory is analogous to the dim sense of an object seen from afar.² If an object is far from the eyes that see it, then fewer parts of it are seen. If fewer parts of an object are seen, then less of its whole is clear. A memory, then, is an image of some previous thought, and it will be as dim or clear as it is old or new, near or far, respectively. The power of recollection is either as strong as a memory is whole, or as weak as a memory is without parts.³ Hobbes considers recollection to be the imagination of past thoughts.⁴ When we recall the past we typically do not revive the whole of an original image. Therefore, if there is recollection, then there must first be imagination.

1. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 22, 32; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 9.

2. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 29-30.

3. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 29-30.

4. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 29; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 8-9.

Hobbes defines imagination as that part of the cognitive power which conceives an absent object.⁵ The clearest image is a dream, which is imagination while asleep.⁶ An image during sleep is clearest, because the brain and nerves are numb to sensation.⁷ An image is conceived after pressure on the brain causes internal motions within the brain—motions that continue after the original pressure is gone.⁸ The internal motion of the brain is caused originally by an object and may thereafter press outward, through the nerves, and onto the organ of sensation that represented the original sense.⁹ If an object is absent, or the endeavor of the brain is stronger than the endeavor of some present object pressing inward on the outer surface of the organ, then an image of the original object may be conceived. Hobbes therefore considers an image to be an effect of sensation. He claims that it is analogous to the motion of water as an effect of the wind.¹⁰ As the wind moves across the surface of water, the water at the surface moves with it. Similarly, as an object presses inward on the outer surface of an organ of sensation, there is a sense of the object conceived once the brain reacts by sending pressure outward to the inner surface of the organ. Once the wind is gone, the water will continue to move. Similarly, once the object

5. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 218; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 27; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 8.

6. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 221-222; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 30; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 9.

7. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 9.

8. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 218-219; Hobbes, *Elements of Law* 27; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 8.

9. Hobbes, “De Corpore,” 218-219; Hobbes, *Elements of Law* 27; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 8.

10. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 27; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 8.

is gone, there is an image of the object conceived until the motion of another thought causes it to fade. As for what is imagined and why, Hobbes considers images to be analogous to seeing the light of the stars through moving clouds.¹¹ As the clouds obscure the sky, the light of the stars is seen only where the sky is clear. Similarly, images are conceived only as they have the strongest endeavor or are the least obscured by the endeavors of other images.

Sensation and imagination are each modes of thought, but the latter is never as clear as the former from which it originates.¹² The clarity of sensation and obscurity of imagination are analogous to the clarity of the light of the sun and obscurity of the light of the stars.¹³ While the light of the sun is seen, the light of the stars is obscured, because the motion from the sun dominates the motion from the stars. Once the light of the sun is gone, the light of the stars is seen, because the motion from the stars is no longer overtaken by the motion from the sun. Similarly, while an object is being sensed, images will be obscured by the immediacy of sensation. When there is no object of sensation, however, an image may be conceived. Furthermore, the intensity of sensation compared with the intensity of imagination is analogous to the intensity of a wave compared with the intensity of a ripple. While a ripple is concurrent with a wave, it is not noticed, because the strength of the wave is too strong. Once the wave is gone, the ripple may be noticed, because the strength of the ripple is not overtaken by the strength of the wave. Similarly, while an image is concurrent with sensation, it is not noticed; the strength of

11. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 28.

12. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 27; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 8.

13. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 8.

sensation is too strong. Once the sense passes, however, imagination may be noticed, because the strength of the image is not overtaken by the strength of the sense. The order of motion transitions from an object, through sensation, and to imagination. Therefore, if there is imagination, then there must first be sensation.

Hobbes defines sensation as that part of the cognitive power which conceives a present object.¹⁴ An object is conceived after it endeavors to press inward on the outer surface of an organ of sensation, such as the eye, ear, nose, tongue, or human body.¹⁵ The pressure of the object on an organ causes pressure from the organ, through the nerves, and onto the brain.¹⁶ The brain then presses back through the nerves, and onto the original organ. The inner surface of the original organ is pressed outward, and a sense of the original object is the effect. Hobbes supposes that thoughts are composed from the elements of sensation and recollection and therefore are resolved to them as well.¹⁷ He offers four propositions:

1. Light is not in an object.¹⁸
2. Light is not itself an object.¹⁹

14. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 214-215; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 23; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 6.

15. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 215; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 22-23; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 6-7.

16. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 215; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 22-23; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 6-7.

17. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 213; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 26.

18. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 23-24.

19. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 23-24.

3. Sensation of light is an effect of the internal motion of the brain caused by an object.²⁰
4. The cause of visual sensation is also the cause of sensations of sound, odor, savor, and bodily feeling, namely motion.²¹

The first and second propositions consider the relationship between light and an object. First, Hobbes proposes that light is not in an object. If the reflected light of the moon is seen on the surface of water, then the light seen is not in the moon. Furthermore, the direct light of the moon is not in the moon. Suppose that, for whatever cause, the eyes see the direct light of the moon as two equal, yet distinct sights. Since each sight is equal to the other, one light could be in the moon no more or less than the other. Both lights seen directly cannot be in the moon together, however they be seen at once, because the moon cannot be in two places at one time. Since the direct light of the moon is seen in two places at one time, neither one light nor the other is in the moon. Therefore, light is not in an object. Second, Hobbes proposes that light is not itself an object. While the reflected light of the moon can be seen on the surface of water, the moon is not on or underneath the surface. Therefore, light is not itself an object.

The third proposition considers the relationship between light and the human body. Hobbes proposes that visual sensation is an effect of internal motions occurring in the brain caused by an object. Since a fire moves outward continually, and the light of a fire is seen to glow, the motion of the parts of a fire must be some alternation of expansion and contraction outward. The scintillant motion of a fire expands and contracts

20. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 24-25.

21. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 25-26.

outward to the parts of some medium contiguous to it, which expands and contracts outward the parts of the same medium contiguous to the first. The scintillation outward of the part of the medium contiguous to the outer surface of the eye endeavors to press it inward. The pressure of the medium onto the eye causes pressure from the eye, through the nerves, and onto the brain. The brain resists this pressure, which in turn causes a pressure from the brain, through the nerves, and onto the eye. The inner surface of the eye is pressed outward, and the glowing light of a fire is seen. Therefore, visual sensation is an effect of the internal motion of the brain caused by an object.

The last of Hobbes' propositions considers the relationship between a sense of light and the senses of sound, odor, savor, and bodily feeling. Hobbes proposes that the cause of visual sensation is also the cause of all other sensations, namely the motion of physical bodies. If the echoed howl of a wolf is heard within the depths of a cave, then the sound heard is not in the wolf. Furthermore, the direct howl of the wolf is not in the wolf. Since each echoed howl is equal to the other, as well as to the direct howl, one sound could be in the wolf no more or less than any other. Any howls of the wolf heard together cannot be in the wolf at the same time, however they be heard at once, because the wolf cannot be in two places at one time. Since the echoed howls of the wolf are heard in two places at one time, neither one sound nor another is in the wolf. Therefore, sound is not in any object. While the echoed howls of a wolf can be heard within the depths of a cave, the wolf is not throughout the cave. Therefore, sound is not itself an object. Since wind moves in this or that direction, and the sound of wind is heard when strong, the motion of the wind must be directional. The directional motion of the wind

moves the part of the air contiguous to it directionally, which moves the part of the air contiguous to that directionally. The direction of that part of the air contiguous to the outer surface of the ear endeavors to press the ear inward. The pressure of the air on the ear causes pressure from the ear, through the nerves, and onto the brain. The brain resists this pressure, which causes a pressure from the brain, through the nerves, and back onto the ear. The inner surface of the ear is pressed outward, and the strength of the wind is heard. Therefore, auditory sensation is an effect of the internal motion of the brain caused by an object. If the cooked odor or savor of food is smelled or tasted, respectively, either by many at once, or by one once while sick and once while healthy, then there is as much chance either that the taste or smell will be similar, or that one or the other will be different. If the odors and savors of cooked food are so varied, both at once and at different times, by one and by many, then olfactory and gustatory sensations are also supposed by Hobbes to be effects of the internal motion of the brain caused originally by an object. The heat of a fire may cause bodily warmth, depending on how near or far it is. The warm feeling neither is in the fire, nor is itself an object. Similar to the eye, ear, nose, and tongue, the pressure of the medium on the body causes pressure from the body, through the nerves, and onto the brain. The brain resists this pressure, which causes a pressure from the brain, through the nerves, and back onto the body. The inner surface of the body is pressed outward, and the warmth of fire is felt. Therefore, somatic sensation is an effect of the internal motion of the brain caused by an object.

Since sensation neither is in an object nor is itself an object, but is an effect of the internal motion of the brain caused by an object, the generation and annihilation of

various senses must be from changes in the sentient.²² In every kind of sensation, as an object endeavors to press inward on the outer surface of an organ of sensation, the pressure changes the organ, nerves, and brain. The mutation or alteration of these parts of the human body is considered by Hobbes to be thought. Therefore, if there is sensation, then there must first be conception. Hobbes defines conception as the whole cognitive power, and every part is a representation of the properties of some object.²³ If the mutation or alteration of the cognitive parts of the human body caused by objects is conception, then a concept is nothing but the knowledge of how the cognitive parts of the human body mutate or alternate as the effect of an object. Therefore, a representation is the cognition of how the human body is affected by an object, not the cognition of the object itself.

In *Elements of Law*, Hobbes imagines the entire world but himself annihilated.²⁴ If everything was annihilated, except for Hobbes, then he asserts that he could not sense present objects, because there would not be any objects of sensation. Though he would be unable to sense present objects, he could still imagine absent objects that he had sensed before the world was annihilated. The world would become indistinguishable from a dream, since there would be nothing to press inward on the organs of sensation; there would be only imagination. Since there is no difference between the image of an annihilated object and the image of an absent object, Hobbes reckons that both are the same mode of cognition, or the same means of knowing. Since concepts are known first

22. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 214.

23. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 22; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 6.

24. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 22.

from sensation, either there must be objects to sense or there must have been objects to sense at one time. Therefore, if there is conception, then either there are physical objects or there were physical objects at one time. The regularity of wakeful sensations, as opposed to convoluted dreams, is enough for Hobbes (unlike his contemporary, René Descartes) to suppose that objects are indeed present in the world.²⁵

Hobbes defines an object as that from which sensation is caused.²⁶ It is a physical body external to the sentient and is sensed after it endeavors to press inward on the outer surface of an organ of sensation.²⁷ Just as an object causes sensation, the sensation of an object causes imagination; just as images of objects cause recollection, the memories of objects cause experience. Since there is experience, there must be recollection. Since there is recollection, there must be imagination. Since there is imagination, there must be sensation. Sensation is caused by the strength of an object, or external body, as it impinges on an organ of sensation. Therefore, if there is experience, then there must first be bodily strength.

Hobbes defines bodily strength, or physical force, as the whole motive power of the human body that moves bodies external to it.²⁸ As objects press inward on the outer surface of an organ of sensation, the bodily strength of an object's pressure relative to

25. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 221; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 28; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 9.

26. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 215; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 23; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 6.

27. Hobbes, "De Corpore," 214; Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 23; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 6.

28. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 43.

other objects' pressures determines how wholly or partially the object is sensed. Hobbes does not define a body, except as that which is independent of conception and with place.²⁹ It may be considered as a singular whole that is filled with itself. Bodies cannot move themselves, because nothing can change itself, i.e. all action, from physics to politics, is subject to inertia.³⁰ Hobbes defines place as a consideration of the length, width, or depth of a present object, or any part of a whole whose part is filled with body. Motion is defined as the continuous and gradual change of the place of a body, and is the fundamental property of bodies in general.³¹

29. Martinich, *A Hobbes Dictionary*, 53.

30. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 7.

31. Martinich, *A Hobbes Dictionary*, 213.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In the introduction to *Leviathan*, Thomas Hobbes sets out his agenda by describing the human body and body politic mechanistically:

For what is the *heart*, but a *spring*; and the *nerves*, but so many *strings*; and the *joints*, but so many *wheels*, giving motion to the whole body, such as was intended by the artificer? *Art* goes yet further, imitating that rational and most excellent work of nature, *man*. For by art is created that great LEVIATHAN called a COMMONWEALTH, or STATE, in Latin CIVITAS, which is but an artificial man; though of greater stature and strength than the natural, for whose protection and defense it was intended.¹

While it may seem to be the case that Hobbes is being metaphorical, it is important to consider his views about metaphors. Hobbes was keen to be as literal as he could be in his appellations, definitions, and explications. On numerous occasions throughout many of his works, he derides those who abuse speech. He goes so far as to point out that he considers metaphors specifically to be an abuse of speech.² Why would he then base his entire moral and political philosophy on a mechanistic metaphor? Furthermore, why would he undermine himself by arguing openly against metaphors in general if the foundation of his philosophy was meant to be metaphorical? In a word, it is absurd, since Hobbes would have essentially contradicted two cornerstones of his philosophy: speech and reason. It is more rational to take Hobbes at his word when he contends that the world is nothing but moving bodies. If we adopt this perspective while studying Hobbes'

1. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 3.

2. Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, 37; Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 17

thought, then it is much easier to understand how someone could argue both for the liberty of the individual and for the necessary authority of the sovereign. It also calls into question the assertion by Leo Strauss that “the mathematical method and materialistic metaphysics each in its own way contributed to disguise the original motivation-nexus and thus to undermine Hobbes’s political philosophy.”³ The mathematical method and materialistic metaphysics cast aside by Strauss influenced Hobbes’ political philosophy in almost every respect.

Every human body is a body in motion, just as the body politic is a conglomeration of human bodies, all of which are moved in the direction as set forth by the sovereign. If every human body endeavored purely as an individual, then everyone would be led into chaos. It would be like a bunch of waves moving in various directions, with no uniformity at all. Certain waves would be bigger or stronger than other waves and would overtake them. If every human body’s endeavor was subject to a sovereign, however, then all of the waves would conjoin into a tsunami, moving in one uniform direction. Each wave would become a part of the tsunami, as opposed to being destroyed by other waves. It is for this reason that Hobbes holds that the sovereign must have absolute power, notwithstanding certain inalienable natural rights. Though there may be inconveniences associated with subjecting oneself to a sovereign, Hobbes argues that such inconveniences are much better than the horrors of war. For his part, Hobbes maintains that he considers it impossible “that any man should take pleasure in other

3. Leo Strauss, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: Its Basis and Its Genesis*, trans. Elsa M. Sinclair (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), 170.

men's great harms; without other end of his own."⁴ Perhaps Hobbes was a bit naive with respect to this view, but it underscores his willingness to subject himself to a sovereign. It also makes it easier to understand why he thought sovereign loyalty to be the final key in the pursuit of peace.

Loyalty to one's sovereign is the final law of nature, while peace is the first and fundamental law of nature. The laws of nature are reasonable, reason is passionate, passion is imaginative, imagination is sensitive, sensation is objective, objects are motive, and motion is, well, motion. Motion is similar to Euclid's geometrical point, as both are primitive and cannot be defined apart from themselves. Motion is not a thing but the fundamental property of physical bodies. Without motion, we could not conceive of anything, since there would be nothing at all. Therefore, if there is to be a commonwealth that provides for peace and the common defense, then we must first know what moves us, so that we may then know what moves others. Hobbes' advice in this pursuit is to first "read thyself."⁵

4. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 32.

5. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 4.

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