Aspects of Hobbes

Noel Malcolm, one of the world's leading Hobbes scholars, presents a set of extended essays on a wide variety of aspects of the life and work of this giant of early modern thought. The greater part of this volume is published here for the first time. Malcolm offers a succinct introduction to Hobbes's life and thought, as a foundation for his discussion of such topics as his political philosophy, his theory of international relations, the development of his mechanistic world view, and his subversive biblical criticism. Several of the essays pay special attention to the European dimensions of Hobbes's life, his sources and his influence; the longest surveys the entire European reception of his work from the 1640s to the 1730s. All the essays are based on a deep knowledge of primary sources, and many present striking new discoveries about Hobbes's life, his manuscripts and the printing history of his works. Aspects of Hobbes will be essential reading not only for Hobbes specialists, but also for all those interested in seventeenth-century intellectual history more generally, both British and European.
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these discourses derive, if not from Hobbes, then from someone (Coverdale) who was personally and intellectually very close to him, is more or less certain; that Hobbes may have contributed some ideas or arguments to them appears very probable; but that Hobbes himself was the author still seems to me quite doubtful.

The dating of the composition of the Latin Optical MS given here (see n. 50) was based on an argument about the date at which the surviving manuscript was copied (presented in Hobbes, Correspondence, I, pp. iii–iv). Prompted by recent research by Dr Timothy Raylor, I have reconsidered the evidence, and now conclude that the manuscript was copied in Paris between December 1640 and, at the latest, April 1641 (or, more probably, August 1640). The composition of the work itself may perhaps be assigned to 1640 or 1642. See T. Raylor, 'The Date and Script of Hobbes's Latin Optical Manuscript', and R. Hobbes, the Latin Optical Manuscript, and the Persian Script, both in English Manuscript Studies, ed. P. Beat and J. Griffith, 13 (2003) (forthcoming).

The 'undated manuscript by Hobbes' referred to in n. 71 is in fact a set of notes by Robert Payne on a draft of part of De corpore; see Chapter 4 below on 'Robert Payne: the Hobbes Manuscripts, and the "Short Tract"', esp. pp. 99–103.

Hobbes and Spinoza

1. Hobbes

When the Parliament sat, that began in April 1640, and was dissolved in May following, and in which many points of the regal power, which were necessary for the peace of the kingdom, and the safety of his Majesty's person, were disputed and denied, Mr Hobbes wrote a little treatise in English, wherein he did set forth and demonstrate, that the said power and rights were inseparably annexed to the sovereignty; which sovereignty they did not then deny to be in the King; but it seems understood not, or would not understand that inseparability. Of this treatise, though not printed, many gentlemen had copies, which occasioned much talk of the author and had not his Majesty dissolved the Parliament, it had brought him into danger of his life.

Such was Hobbes's own account, written twenty-one years later, of the origins of his first work of political theory, The Elements of Law. Hobbes had himself been an unsuccessful candidate for election to the Short Parliament, so no doubt he followed its proceedings closely. The disputed 'points of the royal power' emerged most pointedly in John Pym's famous speech of 17 April, which asserted parliamentary constitutional rights of Parliament against the Crown ('Parliament is in the soul of the commonwealth', 'the intellectual part which governs all the rest') and attacked 'the Doctrine that what property the subject hath in any thing may be lawfully taken away when the King requires it'. The latter point was taken up by Sir John Strange'son the following day: 'Sir, if the King be judge of the necessities, we have nothing and are but tenants at will.'

The King dissolved this parliament on 1 May. Four days later Hobbes signed the dedicatory epistle of his treatise, which was addressed to his patron, the staunchly royalist Earl of Newcastle; he explained that the principles he was expounding were

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those which I have herefore acquireth your Lordship with in private dis-
course, and which by your command I have here put into method. 4 The poli-
tical purpose of the work is evident, and is reflected in its circulation in numerous
manuscript copies, at least nine of which survive. (Three of them were written by
squires and signed by Hobbes: this suggests a form of clandestine publication by a
production-line of copies.) Hobbes's argument was designed to show first of all
that government by a civil sovereign was necessary, and secondly that the reasons
which made it necessary also made the sovereignty absolute. He attacked those
who have imagined that a commonwealth may be constituted in such a manner,
as the sovereign power may be so limited, and moderated, as they should think
fit themselves: he sought to overturn the claim that the sovereign power can be
divided or shared between king and people, and (in a transparent reference to the
recent proceedings in parliament) he denounced those who 'when they are com-
manded to contribute their persons or money to the public service . . . think they
have a property in the same distinct from the domination of the sovereign power.'
It was Hobbes's argument on this last point above all which made him fear for his
life when the next parliament assembled in November and began its impeachment
of Strafford. Within a few days Hobbes fled to Paris, where he was to remain for
eleven years; and it was there that he wrote his two other major works of political
theory (De cive, printed in 1645, and Leviathan, printed in 1651), each of which in
turn developed and added to the arguments of The Elements of Law.

That Hobbes's career as a political writer should have begun with a politically
royalist work in 1642 is, in biographical terms, not very surprising. His entire adult
life, since his graduation from Oxford in 1608, had been spent in the service of
aristocratic families as a tutor, secretary, and companion. Employed at first by the
Cavendish family at Hardwick and Chatsworth, he had gained some experience of
quasi-public affairs cooperating with the second Earl of Devonshire as an active
member of the Virginia Company. 5 In 1629 (prompted, it has been suggested, by
the Petition of Right of the previous year), he had published a translation of
Thucydides, who appealed to him in his dispassionate analysis of the ways in
which democratic governments could be corrupted and manipulated. For most of
the 1650s Hobbes was a tutor to the young third Earl of Devonshire; warship over

5 These three MSS are BL, Harl. MS 2370 Chatsworth, Hobbes MSS Add. 1423 (which now lacks the
dedication, but cf. the description in W. Todd, An Early MS of Hobbes: Leviathan, Neon and Quære, 1770, p. 11).
6 Hobbes, Elements of Law, 11. 122, II. 74 a.
7 J. Aubrey, Brief Lives, Sketches of Contemporaries, ed. by John Aubrey, between the years 1661 and 1696, ed.
Virginia Company" in Ob. below.

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the young Earl was exercised by his cousin, the Earl of Newcastle, who helped to
awaken Hobbes's philosophical interests and no doubt his royalist sympathies.

The Elements of Law is not, however, simply a piece of royalist propaganda.
Its importance lies in the way that it derives its political conclusions from a set of
philosophical assumptions. Hobbes's philosophical awakening had taken place, it
seems, during the 1630s when he had become preoccupied with an area of over-
lapping fundamental problems in physics, metaphysics, and epistemology. He had
adopted enthusiastically the Galilean principle of the subjectivity of secondary
qualities; this meant that a secondary quality such as heat did not inhere in a 'hot'
object, but was a feature of the experience of someone perceiving that object, and
could be causally explained in terms of the primary qualities which belonged to
the object itself (such as the shape and motion of its particles). I see Hobbes, this principle
was a lever which could be used to overturn scholastic physics and metaphysics. He
attacked the notion that the ultimate reality of physical things consisted in their
intelligible 'forms' or 'essences'; scholastic philosophy had used this explanation to
account for the way in which our process of sense perception begins with the action
of physical causes (light acting on the eye, for example) but ends with an immaterial
mental object in the intellect. Most medieval philosophers, drawing on a mixture of
Aristotelian and Neoplatonist thought, had distinguished between physical
existence and non-physical intelligibility (esse existentiae and esse essentiae), and
had subordinated the former to the latter in the order of real being. A tree physis-
ically existed by virtue of being an expression of the essence of a tree, and so the mind
could abstract this essence from its perceptions of a tree's physical properties.

This view of the world as constituted by intelligible essences had usually also
assumed that these essences were systematically related to each other in an
economic of perfection: they all participated in absolute Being, which was unitary and
was derived from (or was perhaps identical with) God. The rational order of the
whole system could be described in terms of the laws of reason or laws of nature
which governed all its parts. This way of describing things gave rise to a way of
valuing them: a thing became better the more it fulfilled its essential nature, and
thereby fulfilled its place in the whole system of essences. The more aroid the tree
was, the more it expressed its essential nature. Human beings also had an innate
rationality to fulftil, but as rational beings they were conscious of their own ends and
were able to direct their actions towards them. In Richard Hooker's words, 'A law
therefore generally taken, is a directive rule unto goodness of operation . . . The
rule of natural agents that work by simple necessity, is the determination of the
wisdom of God. . . . The rule of voluntary agents on earth is the sentence that
Reason giveth concerning the goodness of those things which they are to do'.
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Hobbes rejected this notion of reason involving natural telological values, because he rejected the metaphysics and theology from which those values were derived. His most thorough attack on the old metaphysics came in a monumental refutation of a work by a Catholic Aristotelian, Thomas White; this refutation, which remained unpublished until 1721, was written in 1649-50. The fundamental principle from which Hobbes argued in this work was that of God's freedom to create the world; if, how, and when he pleased,11 a principle which severed any intrinsic connection between the natures of created things and the nature of God, and reduced 'essence' to mere descriptions of existing things.12 These metaphysical assumptions can already be seen at work in an earlier manuscript, probably written between 1637 and 1640, in which Hobbes had asserted that 'the original and sum of knowledge stands thus there is nothing that truly exists in the world but single and individual Bodies producing single and individual acts of sense'.13 And in another early manuscript, probably also written in the 1630s, he had begun to apply these principles to the construction of a system of psychology in which all change was to be accounted for in terms of mechanical causation (the 'Short Treatise').14

Scholastic psychology had explained the operation of desire, for example, in terms of the mind's apprehension of the 'form' or essence of the desired thing. Hobbes explained it in terms of a strictly causal process leading from sense-perception to the setting in motion of the body's animal spirits (conceived of as a fluid in the nervous system), causing the body's motion towards the desired thing. The 'thought' of the desired object was simply that part of the sequence of motion which took place in the brain, where it might also interact with memory's store of residual motions from previous sense-impressions. Hobbes denied that the feeling of desire was a special kind of thought, and analyzed it as a combination of having the mental image of the desired object and beginning to move towards it.15 This idea of the 'beginning of motion' became a key feature of Hobbes's psychology and physics; later described by him as 'constans or endeavours', it enabled him to reduce intentions to infinitesimal actions.

For Hobbes, reason neither participated in the nature of desire nor supplied any substantive knowledge of values. 'For the Thoughts, are to the Desires, as Sounds, and Spies, to range abroad, and find the way to the things Desired.'16 Reason could only calculate means to ends, applying the merely formal principles of rationalization to the brute facts of sense-experience and desire. The ends themselves were supplied by the causal mechanisms of desire and aventure. Such a view of human

13 Ibid., p. 221.
14 M. M. Ruten, Alle fonti del desio e del matrimonio umano (Florence, 1942), p. 201.
15 Promod in Hobbes, Eléments de La, pp. 165-170.
16 JHE, p. 206.

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nature might suggest that, even if one tried to move from 'is' to 'ought' by assigning value to the fullness of desire, one would still not be able to form any universal value system: values would be individual rather than general, refracted and fragmented into a number of conflicting epiphanies. These is, as we shall see, a deep scene in which Hobbes's values are both individual rather than universal, but it is not simply a matter of having an 'egotistic' moral psychology. Motivation in Hobbes's account is necessarily egotistic, only in a notary, definitional sense: each person strives to fulfill his own desires. This does not mean that the contexts of desires cannot be concerned with the good of others. The definitions of the passions which Hobbes supplies in chapter 16 of Leviathan include 'Desire of good to another, neproselené, good will, charity. If to men generally, adventur

18 Ibid., p. 221.

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consumated in the achievement of a final, systematic goal (Hobbes rejects the notion of a 'summum bonum' in this life), not dispensed with by means of Stoic withdrawal. (When Hobbes characterizes life as a "restless desire of Power after power", he is not making the empirical observation that men are power-hungry, but is merely conjuring his view of life as motion with his definition of power as the 'present means, to obtain some future apparent good'.) Only one desire can have any sort of priority over all other desires, namely the desire to avoid death; being alive is a necessary condition, the present means to all future apparent goods. Having established this one general truth over and above the mass of individual desires, Hobbes proceeds to draw from it a system of means towards the avoidance of death, providing a set of rules of action which all men must find valid if they reason correctly. The most important means towards self-preservation is peace, the establishment of stable and trustworthy social relations. And the optimum means towards peace can be formulated as 'Laws of Nature' or natural principles which will be invariable and eternally true. In this way Hobbes has performed the transition from the subjective and relative vocabulary of 'good' and 'well' ('good' meaning 'object of desire') to an objective system of norms which can apply universally.

And therefore so long a man is in the condition of mere Nature, (which is a condition of War), as private appetite is the nature of Good, and Right! And consequently all men agree on this, that Peace is Good, and therefore also the way, or means of Peace, which (as I have shewn before) are Justice, Gratitude, Moderacy, Equity, Mercy, & the rest of the Laws of Nature, are good; that is to say, Moral Virtues.

Hobbes has thus clearly passed from 'it to 'ought' almost without appearing to take upon himself the responsibility for using normative language; given that men use such language in an unreliable way to express their own desires, Hobbes offers a reliable, systematic use of it in the form of 'Laws of Nature' with which they must all agree. The laws are 'Conclusions, or Theories concerning what conduceth to the conservation and defence of themselves' (though usually framed even less as imperatives, they would be more correctly spelt out as theorems of the form: 'given that you desire x y and z, if you reason correctly you will also desire to do the following'. The laws of nature specify an optimum set of actions designed to bring about peace, the optimum condition for self-preservation. But there will also be occasions when obeying those laws will endanger an individual's life rather than preserve it (e.g. when facing a man of violence); in such circumstances the need for self-preservation will dictate breaking the laws of nature and responding with violence in self-defence. This entitle ment to go against the laws of nature in order to fulfil the purpose which they serve is called the 'right' of nature. In chapter 14 of Leviathan Hobbes shows that both laws and right flow from the

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same source, which he calls the 'rule' of nature: 'That every man, ought to endeavor our peace, as farre as he has power of obtaining it; and when he cannot obtain it, that he may seek, and use, all helps, and advantages of Warre.' While the laws put forward in a determinate set of actions, the right covers an indeterminate range of possible actions contrary to natural law; hence Hobbes's statement in the same chapter that 'natural, consisteth in liberty to do, or to forbear, Whereas law, determines th undetermined, to one of them.' But in any particular set of circumstances, when the right needs to be used, using it will be no less necessary than obedience to the laws normally is when they can safely be obeyed. Calling the right a 'liberty' does not mean that at critical moments of self-defense it is a matter of indifference whether the right be used or not; it consists rather the right's nature as an 'entitlement' to act against the usual requirements of natural law.

This account has so far been concerned with what might be called an internal valuation of men's actions: each man has to consider his own need for preservation, and this need generates a particular set of laws and a general right. In the state of nature, when conditions are always potentially hostile and the scope for acting in accordance with the laws of nature is reduced almost to vanishing point, all sorts of actions may be justified by the right of nature. But some actions will still not be justified by it, if they do not meet the internal standard of conduciveness to self-preservation. In an important note added to the second edition of De cive, Hobbes explained that wanton cruelty or drunkenness in the state of nature would not be covered by the right of nature. Yet elsewhere Hobbes clearly stated that in the state of nature 'Every man by nature hath right to all things, that is to say, to do whatsoever he listeth to whom he listeth, to possess, use, and enjoy all things he will and can.' This suggests a different use of the term 'right'; we might call it Hobbes's account of man's external rights, that is, their rights vis-à-vis other men, as opposed to his internal account of rights overruling laws in the system of actions for self-preservation.

The old undifferentiated notion of a right or 'ius' as 'that which is right' was still in the process of being broken up during this period; although Hobbes was one of its main attackers, his own arguments are sometimes ambiguous because he uses the term in more than one way. His internal account of the right of nature made a procedural and categorical distinction between it and the laws of nature, but still

32 Ibid., p. 47.
33 Ibid., p. 64.
34 Ibid., p. 80.

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thought of in this way. But to essence the state of nature is the product of a thought-experiment in which Hobbes considers what rights of action and reasons for action men would have if there were no common authority to which they could turn to settle their disputes, or on which they could rely to give stability to their expectations of how other men would act towards them.

Conversely, when Hobbes describes the formation of political authority through a covenant, he is not trying his argument to a putative historical event, but trying to characterize the kind of commitment which members of society must have towards the political arrangement that they accept. Contract theories of the State have often taken a quasi-historical form because of the element of contingency which is one possible reason for appealing to the notion of a contract. Instead of marshalling general principles to prove that the political arrangement in question is the only just and proper arrangement that could have been made, contract theorists can argue that it is one of a number of possible arrangements, and that men are bound to this one simply by the fact that they have agreed to it. In some cases, notably that of John Selden, the contract theory of the State did have a genuine, though complex, historical character; on the question of when resistance to the government becomes justified, his maxim was that 'we must look to the contract', and this required the services of legal and constitutional historians (such as himself). More frequently, however, contract theory became an excuse for ahistorical arguments about what people 'must have' rationally contracted to do; in other words, a way of presenting conditions which ought to be deemed to be incorporated in any grant of power from people to government. Hobbes followed this ahistorical tendency, but with a radical difference: he used the notion of necessary consent as a lever to overturn all claims about implicit conditions or limitations of the rights of government.

Hobbes was able to do this because of the unitary nature of his foundation for natural law: self-preservation. The main Ciceroan and Thomist traditions of natural law saw self-preservation as the ground floor, so to speak, of a whole structure of human needs and values, and it was out of those higher-order values that rational contractualists could construct the implicit conditions which they thought were involved in the grant of power from people to government. In Hobbes's argument, self-preservation is a sheer need which takes precedence over other needs that a subject should be preserved by his government in the essential condition of his allegiance to it. Since, in Hobbes's theory, self-preservation could in extremis justify doing anything, the subjects must have granted their government the power

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35 This letter does not survive, but the reply of its recipient does, objecting that these two instances are not proper examples of the state of nature because that is only a war of each against each necessarily and in different cities. Prior to Hobbes, Bokanowski, a Jan. 1657 (Chancellor, Hobbes papers, letters from foreign correspondents, letter 34 printed in Hobbes, Correspondence, 1, pp. 444-5). I am grateful to the Warden of the Chancellor for permission to cite this letter.
to do anything for the sake of their preservation. Their consent to this eliminated all scope for further ‘conditions’ or constraints. It may still be wondered, however, whether Hobbes’s account needed to use a concept of contract at all: in any argument which hinges on the phrase ‘must have contracted’, it is surely the reasons for saying ‘must have’ which are doing the real work. Hobbes’s reasons are laid down in his laws of nature, which enjoin people to enter society, submit to arbitration, and so on. Indeed, the third law of nature is ‘that men perform their Covenants made’. If the reasons for obeying covenants are to be found in a system of prudential rules, why has Hobbes not drawn up his whole theory of obedience in terms of long-term benefits and dispensed with the notion of contract altogether? The answer must be that contract was only a formal device in Hobbes’s theory, but a device which served some important subsidiary purposes. First, it enabled him to insulate the language of justice from the rest of the moral vocabulary: a sovereign government might be iniquitous—that is, it might break the laws of nature—but it could not be unjust, because injustice consisted of breach of contract. (In Hobbes’s theory, the sovereign is not a party to the contract: the contract is between the subjects, who agree to hand over their rights and power to the sovereign). In a classic example of his reductionist technique of argument, Hobbes dispensed with the traditional claims of distributive and compensative justice, reducing the former to equity and the latter to contractual justice. The claim that rulers cannot be convicted of injustice had not been without polemical point in the England of 1640.

Secondly, Hobbes’s theory requires people to renounce not only rights of action but also rights of judgement. Only the sovereign can judge what will be necessary for the preservation of peace in the State: if subjects claimed the right to judge this, they would be undermining the sovereign’s role as final arbiter and frustrating the purpose for which a sovereign was instituted. (His two had had a topical relevance in the late 1640s, following the Ship Money case.) The notion of a covenant is a kind of shorthand for the type of commitment to obedience this requires, in advance of any knowledge of the contingencies of particular decisions by the sovereign.

The State forces its subjects to keep their covenant by annexing punishments to its laws. ‘Covenants, without the Sword, are but Words, and of no strength to secure a man at all’. But Hobbes is not arguing here that the desire to avoid punishment is the only motivation for obeying the laws. The prospect of punishment is a short-term consideration, necessary to concentrate the minds of passionate men, and thereby to create secure surroundings for those who do wish to keep their covenant. And there is always an adequate long-term consideration prompting this wish, namely the cooadvantage to self-preservation of peace and stable government. Hobbes is sometimes associated with modern ‘positivist’ or ‘realist’ theories of law which explain the obligation to obey laws in terms of the motivation to avoid the punishments which those laws predict; but in Hobbes’s theory there is thus always a further motive to obedience. This point comes out strongly in his criticism of the doctrine of ‘passive obedience’ in Behemoth, his history of the Civil War. ‘Every law is a command to do, or to forbear; neither of these is (fulfilled by suffering).’ Laws do not propose value-free alternatives of action leading to punishment and action leading to non-punishment: there is always a value attached to obedience to laws, because there is always a duty towards the legislator, whose continuing authority ensures peace.

Hobbes does, however, raise an apparent exception to this principle when he writes about the ‘obligation a man may sometimes have, upon the Command of the Sovereign to execute any dangerous or dishonourable Office’. Here he concludes: ‘When therefore our refusal to obey frustrates the End for which the Sovereignty was ordained, then there is no Liberty to refuse: otherwise there is.’ This seems to transgress Hobbes’s rule that only the sovereign can decide whether an action is necessary for the safety of the State. But, leaving aside the mention of dishonour (which is not fully supported by the rest of Hobbes’s theory), it is clear that Hobbes is concerned here with the uncertain, probabilistic borderline at which the need to obey gives way to the need for self-preservation: the ‘danger’ referred to here is danger to the subject’s life, and it was an inmoveable sticking point in Hobbes’s theory that no one could ever covenant to kill himself. In cases of capital punishment, Hobbes argued, the convict had a right to resist his gaolers and executioners. But it was also an important feature of his argument that at the same time the sovereign (who could commit no injustice) had a right to execute the man. The sovereign acted within the rights of the people, on their behalf.

The most striking formulation of this point comes in De civi, where Hobbes writes that ‘The People rule in all Governments, for even in Monarchies the People Command’. He contrasted the ‘people’, which was the corporate entity created by the political agreement of its members, with the ‘multitude’, which was any mere aggregate of individuals. His intention was to undermine those who claimed to speak on behalf of ‘the people’ against their rulers, by showing that individuals gained a corporate identity only by virtue of being united under a sovereign. But since ‘the people’ was also the term which Hobbes used for the sovereign itself in the case of a democratic constitution, this argument had the probably unintended consequence that the foundation of any type of state had required a primary phase of democracy. In the quasi-historical accounts of The Elements of Law and De civi this is what happened, and the democracy then dissolved itself if it handed over sovereignty to a monarchy or an aristocracy even if the handover occurred at the

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32 Leiceste, p. 72. 33 Ibid., p. 89. 34 Ibid., p. 75. 35 Ibid., p. 92.

36 Leiceste, p. 72.

37 Leiceste, p. 112.


first gathering of the people, the fact that it did so by majority vote would imply the momentary existence of a democratic constitution. Hobbes was obviously troubled both by the quasi-populist appearance of his argument in these works (as if democracy were somehow more natural), and by the theoretical awkwardness of identifying the corporate will of the State with an entity, the 'people', which apparently continued to exist after it had disappeared, like the grin of the Cheshire cat. In Leviathan he streamlined his account by treating the original majority principle as a necessary procedural assumption (rather than as a mini-constitution), and worked out a new way of describing the constituting corporate entity as the 'person' of the State. Together with this concept of a 'person', which was drawn from the legal fiction that corporations could act as persons at law, he employed the related legal vocabulary of 'authorizing' and 'representing': the sovereign (whether an individual or an assembly) represents its subjects because it is authorized to act as the bearer of their 'person', and they have a unitary 'person' only by virtue of being represented by a unitary sovereign. Throughout his account, Hobbes allows that the sovereign may be an aristocratic council or a democratic assembly, although he gives reasons for preferring a monarchy: the nature of the sovereignty is the same in each case.

The notion of authorizing is taken up again when Hobbes considers the sovereign's legislative action and permissive inaction. All Laws, written and unwritten, have their Authority, and force, from the Will of the Commonwealth, that is to say, from the Will of the Representative. Customary law thus has in its validity not from any intrinsic force of its own, but from being 'authorized' by the sovereign, who could cancel it if he wished. (This was the starting point for Hobbes's attack on the claims of common law jurists in his Dialogue... of the Common Law of England.) In a wider sense, all activities within the State are authorized by the sovereign as long as they are not forbidden. The State authorizes geometry professors to teach geometry just as it authorizes people to walk through public parks; this does not mean that everyone is acting on instructions from the State, and it does not mean that the sovereign's authority is making the professors' geometry true, or obliging people to believe it. Of course, the range of things which might be forbidden by the State is almost unlimited; but Hobbes's theory supplies no reason for the State to use this power except for the preservation of peace and prosperity. It is in the sovereign's interest to allow individuals to pursue their own interests, because this produces a more contented and prosperous population: 'where the publick and private interest are most closely united, there is the publique most advanced...'. The riches, power, and honour of a Monarch arise only

from the riches, power, and honour of his Subjects. Hobbes summarized his argument at one point in the Elements of Law by saying that it was the sovereign's duty by the law of nature 'to leave man as much liberty as may be, without hurt of the public.'

Hobbes's apparently unobjectionable claims about the authorization of geography teachers shadowed forth his argument on a much more contentious subject: the status of the Church within the State. He regarded the Church as a society of men engaged in teaching the doctrine of the Bible. The sovereign might authorize this teaching in the strong sense of endorsing as laws the injunctions to action which the teaching contained; or the sovereign could authorize it in the lesser sense of permitting the activity of teaching. The distinction between belief and action was an important one: 'For inward Faith is in its own nature invisible, and consequently exempted from all humane [i.e. human] jurisdiction.' If the Church claimed an independent authority to direct the actions of men within the State, this was contrary to the unitary and absolute nature of civil sovereignty. The Church's own actions must be subject to the civil power, and those actions must include not only acts of worship but also writing and speaking. But Hobbes distinguished carefully between forbidding teaching and forbidding men to believe what they were taught: 'Such Forbidding is of no effect; because thereof, and Unbelief never follow men Commands.' Provided that the Church did not claim independent rights of action, and provided that the doctrine it taught was not subversive to the peace of the State, Hobbes's theory allowed for a great degree of religious toleration. Ideally, the sovereign should have no more reason to interfere with the Church than with geometry lessons. Hobbes is only loosely to be described as an Ehratian; he did not think that any strong connection between State and Church was necessary, and his theory permitted Roman Catholicism in England, for example, provided that it was understood that the pope appointed teachers of doctrine in England only on sufferance from the English sovereign. After the Restoration, Church of England bishops such as Edward Stillington and Samuel Parker used Hobbesian arguments to justify government action against the Dissenters, on the grounds that they were a threat to civil peace; but in some ways it was the Dissenters who were wielding the most centrally Hobbesian arguments when they said that religious beliefs should not be subject to civil compulsion.

The difficulty, of course, was that some versions of religious belief would not fit into Hobbes's scheme, because they did involve belief in rights of action or jurisdiction independent of the sovereign. Most varieties of institutional Christianity
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taught beliefs of this sort, and Hobbes’s arguments on this point are thus forcibly
anti-solipsist and above all anti-Catholic. But even within the Roman Catholic
Church there were traditions of Mariolatry and Gallican argument on which Hobbes
could draw in his attack on papal power. With the Anglican Church, Hobbes
was in some ways following in the tradition of rationalist religion, of writers such
at William Chillingworth and Palkhart at Great Tew, Hobbes agreed with them
that the essential doctrinal truths contained in the Bible were few and easily
known. And in the third part of Leviathan he subjected the Bible to a more thor-
ough course of rational textual criticism than had been attempted by any previous
English writer. His aim was to show that scripture—far from demanding beliefs or
action contrary to those of his own theory, actually matched and confirmed his
account of man’s duties at every point. It may be tempting to describe this as a
rather cynicaladvert-propensior Hobbes’s part; but, equally, it can be described as a
necessary consequence of his own theological position. His theology, as we have
seen, scored all essential links between the nature of God and the nature of the
world. Natural theology might arrive at the knowledge that God existed, but it
could supply no further knowledge of his nature. Evidence of God’s will could exist
in the form of something historically contingent, such as the text of scripture; but
in order to interpret this evidence, principles of interpretation had to be applied,
and they could not be derived from the evidence itself. It was inevitable, then, that
in interpreting the Bible men would use their natural reason and interpret away
any aspect of it which appeared to conflict with the dictates of natural reason—
dictates already arrived at in the first two parts of Leviathan. Hobbes’s similarity to
rational theologians such as Fulland was therefore only skin-deep. They read
rational beliefs into the Bible because they felt they had substantive knowledge of
the rational nature of God; Hobbes did the same because of his lack of knowledge
of God’s nature, which forced him to interpret the Bible in the light of human
nature and human reason. Denounced and dismissed as an ‘atheist’, Hobbes coun-
tered with a reply which is all but gnomic: ‘Do you think I can be an atheist and
not know it? Oh, knowing it, d'ues have offered my atheism to the proof?’

2. Spinoza

Outside England, the Dutch republic was the country where Hobbes’s writings
exerted their greatest influence. The conditions of intellectual life there were
favourable to free-thinking, with a flourishing book trade on which regulation and
supersession were comparatively lightly enforced. The second edition of De cive
was printed there in 1647; a Dutch translation of Leviathan appeared in 1667;
and an important collection of Hobbes’s Latin writings, including his new Latin
version of Leviathan, was published in Amsterdam in 1668.

Given its recent birth and the continuing uncertainty of some of its constitu-
tional arrangements, the Dutch republic was a country in which basic questions of
political theory were often of pressingly topical concern. Hobbes’s pupil, the sec-
ond Earl of Devonshire, had written about ‘such as profess to read Theorie of
State and others’. Where the internal workings of the State were concerned, this
meant a value-free, comparative study of constitutions as power structures; where
their external actions were concerned, it meant a study of all the tricks and devices
of diplomacy and warfare—a study which could be amply justified by the depend-
ence of Dutch foreign policy, throughout the seventeenth century, on politico-
strategically shifting patterns of uncertain alliances. The leading academic exposure
of this sort of power analysis was M. Z. van Horn, who taught at Leiden University
from 1631 to 1653; he published an edition of Tacitus in 1643, and in his own politi-
cal writings he used examples from Tacitus to show that rulers would always be
impelled by self-interest to encroach on the liberties of their subjects. 30

The history of the Dutch republic had also fostered public interest in another
area of political controversy: the relation between religion and the State. The
main patterns of argument had been laid down in the second decade of the cen-
tury, when the Remonstrants (liberal theologians who followed Jacobus Arminius)
had appealed to the civil powers to protect them against the hard-line Calvinist
Catholic Remonstrants. Pre-Remonstrant writers, such as Germain in his De
imperio summarum potestatum circa sacros (written c. 1615 and printed posthumously
in 1647), had developed a theory of jurisdiction in which all power over human
actions—including teaching, preaching, and acts of worship—had to be vested
ultimately in the civil authority. Churches, in this theory, were regarded as volun-
tary associations within the State. The Remonstrants defended a policy of religious
tolerance by arguing that the Calvinist Church had no jurisdictional power to
punish, and by claiming that religion was essentially a matter of beliefs, not
actions, thus implying that a variety of religious beliefs should pose no threat to
the State’s activities. There was a natural congruence between this attitude and the
Tacitan view of religion, which regarded public religious observances as part of

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31 R. M. Z. van Horn, Verso statio politici (Utrecht, 1643), pp. 38–49; E. H. Kreeuwen, "Politikai theor-
et in de zeventiende eeuw Nederlandse", Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Nederlandse
bijlage Internationale, no. 18, 1926, pp. 301–400; H. Wust, Politieke samenhangen van de Leidsche Universi-
the ravings, the psychological theatre, of the State, and therefore as something which must be controlled by the civil power. In the abstract, of course, these arguments did not dictate whether the civil power should be monarchical or republican. The contingencies of political history ensured that the Remonstrants and tolerationists sided with republicanism, while the supporters of the princes of Orange upheld the powers of the Calvinist Church. But these alignments were not quite accidental. For it was the republican theorists who, in their attempt to work out from first principles what the nature and powers of the State should be, came closer to developing a rationalist-authoritarian type of political theory from which the traditional categories of sacerdotal and ecclesiastical power were most likely to be absent.

By the mid-century, the influence of Descartes' philosophy in the Dutch academic world was giving a powerful impetus to the desire to replace traditional bodies of theory with new systems of deductive science. Cartesianism flourished at the Universities of Utrecht and Leiden, where its influence was strongest in the areas of medicine and physics. The anti-scholastic nature of Descartes' views on human psychology was taken further by Dutch Cartesianism such as Henricus Regius and Gerard Winnenau at Utrecht, who developed a more mechanistic, materialist philosophy of mind which denied the existence of innate ideas and described the mind as a 'mode' of the body. This was a version of Cartesianism which was ideally suited to the reception of Hobbesian theories too. And Hobbes' work, for Cartesianism, could usefully remedy the lack of any political theory in Descartes' own writings. Lambert van Velthuysen, for example, who had studied at Utrecht in the 1640s, published defences of Descartes, Copernicus, and Hobbes, in the preface to his apologia for De civi, he defended Hobbes' work as if it were a straightforwardly Cartesian enterprise: all previous attempts at political philosophy were flawed, he wrote, because they had not used 'this derive of doubting everything', and had failed to deduce their various principles from one single starting point.

All these strands of argument—reason of State, Tactician, religious toleration, the defence of unitary civil power, republicanism, Cartesianism, and Hobbesianism—came together in the work of the most influential Dutch political writers of the 1650s and 1660s, the brothers Johan and Pieter de la Court. After the death of William II in 1650, and during the childhood of William III (who was born a few days after his father's death), most of the Dutch provinces found themselves operating a truly republican constitution for the first time, holding in abeyance the office of 'stockholder' which had previously been filled by the princes of Orange. Under John de Witt, the quasi-presidential 'grand pensionary' of Holland, a vigorous campaign of republican propaganda was waged to persuade Holland and the

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other provinces to abolish the office of stockholder altogether. The brothers de la Court and Spinoza were among the most prominent writers to support him.

Both brothers had studied at Leiden in the early 1640s, where they had become Taciturnist and Cartesianists, and Pieter had gone on in 1645 to study medicine under Regius at Utrecht.64 Johan may have been responsible for the unauthorized printing of some lectures by Bochnot, the Commentarii, in 1649: the work bears a suspicious resemblance to Johan's own notes on the lectures, which he heard in 1643.65 And a more spectacular example of literary piracy was Pieter's publication, over his own initials ('V.D.H.:', 'van den Howe'), the Dutch equivalent of 'de la Court' of a book, Narrationen consideratio van staat (A Close Examination of the State), which was in fact written by that other pupil of Regius, Winnenau.66 Winnenau's book seems to have given de la Court the idea of combining Taciturn and Machiavelli with a Cartesian theory of the passions, so that the task of political philosophy was seen as that of constructing the State as a mechanism to regulate the passions of individuals and force both rulers and ruled to identify their individual interests with the common good. And it was with this task in mind that the brothers de la Court turned eagerly to the writings of Hobbes.

The writings of de la Court form a homogeneous group of works, in which the same arguments keep reappearing.67 "Self-love is the origin of all human actions", begins the Consideration.68 "Self-preservation is the supreme law of all individuals."69 Men are governed by their passions, and most men are therefore evil by
HOBES AND SPINOZA

These considerations may prompt the conclusion that the de la Courts owed little to Hobbes beyond their starting point in mechanistic psychology. But there was one important area of their argument which did draw directly on Hobbes’s political theories: their views on the unitary nature of sovereign power and the relationship which this implied between Church and State. The State, they argued, must have power over all external acts, and therefore over all acts of religious worship. To further the interests of both rulers and ruled, it must exercise this power for purely secular ends, namely peace and prosperity. Hence the need to tolerate all religions which are not themselves subversive of the State. And for the subject, mere outward conformity is sufficient. The peculiarly Hobbesian twist to this argument is the insistence that ‘the public determination of what is good and what is evil belongs only to the sovereign: otherwise the political state will change, through the conflict of many private judgments, into a state of nature.’ This argument struck at the moral jurisdiction of the Calvinist Church, and was accompanied by some thoroughly Hobbesian (besides against the deleterious effects of clerical power on intellectual life).

The late 1650s and early 1660s saw numerous attempts by the Calvinists to reassert their moral and intellectual jurisdiction. Pressure was brought to bear on the university authorities at Leiden to curb the teaching of Cartesianism and the application of philosophy to the prejudice of theology; the anti-Clericalism of the de la Courts’ writings provoked a storm of sermons and pamphlets; and in Utrecht, where the Hobbesian philosopher van Velthuysen had penned similar attacks on clerical power in 1660s (Onderwijs en het predikant-ampt, the leading anti-Cartesian, Giubertus Voetius, wrote a major defence of the juridical powers of the Calvinist Church (Politica ecclésiastica, 1661)). In 1665 a brief but important treatise attacking the Calvinists arguments, De juris ecclesiasticorum (The Right of the Clergy), was published under the pseudonym ‘Lucius Antistius Constatius.’ This work, which was once attributed to Spinossa himself, draws so heavily on the arguments of the de la Courts that it can quite plausibly be attributed to Pieter de la Court; but it goes beyond the de la Courts’ other published works in its attempt to assimilate the juridical concepts of contract and ‘just (right).’ It distinguishes between right and power, but observes that the former without the latter is worthless. Differences of right within the State are created by the power of the State, and the State’s power arises either through the conquest of the weak by the strong,

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64 de la Court and de la Court, Consideration, pp. 79-87; 65 Ibid., p. 79. 66 Ibid., p. 77.
67 Ibid., p. 75. 68 Ibid., p. 76.
69 Ibid., p. 76. 70 Ibid., p. 75.
71 Ibid., p. 75. 72 Ibid., p. 75.
or through a social contract, whereby people transfer their 'right and power' to the ruler. Just as the notion of 'right' is weakened, in the course of this argument, by its constant association with 'power', so too the notion of contractual obligation is absorbed into the pattern of factual power relations: the 'conventio' (agreement) can be entirely implicit, something to be identified 'in words but not in deed'.

This is the background against which we must situate Spinoza's own writings on the nature of the State. It was in 1659 that Spinoza started work on what was to become his major political treatise, the Tractatus theologico-politicus (henceforth cited TTP), aiming, as he explained to one correspondent, to defend 'the freedom of philosophizing...for here it is always supposed through the excessive authority and impudence of the preachers'. And when the work was published in 1670, he explained that he had been prompted by the 'false controveresy of the philosophers in church and state'. His library contained copies of de la Court's Philosophe Vergessschuld (the enlarged edition of the Consideration) and Discours, and he described the former work as 'extremely shameful'. If Pierre de la Court was not the author of De jure ecclesiasticorum, then the most likely candidate is Lodewijk Meyer, a Cartesian doctor and theologian who was a close friend of Spinoza.

The anti-clerical, teleological, republican writings of the 1650s form the main background to Spinoza's political works; but of course his own personal history had also given him some reason to consider the relation between religion, state power, and individual freedom. Baruch (Benedictus in Latin) de Spinoza was the son of a Portuguese Jew born in Amsterdam in 1632, he was educated in a Jewish school up to the age of thirteen, and probably attended a yeshiva (a society for the study of the Bible, the Talmud, and the Torah) for several years thereafter. But in 1656 he was excommunicated from the synagogue for 'the horrid heresies which he taught and practised'; the exact nature of his offence is not known, but all the evidence suggests that he had proscribed a rationalism, a doctrine which denoted the status of the Bible as divine revelation, questioned its historical accuracy, and probably cast doubt on the immortality of the soul. According to some early sources, he wrote a thoroughly apologetic 'Apology' after his excommunication, which contained an historical critique of the Bible and a wide-ranging attack on the Jewish religion. If this is so, then it is reasonable to assume that some of this material was put to use in the TTP, which is a major political treatise.

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The main arguments of the treatise are succinctly summarized by Spinoza himself. He argues first that philosophy and theology are radically different in nature, 'and that the latter allows each person to philosophize freely'; and that 'rights over religion belong entirely to the sovereign, and that external acts of worship must be adapted to serve the peace of the state'. Finally, it that freedom of speech is not only compatible with civil peace, liberty and the right of the sovereign, but in fact ought to be permitted in order to maintain all these things. The separation of philosophy and theology is carefully managed, in a way which preserves an apparent respect for the special nature of revelation while at the same time suggesting that it is ultimately unnecessary. Philosophy can reach both virtue and the knowledge of God (these two things being inseparable in Spinoza's theory); theology, on the other hand, which is based on revelation, aims only at teaching obedience to God. For this purpose the teachings of the Old Testament were 'adapted' to the understandings of ordinary people of the time; the validity of a theological doctrine lies not in its truth but in its power to instill obedience. Only gradually does Spinoza make it plain that obedience is an inferior substitute for understanding, that the principal contents of revelation—prophecy and miracles—are fictions adapted for weak minds which cannot understand that God works in nature by means of immutable laws, and that the peculiar injunctions given to the Jews in the Old Testament were essentially political devices, designed to instill moral obedience and social cohesion. Some of these arguments may have derived from Moses Maimonides' theory of divine law, which stressed that divine commands were adapted to historical conditions in the Old Testament, and suggested that the dietary and ceremonial laws were simply devices for instilling moral obedience. 


Ebd., p. 10.


B. de Spinoza, Tractatus theologico-politicus (henceforth TTP), VII, 36.


TTP, ch. 10, Opera, III, p. 186.

Ibid., ch. 19, Opera, III, p. 240.

Ibid., ch. 51, Opera, III, p. 343.

Ibid., ch. 74, Opera, III, p. 106-7.
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which he assimilates the concepts of 'right' and 'contract' into his argument. He makes use of the concept of 'right', but identifies it completely with 'power'. This is not a piece of casual cynicism on his part: it flows from the heart of his philosophical theology, which attributes both infinite right and infinite power to God, and identifies the physical universe as an expression of God's nature. It follows from this that every event in the physical world is an expression both of God's power and of His right. 'Whatever man does, whether he is led to do it by reason or only by desire, he does it according to the laws and rules of nature, that is, by natural right'.

Where Hobbes argued both that natural rights were all-encompassing and that there were some actions (contrary to self-preservation) which people did not have the right to perform, Spinoza can argue both that men have the right to do whatever they can do, and that an order of preference can be established when considering alternative courses of action: actions which help ensure the agent's self-preservation will increase his right because they increase his power, so that in some sense he will have less right to perform those actions which diminish his power.

Just as Spinoza uses the term 'right' but reduces it to 'power', so too he uses the term 'contract' but reduces it to a relationship of power. In chapter 16 of the _Tractatus theolgo-politicus_ he describes, in terms reminiscent of _De cive_, how people must have transferred their natural right to the sovereign through a 'contract' (pactum or 'contractus'). In the later _Tractatus politicus_, this account of a contract is notably absent; the notion of 'agreement' ('consensus') is used instead, and men are said to 'come together' to form a state not because they are led by reason, but because they are driven by common passions. This has led some commentators to suggest that Spinoza believed, in the earlier work, in an historical contract which the founders of society had entered into out of 'rational foresight', and that he later abandoned this belief. Yet the real differences between the two accounts are not so great. A transfer of right, as the earlier work has already made clear, can only amount to a transfer of power, and this is something which can come about without 'rational foresight' playing any special role. Spinoza emphasizes in the _Tractatus theologico-politicus_ that 'a contract is binding only by reason of its utility', as soon as it becomes advantageous for someone to break his contract, he will have the right to do so. This means that men keep their contract of obedience only because the sovereign wields real power. Such a view is entirely compatible with the idea that the origins of the State go back not to a set of formal articles of agreement but to a gradual coalescence of human power relations. When Spinoza introduces the idea of a contract in chapter 16 of the _Tractatus_
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of the 1660s, and be referred to the Ethics, implying that it was part of the same systematic body of theory, in chapter 5 of the Tractatus politicus. 113 Only from the Ethics do we learn just how radically different Spinoza’s metaphysics were from Hobbes’s, and therefore how completely his theory of reason and his theory of human liberty differed from Hobbes’s too.

Spinoza seems to have adopted, at this point in the earlier treatise, a Hobbesian terminology of transferring natural rights, because he wanted to make the Hobbesian anti-clerical notion that all rights belonged to the sovereign. (This was the first stage of his tolerationist argument, aimed at removing the jurisdictional powers of the clergy which would otherwise be deployed against freedom of opinion.) At one point he says that the subject must have ‘‘completely yielded’’ his natural right. 109 But this is a misleading form of words for Spinoza to use, and it can only amount to saying that the subject is sufficiently motivated to act always in accordance with the will of the sovereign. For each person, in Spinoza’s theory, retains natural right so long as he retains natural power; when asked by a friend to explain the difference between his theory and Hobbes’s, he replied that it consists in this, that I ever preserve the natural right intact, so that the Supreme Power in a State has no more right over a subject than it is proportionate to the power by which it is superior to the subject.108

This is the essential argument which enables Spinoza to conclude that the toleration of religious and philosophical opinions is both compatible with the sovereign’s power and beneficial to it. In Spinoza’s State the power of the sovereign can rise or fall, according to how the subjects become more or less fully motivated to obey it. More power, and therefore more right, inheres in a policy which is popular: it is in the interests of the sovereign to avoid alienating his subjects. Laws forbidding beliefs are, as Hobbes pointed out, fitful but Spinoza adds that laws forbidding people to express their beliefs will render those people sullen and hostile, and thereby weaken the power of the State. 109 Only the preaching of tedious doctrines must be proscribed; all opinions which do not disturb the peace of the State are to be allowed.

Despite, or perhaps because of, his reductive style of power analysis, Spinoza seems possibly to have arrived at a liberal, pluralistic theory of the State which matches the liberal elements of Hobbes’s theory. It is possible to argue that the role of the Spinozan State is simply to provide an external framework of peace and security within which individuals can continue to pursue their own interests.110 Such an interpretation, however, ignores the implications of Spinoza’s metaphysics and psychology. His major exposition of these subjects, the Ethics, was completed concurrently with the writing of the Tractatus theologiae-politicae in the second half

106 TTP, ch. 46; Opera, III, p. 199.
107 ibid., ch. 36; Opera, III, p. 195.
108 Spinoza, Correspondence, p. 269.
109 TTP, ch. 19.
one and the same, constituting one and the same nature, always agreeing about everything.\(^{115}\)

Although in his metaphysics he rejected teleology in the strict sense, Spinoza's account of reason as the defining feature of the 'human essence' gives rise to a quasi-teleological scale of values for mankind: man fulfills his nature more fully when he acts rationally. Such a theory could not be further removed from Hobbes's view, in which reason is simply the servant of the desires. Even the apparent agreement between the two writers on the primacy of self-preservation is removed by Spinoza's argument that a man's true self, his 'power of acting', is his reason.\(^{116}\)

The aim of Spinoza's State is to make men rational and free. "When I say that the best State is one in which men live harmoniously together, I mean a form of life ... which is defined above all by reason, the true virtue and life of the mind."\(^{117}\) Spinoza recognizes that the State must be constructed to contain those who are not predominantly rational and virtuous; but the State can aim gradually to mould its citizens into a more rational kind of existence by imposing rational laws on them. In very general terms, we might say that the history of republicanism in political philosophy presages two fundamentally different defences of republican government. There is a mechanistic type of theory, which sees the construction of a republic as the solution to the problem of organizing and balancing a mass of conflicting individual forces; and there is the rationalist-idealistic type of theory, which believes that in a republic men are freed from the corrupting tides of dependence on or subjection to personal authority, and are enabled to participate most fully as rational beings in the rationality of the State and its laws. Spinoza manages to combine both types of theory in a single system: that is the distinction, and the ambiguity, of his achievement.

**ADDITIONAL NOTES**

The manuscript published by M. M. Rosin (see n. 15) probably dates from a slightly later period than the one assigned to it here; some reasons for assigning it to 1654–5 are given in Chapter 1 above. A Summary Biography of Hobbes', n. 70. The 'Short Treatise' assigned here to Hobbes (see n. 14), is probably by Robert Payne, the Hobbes Manuscripts, and the 'Short Treatise' (Chapter 4 below).

My description of the 'Eshvi'ah' treated by Spinoza (at n. 87) was described by one reviewer as a 'boiler'. In subsequent correspondence it became clear that this reviewer was quite unfamiliar with some of the standard works on Judaism in the seventeenth century Amsterdam— including the work I referred to in the note, by Van der Goes and van der Tael, which gives a detailed explanation (summarized by me here) of how the term 'Eshvi'ah' was used in that particular time and place.

\(^{115}\) \textit{See} \textit{above}, \textit{p. 112}.

\(^{116}\) \textit{Hobbes, part 4, prep. 31, etc.}, \textit{Opera II}, p. 246.

\(^{117}\) \textit{Spinoza, Opera III}, p. 396.

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**Hobbes, Sandys, and the Virginia Company**

The early years of Thomas Hobbes are almost entirely sunk in obscurity. Biographers from George Croos Robertson (1886) to Miriam Reck (1977) have added little, for the period before 1658 to the scant information provided by Aubrey and the Latin \textit{Vita}. If to this we add the handful of details which have been gleaned by modern scholarship, the picture remains a bare one, and one that can be briefly summarized.

On leaving Oxford in 1608, Hobbes was employed by William, Lord Cavendish, as a tutor for his son, who was Hobbes's junior by two years. Within a few years, Hobbes and his pupil (who, to prevent confusion, will henceforth be referred to simply as 'Cavendish') went on a grand tour of Europe, the chronology of which remains uncertain.\(^{1} \text{Between 1665 and 1668 Cavendish corresponded with Fulgenzio Mancinio, whose letters Hobbes appears to have translated from the Italian.}^{2} \text{It has also been claimed, though on much more dubious grounds, that Hobbes was involved in the composition of the volume of essays entitled \textit{Hospes scoticus}, which was published anonymously in 1670, and of which a prior version is preserved in manuscript with a dedication by 'W. Cavendish' to his father.}^{3} \text{Little can be added to these facts up to 1679 (the year which saw the publication of Hobbes's translation of Thucydides, following the death of his pupil-patron), except Aubrey's account of the connection with Bacon, and one letter written to Hobbes in 1654 by Robert Mason, who appears to have regarded him as a well-placed source of political gossip. At the start of his letter, Mason encouraged Hobbes to carry on 'communicating with your friend such occurrences of these active times,}\)

\(^{1}\) \text{See the appendix to this chapter.}

\(^{2}\) \text{Discussed by Vincento Gabriele in 'Bacon, la riforma e Roma nella versione Hobbesiana di un carteggio di Fulgenzio Mancinio', The English Miscellany, 9 (1973), pp. 199–200.}

\(^{3}\) \text{Friedrich Wolf, \textit{Die neue Wissenschaft des Thomas Hobbes} (Stuttgart, 1969) see also the appendix below.}