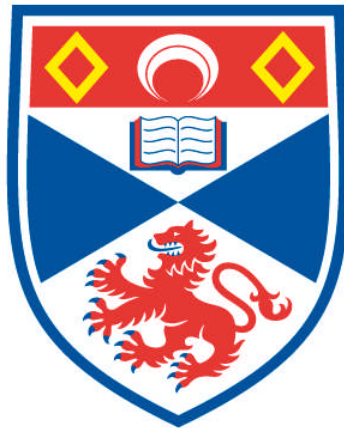


THE CONCEPT OF ENMITY IN THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF HOBBS

Maximilian Jaede

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews**



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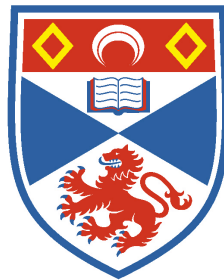
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The Concept of Enmity in the Political Philosophy of Hobbes

Maximilian Jaede



University of
St Andrews

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of
PhD at the
University of St Andrews

04/11/2014

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Abstract

To the author's knowledge, this is the first systematic study of Hobbes's concept of enmity. Examining this important category does not only elucidate the concept itself, but also provides an opportunity to reconnect fragments of Hobbes's thought that are increasingly being treated as disparate subjects. It is suggested here that the concept of enmity can shed further light on related aspects of Hobbes's political philosophy, including human competitiveness, the roles of fear and trust, the evil of violent death, the status of rebels, and his theory of international relations.

Moreover, the subject invites a rethinking of Hobbes's place in the history of international political thought. This thesis argues that he was among the first to make enmity a central subject of political philosophy. This seems to be related to Hobbes's characteristic break with the traditional notion of natural sociability, as a consequence of which he describes the natural condition of mankind as a war of all against all.

Although Hobbes depicts human beings as natural enemies, he also holds that enmity does not exclude the possibility of reconciliation. All individuals can supposedly overcome their hostility through subjection to a sovereign. These views give rise to a dynamic distinction between public and private enmity, according to which outright hostility can be transformed into private competition if human beings renounce their natural right of war. Conversely, subjects of the commonwealth become public enemies if they rebel against the sovereign. Hobbes's views on natural enmity and reconciliation also have important implications for his theory of international relations. This thesis particularly highlights the possibility that states can be decomposed and reassembled after a successful foreign invasion, which precludes wars of annihilation.

Editions and abbreviations

The following abbreviations will be used to refer to Hobbes's writings, followed by chapter, article, and page numbers. Works without subdivisions will be referenced by page numbers only. In most cases, modern critical editions will be used. Otherwise this thesis relies on Sir William Molesworth's edition, which was published in two parts as *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes* and *Opera Latina*.

- Answer* *An Answer to a Book Published by Dr. Bramhall ... Called the 'Catching of the Leviathan'*, published in 1668. Republished in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Vol. 4*, ed. William Molesworth (London: Bohn, 1840).
- AW* *Thomas White's De Mundo Examined*, also known simply as *Anti-White*. This text circulated in manuscript in 1642, and was only rediscovered in the twentieth century. This thesis uses the English translation by Harold Whitmore Jones (London: Bradford University Press, 1976).
- Behemoth* *Behemoth, or the Long Parliament*, written ca. 1668 and published posthumously in 1681. The modern edition by Ferdinand Tönnies was republished with an introduction by Stephen Holmes (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990).
- Corr. 1* *The Correspondence, Volume 1: 1622-1659*, edited by Noel Malcolm (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).
- Corr. 2* *The Correspondence, Volume 2: 1660-1679*, edited by Noel Malcolm (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).
- De Cive* First published in Latin in 1642. An amended second edition came out in 1647. This thesis generally refers to the modern English translation by Michael Silverthorne, which is edited by Richard Tuck and published as *On the Citizen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Howard Warrender has also edited an English edition for Clarendon Press, which is based on a text that was published under the title *Philosophical Rudiments Concerning Government and Society* in 1651. The latter has long been regarded as Hobbes's own translation, yet it is now believed that it was done by another person and without Hobbes's co-operation. Cf. *De Cive*, ed. Richard Tuck, pp. xxxiv-xxxvii.
- De Cive OL* The original Latin text of *De Cive*. This thesis uses the modern critical edition by Howard Warrender (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983).
- De Corp.* *De Corpore*, published in 1655. An English translation that was supervised by Hobbes appeared in 1656. Republished in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Vol. 1*, ed. William Molesworth (London: Bohn, 1839).
- De Hom.* *De Homine*, published in 1658. An abridged English translation appeared as part of *Man and Citizen*, ed. Bernard Gert, trans. Charles T. Wood, T.S.K. Scott-Craig, and Bernard Gert (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1991).
- De Hom. OL* The original Latin text of *De Homine*. Republished in *Opera Philosophica quae Latina Scripsit, Vol 2*, ed. William Molesworth (London: Bohn, 1839).

- Dialogue* *A Dialogue Between a Philosopher and a Student, Of the Common Laws of England*, written ca. 1666, published posthumously in 1681. The modern critical edition is included in *Writings on Common Law and Hereditary Right*, eds. Alan Cromartie and Quentin Skinner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005).
- EL* *The Elements of Law: Natural and Politic*, completed and circulated by Hobbes in 1640 but only published in 1650 (without Hobbes's consent) as two separate works, *Human Nature* and *De Corpore Politico*. The thesis uses the critical edition by J.C.A. Gaskin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), which is based on the first modern edition by Ferdinand Tönnies.
- History 1* *The History of the Grecian War written by Thucydides, Vol. 1*. Hobbes's translation from the ancient Greek appeared, together with an introduction by Hobbes, in 1629. It was republished in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Vol. 8*, ed. William Molesworth (London: Bohn, 1843). Even though Thucydides' work is usually known as *History of the Peloponnesian War*, this thesis will use the title *History of the Grecian War* in order to make it clear that the focus lies on Hobbes's English translation.
- History 2* *The History of the Grecian War written by Thucydides, Vol. 2*. Republished in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Vol. 9*, ed. William Molesworth (London: Bohn, 1843).
- Hist. Eccl.* *Historia Ecclesiastica*, a Latin poem written in the 1660s, first published posthumously in 1688. The modern critical edition is translated from the Latin and edited by Patricia Springborg, Patricia Stablein and Paul Wilson (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2008).
- Lev.* *Leviathan*, published in 1651. Hobbes's Latin translation appeared in 1668. This thesis uses Edwin Curley's critical edition (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1994), which notes variations between the English and Latin texts.
- Lev. OL* The Latin text of *Leviathan*, 1668. Republished in *Opera Philosophica quae Latina Scripsit, Vol 3*, ed. William Molesworth (London: Bohn, 1841).
- QLNC* *The Questions Concerning Liberty, Necessity and Chance, Clearly Stated and Debated between Dr Bramhall, Bishop of Derry, and Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury*. This work, which appeared in 1656, was part of his controversy with Bishop Bramhall. Republished in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Vol. 5*, ed. William Molesworth (London: Bohn, 1841).
- Third Objs.* *Third Objections*, a response to Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*, published in 1641. Republished in René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy With Selections from the Objections and Replies*, ed. and trans. Michael Moriarty (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not exist without my supervisor's inspiration, patience, open-mindedness, and tireless encouragement. Not only has Gabriella Slomp shared her passion for Hobbes with me, she also offered acute and detailed comments on countless drafts of my work. Looking back, I am humbled by the fact that even when dealing with the most underdeveloped of my ideas, Gabriella has applied the principle of interpretive charity. All remaining errors in this thesis are, of course, my own.

In addition, I wish to acknowledge the support from other Faculty members at St Andrews, most notably Karin Fierke, Patrick Hayden, Tony Lang, and Nick Rengger. They have all, in different ways, contributed to the development of my ideas and research over the last four years. At my alma mater, the University of Mannheim, Stefan Seidendorf deserves mention. It was him who first opened my eyes to the fact that there are intellectually stimulating ways to study politics and international relations.

Acknowledgements are also due to the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for providing me with a one-year doctoral scholarship, and to the School of International Relations at St Andrews for fieldwork and conference funding.

Many of the ideas contained in this thesis I discussed over coffee with Maša Mrovlje, to whom I am grateful for taking an interest in Hobbes despite specialising in Hannah Arendt. My thesis was also aided by the help of other friends, colleagues, and office mates at St Andrews, including but not limited to Francesco Belcastro, Antonio Di Biagio, and Kieran McConaghy. Above all, I benefited from innumerable conversations with Lizzie Swarbrick, with whom I have been fortunate to share my life over the last two years. Having proofread large parts of the thesis draft, Lizzie also greatly helped me to express many points with more clarity and consistency.

Last but certainly not least, my family has always unconditionally supported my studies, and helped me in several different ways over the course of the last four years. I particularly wish to express my gratitude to my late grandmother Margot Gramling, my mum Uli Jaede, my sister Nina Hönig, and my brother Julian Jaede.

Maximilian Jaede

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[F.C. Hood's *The Divine Politics of Thomas Hobbes*] is a solid foundation for every future interpretation of *Leviathan*. His approach, which strictly limits itself to the texts under study, is expedient and convincing. Given that Hood has successfully applied this method to important concepts such as obligation, sovereignty, and authority, the reader desires to have other essential Hobbesian concepts analysed and clarified in the same way. I particularly wish for an examination of the enemy concept.

—Carl Schmitt¹

¹ Carl Schmitt, "Die Vollendete Reformation: Zu neuen Leviathan-Interpretationen" [1965], in *Der Leviathan in der Staatslehre des Thomas Hobbes: Sinn und Fehlschlag eines politischen Symbols*, ed. Günter Maschke (Cologne, Germany: Hohenheim Verlag, 1982), pp. 137-178, 140 (author's translation).

1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the thesis, its wider implications, and the methodological approach. The first section makes some suggestions regarding the place of enmity in the current debate on politics and international relations. More specifically, it considers how the subject relates to ideas of Carl Schmitt, liberal political thought, and Realism in International Relations (IR). The second section describes the approach of close textual reading, which is adopted by this study, and considers methodological claims regarding the importance of context. The third section states the main arguments of this thesis and indicates how they contribute to the existing literature on Hobbes.

1.1 The concept of enmity as a subject of enquiry

Why an enquiry into the concept of enmity? In view of events such as the ‘War on Terror’, one commentator has recently pointed out that political rhetoric today “is filled with images of danger and hostility which provide both illustrations and organising themes for accounts of the world”.¹ However, it appears that enmity is often regarded as simply that: a matter of rhetoric, a divergence from ordinary politics, or a pathological condition.² Thus, it seems to be under-examined as a concept in and of itself.

If enmity is considered in the theoretical debate on politics and international relations, it is often in relation to the controversial German jurist Carl Schmitt,³ whose thought has received much attention in recent years. In his work *The Concept of the Political*,

¹ Rodney Barker, *Making Enemies* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 1.

² Cf. Barker, *Making Enemies*, pp. 3f.

³ For a critical discussion of the recent reception of Schmitt, which often loses sight of his involvement with the Nazi regime, see Jef Huysmans, “Know Your Schmitt: A Godfather of Truth and the Spectre of Nazism”, *Review of International Studies* 25 (1999), pp. 323-328.

Schmitt locates the essence of ‘the political’ in the friend-enemy distinction.⁴ Thereby, he emphasises the distinctiveness of political enmity:

The political enemy need not be morally evil or aesthetically ugly; he need not appear as an economic competitor, and it may even be advantageous to engage with him in transactions. But he is, nevertheless, the other, the stranger; and it is sufficient for his nature that he is, in a specially intense way, existentially something different and alien, so that in the extreme case conflicts with him are possible.⁵

The implication of this passage is that enmity concerns the relations between organised totalities, the members of which relate to each other as political friends. Therefore, ‘the enemy’ only exists in the collective singular. In accordance with this view, Schmitt insists that political enmity must not be confused with enmity as “a psychological expression of private emotions”.⁶ This also appears to be Schmitt’s central objection to liberalism. He argues that, in its attempt to transform enemies into economic competitors or intellectual opponents, liberalism fails to acknowledge the possibility of an existential struggle between groups, as denoted by the friend-enemy distinction.⁷

Yet Schmitt does not merely regard enmity, along with friendship, as an essential part of political life. Rather, he seems to advocate a particular type of enmity—i.e. limited hostility between sovereign states—over other types that supposedly emerge from the liberal denial of ‘the political’.⁸ In 1927, Schmitt specifically argued that the liberal state is in crisis because party politics undermines its collective identity vis-à-vis foreign enemies. Developments such as those in the highly polarised parliamentary system of the Weimar Republic could ultimately lead to civil war, in which case “the domestic,

⁴ Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* [1927], expanded edition, trans. George Schwab (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), pp. 26f.

⁵ Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, p. 27.

⁶ Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, p. 28.

⁷ Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, p. 28.

⁸ Cf. John P. McCormick, “Fear, Technology, and the State: Carl Schmitt, Leo Strauss, and the Revival of Hobbes in Weimar and National Socialist Germany“, *Political Theory* 22 (1994), pp. 619-652, 621-625; and Gabriella Slomp, *Carl Schmitt and the Politics of Hostility, Violence and Terror* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2009), pp. 6f.

not the foreign friend-and-enemy groupings are decisive for armed conflict”.⁹ Furthermore, Schmitt suggests in *The Concept of the Political* that wars which are fought in the name of peace and humanity might turn out to be particularly inhumane.¹⁰

In his later writings, Schmitt further elaborates on different types of enmity. He contrasts the limited interstate hostility that occurred within the legal order of the *jus publicum Europaeum* (the system of international law that developed after the Peace of Westphalia) with the absolute and unlimited hostility of modern revolutionary struggles and wars of national liberation.¹¹ Schmitt highlights that, under the *jus publicum Europaeum*, sovereign states recognised each other as ‘just enemies’, i.e. as having equal rights and legitimacy to make war. On this basis, they could impose regulations on the conduct of hostilities, including the important civilian-combatant distinction. According to Schmitt, the First World War, and the discriminatory peace that was subsequently established by the Treaty of Versailles, mark the end of the *jus publicum Europaeum*.¹² Although this war still began as a conventional interstate conflict, it ended with a “global civil war of revolutionary class enemies”,¹³ i.e. a war of annihilation.

Viewed in this light, Schmitt’s definition of ‘the political’ reflects his preference, or perhaps nostalgia, for an international legal order that limits hostility to conventional

⁹ Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, p. 32. This theme is further developed in Schmitt, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy* [1923, 1926], trans. Ellen Kennedy (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988).

¹⁰ Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, p. 95.

¹¹ Carl Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan: Intermediate Commentary on the Concept of the Political* [1963], trans. G.L. Ulmen (New York: Telos, 2007), pp. 11, 69-72, 85-95. Also see the historical account of modern international law in Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum* [1950], trans. G.L. Ulmen (New York: Telos, 2003). On Schmitt’s distinction between different conceptual and historical types of enmity, cf. Slomp, *Carl Schmitt*, ch. 5.

¹² Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth*, pp. 227-239. Discriminatory peace means that the defeated party was no longer treated as having equal rights and legitimacy to wage war. In particular, the Versailles Treaty criminalised the German Emperor, Kaiser Wilhelm II. Also see Schmitt’s discussion of the so-called war guilt article in *The Nomos of the Earth*, pp. 259-280.

¹³ Schmitt, *Theory of the Partisan*, p. 95. Cf. Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth*, pp. 246f.

conflicts between sovereign states, as opposed to global and domestic ‘civil war’.¹⁴ In this context, he portrays Hobbes as an intellectual ally. In the same way as Schmitt sees himself engaged in a struggle against a liberal politics of absolute enmity, Hobbes was supposedly attempting to overcome the power of the Church and the horrors of sectarian civil war.¹⁵ Thereby, Schmitt does not merely regard Hobbes as the foundational theorist of the modern secular state, but also as one of the founders of the international order of the *jus publicum Europaeum*, which supposedly substituted the non-discriminatory legal concept of the ‘just enemy’ for the Christian notion of ‘just war’.¹⁶

Schmitt’s reflections on enmity and his critique of liberalism raise issues that are still topical today,¹⁷ and moreover point to the significance of Hobbes’s views on this subject. Yet the latter may actually be closer to a broadly liberal perspective than Schmitt suggests. As Leo Strauss cogently observes in view of Hobbes’s description of the state of nature as a war of all against all, Hobbesian enmity is not necessarily accompanied by friendship.¹⁸ This marks an important difference between Hobbes and Schmitt. Other commentators have more recently affirmed that, whereas Schmitt insists on the inevita-

¹⁴ Reinhart Koselleck advances a remarkably similar argument in *Critique and Crisis: Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Oxford: Berg, 1988), ch. 3.

¹⁵ This kinship with Hobbes comes out most clearly in Schmitt’s personal reflections on his experience of the years immediately after the end of the Second World War. See Carl Schmitt, *Ex Captivitate Salus: Erfahrungen der Zeit 1945/47* [1950] (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2002). However, it needs to be said that there is some ambivalence in Schmitt’s appropriation of Hobbes’s political thought. In his 1938 book on *Leviathan*, Schmitt also detected a “barely visible crack” in Hobbes’s theory of sovereignty, which he describes as the “inroad of modern liberalism”. See Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes: Meaning and Failure of a Political Symbol* [1938], trans. George Schwab and Erna Hilfstein (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1996), p. 57.

¹⁶ Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth*, pp. 146f, 163. According to just war thinking, only one side could have a just cause to make war. By contrast, as Schmitt emphasises, the concept of ‘just enemy’ implies that both sides have equal rights and legitimacy to wage war.

¹⁷ For instance, Sergei Prozorov has recently argued that the liberal politics of enmity, which can be seen in developments such as the War on Terror, is characterised by a “utopian desire to eliminate enmity as such from the human condition”. See Sergei Prozorov, “Liberal Enmity: The Figure of the Foe in the Political Ontology of Liberalism”, *Millennium* 35 (2006), pp. 75-99, 96.

¹⁸ Leo Strauss, “Notes on Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*”, trans. J. Harvey Lomax, in *The Concept of the Political*, expanded edition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), pp. 99-122, 106.

bility of the friend-enemy distinction, Hobbes appears to be primarily concerned with hostility among individuals that should be overcome for the sake of everyone's self-preservation.¹⁹ Further elaborating on this theme, Stephen Holmes also finds that the enemy for Hobbes is not simply 'the other', but a fellow human being.²⁰

Having said that, there are, of course, important differences between Hobbes's thought and liberal perspectives on enmity. While Hobbes is preoccupied with preventing the war of all against all at all costs, liberal thinkers tend to highlight dangers arising from the arbitrary power of governments, rather than from hostility between members of society. This can already be seen in John Locke's response to Hobbes:

To ask how you may be guarded from harm, or injury on that side where the strongest hand is to do it, is presently the Voice of Faction and Rebellion. As if when Men quitting the State of Nature entered into Society, they agreed that all of them but one, should be under the restraint of Laws, but that he should still retain all the Liberty of the State of Nature, increased with Power, and made licentious by Impunity. This is to think that Men are so foolish that they take care what Mischiefs may be done to them by *Pole-Cats*, or *Foxes*, but are content, nay think it Safety, to be devoured by *Lions*.²¹

While threats posed by the arbitrary power of governments continue to be an important concern today,²² liberal thinkers seem to consider hostility in the domestic realm as both deviant and, to some extent, unworthy of theoretical consideration.²³

¹⁹ Stephen Holmes, "Does Hobbes Have a Concept of the Enemy?", *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 13 (2010), pp. 371-89, 385f; Slomp, *Carl Schmitt*, pp. 48f. For a collection of recent scholarship on Hobbes and Schmitt, also see *Thomas Hobbes and Carl Schmitt: The Politics of Order and Myth*, ed. Johan Tralau (London: Routledge, 2011).

²⁰ Holmes, "Does Hobbes Have a Concept of the Enemy?", pp. 387f.

²¹ John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* [1689], ed. Peter Laslett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), §93, p. 328 (emphasis and capitalisation in the original).

²² For instance, Judith Shklar's 'liberalism of fear' highlights the danger of abuses of power and cruelty built into the system of coercion on which modern states undoubtedly rely to fulfil their functions. See Shklar, "The Liberalism of Fear", in *Liberalism and the Moral Life*, ed. Nancy L. Rosenblum (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), pp. 21-38.

²³ It has been argued that, following John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas, more recent incarnations of liberal political philosophy ignore the importance of conflict and opposition altogether. Yet even so-called 'agonistic' critics of liberalism, who hold this view, are careful to emphasise that politics must transform *antagonism* (outright hostility) into *agonism* (limited conflict). For a paradigmatic statement, see Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox* (London: Verso, 2000), pp. 116-118.

This may be due to the belief in progress and civilisation, which supposedly led to an elimination of violence.²⁴ Michel Foucault's discussion of the 'savage' and the 'barbarian' helps to bring out in which sense hostility and violence could, from a broadly liberal perspective, be viewed as a deviation of ordinary politics.²⁵ The notion of savages appears in accounts of the social contract and also serves the purpose of naturalising the concept of *homo economicus*.²⁶ Yet, as Foucault points out, people supposedly ceased being savages when they entered society. By contrast, barbarians only come into existence with civilisation, which they threaten and despise.²⁷ In either case, hostility and violence seem to lie beyond the boundaries of a liberal politics that presupposes societal pacification. This may also be why liberal democracies find it difficult to respond to a resurfacing of hostility, such as in the event of terrorist attacks.²⁸

Although liberal political thinkers have paid more attention to enmity in the international realm, there is also a strong sense that the latter needs to be transcended. This already clearly comes out in Immanuel Kant's seminal essay "Toward Perpetual Peace", which accepts Hobbes's description of international relations as a state of nature. In this condition, there is, "if not always an outbreak of hostilities, then at least the constant threat of such hostilities".²⁹ Unlike Hobbes, however, Kant argues that lasting peace between nations is possible if they adopt republican constitutions, establish a federation of peoples,

²⁴ Cf. Bruce Buchan, "Liberalism and Fear of Violence", *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 4 (2001), pp. 27-48, 28.

²⁵ For his discussion of these two notions in modern political thought, see Michel Foucault, "*Society Must Be Defended*": *Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*, eds. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. David Macey (London: Penguin Books, 2004), pp. 194-197.

²⁶ In this context, the notion of *homo economicus* refers to the idea that human beings are narrowly self-interested, utility-maximising agents.

²⁷ Foucault, "*Society Must Be Defended*", pp. 194f.

²⁸ Although certain counter-terrorism measures risk undermining the democratic process and the rule of law, there may of course be ways to respond to the threat of terrorism in accordance with liberal democratic values. See, in particular, Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism Versus Democracy: The Liberal State Response*, 3rd. ed. (Oxford: Routledge, 2011), chs. 4-7.

²⁹ Immanuel Kant, "Toward Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch" [1795], in *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History*, eds. and trans. Pauline Kleingeld and David L. Colclasure (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), pp. 67-109, 72.

and grant a universal right of hospitality.³⁰ Kant's views are echoed in liberal IR theories today, which emphasise, among other things, the importance of international institutions for limiting conflict.³¹ Proponents of the so-called democratic peace theory maintain that, in relations between each other, liberal democracies generally avoid violent conflict, which points to the prospect of a peaceful world order.³²

This optimism that international hostility could be overcome is not shared by Realists in IR, who insist that states remain in a condition of anarchy where their attempts to increase security draw them into conflicts with one another. Textbook histories of IR have it that, during the interwar period, classical Realists such as E.H. Carr and Hans Morgenthau were arguing against proponents of a so-called liberal 'idealism', whose attempts to realise Kant's peace plan in the League of Nations they considered doomed to fail.³³ Yet it seems that this first 'great debate' of the discipline was largely a myth.³⁴ Moreover, it is debatable whether liberalism and Realism are best understood as entirely different schools of thought, as is suggested, for example, by Martin Wight's distinction between the Kantian (liberal) and Hobbesian (Realist) traditions.³⁵ Other commentators instead find that liberalism and Realism complement each other, or argue that both schools of thought have always been historically interconnected.³⁶

³⁰ Kant, "Toward Perpetual Peace", pp. 74-85.

³¹ See Scott Burchill, "Liberalism", in *Theories of International Relations*, 3rd ed., eds. Scott Burchill et al. (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 55-83, 64-66.

³² Burchill, "Liberalism", pp. 59f.

³³ See, for instance, Milja Kurki and Colin Wight, "International Relations and Social Science", in *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, 3rd ed., eds. Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 14-35, 16f.

³⁴ For an important reassessment of the disciplinary history of IR, see Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998), esp. ch. 6.

³⁵ Martin Wight, "The Anatomy of International Thought", *Review of International Studies* 13 (1987), pp. 221-227.

³⁶ See, for example, John A. Hall, *International Orders* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1996), pp. 29-32; and Michael C. Williams, *The Realist Tradition and the Limits of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 129-145.

In this regard, it is interesting to note that some Realist theorists in IR apparently share the aforementioned reluctance of liberal thinkers to engage with the concept of enmity. One of the central tenets of the Realist school of thought is the structural logic of anarchy, according to which the distribution of capabilities among states is supposed to lead to security dilemmas regardless of pre-existing state identities and dispositions.³⁷ While a number of Realist theorists have adopted the assumption that some states will behave in a more hostile or aggressive way than others, they seem to be somewhat reluctant to frame such issues in terms of friendship and enmity.³⁸ Arnold Wolfers, for instance, cautions against the use of terms such as ‘amity’ and ‘enmity’ in IR, because they “are taken from the universe of interpersonal relations and they convey a sense of emotional involvement”.³⁹ Even though Wolfers grants that adverse sentiments play a certain role in foreign policy-making, he points out in the same breath that statesmen should rather proceed “by a dispassionate assessment of the national interest”.⁴⁰

While a comprehensive and thorough assessment of notions of enmity in the current debate on politics and international relations is beyond the scope of this chapter, this discussion indicates that mainstream IR theories conceive of this subject in terms of private

³⁷ See Stefano Guzzini, *Realism in International Relations and International Political Economy: The Continuing Story of a Death Foretold* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 35. In his critique of Realism, the social constructivist Alexander Wendt also emphasises that “[s]tates act differently toward enemies than they do toward friends because enemies are threatening and friends are not”. As he further elucidates, not the mere distribution of power, but relational identities supposedly determine the conduct of states. See Wendt, “Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics”, *International Organization* 46 (1992), pp. 391-425, 397.

³⁸ See the useful overview provided by Guzzini, *Realism in International Relations*, pp. 39-42. While Guzzini suggests that theorists such as Morgenthau, Henry Kissinger, and Arnold Wolfers use an ‘amity/enmity’ distinction to qualify the structural logic of anarchy, his discussion also shows that these thinkers do not frame differences between states in terms of ‘enmity’.

³⁹ Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965), p. 25.

⁴⁰ Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration*, p. 25f. This conception of enmity as a matter of irrational private emotions may also help to explain Hobbes’s somewhat ambivalent reception as a forerunner of Realism in IR. While Wolfers, for example, acknowledges the well-known state-of-nature analogy, he also takes Hobbes’s use of the language of enmity as evidence of sweeping psychological generalisations that need to be avoided. See Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration*, p. 236.

emotions, or seek to transcend the condition of hostility between states. This seems to reflect a broader tendency to regard enmity as a deviation from ordinary politics and unworthy of theoretical consideration. Schmitt highlights the concept's importance and points to the significance of Hobbes's views on this subject, yet his appropriation of the latter's thought also conceals important differences between both thinkers. Therefore, this thesis will examine Hobbes's concept of enmity in its own right.

1.2 Methodological approach

The methodological approach chosen for this study is related to Schmitt's comments on the thesis subject, i.e. Hobbes's concept of enmity. As will be shown in this section, Schmitt admits that his claims about Hobbes are not grounded in a careful analysis of his works, which has not been done before. Yet, as will become apparent, Schmitt also expresses his preference for a contextual, rather than a merely textual, exposition of meaning. This points to the wider methodological debate on historical contextualism, which will be briefly considered in order to justify the chosen approach.

As mentioned in the previous section, Schmitt portrays Hobbes not only as the theorist of the modern secular state, but also as one of the founders of the international legal order that was established in the early modern period. However, it needs to be said that Schmitt does not closely examine Hobbes's views on hostility. Rather, he apparently draws a number of historical inferences based on the conventional narrative of the history of modern international law, which supposedly emerged together with the system of mutually recognised sovereign states after the Peace of Westphalia. While Schmitt's account captures important aspects of the *jus publicum Europaeum*, it is also problemat-

ic in many respects. Commentators have not only criticised Schmitt's own approach,⁴¹ but also called into question the conventional notion that the modern state system originated in the Peace of Westphalia.⁴² It is also unclear whether Hobbes was actually aware of developments of positive international law at the time.⁴³

Schmitt himself acknowledges in a later review article (which has, to the author's knowledge, so far not been translated into English) that an examination of Hobbes's concept of the enemy based on what he actually says has yet to be done.⁴⁴ Schmitt praises F.C. Hood's *The Divine Politics of Thomas Hobbes* for providing close textual readings of the concepts of obligation, sovereignty, and authority, and points out that Hood's work awakens in the reader a desire "to have other essential Hobbesian concepts analysed and clarified in the same way".⁴⁵ Thus, he expresses his wish for

an examination of the enemy concept. This could illuminate Hobbes's understanding of atheism, for [in *De Cive*] the atheist is defined as God's enemy, and treated accordingly: *ut hostis ab hoste; hoc est jure belli*. Another question suggests itself: what does the traitor or rebel actually do when he dares to declare war upon the sovereign, i.e. to confront the sovereign as an open enemy and thus revert back to the state of nature?⁴⁶

Schmitt praises Hood's approach of close textual reading as a remedy for premature interpretations, particularly the one of Hobbes's *Leviathan* as a manifesto of totalitarian-

⁴¹ For critical studies of Schmitt's account of the history of international law, see, for example, Martti Koskeniemi, "International Law as Political Theology: How to Read *Nomos der Erde*?", *Constellations* 11 (2004), pp. 492-511; and Peter Schröder, "Carl Schmitt's Appropriation of the Early Modern European Tradition of Political Thought on the State and Interstate Relations", *History of Political Thought* 33 (2012), pp. 348-371.

⁴² See, for instance, Stéphanie Beaulac, "The Westphalian Legal Orthodoxy – Myth or Reality?", *Journal of the History of International Law* 2 (2000), pp. 148-177.

⁴³ See David Armitage, "Hobbes and the Foundations of Modern International Thought", in *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, eds. Annabel Brett and James Tully (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 219-235.

⁴⁴ Schmitt, "Die Vollendete Reformation" [1965], pp. 138-141.

⁴⁵ Schmitt, "Die Vollendete Reformation", p. 140 (author's translation). Cf. F.C. Hood, *The Divine Politics of Thomas Hobbes: An Interpretation of 'Leviathan'* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964).

⁴⁶ Schmitt, "Die Vollendete Reformation", p. 140 (author's translation). The Latin phrase is an abridged quotation from *De Cive OL*, XIV.19, p. 215, meaning "as an enemy [is punished] by an enemy [...] that is, by the right of war". This translation is from *De Cive*, XIV.19, p. 164.

ism.⁴⁷ Yet he also maintains that analysing “what Hobbes really said” is only a preliminary for philosophical-historical reflection on “what he really meant”.⁴⁸

This statement invites a comparison with methodological claims put forward in Anglophone scholarship. For instance, Quentin Skinner points out in a similar vein that “[a]s well as grasping the meaning of what they said, we need [...] to understand what they meant by saying it”.⁴⁹ Cambridge School intellectual historians, most notably Skinner and John Pocock, maintain that meaning can only be understood in its historical context, which needs to be reconstructed prior to the study of texts.⁵⁰ This historical contextualism is often compared to German *Begriffsgeschichte* (conceptual history), which was mainly developed by Reinhart Koselleck.⁵¹ The latter, in turn, acknowledges similarities between conceptual history and Schmitt’s jurisprudential research.⁵²

The methodological writings of the Cambridge School intellectual historians arguably have had a considerable impact on the field,⁵³ yet many critics reject the claim that historical contextualism is the only valid approach to the subject. For instance, Mark Bevir points out that, while considering contexts may be of heuristic value, it is not a ‘method’

⁴⁷ Schmitt, “Die Vollendete Reformation”, p. 141. Schmitt does not mention any particular writers in this context, but might, for example, be alluding to the treatment of Hobbes in Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* [1951] (New York: Schocken, 2004), pp. 186-196.

⁴⁸ Schmitt, “Die Vollendete Reformation”, p. 141 (author’s translation).

⁴⁹ Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics, Vol. I: Regarding Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 82.

⁵⁰ For seminal methodological writings of Cambridge School historians since the 1960s, see the essays collected in J.G.A. Pocock, *Political Thought and History: Essays on Theory and Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); and Skinner, *Visions of Politics, Vol. I*.

⁵¹ Skinner himself notes important similarities between *Begriffsgeschichte* and his own historical contextualism in *Visions of Politics, Vol. I*, p. 177.

⁵² Reinhart Koselleck, *The Practice of History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts*, trans. Todd Samuel Presner et al. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 22. Cf. Timo Pankakoski, “Conflict, Context, Concreteness: Koselleck and Schmitt on Concepts”, *Political Theory* 38 (2010), pp. 749-779.

⁵³ If only to force many practitioners to reassert the validity their alternative approaches, which are contested by methodologists such as Skinner. For a critical assessment of the impact of historical contextualism, see David Boucher, *Texts in Context: Revisionist Methods for Studying the History of Ideas* (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1985), pp. 251-260.

in the sense of being either necessary or sufficient for reaching accurate understandings.⁵⁴ Furthermore, there are doubts as to whether the methodology of historical contextualism is clearly articulated and internally consistent. What constitutes ‘the context’, for instance, remains crucially undefined.⁵⁵ Given that contexts which are supposed to illuminate a text’s meaning need to be reconstructed on the basis of textual sources, Skinner’s and Pocock’s approaches also face a problem of circularity.⁵⁶

While Pocock, Skinner, and their followers have been admired for their historical scholarship, it seems questionable whether they recover history *as it really was*. Critics point out that, in making bold claims about different intellectual movements or periods and historical shifts between them, these scholars often ignore the intricacies of particular texts and philosophies.⁵⁷ It has also been argued that, far from being able to free themselves from preconceptions about the past, historical contextualists tend to let historical assumptions dictate the questions to ask, and answers to expect, in their enquiries.⁵⁸ Furthermore, it appears that some narratives continue to be spread and perpetuated by Cambridge School historians despite effectively having been refuted by other scholars.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Mark Bevir, *The Logic of the History of Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 9f, 83-85. The weaker claim, i.e. that contextual considerations are of heuristic value, appears to be beyond dispute. Hobbes himself also holds that the interpretation of historical texts is difficult and “needs the help of a context [*multarum circumstantiarum*]”. See *De Cive*, XVII.18, p. 219.

⁵⁵ Boucher, *Texts in Context*, pp. 255f; Preston King, *Thinking Past a Problem: Essays on the History of Ideas* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), p. 217.

⁵⁶ King, *Thinking Past a Problem*, p. 224. It has also been noted that historical contextualism, somewhat ironically, relies on ahistorical assumptions. See Robert Lamb, “Quentin Skinner’s Revised Historical Contextualism: A Critique”, *History of the Human Sciences* 22 (2009), pp. 51-73, 64.

⁵⁷ See, for instance, Edward Hall, “Hobbes’s Liberty and Skinner’s Discontent”, *Politics* 30 (2010), pp. 11-17; Randall Lesaffer, “Review of Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace: Political Thought and the International Order From Grotius to Kant*”, *Journal of the History of International Law* 4 (2002), pp. 135-137; Michael Oakeshott, “Review of Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*”, *The Historical Journal* 23 (1980), pp. 449-453; Tom Sorell, “Hobbes Overcontextualised?”, *Seventeenth Century* 16 (2001), pp. 123-146, 142.

⁵⁸ Sorell, “Hobbes Overcontextualised?”, p. 142. On this risk, also see Kinch Hoekstra, “The *de facto* Turn on Hobbes’s Political Philosophy”, in *Leviathan After 350 Years*, eds. Tom Sorell and Luc Foisneau (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), pp. 33-73, p. 57, n. 115.

⁵⁹ In particular, this seems to be the case with regard to Richard Tuck’s thesis that Hobbes sought to overcome an intellectual crisis due to the rediscovery of ancient scepticism. Perez Zagorin notes that, despite the fact that Hobbesian scholars expressed severe objections to Tuck’s views, “it has become ra-

This might, of course, be incidental. Yet some critics also find that the insistence on a certain methodology as a criterion for valid interpretations is not conducive to making arguments as “undogmatically open to counterargument as possible”.⁶⁰

The problems raised by this discussion of historical contextualism suggest that contextual considerations could not be a *substitute* for a careful analysis of the texts under study. In order to examine Hobbes’s concept of enmity, this thesis therefore adopts the approach of close textual reading. Although this way of studying political thought is, in some sense, conventional and used by many practitioners, there seems to be little methodological reflection on it. Peter Steinberger describes it as follows:

Generally, the approach is one of paraphrase, reconstruction, inference, and extrapolation. It is the effort to restate what has been said with a view to achieving maximum clarity and comprehensiveness, and this means eliminating, to the degree possible, all sources of ambiguity or imprecision.⁶¹

The premise underlying such an approach is that careful analysis could improve our understanding of Hobbes’s thought, and specifically of the concept of enmity in his political philosophy. However, a close reading does, of course, not preclude consideration of issues beyond the text. Rather, to concentrate on the latter is, in the words of Preston King, “to focus upon all that to which [the text] adverts and relates”.⁶²

The thesis can be described as a single-author study in that it only considers other thinkers for the purpose of clarifying and situating Hobbes’s ideas. Authorship is, thereby,

ther common to find authors, invariably drawing upon Tuck, who describe Grotius as a central influence upon Hobbes and picture the latter as his disciple in regard to the concept of natural rights.” See Zagorin, “Hobbes Without Grotius”, *History of Political Thought* 21 (2000), pp. 16-40, 19. Tuck’s claims concerning Hobbes’s scepticism will be further considered in sec. 4.3.

⁶⁰ Dominick LaCapra, *Rethinking Intellectual History: Texts, Contexts, Language* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 37f.

⁶¹ Peter J. Steinberger, “Analysis and History of Political Thought”, *American Political Science Review* 103 (2009), pp. 135-146, 142.

⁶² King, *Thinking Past a Problem*, p. 60.

not an objective quality but, as Michel Foucault points out, an attribute imposed upon texts to fulfil certain classificatory functions.⁶³ While there might be a risk to exaggerate an author's agency, there also seems to be the converse danger of overplaying the historian's authority when discourses are reconstructed without consideration of conventional categories such as author and work. As Gary Browning puts it:

A focus in intellectual history upon individuals and their texts at least has the merit of providing relatively determinate objects of study that are susceptible of being interpreted in ways that may resist accommodation into a projected explanatory narrative.⁶⁴

Undoubtedly, attributing authorship might be futile on some occasions, such as in the case of Socrates.⁶⁵ Yet Hobbesian scholarship today does not face any such problems. Apart from one minor exception, it is commonly agreed that Hobbes has written, and in many cases circulated or published, the works we attribute to him.⁶⁶

That being said, interpreters take different views on how Hobbes's works relate to each other. Michael Oakeshott, for example, describes *Leviathan* as "the greatest, perhaps the sole, masterpiece of political philosophy written in the English language".⁶⁷ By contrast, Skinner finds this work largely rhetorical in nature, and suggests that Hobbes had given up his earlier ambition to develop a science of politics when he was writing it.⁶⁸ Rather than making any such general assertions, this thesis provides a comparative analysis of

⁶³ Michel Foucault, "What is an Author?", trans. J.V. Harari, in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin Books, 1984), pp. 101-120.

⁶⁴ Gary Browning, "Agency and Influence in the History of Political Thought: The Agency of Influence and the Influence of Agency", *History of Political Thought* 31 (2010), pp. 345-365, 363.

⁶⁵ Due to the fact that Socrates himself did not leave behind any writings, his philosophy can only be accessed through the works of his disciples, or other indirect accounts. See Louis-André Dorion, "The Rise and Fall of the Socratic Problem", in *The Cambridge Companion to Socrates*, ed. Donald R. Morrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 1-23.

⁶⁶ The only exception is the so-called 'Short Tract on Principles', a metaphysical treatise probably written in the early 1630s. For opposing views on the question whether or not this text was indeed written by Hobbes, see Noel Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), pp. 104-139, and Karl Schuhmann, "Le Short Tract, première œuvre philosophique de Hobbes", *Hobbes Studies* 8 (1995), pp. 3-36. The 'Short Tract' will not be considered in this thesis.

⁶⁷ Michael Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975), p. 3.

⁶⁸ Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 351.

relevant aspects of—what may be called—Hobbes’s main political works, i.e. *The Elements of Law*, *De Cive*, and *Leviathan*. In order to further elucidate the concept of enmity in Hobbes’s political philosophy, relevant passages from his other writings will also be considered.⁶⁹ While these works are concerned with history, law, natural philosophy, and other subjects (rather than with political philosophy in a narrow sense), they relate to and further elaborate themes discussed in *The Elements of Law*, *De Cive*, and *Leviathan*. Therefore, consideration of these texts could shed further light on Hobbes’s concept of enmity and connected aspects of his political philosophy.

To conclude, this study adopts the approach of close textual reading. In view of objections to methodological claims made by historical contextualists, it has been argued that a careful analysis of Hobbes’s works is indispensable for examining his concept of enmity. This approach avoids projecting historical narratives upon past thinkers and thereby misconstruing their ideas, which appears to be the case in Schmitt’s account of the history of the *jus publicum Europaeum*. Indeed, as has been shown above, Schmitt himself acknowledges that his claims about Hobbes are not grounded in a close reading of what he actually says in his works, which he suggests has yet to be done.

1.3 Thesis statement and contribution to the literature

To the author’s knowledge, this is the first systematic study of Hobbes’s concept of enmity. Examining this important category does not only elucidate the concept itself, but also provides an opportunity to reconnect fragments of Hobbes’s thought that are increasingly being treated as disparate subjects. It will be suggested that the concept of enmity can shed further light on a number of related aspects of Hobbes’s political phi-

⁶⁹ See the list of works, editions, and abbreviations on pp. v-vi.

losophy, including competitiveness, the roles of fear and trust, the evil of violent death, the status of rebels, and his theory of international relations.

Moreover, the subject invites a rethinking of Hobbes's place in the history of international political thought. It will be suggested that Hobbes was among the first to make enmity a central subject of the theoretical reflection on the nature and proper organisation of political community.⁷⁰ Surely philosophers have always considered issues relating to friendship and enmity, with the latter often regarded as a fact of moral life and understood along the lines of conventional political or cultural divisions. For example, Greeks and barbarians were considered 'enemies by nature'.⁷¹ Yet it appears that enmity assumes a more prominent role in Hobbes's thought due to his characteristic break with the notion of natural sociability. As a consequence of this, Hobbes describes the natural condition as a war of all against all.⁷² Thus, it will be suggested here that Hobbes substitutes a concept of natural enmity for the notion of natural sociability.

The war of all against all supposedly arises due to universal human characteristics, and this thesis particularly considers competitiveness and distrust as sources of enmity in the state of nature. It will be shown that, according to Hobbes, human competitiveness would naturally provoke hostility. In addition, this thesis highlights Hobbes's peculiar conception of distrust, which does not require that others have previously revealed their hostility but merely denotes the possibility that they could become enemies in the fu-

⁷⁰ This may be broadly defined as the subject matter of political philosophy, as it first emerged in ancient Greece. See Iain Hampsher-Monk, "Political Philosophy, History of", in *Shorter Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Craig (Oxford: Routledge, 2005), pp. 818f.

⁷¹ See sec. 2.1.

⁷² On Hobbes's departure from traditional natural law theory, see, for instance, Norberto Bobbio, *Thomas Hobbes and the Natural Law Tradition*, trans. Daniela Gobetti (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 1-8; Perez Zagorin, *Hobbes and the Law of Nature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), pp. 36-38.

ture. In this context, this thesis also proposes a reassessment of the evil of violent death in Hobbes's political philosophy. It will be suggested that Hobbes does not, as is often assumed, advance the perhaps mistaken view that death is the greatest fear of all human beings.⁷³ Rather, his fundamental premise is that everybody would, under certain conditions, be willing to do the 'greatest thing', i.e. to kill another in order to satisfy his or her own desires.⁷⁴ This willingness also defines the state of hostility.

References to natural enmity are sometimes supposed to preclude reconciliation with particular groups or individuals,⁷⁵ yet this does not apply to Hobbes. It will be shown that Hobbesian enemies are generally supposed to be able to overcome hostility through subjection to a sovereign power. This is particularly apparent from his views on sovereignty acquired by conquest.⁷⁶ What is more, Hobbes describes seeking and granting peace as precepts of natural law. The latter also applies to people who already live in the civil state, and it is often suggested that Hobbes's main persuasive aim is to encourage his readers to remain obedient to their sovereign. Further developing this theme, this thesis will argue that Hobbes deploys scepticism as a rhetorical weapon against religious doctrines that justify resistance against the state. This would indicate that his scepticism has a more limited scope than some intellectual historians suggest.⁷⁷ At the

⁷³ For a useful overview of the debate on the evil of violent death, see Mark C. Murphy, "Hobbes on the Evil of Death", *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 82 (2000), pp. 36-61. Few interpreters pay attention to the fact that Hobbes is primarily concerned with violent death, and even if they do, they do not spell out how violence relates to hostility in the state of nature.

⁷⁴ Hobbesian interpreters usually focus on the equal ability of all human beings to do the 'greatest thing', rather than their equal willingness to kill another. See, for instance, Gabriella Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2000), pp. 25f.

⁷⁵ See, for instance, Plato's comments on the relations between Greeks and barbarians. Plato, *Republic*, trans. C.D.C. Reeve (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2004), 470c, p. 163. Cf. sec. 2.1

⁷⁶ Examining the distinction between subjects and enemies allows for a reassessment of the role of political fear vis-à-vis fidelity and trust in Hobbes's political philosophy. On this point, this thesis further develops views expressed by Deborah Baumgold, "'Trust' in Hobbes's Political Thought", *Political Theory* 20 (2013), pp. 1-18; and Larry May, *Limiting Leviathan: Hobbes on Law and International Affairs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 122-25, 132.

⁷⁷ For instance, Richard Tuck, *Hobbes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 7, advances the view that Hobbes's philosophy sought to overcome fundamental doubts regarding the possibility of secure

same time, Hobbes himself employs a number of different religious analogies to put forward his views on peace. In this regard, the thesis particularly calls attention to his interpretation of the biblical story of the Fall as a warning against rebellion.⁷⁸

In accordance with his view that subjection to a sovereign power allows human beings to avoid the hostility of the state of nature, Hobbes does not draw a static distinction between public and private enmity. Rather, the analysis of his Latin terminology will reveal that he describes individuals in the state of nature as *hostes*,⁷⁹ i.e. as public enemies that possess a right to use force analogous to the sovereign's right to make war. By contrast, people in the civil state are *inimici* (private enemies), because, as will be further shown, the right of war and subjection to the sovereign are mutually exclusive. Subjects do retain a right to resist assaults or punishment. Yet Hobbes holds that they must not use violence pre-emptively against one another or against the sovereign,⁸⁰ because in this case they would pose a challenge to the sovereign's exclusive right of war.

Regarding the relationship between hostility and human competitiveness, it will be shown that the state does not merely keep human nature in check,⁸¹ but also provides

knowledge about morality and the natural world. Cf. sec. 4.3.

⁷⁸ It has been noted before that Hobbes appropriates the doctrine of the Fall. See Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, pp. 58-60; Tom Sorell, *Hobbes* (London: Routledge, 1986), pp. 33-37; and Sheldon S. Wolin, *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 237. However, none of these accounts considers that Hobbes likens the act of rebellion to the 'original sin'.

⁷⁹ Holmes, "Does Hobbes Have a Concept of the Enemy?" p. 386, speculates that, as a translator of Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Hobbes might have been aware "that a hated domestic opponent (*echthros*) could easily become an all-out enemy (*polemios*)". However, Holmes does not pay attention to Hobbes's use of the Latin terms *inimicus* and *hostis*. The latter consideration is also omitted in Michael Silverthorne, "Political Terms in the Latin of Thomas Hobbes," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 2 (1996), pp. 499-509.

⁸⁰ Thus, this thesis also contributes to the debate on Hobbesian 'resistance rights'. For important contributions to this debate, see Deborah Baumgold, *Hobbes's Political Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), ch. 2; Claire Finkelstein, "A Puzzle About Hobbes on Self-Defence", *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 82 (2001), pp. 332-361; and Susanne Sreedhar, *Hobbes on Resistance: Defying the Leviathan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁸¹ For this view, see David P. Gauthier, *Morals by Agreement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986),

arenas for socially beneficial competition that are unavailable in the state of nature.⁸² Despite this, however, Hobbes holds that competitiveness could, under certain conditions, provoke a return of hostility. This appears to be in accordance with his aforementioned dynamic distinction between public and private enemies. This thesis will suggest that the latter distinguishes Hobbes's thought from the liberal conception of economic competition, which does not consider the possibility that competition between private individuals could provoke outright hostility. Furthermore, Hobbes's dynamic distinction also differs from Carl Schmitt's view that political enmity, which concerns the relations between organised totalities, is strictly separate from personal rivalry.

Hostility returns to the domestic realm in the event of rebellion, and it is often said that the English Civil War inspired Hobbes's political philosophy. Yet it will be shown that Hobbes does not mainly conceive of domestic enmity in terms of actual violence, but instead focuses on events prior to civil war. In particular, he seeks to establish that 'bare words' are sufficient evidence for the sin of rebellion, such as when authors of sedition call the sovereign a tyrant.⁸³ In addition, this thesis analyses Hobbes's claim that the rebel is not merely *inimicus* (a private enemy) but *hostis* (a public enemy against whom the right of war can be applied).⁸⁴ It will be argued that he envisions an extra-legal jurisdiction that may allow the sovereign to prevent the outbreak of civil war. Specific-

pp. 319f; Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, p. 38; Sorell, *Hobbes*, p. 125; Thomas Spragens, *The Politics of Motion: The World of Thomas Hobbes* (London: Croom Helm, 1973), p. 193; Sheldon S. Wolin, "Hobbes and the Culture of Despotism", in *Thomas Hobbes and Political Theory*, ed. Mary G. Dietz (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1990), pp. 9-36, 29.

⁸² For this view, see Robert Shaver, "Leviathan, King of the Proud", *Hobbes Studies* 3 (1990), pp. 54-74, 54-58; and Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, p. 67.

⁸³ Hobbes often uses the phrase 'author of sedition' to refer to people who incite others to rebellion, such as, for example, the Roman Senator Catiline. See sec. 7.3. This term will be used throughout this thesis when referring to Hobbes's conception of such rebellious individuals.

⁸⁴ Some interpreters note, but do not further examine, Hobbes's claim that those who break the social contract become public enemies. Others reject the idea that individuals could thus be excluded from society in view of its apparent implausibility. For examples of the latter view, see Peter Hayes, "Pirates, Privateers, and the Contract Theories of Hobbes and Locke", *History of Political Thought* 29 (2008), pp. 461-484, 469f; and Sreedhar, *Hobbes on Resistance*, p. 157.

ly, rulers should attribute exclusive responsibility to authors of sedition while pardoning other participants of a rebellion in order to restore them as subjects. By adopting such a strategy of divide and conquer, they might be able to prevent a civil war.

On this basis, this thesis also proposes a reinterpretation of the fool passage in *Leviathan*. Responding in particular to Kinch Hoekstra's reading of the so-called 'reply to the fool',⁸⁵ it will be argued that Hobbes seeks to persuade his audience that authors of sedition, who reveal their denial of justice by calling the sovereign a tyrant, ought to be treated as 'enemies of mankind'. This notion, which appears in many ancient, medieval, and early-modern sources,⁸⁶ helps to explain the persuasive aims of this passage and Hobbes's views on the foolishness of rebellion.⁸⁷ Like other enemies of mankind, such as pirates, those who deny justice cannot be trusted to keep faith.⁸⁸ Consequently, as Hobbes clearly states in *Leviathan*, rebellious fools should not be admitted into *any* human association. This reflects his view that only people who appear trustworthy enough to keep the social contract could become members of the commonwealth.

Lastly, the thesis examines how the concept of enmity helps to clarify Hobbes's views on international relations. It is argued that the state-of-nature analogy should not be misconstrued as a theory of how pre-given units (i.e. states) interact within a self-enclosed (international) system. Rather, Hobbes's account of sovereignty acquired by conquest implies that commonwealths could also be decomposed and reassembled after

⁸⁵ Kinch Hoekstra, "Hobbes and the Foole", *Political Theory* 25 (1997), pp. 620-654. Hoekstra's article reflects a broader trend to read this passage not as a philosophical argument against free-riding in general but, more specifically, as an attempt to discourage rebellion.

⁸⁶ Cf. sec. 2.1 and 7.4.

⁸⁷ It is argued that this notion provides a more convincing account of the rhetorical nature of the fool passage than the latter's religious symbolism, which is explored in Patricia Springborg, "Hobbes's Fool the *Insipiens*, and the Tyrant-King", *Political Theory* 39 (2011), pp. 85-111.

⁸⁸ If there is one thing that all commentators agree upon, it is the fact that as a consequence of his denial of justice, the fool cannot be trusted to keep his covenants. Cf. sed. 7.4.

a successful foreign invasion.⁸⁹ He insists that once a state's power has been entirely defeated, its former members ought to be admitted as equal subjects of the conqueror. It will be argued that this possibility is of crucial importance for his theory of international relations. In particular, it seems to imply that international hostility does not necessarily result in mutual annihilation, as does the war of all against all.

In relation to this, the question of how sovereign states recognise one another will also be addressed. Analysis shows that Hobbes only assumes *de facto* recognition of sovereign authority and rejects the idea that rulers enjoy any privileges at war, such as being spared from punishment, due to their legal status.⁹⁰ To the contrary, his comments indicate that enemies specifically target the holder of sovereign power, whose life and liberty is, therefore, always at stake in the making of foreign policy. This provides an explanation for Hobbes's claim that sovereigns are personally bound by the natural law, which he identifies with the law of nations.⁹¹ In accordance with this view, Hobbes also seems to assume that there are natural limits of international hostility due to prudential reasoning.⁹² It will be shown that, no matter whether sovereigns desire glory, gain, or security, they can benefit from practising restraint towards the enemy.

⁸⁹ By highlighting the possibility of conquest, this thesis expands on the finding that Hobbes's reception as a forerunner of Realism presupposes an unHobbesian distinction between 'the domestic' and 'the international' as self-enclosed spheres of life. Cf. Armitage, "Hobbes and the Foundations of Modern International Thought", p. 231; Gabriella Slomp, "The Politics of Motion and the Motion of Politics, in *International Political Theory After Hobbes: Analysis, Interpretation and Orientation*, eds. Raia Prokhovnik and Gabriella Slomp (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 19-41, 34-36.

⁹⁰ *Contra* Schmitt, this shows that sovereigns are not treated as 'just enemies'. The question how states recognise one another is generally underexplored in the literature on Hobbes. For exceptions, see David Runciman, *Pluralism and the Personality of the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 17; William Sacksteder, "Mutually Acceptable Glory: Rating Among Nations in Hobbes", in *The Causes of Quarrel: Essays on Peace, War, and Thomas Hobbes*, ed. Peter Caws (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1989), pp. 97-113, 111f.

⁹¹ A number of interpreters highlight this feature of his conception of the law of nations. See, for example, S.A. Lloyd, "International Relations, World Government, and the Ethics of War", in *Hobbes Today: Insights for the 21st Century*, ed. S.A. Lloyd (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 288-303, 298-301; Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, pp. 443-446. However, existing accounts fail to acknowledge that sovereigns are liable with their lives and liberty.

⁹² That there are limits of hostility between Hobbesian states is mentioned or implied, although not further

This reading points to a vision of international order that crucially differs from the so-called ‘Westphalian system’ of sovereign states. Contrary to what Schmitt suggests in his account of the *jus publicum Europaeum* (the system of positive international law that developed after the Peace of Westphalia), Hobbes does not hold that sovereign states recognise each other as ‘just enemies’, i.e. as compound moral persons that have equal rights and legitimacy to make war. Rather, he seems to envision an international order in which the *de facto* authority of sovereigns, their personal liability, and the imperative of self-preservation provide a basis for prudential self-restraint, the coexistence of states, and—in the extreme case—the reconciliation of former enemies.

Hobbes’s concept of enmity and related aspects of his political thought will be considered in chapters 3–8. These chapters will focus on natural enmity, human competitiveness, and the evil of violent death (chapter 3); natural reason and the good of peace (chapter 4); trust, subjection, and the rights of sovereigns and subjects (chapter 5); competitiveness in the civil state (chapter 6); rebellion (chapter 7); and international relations (chapter 8). Prior to the examination of Hobbes’s views on these themes, the following chapter will situate his ideas vis-à-vis other conceptions of enmity.

examined, by many interpreters. See, for instance, Stanley Hoffmann, “Rousseau on War and Peace”, *American Political Science Review* 57 (1963), pp. 317-333, 320.

2. Conceptions of enmity

This chapter offers some preliminary suggestions regarding different conceptions of enmity in order to prepare the ground for the subsequent exposition of Hobbes's views. This treatment of the subject must remain cursory and selective, for a comprehensive account of the enemy concept in the history of international political thought is clearly beyond the scope of this thesis. Yet considering a limited number of thinkers with whom Hobbes was familiar, or who have obvious points of contact with his thought, may suffice to bring out the significance of his views on this subject.

The first section of this chapter looks at aspects of Greek and Roman political thought. It is shown that, although ancient philosophers consider issues relating to enmity, they usually regard the latter as a fact of moral life and understand it along the lines of conventional political or cultural divisions. The second section introduces Augustine's views on the Fall and his reflections on just war. It is suggested that, while Augustine reflects upon the political function of fear, his concern remains ultimately with issues which transcend the realm of temporal existence. The third section considers views on hostility by the late scholastic theologian Francisco Vitoria and the early modern jurist Alberico Gentili. It is argued that these near contemporaries of Hobbes begin to think about enmity in more explicitly political terms as entirely the result of human agency. The fourth suggests that, in breaking with the notion of natural sociability, Hobbes is among the first to make enmity a central subject of political philosophy.

2.1 Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics: enmity and civilisation

Along with friendship, enmity may have always been part of human life. As such, it does not only appear in the writings of poets and historians, such as Homer and Thucydides,¹ but is also considered by ancient Greek philosophers. However, this section will suggest that enmity did, in Antiquity, not yet become a central part of the theoretical reflection on the nature and proper organisation of political community.²

In particular, it will become apparent that ancient Greek philosophers did not yet conceive of enmity as something that could be transformed or transcended through human agency, rather accepting it as a fact of moral life. What is more, it seems that political or cultural divisions that existed between different peoples were frequently taken for granted. Although ancient Greek philosophers conceived of the world as a unified cosmos and were the first to develop the notion of the unity of humanity, it is often noticed that such ideas had little practical bearing. Specifically, it appears that thinkers at the time saw no problem in reflecting upon humanity in universal terms, while also accepting the seemingly natural enmity between Greeks and barbarians (non-Greeks).³

This can be illustrated with regard to Plato's *Republic*.⁴ In a much-cited passage from Book 5 (which consists of a dialogue between Socrates and different interlocutors), Pla-

¹ As one historian puts it, from the time of Homer onwards, "Greek popular thought is pervaded by the assumption that one should help one's friends and harm one's enemies". Mary Whitlock Blundell, *Helping Friends and Harming Enemies: A Study in Sophocles and Greek Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 26. Hobbes was certainly familiar with the culture of ancient Greece, as he translated Homer and Thucydides into English.

² This may be broadly defined as the subject matter of political philosophy, as it first emerged in ancient Greece. See Hampsher-Monk, "Political Philosophy, History of", pp. 818f.

³ H.C. Baldry, *The Unity of Mankind in Greek Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), pp. 1-5; David Boucher, *Political Theories of International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 174f. On the historical development of the notion of barbarians (non-Greeks), which presupposes a shared Hellenic identity, also see Edward Keene, *International Political Thought: A Historical Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), pp. 27-31.

⁴ Hobbes's writings contain a number of references to Plato. In *Lev.* XXXI.41 (OL), n. 15, p. 244, he spe-

to seeks to establish a distinction between, on the one hand, conflicts among Greeks, and on the other, conflicts between Greeks and barbarians:

SOCRATES: When Greeks fight with barbarians [...] or barbarians with Greeks, we will say that that is warfare, that they are *natural enemies*, and that such hostilities should be called war. But when Greeks engage in such things with Greeks, we will say they are natural friends, that Greece is sick and divided into factions in such a situation, and that such hostilities should be called faction [*stasis*].⁵

In other words, only conflicts with barbarians should be called war, while hostilities among Greeks are a pathological condition. As it is evident from the context of this passage, however, Plato is not primarily concerned with relations towards foreign peoples. Rather, he is arguing for restraint towards fellow Greeks, and specifically seeks to discourage the destruction of cities and enslavement of their populations. Apparently for this purpose, Plato invokes the conventional distinction between Greeks and barbarians as different kinds of human beings, even though the latter does not sit easily with his philosophical views on the unity of humanity. As commentators have pointed out, the account of human nature presented in other parts of the *Republic* rather suggests that distinctions between Greeks and non-Greeks are *not* rooted in nature.⁶

Aristotle also makes some references to the conventional distinction between Greeks and barbarians, most notably when he argues in the *Politics* that “against those human beings who are unwilling to be ruled, but naturally suited for it, [...] warfare is naturally

cifically mentions Plato’s *Republic*. While Hobbes is generally critical of Greek philosophy, he describes Plato in *Lev.*, XLVI.11, p. 456, as “the best philosopher of the Greeks”.

⁵ Plato, *Republic* [written around 380 BC], 470c, p. 163 (emphasis added). It remains unclear whether Plato faithfully reports Socrates’ views or merely states his own ideas in dialogical form. On the notion of *stasis* and its English translation, see the discussion in this section below.

⁶ Baldry, *The Unity of Mankind*, pp. 81, 87; Owen Goldin, “Conflict and Cosmopolitanism in Plato and the Stoics”, *Apeiron* 44 (2011), pp. 264-284, 266-270. For a comparison between the *Republic* and statements on this matter in Plato’s other writings, see Rachana Kamtekar, “Distinction Without a Difference? Race and *Genos* in Plato”, in *Philosophers on Race: Critical Essays*, eds. Julie K. Ward and Tommy L. Lott (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 1-13.

just”.⁷ Given that there is clear evidence of Hobbes’s familiarity with Aristotle’s views on slavery, this is particularly relevant for the purpose of this thesis.⁸ Interpreters today often regard Aristotle’s justification of natural slavery as an anomaly in his system of thought.⁹ However, his reflections on this subject may be indirectly connected to the central contention of his political philosophy, i.e. that the *polis* (city-state) is the perfect form of human association and constituted for the sake of the good life. Some commentators thus argue that the institution of slavery gives a relatively small number of citizens the leisure they need to participate in public life, develop virtuous characters, and achieve true happiness, as envisioned by Aristotle.¹⁰ By contrast, all that natural slaves can hope for is self-preservation, which is not the end of the *polis*.¹¹

In other words, the purpose of political community is not primarily to transcend a condition of enmity, as Hobbes would have it. This suggests that Aristotle’s political philosophy does not only conceive of enmity in terms of the conventional distinction between Greeks and barbarians, but also largely excludes it as a subject of theoretical reflection due to its concern with the good life. Having said that, Aristotle is naturally keen to nourish friendship and prevent enmity among members of the *polis*. Like many other Greek philosophers, poets, and historians, he conceives of internal disorder as *stasis*. Signifying a kind of disease of the *polis*, this term has a broader meaning than English

⁷ Aristotle, *Politics* [c. 320 BC], translated with introduction and notes by C.D.C. Reeve (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1998), 1256b24-25, p. 14. Aristotle, thereby, identifies ‘natural slaves’ with barbarians on the basis that only they are usually called slaves. See *Politics*, 1255a28-32, p. 11.

⁸ See Hobbes’s critical comments on Aristotle in *De Cive*, III.13, pp. 49f and *Lev.*, XXI.9, p. 140. Hobbes engages with, and frequently criticises, Aristotle’s thought on many different levels. Above all, he rejects the Aristotelian notion of natural sociability. Cf. sec. 3.1.

⁹ See, for instance, Malcolm Schofield, “Ideology and Philosophy in Aristotle’s Theory of Slavery”, in *Aristotle’s Politics: Critical Essays*, eds. Richard Kraut and Steven Skultety (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), pp. 91-119, 94.

¹⁰ Peter Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 105-127; Eugene Garver, *Aristotle’s Politics: Living Well and Living Together* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), pp. 17-41.

¹¹ Aristotle clearly states in *Politics*, 1280a30-34, p. 80, that if it was for the sake of life, rather than the good life, then an association of slaves or animals could be considered a *polis*.

words such as ‘faction’, ‘sedition’, or ‘civil war’, also covering developments prior and leading to the eventual outbreak of violence.¹² For this reason, *stasis* is also frequently linked to moral deficiencies. This can be seen, for instance, in a passage of Plato’s *Republic*, according to which “injustice causes factions [*stasis*], hatreds, and quarrels [...], while justice brings friendship and a sense of common purpose”.¹³

The connection between *stasis* and moral deficiencies also comes out in Thucydides’ account of the *stasis* in Corcyra, which particularly emphasises the corruption of moral language. In Hobbes’s translation of Thucydides’ work, we read:

The received value of names imposed for signification of things, was changed into arbitrary. For inconsiderate boldness, was counted true-hearted manliness: provident deliberation, a handsome fear: modesty, the cloak of cowardice: to be wise in every thing, to be lazy in every thing. A furious suddenness was reputed a point of valour. [...] In brief, he that could outstrip another in the doing of an evil act, or that could persuade another thereto that never meant it, was commended.¹⁴

The corruption of language in Corcyra, as described by Thucydides, can be regarded as evidence of society’s moral decline.¹⁵ During this *stasis*, people “prosecuted their revenges still farther, without any regard of justice or the public good”.¹⁶

Aristotle’s theory in the *Politics* also links *stasis* to injustice. In particular, Aristotle argues that *stasis* arises out of disagreement over the principles of justice embodied in a city’s constitution,¹⁷ implying that a certain degree of agreement is indispensable for life in the *polis*. As Aristotle states elsewhere, “[political] community involves friendship,

¹² Kostas Kalimtzis, *Aristotle on Political Enmity and Disease* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000), pp. 3-6.

¹³ Plato, *Republic*, 351d4-6, p. 51.

¹⁴ *History 1*, pp. 348f. I am referring to Hobbes’s translation, titled *The History of the Grecian War*, as this seems to be most relevant here. Apparent similarities between Thucydides’ description of the *stasis* in Corcyra and Hobbes’s account of the state of nature will be considered in sec. 2.4.

¹⁵ Cf. Clifford Orwin, “*Stasis* and Plague: Thucydides on the Dissolution of Society”, *The Journal of Politics* 50 (1988), pp. 831-847, 834-838.

¹⁶ *History 1*, p. 350.

¹⁷ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1301a35-38, p. 134. Cf. Aristotle, *Politics*, 1262b5-10, pp. 30f.

since enemies do not wish to share even a journey in common”.¹⁸ Modern interpreters often emphasise the close connections between friendship, agreement, and justice in Aristotle’s political philosophy.¹⁹ Moreover, it has been argued that *stasis* should be understood as a privation of friendship.²⁰ However that may be, enmity within a city-state appears to be mainly a symptom of moral deficiencies that would not occur if citizens had sufficient friendship ties and were in agreement on the common good.

After Aristotle, the focus of theoretical reflection on ethics and politics increasingly shifted away from the *polis*. Denying natural differences between Greeks and barbarians, Zeno of Citium, the founder of the Stoic school of philosophy, appears to have been the first to advance cosmopolitan principles. According to Plutarch:

[T]he much-admired *Republic* of Zeno, the founder of the Stoic sect, may be summed up in this one principle: that all the inhabitants of this world of ours should not live differentiated by their respective rules of justice into separate cities and communities, but that we should consider all men to be of one community and one polity, and that we should have a common life and an order common to us all [...].²¹

While this may sound like a description of the ideal cosmopolitan state to modern ears, the political implications of Stoicism remain somewhat ambiguous. In practice, Stoicism did certainly not inspire universal friendship towards all human beings. The Greek historian Plutarch, who is also one of the main sources of knowledge about the Old Stoa, points out “that it was Alexander [the Great] who gave effect to [Zeno’s] idea”.²²

¹⁸ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1295b22-24, p. 119.

¹⁹ However, there is disagreement as to how exactly they relate to each other, and what kind of friendship political friendship is. See Richard Mulgan, “The Role of Friendship in Aristotle’s Political Theory”, *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 2 (1999), pp. 15-32, 24-28; Paul Schollmeier, *Other Selves: Aristotle on Personal and Political Friendship* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), pp. 97-111; Lorraine Smith Pangle, *Aristotle and the Philosophy of Friendship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 80-81, 99-104.

²⁰ Kalimtzis, *Political Enmity and Disease*, pp. 87-101.

²¹ Plutarch, “On the Fortune or the Virtue of Alexander”, in *Plutarch’s Moralia with an English translation by Frank Cole Babbitt*, Vol. 4 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936), p. 397.

²² Plutarch, “On the Fortune or the Virtue of Alexander”, p. 397.

However, this statement is clearly part of an idealised account intended to portray the emperor as a true philosopher who spread Hellenic civilisation.²³

The same ambiguity can be encountered in Roman Stoicism, which flourished at a time when the Republic engaged in some of its most brutal conquests. Cicero, who to some extent followed Stoic ethical ideas, is a case in point. In *On Obligations*, he endorses the notion of a “fellowship of the whole human race” and argues that wars ought to be waged only for the sake of peace and justice.²⁴ At the same time, Cicero points out that the Roman Empire should be understood as a “protectorate of the world”.²⁵ Modern advocates of cosmopolitanism tend to downplay this apparent tension between Stoic principles and justifications of imperialism.²⁶ Yet it has also been suggested that it was exactly due to its abstract moral nature and opposition to the reality of particularistic politics that Stoicism could easily be exploited by hegemonic powers.²⁷

In any case, it seems safe to assert that Cicero endorses the Roman ambition to speak and act in the name of humanity. Thus, he also famously describes pirates as *communis hostis omnium* (a common enemy of all).²⁸ After noting in *On Obligations* that fidelity is required even in times of war, he argues that pirates have a special status, because

²³ For Plutarch’s portrayal of Alexander as a philosopher-king, see esp. “On the Fortune or the Virtue of Alexander”, pp. 389-399. Cf. Tim Whitmarsh, “Alexander’s Hellenism and Plutarch’s Textualism”, *Classical Quarterly* 52 (2002), pp. 174-192, 179f. The alternative view that Alexander, indeed, sought to realise a cosmopolitan ideal is now widely considered inaccurate.

²⁴ Cicero, *On Obligations* [*De officiis*, 44 BC], trans. P.G. Walsh (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), I 34-35, pp. 13f; I 50, p. 19.

²⁵ Cicero, *On Obligations*, II 27, p. 63. On the relationship between Stoicism and imperialism in Cicero’s thought, cf. Goldin, “Conflict and Cosmopolitanism”, pp. 281-285.

²⁶ See, for example, Martha C. Nussbaum, “Kant and Stoic Cosmopolitanism”, *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 5 (1997), pp. 1-25, 14.

²⁷ Anthony Pagden, “Stoicism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Legacy of European Imperialism”, *Constellations* 7 (2000), pp. 3-22, 6; Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, pp. 73-75.

²⁸ Walter Rech suggests that the Latin genitive *omnium* may, in this context, also be translated as ‘of all humans’. See Rech, *Enemies of Mankind: Vattel’s Theory of Collective Security* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2013), p. 31. Later writers who appropriated Cicero’s phrase commonly refer to *hostis humani generis* (‘enemy of mankind’). See sec. 7.4.

their oaths cannot be trusted.²⁹ As he further points out in this regard, “if you fail to pay ransom on your life when you have agreed it with pirates, that does not constitute deception, even if before you failed to pay you had sworn an oath”.³⁰ In other words, universal obligations do not apply to those who are common enemies of all. Yet Cicero neither provides any sustained reflection on the nature of the latter, nor restricts his application of this notion to those who engage in piratical activities. Rather, as some commentators have recently suggested, Cicero describes particular opponents of Rome as *communis hostis omnium* in order to disqualify them as unlawful enemies.³¹

To conclude, this section has suggested that ancient Greek and Roman political thinkers often take for granted the seemingly natural division between civilisation and its enemies. Moreover, they frequently conceive enmity as a fact of moral life. Plato and Aristotle consider domestic hostility as evidence of a city’s moral decline, while Cicero emphasises the moral deficiencies of particular enemies. However, it may be said that enmity did not become a central subject of political philosophy in Antiquity.

2.2 Augustine: fear of enemies and just war

In Late Antiquity, Augustine of Hippo offers some particularly interesting reflections on enmity. Illuminative in this regard is above all his account of Roman history in *The City of God*,³² which was intended to refute the view that the sack of Rome in 410 was relat-

²⁹ Cicero, *On Obligations*, Book 3.107, pp. 120f.

³⁰ Cicero, *On Obligations*, Book 3.107, pp. 120f.

³¹ See especially Daniel Heller-Roazen, *The Enemy of All: Piracy and the Law of Nations* (New York: Zone Books, 2009), pp. 100-102; and Rech, *Enemies of Mankind*, pp. 32-35. The distinction between lawful and unlawful enemies also plays an important role in the early modern period, and will be further addressed in sec. 2.3. In addition, it will be suggested in sec. 7.4 that Hobbes, in his ‘reply to the fool’, appropriates the notion of an enemy of mankind.

³² Hobbes had access to Augustine’s *Opera* and *The City of God*. See James Jay Hamilton, “Hobbes’s Study and the Hardwick Library”, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 16 (1978), pp. 445-453.

ed to the Empire's Christianisation.³³ In addition, this section indicates how enmity relates to Augustine's interpretation of the Fall and reflections on just war.

Augustine wrote at a time when the Western Roman Empire disintegrated, which was formative for the subsequent development of Western Christianity. In response to the Roman historian Sallust, he writes in *The City of God*:

[Sallust] notes first that, between the second and last Carthaginian wars, the Romans displayed the highest morals and the greatest harmony. The cause of this happy state of affairs, however, was not the love of justice, but the fear of an uncertain peace while Carthage remained standing. (This is also why Nascia opposed the destruction of Carthage. He wished to suppress wickedness and to preserve those outstanding morals by restraining vice through fear).³⁴

Like Sallust, Augustine blames Rome's moral corruption and discord on the annihilation of its principal enemy.³⁵ Thereby, he also recalls the well-known story about the debate between Cato the Elder and Nasica in the Roman Senate. According to Plutarch's version of this tale, Cato kept demanding that "Carthage must be destroyed", while Nasica ended his speeches with the request that it "must be spared". This was apparently in view of the beneficial effects of the fear of Carthage.³⁶

The idea that fear of enemies can benefit a political community has been described as a "prudential commonplace rooted in ancient Greek and Roman culture".³⁷ Yet Augustine does not merely reiterate this view, but also provides his own reflections on the sources

³³ Paul J. Weithman, "Augustine's Political Philosophy", in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, 2nd ed., eds. David Vincent Meconi and Eleonore Stump (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 234-252, 241.

³⁴ Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans* [written 413-426 AD], ed. and trans. R.W. Dyson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), II 18, p. 71. Cf. III 21, pp. 129f.

³⁵ For Sallust's account, see *Catiline's War, The Jugurthine War, Histories*, trans. A.J. Woodman (London: Penguin Books, 2007), p. 144. Also see *Catiline's War*, 10, pp. 8f.

³⁶ See Plutarch, "Marcus Cato", in *Plutarch's Lives with an English translation by Bernadotte Perrin*, Vol. 2 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935), XXVII, p. 383. To the author's knowledge, Sallust himself does not mention this story in his works.

³⁷ Neal Wood, "Sallust's Theorem: A Comment on 'Fear' in Western Political Thought", *History of Political Thought* 16 (1995), pp. 174-189, 175.

of Rome's moral energy and political cohesion. In this regard, he disagrees with Sallust on the inherent virtue of the early Romans and argues that it was *only* through the fear of Carthage that they lived "by the highest morals and in the greatest concord".³⁸ Underlying this claim seems to be Augustine's interpretation of the biblical story of the Fall, which he develops in Books XI-XXII of *The City of God*. According to his narrative, all human beings became sinful mortals after Adam's 'original sin', i.e. his eating from the forbidden tree of knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden.

Augustine's conception of human nature after the Fall has important implications for the role of politics. In particular, it seems that such people need to be humbled and restrained,³⁹ which is also the function of the fear of Carthage that Augustine so clearly discerns. If one accepts the idea of an inherited sin, the flourishing of a temporal city like Rome must entirely be due to the fear of enemies, as opposed to any inherent virtue of the Romans. Thus, Augustine may be said to offer some more general reflections on enmity and its implications for the nature of political communities. Naturally, his interpretation of the Fall has reminded some readers of Hobbes's political thought, and specifically of the latter's account of human beings in the state of nature. Yet there also seem to be obvious differences between the perspectives of both thinkers.⁴⁰

Being considered one of the earliest sources of the just war tradition,⁴¹ Augustine does not only consider enmity in the context of beneficial effects of the fear of enemies. Ra-

³⁸ Augustine, *The City of God*, III 21, pp. 129f. Cf. II 18, pp. 71-73. It is interesting that in ancient Greek and Roman thought, ideas on the political utility of fear appear to have been closely related to reflection on its persuasive uses by skilled orators. See Daniel Kapust, "On the Ancient Uses of Political Fear and Its Modern Implications", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 69 (2008), pp. 353-373. By contrast, Augustine seems to be less concerned with the rhetorical evocation of fear.

³⁹ Cf. Weithman, "Augustine's Political Philosophy", p. 238.

⁴⁰ Claims about Hobbes's appropriation of the story of the Fall, and similarities and differences between both thinkers in this regard, will be considered in sec. 4.4.

⁴¹ Commentators sometimes refer to Augustine or Aquinas as proponents of the classical just war *doc-*

ther, he also pays great attention to the question when using force is compatible with Christian faith. Due to the pacific counsels of the New Testament, culminating in the ‘Love your enemies’ precept,⁴² early Christians refused to engage in warfare. Just war thinking can be described as an attempt to reconcile divine commands with the theory and practice of Roman law, which permits making war.⁴³ It is sometimes also contrasted with the idea of holy war, yet there are different views on this matter.⁴⁴

One characteristic idea of the just war tradition that clearly comes out in Augustine’s thought is that war should be regarded as an instrument of justice. Apparently based on his understanding of human nature after the Fall, Augustine conceives of war both as a consequence and a remedy for sin.⁴⁵ This seems to suggest that, if violence is inflicted with the right intention,⁴⁶ making war could be interpreted as a benevolent act. As Nigel Biggar sums up this view of Augustine, “just war is waged out of a benevolent concern for the interests of the unjust enemy”.⁴⁷ While this perspective differs from Greco-Roman conceptions, it still seems to accept enmity as a fact of moral life.

trine, rather than the just war *tradition*. However, it seems that a distinctive doctrine on just war was only articulated at the end of the Middle Ages. See James Turner Johnson, *Ideology, Reason and, the Limitations of War: Religious and Secular Concepts, 1200-1740* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 7f. Also see Nicholas Rengger, *Just War and International Order: The Uncivil Condition of World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 71.

⁴² Matt 5:44. For an interesting discussion of how the ‘Love your enemies’ precept compares to the Greco-Roman tradition, see Marius Reiser, “Love of Enemies in the Context of Antiquity”, *New Testament Studies* 47 (2001), pp. 411-427.

⁴³ Frederick H. Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), pp. 16-26.

⁴⁴ For instance, Russell, *The Just War in the Middle*, pp. 29-32, presents the idea of just war as an alternative to justifications of holy war by Carolingian writers in the Early Middle Ages. By contrast, Turner Johnson, *Ideology, Reason and, the Limitations of War*, p. 82, holds that the concept of holy war arose out of the just war tradition in the late medieval and early modern period.

⁴⁵ Russell, *The Just War in the Middle Ages*, pp. 16-18.

⁴⁶ Along with a just cause and legitimate authority, right intent is usually regarded as one of the three necessary conditions of a just war. For a comparative analysis of Augustine’s and Aquinas’ views on right intent, see Joseph Boyle, “The Necessity of ‘Right Intent’ for Justifiably Waging War”, in *Just War: Authority, Tradition, and Practice*, eds. Anthony F. Lang Jr., Cian O’Driscoll, and John Williams (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013), pp. 181-196, 183-189.

⁴⁷ Nigel Biggar, “Natural Flourishing as the Normative Ground of Just War: A Christian View”, in *Just War: Authority, Tradition, and Practice*, eds. Anthony F. Lang Jr., Cian O’Driscoll, and John Williams (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013), pp. 49-61, 58, n. 2.

Despite his reflections on the political function of the fear, it therefore seems that Augustine does not conceive of enmity as something that could be politically transformed or overcome. Rather, it may be said that Augustine is principally interested in moral and theological questions which transcend the realm of temporal existence. In particular, his concern is with the city of God, i.e. a “social ideal [of] rightly ordered love, peace, and justice” that cannot be realised in any earthly city.⁴⁸ Instead of envisioning some sort of political salvation from earthly suffering, as Hobbes later does,⁴⁹ Augustine holds that human beings could ultimately only be redeemed by divine grace.

To conclude, this section has shown that enmity plays an important role in Augustine’s political thought. In particular, it has been argued that his views on human nature after the Fall provide a theoretical foundation for the idea that enemies are a source of moral energy and political cohesion. Despite this, however, Augustine’s reflections on just war suggest that his concern is ultimately with moral and theological questions, rather than with the nature and proper organisation of political community.

2.3 Vitoria and Gentili: hostility, hospitality, and trust

This section looks at ideas on enmity that developed closer to Hobbes’s time. Specifically, it considers aspects of the thought of the late scholastic theologian Francisco Vitoria and the early modern jurist Alberico Gentili, who theorised encounters between European and non-European opponents. It will be shown that, in this context, these

⁴⁸ Weithman, “Augustine’s Political Philosophy”, p. 248.

⁴⁹ See sec. 4.4.

thinkers conceive of enmity as being entirely the result of human agency. Unlike Hobbes, however, they are still indebted to the idea of natural sociability.

To what extent Hobbes was familiar with the thought of Vitoria is not entirely clear. Hobbes undoubtedly knew traditional natural law theory, and he expresses his objections to scholastic philosophy more generally throughout his works. To the author's knowledge however, he never mentions Vitoria by name.⁵⁰ Neither does Hobbes explicitly refer to Gentili in any of his writings. However, the latter was Regius Professor of Civil Law at the University of Oxford while Hobbes was a student there, and Richard Tuck speculates that Hobbes might have attended his lectures.⁵¹ This may or may not be true, yet there is clear evidence that Hobbes was familiar with some ideas that were paradigmatically expressed by Gentili, including the notion of 'just enemies', which is particularly relevant for the purpose of this thesis.⁵² Given that Vitoria and Gentili feature prominently in Schmitt's account of the *jus publicum Europaeum* (the system of law that developed after the Peace of Westphalia), which was mentioned in sec. 1.1, these thinkers further provide a useful point of comparison with Hobbes.⁵³

To begin with, Vitoria may be regarded as a thinker who was, on the one hand, indebted to the Christian just war tradition, and on the other hand, adapted ideas of this tradition in order to come to terms with a changing international political order. For instance, he argues in his lecture *De iure belli* that "except in ignorance" war cannot be just on both

⁵⁰ Yet on a number of occasions he refers to Vitoria's fellow from the School of Salamanca, Francisco Suárez. See *Lev.*, VIII.27, p. 46; *EW* 5, pp. 11, 18, 37, 176, 266; *Behemoth*, p. 17.

⁵¹ Richard Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace: Political Thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 17.

⁵² Cf. sec. 1.1. Hobbes's critical comments on the idea that sovereign states recognise each other as having equal rights and legitimacy will be discussed in sec. 8.2.

⁵³ This is the main reason why this section's focus lies on Vitoria and Gentili, rather than other writers on international law, such as Hugo Grotius. However, Grotius will be mentioned in the footnotes. Claims about Grotius' influence on Hobbes will be briefly addressed in sec. 3.2.

sides.⁵⁴ While Vitoria thus confirms the principle that only one side could have a just cause, he also considers the possibility of doubt. This seems to be of great importance,⁵⁵ for it lets Vitoria emphasise the role of public authority:

I admit that it is never lawful to act against conscientious doubt [...]. But it is incorrect to deduce that if I am in doubt as to whether the cause of war is just, I must therefore doubt whether I may lawfully make war, or fight in that war. In fact, we must deduce just the opposite: if I am in doubt about the justice of war, it follows that it is lawful for me to go to war at the command of my prince.⁵⁶

Vitoria's principal concern arguably remains under what conditions Christians are permitted to go to war, a question that had particular significance in view of the conquest of the New World, yet he invokes juridical terms to settle this issue.⁵⁷ Specifically, he maintains that public authority must ultimately decide the justice of war.

Regarding colonial wars in America, Vitoria further advances the view that "difference of religion cannot be a just cause of war".⁵⁸ Yet he provides an alternative argument to legitimise colonial wars, which reveals his conception of enmity. Vitoria reasons that war would be justified if Native Americans failed to act in accordance with the natural law that stipulates friendship towards all human beings, and specifically if they did not

⁵⁴ Francisco de Vitoria, "On the Law of War" [1539], in *Political Writings*, trans. and eds. Anthony Pagden and Jeremy Lawrance (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), II 4, pp. 312f.

⁵⁵ Cf. Peter Schröder, "Vitoria, Gentili, Bodin: Sovereignty and the Law of Nations", in *The Roman Foundations of the Law of Nations: Alberico Gentili and the Justice of Empire*, eds. Benedict Kingsbury and Benjamin Straumann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 163-186, 168f.

⁵⁶ Vitoria, "On the Law of War", II 3, p. 312.

⁵⁷ For this reason, Vitoria has also been regarded as the founder of modern international law. See James Brown Scott, *The Spanish Origin of International Law: Francisco de Vitoria and his Law of Nations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934). By contrast, other commentators emphasise the distinction between Vitoria's still largely theological perspective and later juridical thought. See, for instance, Murray Forsyth, "The Tradition of International Law", in *Traditions of International Ethics*, eds. Terry Nardin and David R. Mapel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 23-41, 25f; and Schröder, "Vitoria, Gentili, Bodin", pp. 167-169, 177.

⁵⁸ Vitoria, "On the Law of War", I 3, p. 302. This position, which was already expressed by Pope Innocent IV, can be traced back to earlier developments in Thomistic thought. See Brett Bowden, "The Colonial Origins of International Law: European Expansion and the Classical Standard of Civilization", *Journal of the History of International Law* 7 (2005), pp. 1-23, 4-9. Grotius later advanced a similar view, thereby criticising Aristotle's doctrine of natural slavery (which was mentioned in sec. 2.1). See Hugo Grotius, *On the Law of War and Peace*, edited and annotated by Stephen C. Neff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), II.22 12, p. 304.

grant the Spanish a right of hospitality. The latter prescribes, among other things, free travel and free trade.⁵⁹ This argument is certainly problematic as a justification of European colonial endeavours, which are inadequately described in terms of trade and travelling.⁶⁰ However, Vitoria's reasoning shows that he does not conceive of the universal community of mankind in abstract moral terms. Rather, he appears to politicise this notion by drawing a distinction between hostility and hospitality.⁶¹ Consequently, enmity is no longer regarded as natural, but entirely as the result of human agency.

Similarly, it may be said that the jurist Gentili does not only put forward a formal legal doctrine, but also begins to theorise enmity, in more explicitly political terms, as the product of human agency. At the outset of his main work on international law, *De iure belli libri tres*, Gentili notes that previous moral and political philosophers did not provide “an account of the laws which we have in common with our enemies and with foreigners”.⁶² Invoking the Roman legal notion of *hostis* (the enemy), defined as a “foreigner who had equal rights”,⁶³ he sets out to develop such a theory. The laws of war are, thereby, meant to regulate relations between sovereign states which, because of their sovereignty, must necessarily become hostile towards one another.⁶⁴ At the same time, states recognise each other as ‘just enemies’ that have equal rights and legitimacy to make war. Schmitt suggests in his history of modern international law that the latter

⁵⁹ Vitoria, “On the Law of War”, III 1, pp. 278-284.

⁶⁰ Georg Cavallar, *The Rights of Strangers: Theories of International Hospitality, the Global Community, and Political Justice since Vitoria* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 107-112; Pagden, “Stoicism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Legacy of European Imperialism”, pp. 7-9.

⁶¹ Jacques Derrida highlights the close relationship of hospitality and hostility as two possibilities how to treat a stranger, and also suggests in this context that ‘stranger’ or ‘foreigner’ is the original meaning of *hostis* (the Latin word for public enemies). See Derrida, *Of Hospitality*, trans. Rachel Bowlby (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. 45.

⁶² Alberico Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres* [1598], trans. John C. Rolfe (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933), I.I 2, p. 3. Gentili also mentions the insufficient treatment of the subject by Roman lawyers.

⁶³ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.II 18, p. 12.

⁶⁴ Gentili argues that the necessity of war “arises because there cannot be judicial processes between supreme sovereigns or free peoples unless they themselves consent, since they acknowledge no judge or superior”. See Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.III 22, p. 15.

notion marks a turn away from just war thinking, and led to a rationalisation and humanisation of war.⁶⁵ While this appears to be an idealised account,⁶⁶ it is true that Gentili's theory captures the reality of European states engaging in treaties, customs, and regular warfare on the basis of their mutually recognised legal equality.⁶⁷

Yet Gentili is not solely concerned with European wars but also theorises relations towards those who, for some reason, do not qualify as equal opponents. Agreeing with Vitoria on this point, he adopts the natural law idea of universal friendship and denies that Christians and infidels are enemies by nature. Rather, hostility supposedly results from "acts and customs".⁶⁸ The archetypical opposite of the just enemy appears to be the pirate, whom Gentili—drawing on Cicero—describes as a common enemy of mankind.⁶⁹ Gentili insists that such opponents are not subject to the laws of war, and that conflict with them never ended by agreement. Instead, "the pirates have either saved their lives by victory, or have been conquered and compelled to die".⁷⁰

However, the absolute and irrevocable enmity implied by this status is not restricted to robbers of the sea.⁷¹ Gentili also writes that Native Americans "divest themselves of human nature" by breaking fundamental natural laws, such as for instance through their

⁶⁵ In this context, Schmitt particularly highlights the break between Gentili and Vitoria, whose thought supposedly still "belongs to the Christian Middle Ages, rather than to the modern international law among European states". Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth*, pp. 121f.

⁶⁶ See Koskenniemi, "International Law as Political Theology", pp. 493-497; and Schröder, "Schmitt's Appropriation of the Early Modern European Tradition", p. 369.

⁶⁷ Randall Lesaffer, "Alberico Gentili's *ius post bellum* and Early Modern Peace Treaties", in *The Roman Foundations of the Law of Nations: Alberico Gentili and the Justice of Empire*, eds. Benedict Kingsbury and Benjamin Straumann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 210-240, 225f; Schröder, "Schmitt's Appropriation of the Early Modern European Tradition", pp. 365f.

⁶⁸ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.XII 89, p. 55.

⁶⁹ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.XII 89, p. 55. Cf. the brief discussion of Cicero's notion of *communis hostis omnium* (common enemy of all) in sec. 2.1. The distinction between enemies with public authority, on the one hand, and pirates and robbers on the other hand, is also acknowledged by Grotius in *On the Law of War and Peace*, II.17 19, p. 257.

⁷⁰ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.IV 35, p. 22.

⁷¹ Schmitt erroneously suggests in *The Nomos of the Earth*, pp. 64f, that the 'enemy of mankind' concept is theological in origin, and that it was only applied to non-state enemies at sea.

alleged lack of any kind of religion.⁷² Moreover, he conceives of the major non-European power at the time, the Ottoman Empire, in similar terms:

War is not waged on account of religion, and war is not natural either with others or even with the Turks. But we have war with the Turks because they act as our enemies, plot against us, and threaten us. With the greatest treachery they always seize our possessions, whenever they can.⁷³

This association may be related to the piratical activities of the Barbary Corsairs, whose states were nominally vassals of the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁴ Furthermore, Gentili's attitude towards imperialism is generally ambivalent, which is understandable in view of the fact that expansionist empires pose a threat to an international legal order based on the equality of sovereign states.⁷⁵ With regard to the Ottoman Empire, he also points out that "he who injures one, threatens many".⁷⁶ However that may be, Gentili apparently seeks to establish that 'the Turks' should not be treated as just enemies.

The criteria by which Gentili excludes pirates, Native Americans, and Ottomans alike from the laws of war, thereby, are neither overtly religious nor strictly legal, because at least the last-mentioned would surely qualify as a sovereign state.⁷⁷ Rather, as some writers have recently suggested, Gentili seems to exclude particular opponents from the class of just enemies on the ground of them having revealed their fundamental untrust-

⁷² Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.XXV 204, p. 124.

⁷³ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.XII 92, p. 22.

⁷⁴ Walter Rech provides a useful overview of theoretical responses to the 'Barbary issue' in the early modern period. See Rech, *Enemies of Mankind*, ch. 2.

⁷⁵ While Gentili is, for instance, critical of comparisons between Alexander the Great and a pirate, he suggests that the latter may be regarded as a "plunderer of the whole world". See Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.IV 38, p. 24; cf. *De iure belli libri tres*, I I.VII 53, p. 34. In his work *De armis Romanis*, which appeared one year after *De iure belli libri tres*, Gentili presents an indictment and a defence of Roman imperialism in two separate books. See *The Wars of the Romans: A Critical Edition and Translation of De armis Romanis* [1599], eds. Benedict Kingsbury and Benjamin Straumann, trans. David Lupher (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). On Gentili's views on imperialism, cf. Kaius Tuori, "Alberico Gentili and the Criticism of Expansion in the Roman Empire: The Invader's Remorse", *Journal of the History of International Law* 11 (2009), pp. 205-219.

⁷⁶ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.XIV 103, p. 64.

⁷⁷ Jean Bodin, for instance, did not only recognise the status of the Ottoman Empire as a 'well-ordered commonwealth', but also acknowledged the regular legal status of some of the Barbary States on the north coast of Africa. Cf. Rech, *Enemies of Mankind*, pp. 50-54.

worthiness.⁷⁸ This would suggest that enemies either trust each other to the degree that they can limit hostility through customs and agreements, or must face the other in an irreconcilable struggle. In any case, it seems that Gentili does not only put forward a formal doctrine of the laws of war, but also considers different types of hostility as part of his reflections on the nature of political order beyond the sovereign state.

To conclude, late scholastic theologians like Vitoria and early modern jurists such as Gentili reject the view that cultural or religious divides, such as the one between Christians and infidels, imply natural enmity. What is more, it seems that these thinkers no longer conceive the unity of humanity as merely a moral ideal, but begin to theorise how hostile relations materialise despite the precept of universal friendship.

2.4 Hobbes: the political deliverance from natural enmity

This section introduces Hobbes's concept of enmity in relation to previous perspectives on this subject, as outlined in the last sections. Hobbes's break with traditional natural law theory, which—following Aristotle—conceived of human beings as naturally sociable, thereby, seems to be particularly important for situating his ideas. Conceptions of a pre-political condition were, of course, common in the early modern period. Yet it has been noted that only Hobbes abandons the idea of natural sociability and, instead, posits the concept of the state of nature as a war of all against all.⁷⁹ As will be shown in this section, enmity therefore plays a more prominent role in his thought.

⁷⁸ Noel Malcolm, "Alberico Gentili and the Ottomans", in *The Roman Foundations of the Law of Nations: Alberico Gentili and the Justice of Empire*, eds. Benedict Kingsbury and Benjamin Straumann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 127-145, 143; Schröder, "Schmitt's Appropriation of the Early Modern European Tradition", pp. 367-369.

⁷⁹ On this point, see esp. Bobbio, *Thomas Hobbes and the Natural Law Tradition*, pp. 1-8; and Zagorin, *Hobbes and the Law of Nature*, pp. 36-38.

All of Hobbes's main political works contain versions of the so-called bees-and-ants argument, which is an attempt to refute Aristotle's view that, along with these creatures, man can be considered a political animal.⁸⁰ In *De Cive*, Hobbes also criticises that previous natural law theorists take this notion as their point of departure:

The majority of previous writers on public Affairs either assume or seek to prove or simply assert that Man is an animal born fit for Society,—in the Greek phrase, Ζῶον πολιτικὸν [political animal]. On this foundation they erect a structure of civil doctrine, as if no more were necessary for the preservation of peace and the governance of the whole human race than for men to give their consent to certain agreements and conditions which, without further thought, these writers call laws.⁸¹

In this passage, Hobbes does not only identify the notion of natural sociability as the target of his critique. He also objects that previous writers mistake prescriptions derived from this idea for a system of 'laws'. As is well known, Hobbes denies that the laws of nature could effectively regulate human interaction outside the civil state.⁸² For this reason, his version of the natural law dictates, first of all, to abandon the liberty of the state of nature and constitute an absolute and undivided sovereign power.⁸³

Hobbes's account of the natural condition has reminded some interpreters of the Greek notion of *stasis*, particularly the *stasis* in Corcyra as described by Thucydides.⁸⁴ Moreover, interpreters have associated Hobbes's political thought with Augustine's views on human nature after the Fall.⁸⁵ While it is true that Hobbes portrays human beings in negative terms and thinks of civil war as a return to the state of nature however, he also conceives of the latter—which is often considered a thought experiment—as the (fic-

⁸⁰ *EL*, XIX.5, pp. 105f; *De Cive*, V.5, pp. 71f; *Lev.*, XVII.6-12, pp. 108f.

⁸¹ *De Cive*, I.2, p. 22 (capitalisation in the original).

⁸² While this appears to be the standard view, some writers also suggest that the natural laws considerably modify the state of nature. See, for instance, Murray Forsyth, "Thomas Hobbes and the External Relations of States", *British Journal of International Studies* 5 (1979), pp. 196-209.

⁸³ *EL*, XV.2, p. 82; *De Cive*, II.3, p. 34; *Lev.*, XIV.5, pp. 80f.

⁸⁴ See, for example, Orwin, "Stasis and Plague", pp. 839f; and Richard Schlatter, "Hobbes and Thucydides", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 6 (1945), pp. 350-362.

⁸⁵ Cf. sec. 2.2. Parallels between Hobbes and Augustine will be further examined in sec. 4.4.

tive) origin of a rationally constructed, artificial political order, which allows us to avoid the war of all against all. Hence, Hobbes does not primarily regard enmity in the domestic realm as evidence of moral decline, as did Greek accounts of *stasis*.⁸⁶ Nor does he share Augustine's conception of war as a remedy for sin.⁸⁷ Rather, hostility for Hobbes is part of a natural predicament that calls for a political deliverance.⁸⁸

It follows from what has been said that enmity can be regarded as a central category of Hobbes's political philosophy. What the latter entails, however, is a matter of debate, given Hobbes's scientific ambitions and aim to build a system of thought that incorporates natural, moral, and political philosophy. For a long time, readers of Hobbes have taken for granted that he, indeed, derives morality and politics from his mechanistic psychology. This 'received view' is aptly summarised by Robert Shaver:

We are self-interested, valuing our self-preservation above everything else. This leads us, in the state of nature, to a war of all against all, in which there is no right or wrong. Moral philosophy is no different than prudence; it tells us how to avoid that war. The laws of nature are justified because following them lets us preserve ourselves. They could have no other justification, for all value is subjective, stemming from our interests, and reason is purely instrumental. Neither value from some other source nor the pronouncements of other beings, such as God, are relevant. All obligation is self-imposed. The most important law of nature tells us to establish a sovereign, to keep peace between us. For the sovereign to succeed in this task, and because the sovereign represents each of us, the sovereign must be absolute. It does not follow, however, that we have no right to defend ourselves against the sovereign; this right is inalienable.⁸⁹

To this characterisation one may add Hobbes's description of international relations as a condition of anarchy that replicates the state of nature, thus excluding moral considerations from the conduct of commonwealths towards one another.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Cf. sec. 2.1. As Gabriella Slomp, *Thomas Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, pp. 56f, points out, there is also a difference between Hobbes and Thucydides. While the latter regards *stasis* as a matter of fate, Hobbes holds that civil war can be avoided through political philosophy.

⁸⁷ Cf. sec. 2.2.

⁸⁸ The terms 'predicament' and 'deliverance' are borrowed from Michael Oakeshott, who uses them to describe the argument of *Leviathan*. See Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, pp. 5f.

⁸⁹ Robert Shaver, "Introduction", in *Hobbes* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1999), pp. xi-xvi, xi.

⁹⁰ For a cogent summary of this reception of Hobbes in IR, see Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, pp. 433-435.

However, interpreters such as Leo Strauss, A.E. Taylor, and Howard Warrender have argued that natural science is not the basis of Hobbes's political philosophy. Instead, they suggest that there is a moral dimension in Hobbes's thought that cannot be reduced to prudence and self-interest.⁹¹ Taylor advances the view that Hobbes's ethical doctrine is logically independent from his views on human nature, rather constituting "a very strict deontology".⁹² Building on this argument, Warrender develops an interpretation according to which the natural laws oblige Hobbesian individuals on the ground of them being commanded by God.⁹³ It is true that Hobbes uses religious parallels and analogies to show that the laws of nature can also be confirmed in Scripture. Yet the claim that divine command is the ground of obligation is widely rejected today.⁹⁴

Michael Oakeshott takes a distinctive and different position, arguing that it is not the content but the form of reasoning that gives unity to Hobbes's philosophy. On this view, Hobbes is systematic because he applies the method of rational enquiry to otherwise autonomous subjects.⁹⁵ Other interpreters, such as Richard Peters, John Watkins, and Thomas Spragens, have gone further than Oakeshott and claim that, while the unity of the system is surely not a matter of simple deductive derivation, there is considerable interaction between Hobbes's mechanistic principles and his political ideas.⁹⁶ In effect, both approaches draw out similar themes. For instance, Oakeshott suggests that

⁹¹ Leo Strauss, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: Its Basis and Its Genesis*, trans. Elisa M. Sinclair (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936); A.E. Taylor, "The Ethical Doctrine of Hobbes", *Philosophy* 13 (1938), pp. 406-24; Howard Warrender, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: His Theory of Obligation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957).

⁹² Taylor, "The Ethical Doctrine of Hobbes", p. 408.

⁹³ Warrender, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes*, pp. 97-100. This interpretation has often been referred to as the 'Taylor-Warrender thesis' (or 'Warrender-Taylor thesis').

⁹⁴ For a partial exception, see A.P. Martinich, *The Two Gods of Leviathan: Thomas Hobbes on Religion and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), ch. 4, who argues that divine command is necessary but not sufficient for Hobbes's doctrine of the laws of nature.

⁹⁵ Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, pp. 25-28.

⁹⁶ Richard Peters, *Hobbes* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1956); Spragens, *The Politics of Motion*; J.W.N. Watkins, *Hobbes's System of Ideas: A Study in the Political Significance of Philosophical Ideas* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1965).

Hobbes's scepticism led him consider will and artifice, rather than natural reason, as the sources of political order.⁹⁷ Spragens emphasises that Hobbes does no longer conceive of political community as part of the universe's natural order since he substituted a theory of inertial motion for Aristotle's theory of finite, goal-directed motion.⁹⁸

Following the above-mentioned contributions, interpreters have largely lost interest in the question of the unity of Hobbes's system of thought.⁹⁹ Thus, it has been noted that Hobbesian scholarship became increasingly fragmented in the second half of the twentieth century.¹⁰⁰ Instead of advancing grand interpretations of Hobbes's system, scholars turned to his political and moral philosophy in a narrower sense, a trend that has been associated with the game-theoretical approach that took off in the 1960s and mainly focussed on the state of nature and the social contract.¹⁰¹ However, there may have been several reasons for the increasing fragmentation of studies, including the historical contextualist approach with its emphasis on the rhetoric rather than the logic of his writings, the feminist study of Hobbes in the 1980s, and Hobbes's appropriation in International Relations.¹⁰² In addition to these aspects, Hobbes's theory of law and his ideas on religion have received considerable scholarly attention in recent years.¹⁰³

⁹⁷ Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, pp. 7, 56-58.

⁹⁸ Spragens, *The Politics of Motion*, pp. 97-108.

⁹⁹ For a notable exception, see Samantha Frost, *Lessons from a Materialist Thinker: Hobbesian Reflections on Ethics and Politics* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008). Also see the brief treatments in Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, pp. 146-155; and Sorell, *Hobbes*, pp. 24-26.

¹⁰⁰ For a discussion of claims about the fragmentation of Hobbes scholarship, see Gabriella Slomp, "Introduction", in *Thomas Hobbes* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008), pp. xi-xxvii.

¹⁰¹ Seminal game-theoretical interpretations include David P. Gauthier, *The Logic of Leviathan: The Moral and Political Theory of Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969); Jean Hampton, *Hobbes and the Social Contract Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Gregory S. Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986).

¹⁰² Cf. Slomp, "Introduction", pp. xvii-xx. None of these approaches necessarily excludes a more holistic approach. David Johnston, *The Rhetoric of Leviathan: Thomas Hobbes and the Politics of Cultural Transformation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986) interprets Hobbes's natural philosophy in view of the persuasive aims of *Leviathan*. Implications of Hobbes's idea of motion for his theory of international relations are discussed in Slomp, "The Politics of Motion", pp. 19-41.

¹⁰³ Publications that reflect the increasing interest in fragments of Hobbes's thought include *Hobbes on Law*, ed. Claire Finkelstein (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2005); *Thomas Hobbes*, ed. Gabriella Slomp

Hobbes's distinctive natural law doctrine also continues to be an important concern of scholarship. In contrast to the earlier debate on the 'Warrender-Taylor thesis' however, this issue is no longer the site of a clash between grand interpretations. Many commentators now take the more pragmatic view that the laws of nature are neither reducible to prudential maxims nor entirely independent of Hobbes's psychological assumptions. Rather, it is often argued, Hobbes invokes prudence and self-interest in order to provide a foundation for traditional moral values such as peaceableness, equity, fidelity, reciprocity, and the recognition of others as equals.¹⁰⁴ Deborah Baumgold defends this position with regard to Hobbesian sovereigns, who are subject to the laws of nature and, therefore, have supposedly both "moral and prudential reasons for governing well".¹⁰⁵ Nonetheless, it needs to be said that the received view, according to which there is no sense of morality in Hobbes's political thought, is still widely held.¹⁰⁶

Some interpreters have also argued that Hobbes should be regarded as a virtue ethicist. For instance, Tom Sorell points out, in this vein, that Hobbes appears to view "moral virtues as dispositions latent in the human make-up, which it takes reasoning about war to disclose and activate".¹⁰⁷ Hobbes's conception of the good, thereby, remains a matter of debate, and proponents of this interpretation differ as to whether his endorsement of

(Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008); *Hobbes and the Law*, eds. David Dyzenhaus and Thomas Poole (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); *Hobbes Today: Insights for the 21st Century*, ed. S.A. Lloyd (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Also see Larry May's *Limiting Leviathan: Hobbes on Law and International Affairs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

¹⁰⁴ For interpretations that adhere to this view, see Sorell, *Hobbes*, pp. 105-108; May, *Limiting Leviathan*, pp. 38-47; and Zagorin, *Hobbes and the Law of Nature*, pp. 47-49. Studies that develop, or allude to, such a position with regard to particular laws of nature include Baumgold, "'Trust' in Hobbes's Political Thought", pp. 1-18; Hoekstra, "Hobbesian Equality", pp. 99-103; and Larry May, "Hobbes on Fidelity to Law", *Hobbes Studies* 5 (1992), pp. 77-89.

¹⁰⁵ Baumgold, *Hobbes's Political Theory*, p. 104.

¹⁰⁶ For a recent defence of this position, see Gary B. Herbert, "The Non-normative Nature of Hobbesian Natural Law", *Hobbes Studies* 22 (2009), pp. 3-28.

¹⁰⁷ Sorell, *Hobbes*, p. 108. Also see David Boonin-Vail, *Thomas Hobbes and the Science of Moral Virtue* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Richard E. Flathman, *Thomas Hobbes: Skepticism, Individuality, and Chastened Politics*, new edition (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), p. 82; and Bernard Gert, *Hobbes: Prince of Peace* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010), pp. 68-76.

moral virtues is merely instrumental for securing peace, or the subject matter of a strictly separate moral philosophy. However, this insistence on a sharp distinction between the domains of ethics and politics may tell us less about Hobbes's views than about the departmentalisation of academic studies today. After all, a number of statements in Hobbes's works indicate that he considers the study of rights and duties to be part of 'civil philosophy', as opposed to ethics (or moral philosophy).¹⁰⁸

The subject of this thesis may be regarded as yet another fragment of Hobbes's thought. However, as has been suggested above, enmity is certainly a central category of his political philosophy that is intimately connected to a plethora of other aspects. As part of his account of the natural condition, Hobbes addresses the role of the passions, the instrumental rationality of violence, and the evil of violent death. The concept of enmity also invokes ethical questions, as exemplified by the 'Love your enemies' precept, and possibly relates to religious conceptions of evil. What is more, hostility is often assumed to imply a certain legal status and the applicability of the right of war, which could be of relevance for Hobbes's views on rebellion and international relations.

In view of these possible connections between enmity and other aspects of Hobbes's thought, it seems fruitful to adopt a more holistic approach to his political philosophy. While this thesis does not aim at a systematic exposition of Hobbes's system, a focus on the enemy concept could provide an opportunity to reconnect some of the fragments of his thought that are increasingly being treated as disparate subjects.

¹⁰⁸ For instance, Hobbes points out in *De Corp.*, I.9, p. 11, that "civil philosophy is [...] commonly divided into two parts, whereof one, which treats men's dispositions and manners, is called *ethics*; and the other, which takes cognizance of their civil duties, is called *politics*, or simply *civil philosophy*". Cf. Richard Tuck, "Hobbes's Moral Philosophy", in *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes*, ed. Tom Soerell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 175-207, 179f.

2.5 Conclusion

Although philosophers have long considered aspects of enmity, Hobbes seems to be among the first to make the latter a central subject of political philosophy. It has been suggested in this chapter that this is due to his departure from traditional natural law theory. Instead of adopting the position that people are naturally sociable, Hobbes posits a state of nature in which everyone is at war with everybody else. On this basis, he argues for the need of an absolute and undivided sovereign power to deliver people from their natural predicament. Hence, enmity clearly plays an important role in Hobbes's reflection on the nature and proper organisation of political community.

It has been suggested that previous theorists do not yet make enmity a central subject of political philosophy. Ancient Greek and Roman thinkers, for instance, often understand enmity in terms of the seemingly natural distinction between civilisation and barbarians. Augustine clearly discerns the function of the fear of enemies as a source of moral energy and political cohesion, yet he does not conceive of hostility as something that could be politically transformed or transcended. Closer to Hobbes's time, late scholastic theologians such as Vitoria and early modern jurists like Gentili consider enmity as entirely the result of human agency, and begin to theorise it in more political categories such as (dis)trust and (in)hospitality. However, these thinkers are primarily concerned with relations towards particular opponents, including pirates and native inhabitants of the New World, and still retain the traditional notion of natural sociability.

Undoubtedly, this chapter's treatment of different conceptions of enmity has been cursory and selective. Yet it seems that the themes and intellectual developments that have been discussed help to bring out the significance of Hobbes's views on this subject.

Moreover, it has become apparent that enmity is a fundamental category that relates to many other aspects of Hobbes's thought. Based on these preliminary suggestions regarding different conceptions of enmity, the next chapter will further examine Hobbes's views on hostility in the natural condition. It will be argued that he substitutes a concept of natural enmity for the traditional notion of natural sociability.

3. The concept of natural enmity

This chapter examines Hobbes's views on enmity among human beings in the natural condition. The first section analyses how hostility relates to human competitiveness. It is shown that Hobbes regards people neither as 'asocial', nor as naturally fit for society, but as competitive creatures that need one another in order to satisfy many of their desires. In addition, he holds that competitiveness provokes hostility in the state of nature. The second section looks at the relationship between enmity and Hobbes's conception of the right of nature. It is shown that the latter permits the pre-emptive use of force against those who are considered enemies, i.e. anyone who is believed to pose a threat to one's own self-preservation, regardless of whether or not they have already revealed their hostility. On this basis, the third section seeks to further clarify the nexus of enmity and violent death. It is suggested that Hobbes does not hold the unrealistic view that death is under all circumstances regarded as the greatest natural evil. Rather, he posits death-aversion insofar as all people would, under certain conditions, inflict death upon others in order to avoid it for themselves. According to Hobbes, the willingness to use force for this and other purposes also defines the state of hostility.

3.1 Enmity and human competitiveness

Prior to examining Hobbes's views on natural enmity and human competitiveness, it may be fruitful to briefly consider the conventional distinction between public and private enemies. The eighteenth-century jurist and philosopher Emer de Vattel provides a paradigmatic statement of this distinction:

The enemy is he with whom a nation is at open war. The Latins had a particular term (*Hostis*) to denote a public enemy, and distinguished him from a private enemy (*Inimicus*). Our language affords but one word for these two classes of persons, who ought

nevertheless to be carefully distinguished. A private enemy is one who seeks to hurt us, and takes pleasure in the evil that befalls us. A public enemy forms claims against us, or rejects ours, and maintains his real or pretended rights by force of arms. The former is never innocent; he fosters rancour and hatred in his heart. It is possible that the public enemy may be free from such odious sentiments, that he does not wish us ill, and only seeks to maintain his rights.¹

Endorsing this view, Carl Schmitt insists in *The Concept of the Political* that “[t]he enemy is solely the public enemy”.² Like Vattel, Schmitt strictly distinguishes the public contest between organised collectives, which does not necessarily require personal hatred, from enmity as “a psychological expression of private emotions”.³

In accordance with this distinction, Schmitt rejects a literal reading of Hobbes’s claim that the state of nature is a war of all against all. Rather, he suggests that the notion *bellum omnium contra omnes* (the war of all against all) has a similar status as the phrase *homo homini lupus* (man is a wolf to man),⁴ i.e. it merely testifies to the dangerous and ‘asocial’ nature of human beings.⁵ Yet other commentators reject this view and argue that Hobbesian individuals actually seek the company of others. Michael Oakeshott, who was among the first to emphasise this theme, aptly captures this idea when he states that people “are enemies but they also need one another”.⁶ As he further points out, the felicity of Hobbesian individuals consists of comparative goods, such as honour, that depend on others’ recognition, therefore people are competitive.⁷

¹ Emer de Vattel, *The Law of Nations, Or, Principles of the Law of Nature, Applied to the Conduct and Affairs of Nations and Sovereigns, with Three Early Essays on the Origin and Nature of Natural Law and on Luxury* [1758], eds. Béla Kapossy and Richard Whatmore (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 2008), p. 509.

² Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, p. 28.

³ Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, p. 28.

⁴ This is implied in the brief discussion of the state of nature in Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Hobbes*, p. 31.

⁵ Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes*, p. 36.

⁶ Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, p. 36.

⁷ Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, pp. 35f.

Hobbes puts particular emphasis on glory, which he defines in *The Elements of Law* as “that passion which proceedeth from the imagination or conception of our own power, above the power of him that contendeth with us”.⁸ In his well-known analogy between life and a race, he likens glory to considering others behind, and describes felicity as continually outdoing other people.⁹ Similarly, Hobbes states in *De Cive* that glorying “consists in comparison and preeminence”.¹⁰ In addition, he claims that “all the heart's joy and pleasure lies in being able to compare oneself favourably with others and form a high opinion of oneself”.¹¹ In the *Anti-White*, he also expresses that “the mind's delight, is nothing but a kind of triumph of the mind, or an internal pride, or boasting about its own potential and excellence in comparison with another”.¹² All of these passages suggest that glory is the main driver of human competitiveness.

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes defines glory as a joy arising from the imagination of one's own power, and therefore leaves open the possibility that people may have feelings of triumph solely based on contemplation of their own actions.¹³ In general, *Leviathan* puts greater emphasis on the desire for *power*, which Hobbes defines as present means to obtain future goods.¹⁴ Thus, power does not relate to any specific passion. However, even if Hobbes no longer refers to glory as the source of all desire,¹⁵ he continues to attribute an important role to this passion in *Leviathan*. At least, this is suggested by a

⁸ *EL*, IX.1, p. 50.

⁹ *EL*, IX.21, pp. 59f.

¹⁰ *De Cive*, I.2, p. 24.

¹¹ *De Cive*, I.5, p. 26.

¹² *Anti-White*, XXXVIII.7, p. 466.

¹³ *Lev.*, VI.39, p. 31. McNeilly suggests that Hobbes's view on glory in *Leviathan* differs from the earlier works, and specifically that glory is no longer relational concept. See F.S. McNeilly, *The Anatomy of Leviathan* (London: Macmillan, 1968), ch. 6. For a convincing argument against this view, see Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, pp. 5, 34.

¹⁴ *Lev.*, X.1, p. 50. Hobbes also states in *Lev.*, XI.2, that there is in all people “a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death”.

¹⁵ Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, p. 91, finds that, in *Leviathan*, “glory is no longer the *genus*, or ultimate source of all passions and desires, but becomes a *species*, or an instance of human passions”.

number of statements that recall passages from earlier writings. For instance, Hobbes states in the bees-and-ants argument in this work that “man, whose joy consisteth in comparing himself with other men, can relish nothing but what is eminent”.¹⁶

Despite this, however, many commentators largely ignore, or play down, the importance of glory. It has often been suggested that Hobbesian people primarily seek power and recognition in economic terms. According to C.B. Macpherson, the evolving ‘market society’ of seventeenth century England shaped Hobbes’s views on human nature.¹⁷ David Gauthier expresses the widely held position that “Hobbes offers the most unified and compelling psychological portrayal of economic man”.¹⁸ In accordance with this view, Gauthier also holds that competition in the state of nature arises because material resources are scarce in this condition.¹⁹ Moreover, he argues that people only seek the glory of conquest since this is conducive to their rational self-interest.²⁰

However, these claims appear to be mistaken. As Gabriella Slomp points out, conflict among human beings could never be transcended if resources were really insufficient for the survival of an entire population.²¹ In other words, the commonwealth would be unable to bring about civil peace if this was the case. What is more, Hobbesian people seem to desire glory and honour for its own sake, rather than because it is conducive to

¹⁶ *Lev.*, XVII.8, p. 108.

¹⁷ C.B. Macpherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 104-106.

¹⁸ David P. Gauthier, *Morals by Agreement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 319.

¹⁹ Gauthier, *The Logic of Leviathan*, p. 18. Other interpreters who highlight the role of scarcity in the state of nature include Bobbio, *Hobbes and the Natural Law Tradition*, p. 39; Hampton, *Hobbes and the Social Contract Tradition*, pp. 59f; Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, p. 33; McNeilly, *The Anatomy of Leviathan*, p. 143; Sorell, *Hobbes*, pp. 32, 36.

²⁰ Gauthier, *The Logic of Leviathan*, p. 19.

²¹ Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, pp. 70f. Also see Tuck, “Hobbes’s Moral Philosophy”, p. 185. Indeed, Hobbes states in *Lev.*, XXX.19, p. 229, that “when all the world is overcharged with inhabitants, then the last remedy of all is war”.

their benefit or security.²² Much to the contrary, some statements suggest that the accumulation of riches is subordinate to the desire for honour.²³ In *The Elements of Law*, Hobbes argues that “riches are honourable; as signs of the power that acquired them”.²⁴ Similarly, he expresses in *De Cive* that somebody’s enjoyment of being honoured “lies in his contemplation of his own virtue, force, knowledge, beauty, friends, wealth or any other power which he has or regards as his own”.²⁵ In *Leviathan*, Hobbes also points out that people who are “displeased with one another’s attaining of [wealth]” condemn the desire for the latter as covetousness.²⁶ This seems to imply that people seek goods because they envy others, rather than merely out of self-interest.²⁷

Hobbes’s historical illustrations of the state of nature help to further clarify the relationship between honour and gain. Klosko and Rice show that *Leviathan’s* account of the natural condition resembles the description of the life of the earliest inhabitants of Greece in the *History of the Grecian War*.²⁸ The passage in *Leviathan* on which they base their claim, thereby, indicates a constant threat of pillaging:

In such condition there is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain, and consequently, no culture of the earth, no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea, no commodious building, no instruments of moving and removing such things as require much force, no knowledge of the face of the earth, no account of time, no arts, no letters, no society [...].²⁹

In the same chapter, Hobbes also argues that “others may probably be expected to come prepared with forces united, to dispossess and deprive [somebody], not only of the fruit

²² Shaver, “Leviathan, King of the Proud”, p. 55.

²³ Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, pp. 54f.

²⁴ *EL*, VIII.5, p. 49.

²⁵ *De Cive*, XV.13, p. 177.

²⁶ *Lev.*, VI.23, p. 30.

²⁷ Elsewhere in *Leviathan*, Hobbes clearly associates envy with a desire for pre-eminence over one’s rivals, and contrasts envy with self-interest. See sec. 6.3.

²⁸ George Klosko and Daryl Rice, “Thucydides and Hobbes’s State of Nature”, *History of Political Thought* 6 (1985), pp. 405-409.

²⁹ *Lev.*, XIII.9, p. 76. For the parallel passage in Thucydides, cf. *EW* 8, p. 2.

of his labour, but also of his life or liberty”.³⁰ Similarly, he reasons in *De Cive* that, outside the commonwealth, “anyone may be killed and robbed by anyone”.³¹

Yet Hobbes does not simply hold that people in the past used force to deprive others of their possessions, but also states that pillaging was regarded as a source of honour. Thus, he points out in *De Cive* that ancient nations who lived in a state of nature practiced piracy or raiding as a gainful activity, which was “considered just and honourable”.³² In *Leviathan*, Hobbes states that “till there were constituted great commonwealths, it was thought no dishonour to be a pirate or a highway thief, but rather a lawful trade”.³³ As for the time of the old Germanic people, he even suggests that “nothing [was then] in honour but virtue military”.³⁴ This, again, recalls passages from Thucydides’ *History of the Grecian War*. For instance, we read in Hobbes’s translation of this work that the earliest inhabitants of Greece “[fell] upon towns unfortified and scatteringly inhabited, rifled them, and made this the best means of their living”.³⁵ Instead of being merely a source of gain however, such pillaging was “a matter at that time nowhere in disgrace, but rather carrying with it something of glory”.³⁶

It is true that Hobbes suggests in a number of passages that wealth and honour are separate desires that are related to different passions. Thus, he argues in *The Elements of Law* that “men aim at dominion, superiority, and private wealth”.³⁷ In *Leviathan’s* account of the natural condition, Hobbes states that “in the nature of man we find three

³⁰ *Lev.*, XIII.3, p. 75.

³¹ *De Cive*, X.1, p. 116.

³² *De Cive*, XIII.14, p. 150. In this context, Hobbes also considers the possibility that the desire for honour limits hostility, and inspires some restraint. See sec. 8.3

³³ *Lev.*, X.49, p. 54.

³⁴ *Lev.*, X.51, p. 56. In *EL*, XIV.12, p. 80, Hobbes refers to the old Germanic people as evidence of a state of nature. For a more extensive discussion, also see *Dialogue*, pp. 139f.

³⁵ *EW* 8, pp. 5f.

³⁶ *EW* 8, pp. 5f.

³⁷ *EL*, XIX.5, p. 105.

principal causes of quarrel: first, competition; secondly, diffidence; thirdly, glory”.³⁸ As he further specifies, “[t]he first maketh men invade for gain; the second, for safety; and the third, for reputation.”³⁹ This seems to suggest that the three causes relate to separate passions, and that ‘glory’ is distinct from ‘competition’ for wealth.

Yet, elsewhere in *Leviathan*, Hobbes uses the term ‘competition’ in a more encompassing sense. In the chapter on the passions, he states that people may be “competitor[s] in wealth, honour, or other good[s]”.⁴⁰ Similarly, he expresses in another passage that “[c]ompetition of riches, honour, command, or other power, inclineth to contention, enmity, and war”.⁴¹ In the bees-and-ants argument in *Leviathan*, he also points out that “men are continually in competition for honour and dignity”.⁴² The picture emerging from these statements is that Hobbes does not seek to reduce competition to a matter of economic gain. Rather, his principal concern is to establish the fact of human competitiveness, and he appears to be relatively indifferent towards the specific passions that fuel rivalry and the distinction of kinds of goods for which people compete.

According to this reading, competitiveness is part of the human makeup, rather than being due to external circumstances. The goods that people primarily compete for, i.e. glory and honour, are not only scarce in the state of nature, but are *intrinsically* scarce, because the superiority of some presupposes the inferiority of others.⁴³ Therefore, it also

³⁸ *Lev.*, XIII.6, p. 76.

³⁹ *Lev.*, XIII.7, p. 76.

⁴⁰ *Lev.*, VI.48, p. 32.

⁴¹ *Lev.*, XI.11, p. 58.

⁴² *Lev.*, XVII.7, p. 108.

⁴³ Cf. Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, p. 35; Shaver, “Leviathan, King of the Proud”, p. 59; Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, pp. 111, 162.

seems that human beings will compete with one another at all times, even though rivalry no longer necessarily provokes hostility in the civil state.⁴⁴

Understood thus, competitiveness is a fundamental aspect of the concept of natural enmity, which Hobbes appears to substitute for the traditional notion of natural sociability. Hobbes's statements on the idea of natural sociability in *The Elements of Law* are still somewhat ambiguous.⁴⁵ A more developed account of his critique of this notion, which was probably occasioned by objections to the first version of his political philosophy, can be found in *De Cive*. Before Hobbes even introduces his concept of the state of nature in the first chapter of this work, he seeks to establish that people do not gather out of love of society, but in pursuit of their own benefit or glory:

Men's purpose in seeking each other's company may be inferred from what they do once they meet. If they meet to do business, everyone is looking for profit not for friendship. If the reason is public affairs, a kind of political relationship develops, which holds more mutual fear than love; it is sometimes the occasion of faction, but never of goodwill. If they meet for entertainment and fun, everyone usually takes most pleasure in the kind of amusing incident from which [...] he may come away with a better idea of himself in comparison with someone else's embarrassment or weakness. [Therefore it is] evident that what they primarily enjoy is their own glory and not society.⁴⁶

While Hobbes does not deny that human beings seek each other's company,⁴⁷ he finds that they, thereby, only pursue their own glory or advantage. On this basis, he concludes that, instead of providing mutual help and protection, people would naturally endeavour to dominate one another.⁴⁸ Thus, competitiveness is crucial for Hobbes's critique of the notion of natural sociability, for it offers an explanation for why people come together even though they are supposed to be naturally unfit for society. What makes this expla-

⁴⁴ For a discussion of Hobbes's views on competitiveness in the civil state, see ch. 6.

⁴⁵ Hobbes rejects the notion that man is a political animal as part of the bees-and-ants argument in this work. However, he also refers to the "pleasure [people] take in one another's company; and by which men are said to be sociable by nature". See *EL*, IX.16, p. 56; *EL*, XIX.5, p. 105.

⁴⁶ *De Cive*, I.2, p. 22.

⁴⁷ As Hobbes further states in a note attached to this passage, "infants need the help of others to live, and adults to live well". See *De Cive*, I.2, n., p. 24.

⁴⁸ *De Cive*, I.2, p. 24.

nation attractive is that it could be applied to all spheres of public life. Indeed, Hobbes suggests that even philosophers “not only [...] fail, like ordinary men, to love their colleagues, [but] actively pursue their resentments against them”.⁴⁹

To conclude, this section has shown that Hobbesian people are not ‘asocial’, as it is often supposed, but competitive creatures that need one another to satisfy many of their desires. While the desire for pre-eminence appears to be a permanent feature of human nature however, competitiveness only necessarily develops into hostility in the state of nature. The next section will further show how this relates to the concept of natural right, which permits the use of force against anyone who poses a threat.

3.2 Enmity and the natural right to all things

As mentioned in the last section, Hobbes’s account of the state of nature as a war of all against all has sometimes been interpreted figuratively. Carl Schmitt, for example, reads it merely as a statement about human psychology.⁵⁰ This appears to reflect the conventional view that public enmity, which is a matter of right, is absolutely distinct from private enmity, which is a matter of emotions. However, there are reasons to believe that Hobbes himself takes the possibility of war between individuals more seriously, at least for the purpose of spelling out the absurdity of the state of nature.⁵¹

Critics of Schmitt have argued that Hobbes does not simply portray human beings as dangerous and wolflike, but attributes to them a right to use force against one another.

As Leo Strauss points out, “the fundamental political fact [for Hobbes] was natural right

⁴⁹ *De Cive*, I.2, p. 23.

⁵⁰ Cf. sec. 3.1.

⁵¹ Cf. Holmes, “Does Hobbes Have a Concept of the Enemy?”, pp. 386f.

as the justified *claim* of the individual, and Hobbes conceived of obligation as a *subsequent* restriction upon that claim”.⁵² This finds support in Hobbes’s statement in *Leviathan* that “desires and other passions of man are in themselves no sin. No more are the actions that proceed from those passions, till [people] know a law that forbids them”.⁵³ Thus, we cannot be blamed for trying to preserve ourselves.

The importance of Hobbes’s concept of natural right, which permits actions contrary to the prescriptions of the natural law, is widely acknowledged today. Hobbes maintains that the laws of nature still bind in conscience.⁵⁴ However, it seems that these precepts cannot effectively regulate human behaviour in the state of nature. After all, the first natural law that Hobbes posits prescribes that everyone should renounce his or her right of nature in order to constitute an absolute sovereign power.⁵⁵ What is more, Hobbes suggests in *Leviathan* that, before the constitution of the commonwealth, “the notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice, have there [in the state of nature] no place”.⁵⁶ This may be understood in the sense that the laws of nature cannot be applied to human interaction as long as everyone retains a natural right to all things.

Hobbes’s concept of natural right has also been subject to revisionist interpretations. Richard Tuck argues that, like Hugo Grotius, Hobbes intended to develop a moral science based on the commonly agreeable right of self-preservation. In advancing this view, Tuck effectively conceives of the state of nature as a moral condition in which

⁵² Strauss, “Notes on Carl Schmitt”, pp. 114f (emphasis in the original).

⁵³ *Lev.*, XIII.10, p. 77.

⁵⁴ Bobbio, *Hobbes and the Natural Law Tradition*, pp. 154f; Martin Harvey, “Grotius and Hobbes”, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 14 (2006), pp. 27-50, 41-44; May, *Limiting Leviathan*, pp. 35f; Sorell, *Hobbes*, pp. 111f; Zagorin, *Hobbes and the Law of Nature*, pp. 26-28.

⁵⁵ See *EL*, XV.2, p. 82; *De Cive*, II.3, p. 34; *Lev.*, XIV.5, pp. 80f. For further consideration of Hobbes’s views on the renouncement of natural right, see sec. 5.3.

⁵⁶ *Lev.*, XIII.13, p. 78.

conflicts arise due to disagreement on the application of right. Thus, he also suggests that Hobbes attributes ‘minimal sociability’ to people in this condition.⁵⁷ As critics of this interpretation have pointed out, however, Tuck seems to misconstrue Hobbes’s characteristic departure from traditional natural law theory with its emphasis on natural sociability.⁵⁸ What is more, it is important to note that, according to Hobbes, the right of nature does not have to be recognised by others. Thus, Hobbes also points out in *The Elements of Law* that people in the state of nature are permitted to kill animals on the same grounds as they can use force against fellow human beings.⁵⁹

Hobbes describes the natural right both as a right to all things and, more specifically, as a right to kill.⁶⁰ Thus, he expresses in *The Elements of Law* and *De Cive* that people in the state of nature have a right to attack and resist one another.⁶¹ In the latter work, Hobbes, moreover, identifies the right to all things (*jus in omnia*) with the right of war (*jus belli*).⁶² Elsewhere in *De Cive*, he argues that inflicting death is the ‘greatest thing’ that people can do to each other,⁶³ which may explain why he describes the natural right both as a right to kill and a right to all things. Indeed, Hobbes also states in *Leviathan* that everyone in the state of nature “has a right to everything, even to one another’s body”.⁶⁴ In view of these passages, it seems plausible that Hobbes conceives of the natural right as a right to *all things* in the sense of *each and every thing*, up to and including the taking away of another’s life, which is the ‘greatest thing’.

⁵⁷ Tuck, *The Rights of War and Peace*, pp. 9-11 and 129.

⁵⁸ Harvey, “Grotius and Hobbes”, p. 43; Zagorin, “Hobbes Without Grotius”, pp. 16-40; Zagorin, *Hobbes and the Law of Nature*, pp. 16-20.

⁵⁹ *EL*, XXII.9, p. 129.

⁶⁰ Cf. Delphine Thivet, “Thomas Hobbes: a Philosopher of War or Peace?”, *British Journal of the History of Philosophy* 16 (2008), pp. 701-721, 714.

⁶¹ *EL*, XIV.13, pp. 80f; *De Cive*, I.12, p. 29.

⁶² *De Cive*, V.1, p. 69.

⁶³ *De Cive*, I.3, p. 26. Note that Silverthorne’s translation of this passage is misleading, because it implies that killing requires the greatest power. Yet Hobbes holds that little power may be sufficient for inflicting death. Cf. Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, p. 24.

⁶⁴ *Lev.*, XIV.4, p. 80.

In order to further bring out how Hobbes's concept of natural right relates to his views on enmity, it may be fruitful to distinguish between offensive and defensive uses of force. In *The Elements of Law*, for instance, Hobbes describes the state of nature as a situation where "one man invadeth with right, and another with right resisteth".⁶⁵ The parallel passage in *De Cive* likewise refers to some individuals who invade, and others who resist the attackers.⁶⁶ However, such defensive uses of force are not restricted to the natural condition. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes also argues that "[a] man is assaulted, fears present death, from which he sees not how to escape but by wounding him that assaulteth him".⁶⁷ Yet this statement refers to assaults by others in the civil state, i.e. to people who no longer face each other as enemies. This shows that a mere act of self-defence does not require prior beliefs about the other's hostile disposition.

By contrast, the anticipation of attacks seems to presuppose that others come to be regarded as enemies. Hobbes holds that the natural right does not only permit resistance against an attacker, but also the pre-emptive use of force.⁶⁸ This seems to reflect his more general contention that people in the state of nature are free to deploy all available means according to their own judgement. As Hobbes, for instance, states in *The Elements of Law*, everyone "is judge himself of the necessity of the means, and of the greatness of the danger".⁶⁹ Although he only mentions that everyone is allowed to judge the greatness of danger and the necessity of means, this statement seems to imply a right to identify other people as the *source* of danger. In this vein, Hobbes also points out in

⁶⁵ *EL*, XIV.11, p. 80

⁶⁶ *De Cive*, I.4, p. 26.

⁶⁷ *Lev.*, XXVII.20, p. 169.

⁶⁸ David P. Gauthier, "Thomas Hobbes: Moral Theorist", *The Journal of Philosophy* 76 (1979), pp. 547-559, 554; Hampton, *Hobbes and the Social Contract Tradition*, p. 60; Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, pp. 92, 96; Thivet, "Philosopher of War or Peace?", p. 710.

⁶⁹ *EL*, XIV.8, p. 79. Cf. *De Cive*., I.7-8, p. 27; *Lev.*, XIV.1, p. 79.

Leviathan that the sovereign's natural right permits judgement "both of the means of peace and defence, and also of the *hindrances and disturbances* of the same".⁷⁰

Tom Sorell suggests, but does not further elaborate, that the natural right permits individuals in the state of nature "to treat everybody as an enemy".⁷¹ This seems to be correct in view of the aforementioned passages. Treating somebody as an enemy, thereby, implies using force against them on the ground that they pose a threat to one's self-preservation. Yet Hobbes also argues in his earlier works that people in the state of nature have a right to harm or subdue others that do not yet pose threat, as such individuals might otherwise "gather strength and be our enemy".⁷² This clearly shows that Hobbes's concept of natural right permits pre-emptive attacks solely on the grounds of subjective means-ends calculations, regardless of whether or not those who are treated as enemies currently pose a threat by any inter-subjective standard.

Therefore, Hobbes's argument does not seem to depend on epistemological assumptions about our ability to detect others' true dispositions. This issue is raised by Marshall Missner, who claims that Hobbes adopts a more sceptical position regarding our ability to know others' intentions in order to resolve a problem in his initial account of the natural condition in *The Elements of Law*.⁷³ Considering Hobbes's argument in the earlier work that a number of vain-glorious people seek to subdue everybody else, while others are content with natural equality, Missner asks: "why could not these 'moderates' band together and form a community in which they could protect themselves against the 'hos-

⁷⁰ *Lev.*, XVIII.8, p. 113 (emphasis added).

⁷¹ Tom Sorell, "Hobbes Without Doubt", *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 10 (1993), pp. 121-135, 129.

⁷² *EL*, XIV.13, pp. 80f. Cf. *De Cive*, I.14, pp. 30f.

⁷³ Marshall Missner, "Skepticism and Hobbes's Political Philosophy", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 44 (1983), pp. 407-427.

tiles'?"⁷⁴ In order to resolve this problem, Hobbes supposedly argues from *De Cive* onwards that it is very difficult to tell good and evil people apart.⁷⁵

However, it rather seems that, according to Hobbes, the war of all against all materialises because everybody is entitled to act upon the supposition that others pose a threat to their self-preservation. As Sorell puts it, as long as there is no authority that could establish inter-subjective standards of right and wrong, people may even engage in mass-slaughter if they think that this is conducive to their self-preservation. Therefore, vain-glorious individuals cannot be blamed for acting according to their disposition, while the 'moderate' people have good reason to act out of character.⁷⁶ Hobbes clearly states in *De Cive* that people do not sin as long as they *believe* that their actions are conducive to self-preservation.⁷⁷ As was demonstrated above, this does not require that others have previously revealed their hostility. Rather, everyone is free to harm or subdue everybody else on the ground that they might become enemies in the future.

Consequently, the epistemic ground on which people in the state of nature may treat others as enemies is not knowledge about their dispositions, but mere suspicion. In this regard, it is important to consider Hobbes's peculiar conception of distrust as the opposite of assurance. In *The Elements of Law*, he defines trust as "a passion proceeding from belief of him from whom we expect or hope for good, *so free from doubt* that upon the same we pursue no other way".⁷⁸ In accordance with this view, Hobbes also reasons

⁷⁴ Missner, "Skepticism and Hobbes's Political Philosophy", p. 413.

⁷⁵ Missner, "Skepticism and Hobbes's Political Philosophy", pp. 414f.

⁷⁶ Sorell, "Hobbes Without Doubt", p. 129.

⁷⁷ *De Cive*, I.10, note, pp. 28f.

⁷⁸ *EL*, IX.9, p. 53 (emphasis added).

that contracts of mutual trust are ineffectual in the state of nature, for “he that doubteth, shall be judge himself”.⁷⁹ Similarly, he states in *De Cive* that

in the purely natural state, if you wish to kill, you have the right to do so on the basis of the natural state itself; so that there is no need to trust first and kill later when he lets you down. But in the civil state, where the right of life and death and of all corporal punishment are [*sic*] the responsibility of the commonwealth, this right of killing cannot be allowed to any private person.⁸⁰

This shows that people do not have to take any risks to find out whether or not the other is truly hostile. Hence, Hobbes also points out in *De Cive* that “hostility is adequately shown by distrust”.⁸¹ Similarly, he maintains in *Leviathan* that war persists in the natural condition as long as there is “no assurance to the contrary”.⁸² On Hobbes’s account, this, of course, requires the constitution of an absolute sovereign.

To conclude, Hobbes’s concept of natural right signifies that individuals are naturally free to do everything they consider conducive to self-preservation. In particular, this right permits treating everybody as an enemy solely on the grounds of means-ends calculations, i.e. without consideration of whether or not others have revealed their hostile dispositions in any way. Based on these findings, the next section will further examine how enmity relates to Hobbes’s assumptions about death-aversion.

3.3 Enmity, death-aversion, and the will to fight

Given that enemies are those who pose a threat to self-preservation, there appears to be a connection between enmity and the evil of violent death. According to the received view, Hobbes regards death as the greatest natural evil. While some interpreters have

⁷⁹ *EL*, XV.10, pp. 84f.

⁸⁰ *De Cive*, II.18, p. 40.

⁸¹ *De Cive*, XVII.27, p. 231.

⁸² *Lev.*, XIII.8, p. 76.

defended this position, others have also expressed objections and advanced alternative interpretations of the role of death in Hobbes's political thought. As the following discussion will show however, none of the existing accounts sufficiently considers the relationship between violent death and Hobbes's views on enmity.

There are different explanations for why Hobbes apparently regards death as the greatest natural evil. John Watkins, for example, seeks to defend this view on the basis of Hobbes's physiological theory of pleasure and pain.⁸³ According to Watkins' reconstruction of this theory, desires reflect whether something enhances or impedes the body's vital motion. In this light, it appears that there is, on the one hand, no natural limit to pleasure. On the other hand, Watkins maintains, death is the greatest possible impediment to motion, and therefore also the greatest anticipated pain.⁸⁴

Watkins' interpretation, according to which death is the greatest evil due to Hobbes's physiological theory of pleasure and pain, has not found many followers. However, other scholars defend the received view on different grounds. For instance, Jean Hampton suggests that the desire for self-preservation requires the capability "healthy deliberation" about real and apparent goods.⁸⁵ Thus, some individuals may consider other *apparent* evils worse than death because a disease, such as madness, impedes their deliberation. Yet, Hampton suggests, all those people who are able to deliberate healthily would recognise that death is *really* the greatest evil. This reading provides an explanation for why Hobbes refers to death as the greatest evil, while also considering some cases where some people regard other things as worse than death.

⁸³ Watkins, *Hobbes's System of Ideas*, pp. 107-117.

⁸⁴ Watkins, *Hobbes's System of Ideas*, p. 116.

⁸⁵ Hampton, *Hobbes and the Social Contract Tradition*, pp. 39-42. For a similar argument, see Murphy, "Hobbes on the Evil of Death", pp. 56f.

Some commentators have also emphasised the role of education in this context, which points to a normative reinterpretation of the standard view on death.⁸⁶ On this view, Hobbes does not posit that all human beings *do* regard death as the greatest evil, but rather seeks to persuade his audience that they *should* do so. Leo Strauss, for instance, thus argues that the consistency of Hobbes's political philosophy does not depend on psychological assumptions, but on the prospect of popular enlightenment. The latter supposedly makes subjects of the commonwealth realise that life is the condition *sine qua non* (an essential condition) for the satisfaction of any desire.⁸⁷ If people were to realise that being alive is indispensable, they would follow the prescriptions of Hobbes's political philosophy in order to secure their self-preservation.

In the light of exceptions mentioned by Hobbes, some Hobbesian scholars reject the received view on death. Gregory Kavka, for example, finds that Hobbes's statements on this matter are simply unclear and inconsistent.⁸⁸ Edwin Curley suggests that Hobbes's apparently unrealistic assessment of the fear of death is an exaggeration for stylistic purposes.⁸⁹ A more substantial objection is put forward by S.A. Lloyd, who holds that Hobbes regards passionately held opinions about our duties to God as the main cause of rebellion.⁹⁰ Lloyd finds that Hobbes was particularly concerned with some people's willingness to risk their lives for the purpose of salvation, which would rule out the standard view of death as the supreme evil. Rather than developing a political philoso-

⁸⁶ See esp. Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1953), p. 199; Strauss, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes*, p. 15. Similarly, David Johnston finds that Hobbes's political philosophy calls for a cultural transformation through which people may lose their irrational fear of spirits. See Johnston, *The Rhetoric of Leviathan*, pp. 128-133.

⁸⁷ Strauss, *Natural Right and History*, p. 199; Strauss, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes*, p. 15.

⁸⁸ Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, p. 81.

⁸⁹ Edwin Curley, "Reflections on Hobbes: Recent Work on His Moral and Political Philosophy", *Journal of Philosophical Research* 15 (1989-90), pp. 169-250, pp. 174f.

⁹⁰ S.A. Lloyd, *Ideals as Interests in Hobbes's Leviathan: The Power of Mind over Matter* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 38-44.

phy on the basis of the principle of death-aversion, Hobbes supposedly tried to reconcile competing transcendent interests by way of a careful scriptural exegesis.⁹¹

It is usually assumed that Hobbes's principal concern is with violent death, as opposed to death caused by old age or disease. Yet most interpreters do not make much of this qualification. One exception is Michael Oakeshott, who argues that violent death is a shameful death that signifies the greatest possible defeat.⁹² People in the civil state are relieved from the *fear* of such a death, because there is no longer an unconditional competition for precedence in this condition. However, Oakeshott suggests that subjects could still risk their lives for the defence of the state, which is honourable.⁹³ This reading helpfully points to the role of the other who inflicts violent death. Nevertheless, Oakeshott's claim that death is part of the competition for honour does not stand up against a close reading of Hobbes's works. For instance, Hobbes states in *The Elements of Law* that "[t]o kill is the aim of them that hate, to rid themselves of fear; [whereas] revenge aimeth at triumph, which over the dead is not".⁹⁴

To begin with, it needs to be said that Hobbes does, indeed, suggest that death is the greatest natural evil. What is more, he clearly expresses the assumption that human beings necessarily avoid death. Yet, as can already be seen in his first discussion of natural right in *The Elements of Law*, his concern seems to be with death-aversion insofar as it motivates resistance against other individuals. Thus, Hobbes argues that

⁹¹ Lloyd, *Ideals as Interests*, pp. 44f.

⁹² Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, pp. 87f. Also see Michael Oakeshott, "Letter on Hobbes", *Political Theory* 29 (2001), pp. 834-836.

⁹³ Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, pp. 87f.

⁹⁴ *EL*, IX.6, p. 52. As it will be shown later in this section, Hobbes's view seems to be that the will to fight results from the passions of courage or anger, both of which presuppose fear.

forasmuch as necessity of nature maketh men to will and desire *bonum sibi*, that which is good for themselves, and to avoid that which is hurtful; but most of all that terrible enemy of nature, death, from whom we expect both the loss of all power, and also the greatest of bodily pains in the losing; it is not against reason that a man doth all he can to preserve his own body and limbs, both from death and pain.⁹⁵

Although Hobbes refers to death as an enemy of nature, he seems to be particularly concerned with death that is inflicted by others and therefore avoidable through resistance or anticipation. As he reiterates later in the same chapter, natural right proceeds from danger, and danger from human equality.⁹⁶ This already indicates that Hobbes may invoke death-avoidance in a narrower sense than is often supposed.

In *De Cive*, Hobbes states that people avoid death “by a real necessity of nature as powerful as that by which a stone falls downward”.⁹⁷ In addition, he introduces the tendency to avoid violent death as one of two “postulates of human nature” in the epistle dedicatory.⁹⁸ Yet *De Cive* also contains a more detailed discussion of death-aversion. Concerning agreements that people are not bound to keep, Hobbes points out that

there is in every man a kind of supreme stage of fearfulness, by which he sees the harm threatening him as the worst possible, and by natural necessity does his best to avoid it; and is understood not to be able to do otherwise. When one has reached this level of fear, he must be expected to look out for himself either by flight or by fighting. Since no one is bound to do the impossible, no one is obliged to accept the *death* with which he is threatened (the greatest harm of nature) [...].⁹⁹

This passage lends further credence to the view that Hobbes only posits death-aversion in a narrow sense as a matter of natural necessity, as statements in *The Elements of Law* already suggested. His position in *De Cive* seems to be that nobody could be expected *not* to take action in response to the threat of violent death. Having said that, the alterna-

⁹⁵ *EL*, XIV.6, pp. 77f (emphasis in the original).

⁹⁶ *EL*, XIV.13, p. 80.

⁹⁷ *De Cive*, I.7, p. 27.

⁹⁸ *De Cive*, epistle 10, p. 6.

⁹⁹ *De Cive*, II.18, p. 39 (emphasis in the original).

tive courses of action mentioned by Hobbes, i.e. flight and fighting, raise the question why people would necessarily risk their lives for self-preservation.

This issue is further addressed by passages in *Leviathan*. In particular, Hobbes suggests that an act of self-defence presupposes that individuals do not see any other option as to how they could escape from violent death.¹⁰⁰ He also argues in *Leviathan* that “man by nature chooseth the lesser evil, which is danger of death in resisting, rather than the greater, which is certain and present death in not resisting”.¹⁰¹ This indicates that Hobbes posits death-aversion insofar as it lets people inflict death on others in order to avoid it for themselves. Understood thus, death-aversion may either take the form of resistance against an attacker, or manifest itself in the pre-emptive use of violence. The latter is certainly not a matter of necessity in the civil state, where people “have time and means to demand protection from the sovereign power”.¹⁰² In the natural condition however, people are constantly threatened by violent death and do not possess any alternative means to protect themselves from their enemies. Thus, Hobbes points out that “there is no way for any man to secure himself so reasonable as anticipation”.¹⁰³

This reading of Hobbes’s views on death-aversion can account for apparent exceptions, which have led some interpreters doubt the standard view that death is the greatest natural evil. For instance, Hobbes states in *De Cive* that “most men prefer to lose [...] their lives rather than suffer insult”, and that “a son may prefer to die rather than live in infamy and loathing”.¹⁰⁴ In *De Homine*, he also notes that “the pains of life can be so

¹⁰⁰ *Lev.*, XXVII.20, p. 196.

¹⁰¹ *Lev.*, XIV.29, p. 87.

¹⁰² *Lev.*, XXVII.20, p. 196. The question to what extent subjects may still use force to protect themselves in the civil state will be further addressed in sec. 5.3

¹⁰³ *Lev.*, XIII.4, p. 75.

¹⁰⁴ *De Cive*, III.12, p. 49; *De Cive*, VI.13, p. 83.

great that, unless their quick end is foreseen, they may lead men to number death among the good”.¹⁰⁵ If Hobbes’s ‘postulate’ of death-aversion only concerns natural responses to the threat of violent death, as has been suggested above, it would not conflict with the fact that some people, under certain circumstances, choose to lose their lives. In particular, it does not exclude the possibility that people find the *actual* pain of infamy or a severe medical condition greater than the *anticipated* pain of violent death.

Furthermore, the previously stated interpretation helps to clarify the nexus of enmity and violent death. As was shown in sec. 3.1, enmity implies, according to Hobbes, that the other is believed to pose a threat to self-preservation. However, this is not how Hobbes generally defines the state of war (or the state of hostility).¹⁰⁶ In *The Elements of Law*, for example, he points out that war is “that time wherein the will and intention of contending by force is either by words or actions sufficiently declared”.¹⁰⁷ Thus, Hobbes distinguishes the condition of war (or hostility) from battle, which he defines in *The Elements of Law* as “reciprocally resistances [...] upon the persons of one another”.¹⁰⁸ *De Cive* contains a virtually identical definition of the state of war.¹⁰⁹

Similarly, Hobbes states in *Leviathan* that “WAR consisteth not in battle only, or the act of fighting, but in a tract of time wherein the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known”.¹¹⁰ Thus, throughout Hobbes’s main political works, the state of war (or hostility) is defined by the will to contend in battle. The latter implies, as has been suggested above, that human beings are willing to risk their lives, and ultimately to kill another, in

¹⁰⁵ *De Hom.*, XI.6, pp. 48f.

¹⁰⁶ In *EL*, XIV.12, p. 80, Hobbes also refers to the “estate of hostility and war“. This suggests that he does not distinguish between hostility and war in the natural condition.

¹⁰⁷ *EL*, XIV.11, p. 80.

¹⁰⁸ *EL*, XII.7, p. 72.

¹⁰⁹ *De Cive*, I.12, pp. 29f.

¹¹⁰ *Lev.*, XIII.8, p. 76 (capitalisation in the original).

order to preserve themselves. Yet some individuals may, of course, also be willing to fight for other purposes. This comes out in another passage in *Leviathan*, according to which people in the natural condition “become enemies; and in the way to their end, which is principally their own conversation, and sometimes their delectation only, endeavour to destroy or subdue one another”.¹¹¹ Delectation may, thereby, be understood as the satisfaction of desires that are unrelated to self-preservation.¹¹²

However that may be, the will to contend in battle presupposes that others come to be regarded as a hindrance to satisfying a desire. Based on his determinism,¹¹³ Hobbes generally defines the will as the last appetite preceding the act.¹¹⁴ Nonetheless, he does not simply hold that human actions are caused by external events, but also seeks to account for mental events through his concept of deliberation:¹¹⁵

When in the mind of man appetites and aversions, hopes and fears, concerning one and the same thing arise alternately, and diverse good and evil consequences of the doing or omitting the thing propounded come successively into our thoughts, so that sometimes we have an appetite to it, sometimes an aversion from it, sometimes hope to be able to do it, sometimes despair or fear to attempt it, the whole sum of desires, aversions, hopes and fears, continued till the thing be either done or thought impossible, is that we call DELIBERATION.¹¹⁶

Thus, human beings are said to constantly deliberate whether or not they can satisfy a desire through some action. While Hobbes does not describe this succession of hopes

¹¹¹ *Lev.*, XIII.3, p. 75.

¹¹² Hobbes may be referring to desires related to the natural competitiveness of human beings, such as glory and honour, which have been discussed in sec. 3.1.

¹¹³ While this thesis does not seek to make any general claims about the importance of Hobbes’s mechanistic ideas for his political thought, it seems fruitful to briefly consider his views on the will and deliberation on this point in this context. On Hobbes’s determinism, see esp. Frost, *Lessons from a Materialist Thinker*, pp. 82-105; Cees Leijenhorst, *The Mechanisation of Aristotelianism: The Late Aristotelian Setting of Thomas Hobbes’ Natural Philosophy* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2003), pp. 203-217; and Yves Charles Zarka, “Liberty, Necessity and Chance: Hobbes’s General Theory of Events”, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 9 (2001), pp. 425-437.

¹¹⁴ *Lev.*, VI.53, p. 33. Cf. *EL*, XII.2, p. 71; *De Corp.*, XXV.13, pp. 408-410; *De Hom.*, XI.2, pp. 45f.

¹¹⁵ Zarka, “Liberty, Necessity and Chance”, pp. 431f, suggests that the controversy with Bishop Bramhall on free will made Hobbes realise the problems inherent in the application of his general theory of causality to human conduct. Hobbes’s use of the concept of deliberation may accordingly be understood as an attempt to resolve these problems.

¹¹⁶ *Lev.*, VI.49, p. 33 (capitalisation in the original).

and fears as an active process, and generally denies freedom of the will, he seems to allow for the possibility of manipulating deliberation through reasoning.¹¹⁷ As was shown in sec. 3.2, Hobbes specifically maintains that enemies could be identified based on means-ends calculations, rather than through sense-perception alone.

Moreover, it seems to follow from Hobbes's views on deliberation that the will to contend in battle presupposes hope to satisfy some desire in this way. This is what Hobbes generally describes as the passion of courage. In *The Elements of Law*, he associates the latter with the absence of fear, and defines it more specifically as “contempt for wounds and death, when they oppose a man in the way to his end”.¹¹⁸ In addition, he argues that anger is sudden courage, i.e. “the appetite or desire of overcoming present opposition”.¹¹⁹ Similarly, Hobbes suggests in the *Anti-White* that anger presupposes “hope of victory”.¹²⁰ In *Leviathan*, he defines fear as “Aversion with opinion of *hurt* from the object”,¹²¹ and refers to courage as “[fear] with hope of avoiding that hurt by resistance”.¹²² Furthermore, Hobbes suggests in *Leviathan* (as part of his speculative theory of dreams) that anger corresponds with an “imagination of an enemy” in the mind.¹²³ *De Homine* provides a very similar account of these passions.¹²⁴

While Hobbes's definitions may be idiosyncratic, his statements on hope, fear, courage, and anger provide an explanation for—and thus lend further credence to—his ‘postulate’ of death-aversion, as reconstructed above, i.e. the notion that people would neces-

¹¹⁷ Adrian Blau, “Reason, Deliberation, and the Passions”, in *The Oxford Handbook on Hobbes*, eds. A.P. Martinich and Kinch Hoekstra (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

¹¹⁸ *EL*, IX.4, pp. 51f.

¹¹⁹ *EL*, IX.5, p. 52.

¹²⁰ *AW*, XXXVIII.14, p. 473.

¹²¹ *Lev.*, VI.16, p. 30 (emphasis in the original).

¹²² *Lev.*, VI.16-17, p. 30. As in *The Elements of Law*, Hobbes subsequently introduces anger as a sudden occurrence of courage. See *Lev.*, VI.18, p. 30.

¹²³ *Lev.*, II.6, p. 10.

¹²⁴ *De Hom.*, XII.4, p. 56f.

sarily risk their lives in battle, and ultimately kill others, for the purpose of self-preservation. At least, this would be the case if human beings had no alternative means at their disposal. Given that using force would then be their only hope to overcome the threat of death, they would have to risk their life in order to preserve it.

However, it seems that this explanation requires a further assumption that Hobbes provides in all of his main political works. It is commonly agreed that, although Hobbes considers natural inequalities between human beings, he also regards all grown-ups as roughly equal in strength and vulnerability.¹²⁵ As he puts it in *Leviathan*, “the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest, either by secret machination, or by confederacy with others that are in the same danger with himself”.¹²⁶ If this assumption is granted, it follows that people who are faced with the threat of violent death have generally reason to hope that fighting is conducive to self-preservation.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has argued that Hobbes regards human beings as natural enemies insofar as they would, under certain circumstances, use force against one another and, ultimately, inflict death in order to avoid it for themselves. Some individuals may also be willing to fight for other desires, such as honour, and thus provoke hostility. Furthermore, this chapter has suggested how Hobbes’s views on natural enmity relate to his conception of the natural right, which everybody retains in the state of nature. It has been shown that, according to Hobbes, people in this condition cannot be expected to take risks in order

¹²⁵ See, for instance, Hampton, *Hobbes and the Social Contract Tradition*, pp. 24f; Gary B. Herbert, “Thomas Hobbes’s Counterfeit Equality”, *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 14 (1976), pp. 269-282, 275; Kinch Hoekstra, “Hobbesian Equality”, in *Hobbes Today: Insights for the 21st Century*, ed. S.A. Lloyd (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 76-112, 85; Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, p. 34; Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, pp. 22-26.

¹²⁶ *Lev.*, XIII.1, p. 74.

to find out about others' dispositions. Rather, they possess a right to treat others as enemies upon the mere suspicion that they might pose a threat to self-preservation, even if these people have not revealed their hostility in any way.

Furthermore, this chapter has shown that Hobbes's concept of natural enmity is markedly different from the conventional distinction between public and private enmity. The latter differentiates between the public struggles among organised collectives, which are a matter of right, and enmity among individuals, which is a matter of emotions. By contrast, Hobbes describes enmity in the natural condition both in terms of the passions and the natural right to all things, which permits killing another person.

Hobbes's concept of natural enmity may be regarded as a substitute for the notion of natural sociability. The claim that competitiveness is intrinsic to human nature, rather than due to external circumstances (such as scarcity of resources), is thereby of particular importance. This provides an alternative explanation for why people seek each other's company. In the natural condition, where everybody retains a right to all things, rivalry would develop into hostility. Yet even individuals in the civil state, who are kept in bounds by the sovereign power, may be described as natural enemies insofar as they remain competitors and could return to the state of nature.

However, the latter consideration also suggests that, even though Hobbes regards human beings as natural enemies, they can also be reconciled. For this purpose, his account of the natural laws prescribes the constitution of an absolute and undivided sovereign power. The following chapter will further examine Hobbes's views on reason and the good of peace, which inform his account of the laws of nature.

4. Natural reason and the good of peace

This chapter examines Hobbes's views on reason and peace. The first section demonstrates that peace is not only conducive to self-preservation, but also encompasses other goods that are unavailable in the state of nature. It is suggested that the hope to benefit from lasting peace lets people submit themselves (or remain obedient) to an absolute sovereign. The second section looks at Hobbes's conceptions of language and reason, which underlie his account of the laws of nature. It is suggested that he does not merely envision a syllogistic science but also invokes the idea of natural reason, understood as an inherent human potential which can be realised through both science and experience. As a consequence, even untaught people are supposed to be able to seek peace. The third section examines different interpretations of Hobbes's scepticism. It is argued that instead of entertaining fundamental doubts about the foundations of knowledge, Hobbes's scepticism serves the more limited purpose of disarming seditious ecclesiastical doctrines. The fourth section analyses religious analogies that Hobbes employs to describe the good of peace. It is shown that he likens peace to salvation on earth and identifies rebellion with the original sin in the biblical story of the Fall.

4.1 Enmity and the natural law to endeavour peace

References to natural enmity are sometimes supposed to preclude reconciliation. For instance, Plato writes in his *Republic* that Greeks are natural friends who ought to re-establish peace after their conflicts. By contrast, Greeks and barbarians are enemies by nature and can, therefore, not be reconciled.¹ Unlike Plato, Hobbes does not refer to particular peoples as natural enemies. Rather, as has been shown in the last chapter, he in-

¹ Plato, *Republic*, 470c, p. 163. This distinction appears to have been conventional at the time, and is also invoked by other ancient Greek writers. See sec. 2.1

vokes universal human characteristics, including competitiveness, distrust, and death-aversion, to show that the natural condition is a war of all against all.

Understood thus, Hobbes's concept of natural enmity does not preclude reconciliation,² but—to the contrary—makes it mandatory to transcend hostility within the rationally constructed, artificial political order of the commonwealth. Hobbes also does not seem to regard enmity between groups as irrevocable. His views on sovereignty acquired by conquest indicate that states may be decomposed and reassembled in order to establish peace between their members, implying that group identities are ultimately less important than the preservation of individuals.³ In order to clarify on what ground Hobbes holds that natural enemies can generally be reconciled, this section will examine his views on the fundamental natural law that prescribes to endeavour peace. Furthermore, the analysis will consider what exactly the good of peace consists of.

All of Hobbes's main political works put forward the fundamental prescription to seek peace. In *The Elements of Law* and *De Cive*, Hobbes introduces this tenet as a conclusion of his accounts of the state of nature, and uses it as the starting point of the following discussions of the natural laws.⁴ Thereby, he refers to seeking peace as a precept of reason. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes instead concludes the account of the natural condition with a discussion of “the passions that incline men to peace”.⁵ However, in the subsequent chapter on the first and second natural laws, he also states that

it is a precept, or general rule, of reason *that every man ought to endeavor peace, as far as he has hope of obtaining it, and when he cannot obtain it, that he may seek and use*

² Hobbes himself uses the term ‘reconciliation’ to refer to the event when peace is established through the subjection to a sovereign power. See sec. 5.1.

³ Hobbes's views on sovereignty acquired by conquest will be further examined in sec. 5.1 and 8.1.

⁴ *EL*, XIV.14, p. 81; *De Cive*, I.15, p. 31, II.3, p. 34.

⁵ *Lev.*, XIII.14, p. 78.

all helps and advantages of war. The first branch of which rule containeth the first and fundamental law of nature, which is *to seek peace and follow it.* The second, the sum of the right of nature, which is *by all means we can, to defend ourselves.*⁶

Although human beings retain the liberty to defend themselves by all means as long as they remain in the state of nature, Hobbes holds that it is a precept of reason to avoid this condition in the first place. For this purpose, people ought to renounce their natural right to all things and constitute an absolute sovereign power.

Thus, peace appears to be the *raison d'être* of the Hobbesian state, which comes into existence with the constitution of an absolute sovereign. Hobbes characterises the peace provided by the commonwealth in terms of security and protection from injuries that people might otherwise inflict upon one another.⁷ Yet while peace may be instrumental for the self-preservation of individuals, it also implies the pacification of society as a whole. Thus, Hobbes expresses in *Leviathan* that peace is a means for “the conservation of men in multitudes”.⁸ Furthermore, he refers to peace in terms of the subjects’ concord and mutual aid.⁹ This can be understood in view of the fact that peace inside the commonwealth needs to be accompanied by defence against external enemies. Indeed, Hobbes often writes as if peace and defence were inseparable goods.¹⁰

The kind of peace that Hobbes envisions is a *lasting* peace, and must therefore be distinguished from peace agreements in the state of nature. Hobbes acknowledges that

⁶ *Lev.*, XIV.4, p. 80 (emphasis in the original).

⁷ *EL*, XVII.10, p. 97, XIX.1-6, pp. 103-106, XX.2, p. 109, XX.5, pp. 111f, XXI.14, p. 125; *De Cive*, V.12, p. 74, VI.3-4, pp. 77f, VII.6, p. 95, XIII.6, p. 144; *Lev.*, XIV.8, p. 82, XVII.1-4, pp. 106f, XVIII.8, p. 113, XIX.4, p. 120, XIX.15, p. 124, XXVII.3, p. 191, XXVII.20, p. 196.

⁸ *Lev.*, XV.34, p. 99.

⁹ *EL*, XIX.1, p. 103, XIX.4, p. 105; *De Cive*, V.3, p. 70, V.9, p. 73. *Lev.*, XV.16, p. 95, XVII.13, p. 109, XVIII.9, p. 113, XXX.7, p. 222.

¹⁰ *EL*, XXI.2, p. 119, XXIV.2, p. 137; *De Cive*, V.6, p. 72, V.9, p. 73, VI.3, p. 77, VI.10, p. 80, X.2, p. 116, X.5, p. 119; *Lev.*, XV.5, p. 92, XVIII.13, p. 109, XVIII.8, p. 113, XVIII.13, p. 115, XXII.5, p. 146, XXIV.8, p. 162, XXIX.3, p. 211, XXX.25, p. 231.

people in the latter condition can form alliances for common defence, or to make booty,¹¹ yet this does not terminate the state of war between them. Likewise, international peace treaties are fragile because sovereigns retain a right to break them if they consider it necessary for security reasons.¹² By contrast, as Hobbes clearly expresses in *Leviathan*, individuals are supposed to constitute the commonwealth “for their perpetual (and not temporary) security”.¹³ In effect, he advances the view that (only) the submission to an absolute sovereign power could provide permanent societal peace.

While Hobbes thus considers subjection necessary for self-preservation, scholars have noted that this kind of peace also contains (or provides the foundation for) many other goods that are unavailable in the state of nature.¹⁴ This comes out particularly in *Leviathan*. In this work’s account of the natural condition, Hobbes states:

In such a condition there is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain, and consequently, no culture of the earth, no navigation, for use of commodities that may be imported by sea, no commodious building, no instruments for moving and removing such things as require much force, no knowledge of the face of the earth, no account of time, no arts, no letters, no society [...].¹⁵

Thus, the continual fear of enemy attacks implies that people would be unable to develop or access many economic and cultural goods that are available in the civil state. In accordance with this view, Hobbes further points out at the end of this chapter that human beings do not only seek peace to avoid violent death. Rather, they are also motivated by a “desire of such things as are necessary to commodious living, and a hope by

¹¹ *EL*, XIX.4, p. 105; *De Cive*, V.4, p. 70; *Lev.*, XVII.4-5, pp. 107f.

¹² Hobbes likens international relations to the state of nature. For a discussion of this analogy, and of international peace agreements, see sec. 8.1.

¹³ *Lev.*, XIX.15, p. 124. In *Lev.*, XIX.14, p. 124, Hobbes also refers to the state’s ‘artificial eternity’ that is necessary for preventing a return of the state of war.

¹⁴ See, for instance, Gert, *Hobbes*, p. 171; Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, p. 67; Tom Sorell, “Hobbes on Trade, Consumption and International Order”, *The Monist* 89 (2006), pp. 245-258, 246f; Sorell, *Hobbes*, p. 108; Peter J. Steinberger, “Hobbesian Resistance”, *American Political Science Review* 46 (2002), pp. 856-865, 857.

¹⁵ *Lev.*, XIII.9, p. 76.

their industry to obtain them”.¹⁶ In a similar vein, Hobbes states elsewhere in *Leviathan* that the ‘safety of the people’ does not merely consist of their “bare preservation”, but also implies that they have access to other “contentments of life”.¹⁷

What is more, it seems that the peace provided by the commonwealth makes it safe for people to comply with the natural laws that prescribe justice, gratitude, modesty, equity, mercy, and other moral qualities.¹⁸ As was shown in sec. 3.2, Hobbes holds that the latter only bind in conscience as long as people lack sufficient security. Yet this no longer applies to individuals in the civil state, who renounced their natural right to all things and are generally secure enough to act in accordance with the natural laws. Although not everyone will develop a virtuous character,¹⁹ Hobbes holds that all subjects *ought to* show justice, gratitude, mercy, etc. Thus, he argues in *Leviathan* that

he that having sufficient security that others shall observe the same laws towards him, observes them not himself, seeketh not peace, but war, and consequently the destruction of his nature by violence.²⁰

This suggests that the moral qualities prescribed by the natural laws are inseparable from the good of peace. On the one hand, justice, gratitude, etc., can only develop (or be displayed) because subjects of the commonwealth have sufficient security to do so. On the other hand, the laws of nature are conducive to sustaining civil peace.

Having said that, some commentators attribute a far greater role to the natural laws in the Hobbesian state of nature. For instance, Larry May has recently suggested that it is

¹⁶ *Lev.*, XIII.14, p. 78. Cf. *Lev.*, XVII.1, p. 106.

¹⁷ *Lev.*, XXX.1, p. 219. Cf. *De Cive*, XIII.6, p. 144.

¹⁸ This presumes that justice, gratitude, etc., are (in some sense) moral, rather than merely prudential maxims. For an overview of different views on this question, see sec. 2.4.

¹⁹ Hobbes states in *Lev.*, XV.10, p. 193, that, unlike the justice of actions, the justice of manners is “a certain nobleness or gallantness of courage (rarely found)”.

²⁰ *Lev.*, XV.36, p. 99.

reasonable for people in this condition to develop ‘pacifist attitudes’, by which he means the disposition to trust others and only use violence as the last resort.²¹ May regards such attitudes as crucial for the transition from the state of nature to the civil state. In particular, pacifist attitudes are supposed to “[open] the door to the kind of limited trust upon which the social contract seems to be based”.²² Yet such a quasi-historical reading is difficult to square with remarks suggesting that the state of nature is merely a thought experiment intended to show how life would be without the fear of a common power.²³ François Tricaud also notes that Hobbes uses both the past tense and a seemingly atemporal present tense when describing the natural condition.²⁴

This points to Hobbes’s own understating of time, which casts further doubt on the view that his political philosophy seeks to reveal the actual origins of the state. As Hobbes points out in *Leviathan*, “[t]he *present* only has a being in nature; things *past* have a being in the memory only; but things *to come* have no being at all, the *future* being but a fiction of the mind”.²⁵ Thus, he considers history solely in terms of memory, which is the basis of historiography.²⁶ Hobbes does seem to conceive of history as a series of events that encompasses the past, present, and future of human existence.²⁷ Furthermore, his accounts of the state of nature suggest that everyone in this condition would

²¹ May, *Limiting Leviathan*, pp. 224-239. Forsyth, “Hobbes and the External Relations of States”, pp. 196-209, provides a somewhat similar account that also emphasises the role of the natural laws in the transition from the state of nature to the civil state.

²² May, *Limiting Leviathan*, p. 237.

²³ Hobbes asks his readers in *De Cive*, VIII.1, p. 102, “to look at men as if they had just emerged from the earth like mushrooms and grown up without any obligation to each other”.

²⁴ François Tricaud, “Hobbes’s Conception of the State of Nature from 1640 to 1651: Evolution and Ambiguities”, in *Perspectives on Thomas Hobbes*, eds. G.A.J. Rogers and Alan Ryan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 107-123, 111f.

²⁵ *Lev.*, III.7, p. 14 (emphasis in the original).

²⁶ Hobbes generally distinguishes between science (or philosophy), i.e. knowledge of consequences (or causes and effects), and history, defined as knowledge of fact. Moreover, he points out that historical knowledge “is nothing else but sense and memory”. See *Lev.*, IX.1-2, p. 47.

²⁷ Cf. Karl Schuhmann, “Hobbes’s Concept of History”, in *Hobbes and History*, eds. G.A.J. Rogers and Tom Sorell (Oxford: Routledge, 2000), pp. 3-24, 6. Yet J.G.A. Pocock suggests that Hobbes’s views on religion, and specifically the transmission of prophecies, add a historical dimension to his thought. See Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time* (London: Methuen, 1972), pp. 148-201.

be concerned with present survival or the satisfaction of other short-term desires.²⁸ In *Leviathan*, Hobbes even points out that there is “no account of time” in the natural condition.²⁹ If human beings are thus immersed in the present, it is hard to imagine how their attitudes or actions could be, as Larry May implies, oriented towards long-term goods. Rather, as has been suggested above, such a concern seems to be specific to the civil state. Given that subjects of the commonwealth do no longer face a constant threat of violent death, and can also be certain that the state will protect the fruit of their labour, they could, for instance, produce goods to satisfy their desires. This indicates that Hobbes does not envision a historical peace process, but instead holds that the time orientation of human conduct only unfolds under the condition of peace.

The latter claim is consistent with a view that is now widely held among Hobbesian interpreters, i.e. that the state of nature is a thought experiment intended to persuade an audience that already live in the civil state that they ought to obey their sovereign in order to make an already existing peace lasting and secure.³⁰ For current subjects, lasting peace entails the prospect that they could continue to enjoy the goods they already possess, and satisfy other desires through their own industry. Yet even those who have revealed their hostility to the state, or were previously subjects of another state, could repent and submit themselves to the sovereign in view of the good of peace.³¹

²⁸ Game-theoretic interpreters also suggest that it would be impossible for agents in a Hobbesian state of nature to agree to the social contract. See, for instance, Jean Hampton, “Hobbes's State of War”, *Topoi* 4 (1985), pp. 47-60; and Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, pp. 109-123.

²⁹ *Lev.*, XIII.9, p. 76.

³⁰ For example, Russell Hardin, “Hobbesian Political Order”, *Political Theory* 19 (1991), pp. 156-180, 158f; Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, pp. 123f; Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, pp. 148-152; Sorell, *Hobbes*, pp. 136f. In support of this reading, scholars often refer to a passage from *De Cive*, VIII.1, p. 102, which was cited in footnote 23. Oakeshott seems to advance a somewhat similar view as the aforementioned interpreters when he states in *Hobbes on Civil Association*, p. 14, that “*Leviathan* is a myth, the transposition of an abstract argument into the world of the imagination”. Cf. Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, pp. 159-163.

³¹ The remainder of this thesis will shed further light on these cases. Sec. 5.1 examines Hobbes's views on sovereignty acquired by conquest. Sec. 7.3 shows that Hobbes emphasises the need to pardon (some)

To conclude, peace is, according to Hobbes, not only instrumental for self-preservation, but also provides the foundation for the attainment of many other goods that are only available in the civil state. Unlike temporary peace agreements in the state of nature, the lasting peace provided by the commonwealth, thereby, requires subjection to an absolute sovereign power. Hobbes describes seeking peace as a precept of reason and law of nature, which raises the question how reason guides human beings to submit themselves (or remain obedient to) the sovereign. In order to answer this question, the next section will further look at Hobbes's conceptions of reason and language.

4.2 Natural reason and the power of language

This section examines Hobbes's conception of reason and how it relates to his philosophy of language. Rejecting the position that he regards reasoning merely as an acquired art, this section will argue for, and further develop, the alternative view that Hobbes has a concept of natural reason. The latter also points to a different reading of Hobbes's views on the foundations and conditional nature of scientific knowledge.

Michael Oakeshott first expressed the view that Hobbes's conception of *reasoning* departs from the notion of *Reason* in the classical tradition,³² i.e. the idea that reason is a divinely ordained faculty of the mind that provides people with innate knowledge of the cosmic order. For Oakeshott, all branches of Hobbes's philosophy instead rely on syllogistic reasoning in order to establish conditional knowledge of causes and effects.³³

participants of a rebellion in order to restore them as obedient subjects.

³² Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, p. ix. Cf. John Deigh, "Reason and Ethics in Hobbes's *Leviathan*", *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 34 (1996), pp. 33-60, 49f; Philip Pettit, *Made with Words: Hobbes on Language, Mind, and Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), p. 44; Sorell, *Hobbes*, p. 27; Zagorin, *Hobbes and the Law of Nature*, pp. 10f.

³³ Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, pp. 15-28. As mentioned in sec. 2.4, Oakeshott also claims that this method of rational enquiry gives unity to Hobbes's system of thought.

Hence, he also claims that, even though Hobbes identifies ‘natural reason’ with the laws of nature, the latter are nothing but “theorems about human preservation”.³⁴ Bernard Gert adopts a very different position, according to which Hobbes invokes a concept of natural reason similar to that of Aristotle.³⁵ Gert argues that, despite rejecting the notion that reason is a guide towards the good, Hobbes still holds that reason has its own end, i.e. self-preservation. Moreover, Gert finds that natural reason is a broader concept than syllogistic reasoning, also containing knowledge from experience.³⁶

To begin with, Oakeshott is right that Hobbes aimed to develop a syllogistic science capable of establishing universal truths.³⁷ In particular, Hobbes defines science (or philosophy) as knowledge of consequences (or of causes and effects) and generally contrasts the latter with knowledge of sensible facts.³⁸ His conception of science as a language-based way of thinking is inspired by Euclidean geometry. In addition, Hobbes draws a comparison with arithmetic, arguing that in the same way as we can reckon with number words to establish universal truths, it is possible to apply syllogistic reasoning to other phenomena.³⁹ His favourite example is the syllogism *every man is a living creature, every living creature is a body, therefore every man is a body*.⁴⁰

Although such syllogistic reasoning is primarily a theoretical exercise, Hobbes also thinks of philosophy as having important practical implications. He specifically praises geometry for providing the theoretical foundation of the mechanical arts, including

³⁴ Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, p. 117.

³⁵ Gert, *Hobbes*, pp. 72f. This position is also defended by Kinch Hoekstra, “Hobbes on Law, Nature, and Reason”, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 41 (2003), pp. 111-120, 116-119.

³⁶ Gert, *Hobbes*, p. 73.

³⁷ *EL*, VI.6, p. 42; *Lev.*, VII.4, p. 36.

³⁸ *EL*, VI.1, p. 40; *Lev.*, IX.2, p. 47; *De Corp.*, I.8, pp. 10f. Note that Hobbes generally uses the terms ‘science’ and ‘philosophy’ interchangeably.

³⁹ *Lev.*, IV.9-10, p. 18.

⁴⁰ *De Corp.*, IV.7, p. 49.

chronometry, navigation, and architecture.⁴¹ Regarding the utility of moral and political philosophy, Hobbes points out in *De Corpore* that it is

to be estimated, not so much by the commodities we have by knowing these sciences, as by the calamities we receive from not knowing them. Now, all such calamities as may be avoided by human industry, arise from war, but chiefly from civil war; for from this proceed slaughter, solitude, and the want of all things.⁴²

This recalls the depictions of the state of nature in Hobbes's main political works. Particularly in *Leviathan*, Hobbes refers to a wide range of goods that are available in the civil state, but cannot be accessed (or developed) in the natural condition.⁴³

Nonetheless, a number of statements in Hobbes's works cast doubt on the view that he conceives of reason solely in terms of the kind of syllogistic ratiocination that inspires his philosophy of science. In *The Elements of Law*, for instance, Hobbes defines reason as a natural faculty, and also states that "God Almighty hath given reason to a man to be a light unto him".⁴⁴ Similarly, we read in *De Cive* that the natural law "is the law which God has revealed to all men through his eternal word which is innate in them, namely by natural reason".⁴⁵ One of the explanatory notes that Hobbes later added to *De Cive* provides the clearest statement on this matter. According to this clarification, the notion of natural reason does not mean that something is known by everyone, only that it *can be known* if people acquire the necessary skills.⁴⁶ Elsewhere in *De Cive*, Hobbes also contrasts natural reason with matters of faith, which are "beyond human understand-

⁴¹ *De Corp.*, I.7, p. 7. Cf. *De Hom.*, X.3, p. 39.

⁴² *De Corp.*, I.7, p. 8.

⁴³ Cf. sec. 4.1.

⁴⁴ *EL*, I.4, p. 21, XVIII.12, p. 103.

⁴⁵ *De Cive*, ch. XIV.4, p. 156 (emphasis in the original). Cf. *De Cive*, epistle, 10, p. 6. However, after Hobbes describes the natural laws as dictates of right reason, he also insists that "[b]y right reason [...] I mean not, as many do, an infallible Faculty". See *De Cive*, II.1, n., p. 33. In this context, Hobbes apparently identifies 'right reason' with 'natural reason'. Cf. footnote 76 below.

⁴⁶ *De Cive*, XIV.10, n., p. 164.

ing”.⁴⁷ Together, these passages suggest that his concept of natural reason denotes the full potential and inherent limitations of human understanding.

Statements in *Leviathan* lend further credence to the view that Hobbes invokes the concept of natural reason in this sense. As in *De Cive*, Hobbes suggests in *Leviathan* that the Word of God is revealed through natural reason.⁴⁸ In the Latin *Leviathan*, he argues that the schoolmen take natural reason away from young men,⁴⁹ which seems to imply that ecclesiastical doctrines prevent students from realising an inherent potential. Moreover, he explains in which sense human beings are rational creatures:

*Children [...] are not endowed with reason at all till they have attained the use of speech, but are called reasonable creatures for the possibility apparent of having the use of reason in time to come. And the most part of men, though they have the use of reasoning a little way, as in numbering to some degree, yet it serves them to little use in common life, in which they govern themselves, some better, some worse, according to the differences of experience, quickness of memory, and inclinations to several ends, but specially according to good or evil fortune, and the errors of one another.*⁵⁰

Thus, human beings may be called rational insofar as they have the potential to find out truth with the help of language, and despite the fact that most people fail to acquire much scientific knowledge. Yet Hobbes also states in this context that

they that have no *science* are in better and nobler condition with their natural prudence than men that by mis-reasoning [*sic*], or by trusting them that reason wrong, fall upon false and absurd general rules.⁵¹

In other words, knowledge from experience is generally preferable to deception through false reasoning or mistaken doctrines. These passages are echoed in the first chapter of *De Corpore*, where Hobbes states that “every man brought Philosophy, that is, Natural

⁴⁷ *De Cive*, XVIII.4, p. 238.

⁴⁸ *Lev.*, XXXI.3, p. 235.

⁴⁹ *Lev.*, XLVII.20 (OL), p. 487.

⁵⁰ *Lev.*, V.18, p. 26 (emphasis added). Cf. *Lev.*, XLVI.6, pp. 454f.

⁵¹ *Lev.*, V.1p, p. 26 (emphasis in the original).

Reason, into the world with him”.⁵² What is more, Hobbes argues in this regard that most people fail to realise this potential due to a want of the right method, and that those who rely on knowledge from experience are generally of sounder judgment than others who merely trust received doctrines or their teachers’ authority.⁵³

This suggests that the potential of natural reason may be realised to different degrees, with those using the right method being able to establish universal truths. People who make inferences based on their experience may still find out some truths,⁵⁴ while others are being led astray by false reasoning or mistaken doctrines. This reading finds further support in Hobbes’s reflections on language. Hobbes generally attributes great power to speech, which sets humans apart from other animals.⁵⁵ Thus, he states in *Leviathan* that, without language, “there had been amongst men, neither commonwealth, nor society, nor contract, nor peace, no more than amongst lions, bears, and wolves”.⁵⁶ Yet language does not merely account for the greatest human achievements, but also causes extreme misery, particularly civil war.⁵⁷ The latter seems to be connected to abuses of speech, as a consequence of which people end up deceiving themselves or others.⁵⁸

What distinguishes constructive from deceptive uses of language, according to Hobbes, is not the use of syllogism. Rather, this distinction appears to be due to whether or not people use words as verbal marks and signs for images or conceptions of the mind,

⁵² *De Corp.*, I.1, p. 1 (capitalisation in the original).

⁵³ *De Corp.*, I.1, pp. 1f.

⁵⁴ Experience could also be aided by history. As Hobbes states in his preface to *History 1*, p. vii: “[T]he principal and proper work of history being to instruct and enable men, by the knowledge of actions past, to bear themselves prudently in the present and providently towards the future”. That being said, Hobbes still insists that experience-based knowledge falls short of science. For instance, he states in *EL*, IV.10, p. 33: “Experience concludeth nothing universally”.

⁵⁵ *EL*, V.1, p. 2; *Lev.*, IV.1, p. 16; *De Hom.*, X.1, pp. 37f.

⁵⁶ *Lev.*, IV.1, p. 16.

⁵⁷ This comes out particularly in the bees-and-ants argument in *EL*, XIX.5, p. 105; *De Cive*, V.5, pp. 71f; and *Lev.*, XVII.10, p. 108. Also see *Lev.*, IV.3-4, p. 17; *De Hom.*, X.3, pp. 39f.

⁵⁸ In *Lev.*, IV.3-4, p. 17, Hobbes distinguishes between a number of uses and abuses of language.

which he regards as the general purpose of language.⁵⁹ As he puts it in *Leviathan*, establishing universal truths requires first of all to settle the meaning of words:

So that in the right definition of names lies the first use of speech, which is the acquisition of science; and in wrong or no definitions lies the first abuse, from which proceed all false and senseless tenets, which make those men that take their instruction from the authority of books, and not from their own meditation, to be as much below the condition of ignorant men as men endued with true science are above it. For between true science and erroneous doctrines, ignorance is the middle.⁶⁰

Thus, people may reckon with words whose meaning they have not clearly defined, and consequently end up with false conclusions. This would be worse than ‘natural ignorance’, i.e. the understanding of those who are untaught.

Hobbes has sometimes been considered a radical nominalist who regards meaning as entirely arbitrary and conventional, and truth as a function of language.⁶¹ Yet, more recently, some Hobbesian interpreters have argued for a more nuanced view. For instance, Cees Leijenhorst highlights that, according to Hobbes, external objects cause images or conceptions in the mind. Therefore, only the signifier (i.e. the labels that we attach to these conceptions) is supposed to be conventional, yet not the significant (i.e. mental images, which supposedly arise naturally in the mind).⁶² This would suggest that scientific knowledge and knowledge from experience are not mutually exclusive. As Tom Sorell puts it: “Instead of taking the place of experience, reason is supposed to transform, partly by introducing new ways of organising, experience”.⁶³

⁵⁹ *EL*, V.1, pp. 34f; *Lev.*, IV.3, pp. 16f; *De Corp.*, II.1-2, pp. 13-15.

⁶⁰ *Lev.*, IV.13, p. 19.

⁶¹ See, for instance, Dorothea Krook, “Hobbes's Doctrine of Meaning and Truth”, *Philosophy* 31 (1956), pp. 3-22. Cf. Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, p. 23.

⁶² Leijenhorst, *The Mechanisation of Aristotelianism*, pp. 44, 156-157. Also see Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, p. 152; Sorell, *Hobbes*, p. 31.

⁶³ Sorell, *Hobbes*, p. 31. For an illuminating discussion of Hobbes's views on scientific and historical knowledge and how they changed over time, see Gigliola Rossini, “The Criticism of Rhetorical Historiography and the Ideal of Scientific Method: History, Nature and Science in the Political Language of Thomas Hobbes”, in *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 303-324.

This view finds support in many passages throughout Hobbes's works. In *The Elements of Law*, for example, he argues that the truth of a proposition is not evident "until we conceive the meaning of the words or terms whereof it consisteth, which are always conceptions of the mind".⁶⁴ In the *Third Objections*, he points out that "reasoning depends on names, names on the imagination, and the imagination perhaps (as I myself hold) on the motion of bodily organs".⁶⁵ In *Leviathan*, we read that reason is not "gotten by experience *only*",⁶⁶ which seems to suggest that it is not meant to replace, but rather to perfect, experience. Furthermore, Hobbes criticises the terms used by scholastic philosophers, which do not correspond with anything conceivable and must therefore lead to absurd doctrines.⁶⁷ In *De Homine*, he also claims that "no sense can be had from [the words of the schoolmen]", and in *De Corpore* he argues that the "first beginnings [of scientific] knowledge are the phantasms of sense and imagination".⁶⁸

If reasoning depends on conceptions of the mind that we naturally acquire by experience, then the conditional nature of scientific knowledge needs to be reconsidered. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes distinguishes the absolute knowledge of fact, i.e. sense and memory, from conditional knowledge of consequences.⁶⁹ In addition, he points out:

No man can know by discourse [i.e. syllogistic reasoning] that this or that is, has been, or will be, which is to know absolutely, but only that if this be, that is, if this has been, that has been, if his shall be, that shall be, which is to know conditionally [...].⁷⁰

However, it seems that reasoning meets this condition for the truth of its conclusions insofar as it uses propositions about things that are known by experience. In other

⁶⁴ *EL*, VI.4, p. 41.

⁶⁵ *Third Objs.*, p. 112.

⁶⁶ *Lev.*, V.17, p. 25 (emphasis added).

⁶⁷ *Lev.*, V.5-15, pp. 23-25.

⁶⁸ *De Hom.*, X.3, p. 40; *De Corp.*, VI.1, p. 66.

⁶⁹ *Lev.*, VII.3, p. 35.

⁷⁰ *Lev.*, VII.3, p. 35.

words, reasoning does not, as is sometimes argued, merely establish conditional knowledge. This is also suggested by Hobbes's discussion of syllogism in *De Corpore*:

[W]hen this syllogism is made, *every man is a living creature, every living creature is a body*, therefore *every man is a body*, the mind conceives first an image of a man speaking or discoursing, and remembers that that, which so appears, is called *man*; then it has the image of the same man moving, and remembers that that, which appears so, is called *living creature*; thirdly, it conceives an image of the same man, as filling some place or space, and remembers that what appears so is called *body*; and lastly, when it remembers that that thing, which was extended and moved and spake [*sic*], was one and the same thing, it concludes that the three names, *man, living creature, and body*, are the names of the same thing, and that therefore [it] is a true proposition.⁷¹

As this passage clearly shows, syllogistic reasoning is supposed to raise a succession of images in the mind, and is therefore not simply a reckoning with words intended to establish merely conditional knowledge. Rather, reasoning uses propositions that are confirmed by experience, such as 'human beings are living creatures'.

The same may be true for the laws of nature, which Hobbes describes as precepts of reason. As was previously mentioned, Oakeshott regards them as mere "theorems about human preservation".⁷² Gert, on the other hand, maintains that Hobbesian reason has its own end, i.e. self-preservation.⁷³ Expanding on the latter view, Kinch Hoekstra suggests that the laws of nature "are conditional, but we already by our very nature fulfil the conditions".⁷⁴ This seems to be warranted in view of the analysis of Hobbes's concept of natural reason in this section. In particular, the laws of nature are conditional upon Hobbes's proposition that people avoid violent death, which cannot be confirmed through syllogistic reasoning. Rather, death-aversion is known by experience.⁷⁵ Thus,

⁷¹ *De Corp.*, IV.7, p. 49 (emphasis in the original).

⁷² Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, p. 117.

⁷³ Gert, *Hobbes*, p. 73.

⁷⁴ Hoekstra, "Hobbes on Law, Nature, and Reason", p. 116. Hoekstra also draws on Watkins' claim that the laws of nature are best understood as 'assertoric hypothetical imperatives' in a Kantian sense, i.e. as imperatives with a fixed end. See Watkins, *Hobbes's System of Ideas*, pp. 82-84.

⁷⁵ As has been suggested in sec. 3.3, Hobbes posits death-aversion in the sense that all people would, under certain conditions, inflict death on others in order to avoid it for themselves.

Hobbesian natural reason may be understood to encompass both empirical assumptions and knowledge of consequences. Thus, it dictates, for example, endeavouring peace insofar as this is conducive to avoiding death at the hands of another.⁷⁶

To conclude, this section has shown that Hobbes adopts a concept of natural reason, which denotes the full potential and inherent limitations of human understanding. Although he holds that this potential can only be fully realised with the help of syllogistic reasoning, people can, according to Hobbes, also find out some truths by experience alone. His principal concern seems to be with those who act contrary to natural reason because they were deceived by false reasoning or mistaken doctrines.

4.3 Scepticism as a weapon against seditious doctrines

This section considers claims about Hobbes's scepticism, which relate to issues such as the relationship between philosophy and religion, the foundations of knowledge, and the nexus of reason and rhetoric. It will be suggested that Hobbes's scepticism is grounded in his aforementioned concept of natural reason. In particular, it appears that Hobbes draws out the latter's sceptical implications for the purpose of disarming seditious ecclesiastical doctrines that could otherwise endanger the civil peace.

While it is often argued that Hobbes was a sceptic of some sort, commentators advance different interpretations of his scepticism. Emphasising similarities between Hobbes and late-medieval sceptics, Michael Oakeshott, for example, suggests that Hobbes was "not

⁷⁶ This raises a further question, namely how 'natural reason' relates to 'right reason'. Gregory Kavka, "Right Reason and Natural Law", p. 121, notes that Hobbes sometimes uses the latter term as a synonym for 'reason' or 'natural reason'. At other times, he apparently identifies 'right reason' with the process of reasoning, or with the conclusions reached by reasoning. This seems to be consistent with the above stated view that Hobbes adopts a concept of natural reason, defined as the full potential of human understanding, which can be realised with the right method.

less persuaded of [the] fallibility and limitations [of reasoning] than Montaigne himself".⁷⁷ This assertion appears to be justified insofar as Hobbes, indeed, assumes that there are limits to human understanding. In particular, Hobbes holds that philosophy cannot reveal the truth about matters of faith.⁷⁸ He also invokes St Paul's warning towards a corruption of faith "through philosophy and vain deceit",⁷⁹ which is echoed in his own condemnation of 'vain philosophy' in Book 4 of *Leviathan*. In addition, Hobbes clearly states in *De Corpore* that philosophy "excludes *Theology*".⁸⁰

However, Oakeshott appears to be mistaken when he claims that Hobbes's conception of philosophy as conditional knowledge of causes and effects entirely excludes matters of religion.⁸¹ After all, Hobbes indicates his acceptance of a causal proof of God in *Leviathan*.⁸² While he denies that we can have an image or conception of God in the same way as we conceive sensible objects, he holds that we can infer the fact of His existence like a blind man can confirm the presence of a fire after experiencing its effects. If we suppose the actuality of conceptions of the mind, their necessary external causes, and a succession of prior causes, we may infer the existence of a "first and eternal cause of all things, which is that which men mean by the name of God".⁸³ This casts doubt on the

⁷⁷ Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, pp. 25f. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 10f. In these passages Oakeshott also associates Hobbes's scepticism with his conception of reason. Cf. sec. 4.2.

⁷⁸ It has often been suggested that Hobbes was an atheist, a claim that can be traced back to his own time when the charge of atheism conveyed a wider meaning than today. See Samuel I. Mintz, *The Hunting of Leviathan: Seventeenth-Century Reactions to the Materialism and Moral Philosophy of Thomas Hobbes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), p. 67. More recently, a number of Hobbesian interpreters have argued that Hobbes was not opposed to religion as such, but rather to a particular kind of theology that applied philosophy to matters of faith. See, for example, Alan Cromartie, "The God of Thomas Hobbes", *The Historical Journal* 51 (2008), pp. 857-879; Arrigo Pacchi, "Some Guidelines Into Hobbes's Theology", *Hobbes Studies* 2 (1989), pp. 87-103; Patricia Springborg, "Hobbes on Religion", in *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes*, ed. Tom Sorell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 346-380.

⁷⁹ *Lev.*, XLVI.30, p. 463. Cf. Col 2:8.

⁸⁰ *De Corp.*, I.8, p. 10 (emphasis and capitalisation in the original).

⁸¹ Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, p. 17.

⁸² See *Lev.*, XII.6, p. 64.

⁸³ *Lev.*, XII.6, p. 64. At least, this would follow if we assume that our imaginings must have external causes, and that an infinite regress of causes is inconceivable.

idea that reasoning merely joins together propositions,⁸⁴ and points to Hobbes's concept of natural reason, which also incorporates knowledge of fact.⁸⁵

The idea that human beings have an inherent potential to understand the natural world, moreover, indicates that reason and religion are not mutually exclusive. As Kinch Hoekstra aptly observes, Hobbes rather “identifies natural reason with the word of God, who rules as God of nature via natural reason”.⁸⁶ This connection has received surprisingly little attention in the literature on Hobbes.⁸⁷ A 1634 letter by Hobbes, which mentions Galileo's *Dialogue*, is most revealing in this regard:

My first businesse in London, was to seek for Galileo's dialogues; [...] I heare say it is called in, in Italy, as a booke that will do more hurt to their religion then all the bookes haue done of Luther and Calvin, such opposition they thinke is between their Religion, and naturall reason.⁸⁸

Hobbes seems to suggest that ecclesiastics in Italy consider Galileo's *Dialogue* a threat because they fear that their religion is opposed to natural reason. In contrast to this alleged position of the Roman Church, Hobbes himself points out in the introduction of *Leviathan* that nature is “the art whereby God hath made and governs the world”.⁸⁹ Understood thus, the fact of divine Creation enables the acquisition of knowledge about the natural world, rather than being opposed to science and philosophy.

⁸⁴ Cf. Cromarite, “The God of Thomas Hobbes”, p., 868. Yet this does, of course, not provide an answer to the question whether or not Hobbes truly believed in God. Alan Cromartie, “The God of Thomas Hobbes”, p., 877, for instance, finds it “hard to believe that Hobbes had ‘faith’”. However, it seems very difficult to make an assertion based on Hobbes's writings about this issue.

⁸⁵ See sec. 4.2.

⁸⁶ Hoekstra, “Hobbes on Law, Nature, and Reason“, p. 119.

⁸⁷ Douglass Jesseph highlights the debts of Hobbes's natural philosophy to Galileo, and argues that both thinkers sought to unlock the principles underlying the Book of Nature. See Douglas M. Jesseph, “Galileo, Hobbes, and the Book of Nature”, *Perspectives on Science* 12 (2004), pp. 191-211. Richard Popkin suggests that, with few exceptions, seventeenth-century philosophers conceived of knowledge as being revealed through the Book of Nature or the Word of God, i.e. natural science or Scripture. See Richard H. Popkin, “The Religious Background of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy”, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 25 (1987), pp. 35-50, 43. However, Popkin does not explicitly mention Hobbes in this context.

⁸⁸ *Corr. I*, Letter 10 (1634), pp. 19f.

⁸⁹ *Lev.*, intr. 1, p. 3.

In general, the role of the Word of God appears to have been an important concern in the early-modern period. In their search for truth, many thinkers at the time turned away from Scripture as a source of divine revelation towards the ‘text’ of Creation—often conceived as the Book of Nature.⁹⁰ In doing so, they adopted a distinctive position on the relationship between the Word of God and human languages, i.e. they held that the latter were disconnected from the divine Word due to the corruption of language at the Tower of Babel.⁹¹ Therefore, scholars also abandoned the search for traces of the Word of God with the methods of Renaissance humanism, i.e. philology, textual criticism, and historiography.⁹² The authority of the Scripture was, of course, still recognised. However, Protestant theologians and early-modern philosophers advanced naturalistic readings of passages about issues such as miracles and transubstantiation.⁹³

Hobbes seems to adopt a similar position on the Word of God and the Book of Nature. In *De Cive* and *Leviathan*, he distinguishes between three ways in which the Word could be revealed: first, through natural reason; secondly, supernaturally by God Himself; thirdly, through prophets who speak on God’s behalf.⁹⁴ In effect, nature and Scripture are the two sources of knowledge about the Word that available to ordinary human beings. While Hobbes does not use the phrase ‘Book of Nature’, passages in his works show that he does conceive of reason as a means to unlock the natural order of Creation. In *De Cive*, for instance, he refers to the “government of the world, in which God the first mover of all things, produces natural effects through the order of secondary caus-

⁹⁰ James J. Bono, *The Word of God and the Languages of Man: Interpreting Nature in Early Modern Science and Medicine, Vol 1: Ficino to Descartes* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), pp. 64-84.

⁹¹ Bono, *The Word of God and the Languages of Man*, pp. 70f.

⁹² Bono, *The Word of God and the Languages of Man*, p. 49-60.

⁹³ Nicholas Jolley, “The Relation Between Theology and Philosophy”, in *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy, Vol. 1*, eds. Daniel Garber and Michael Ayres (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 363-392, 377-388.

⁹⁴ *De Cive*, XV.3, pp. 172f; *Lev.*, XXXI.3, p. 235.

es”.⁹⁵ In addition, in the introduction of *Leviathan*, he seems to directly allude to Galileo’s notion of the Book of Nature when he states his intention to acquire knowledge about human nature “not by reading of *books*, but of *men*”.⁹⁶

Like other Protestant thinkers at the time, Hobbes doubted that miracles were still being performed after the time of the prophets.⁹⁷ Moreover, he argues in *Leviathan* that “in all miracles the work done is not the effect of any virtue in the prophet, because it is the effect of the immediate hand of God”.⁹⁸ On this basis, Hobbes cautions against pretence to miracle, such as in the case of transubstantiation.⁹⁹ Before something be declared a miracle, Hobbes insists, it is necessary to establish “whether it be such as no man can do the like by his natural power, but that it requires the immediate hand of God”.¹⁰⁰ This shows that Hobbes attributes an important role to natural reason in the interpretation of the Scripture.¹⁰¹ The explanations that he provides for supposedly supernatural phenomena, such as miracles, thereby seem to reveal the sceptical implications of his concept of natural reason. Yet, given that Hobbes also identifies natural reason with the Word of God, his scepticism seems to be less radical than Oakeshott suggests.

In particular, Hobbes’s views on nature as a source of knowledge about the Word of God seem incompatible with a fundamental scepticism regarding the foundations of knowledge. Richard Tuck has considered this possibility. He argues that Hobbes’s philosophy attempted to overcome what was then perceived as a crisis of knowledge after

⁹⁵ *De Cive*, XIII.1, p. 142. Cf. *De Corp.*, epistle, p. xiii.

⁹⁶ *Lev.*, intr. 3, p. 4 (emphasis in the original). Similarly, Hobbes points out in *Hist. Eccl.*, p. 349, that philosophers “read the world not books”.

⁹⁷ *Lev.*, XXVI.41, n. 15, p. 187.

⁹⁸ *Lev.*, XXXVII.8, p. 297.

⁹⁹ *Lev.*, XXXVII.13, p. 299. According to the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, a priest turns bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ when performing the mass.

¹⁰⁰ *Lev.*, XXXVII.13, p. 299. Cf. *Lev.*, XXXVII.3-4, p. 294.

¹⁰¹ On Hobbes’s approach to scriptural exegesis, cf. Johnston, *The Rhetoric of Leviathan*, pp. 134-163; and Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, pp. 383-431.

the rediscovery of ancient scepticism.¹⁰² Hobbes's reading of Descartes's *Discourse on the Method* supposedly stimulated his interest in these questions.¹⁰³ Yet other Hobbesian interpreters have put forward severe objections to Tuck's thesis. Their criticisms concern, among other things, problematic historical conjectures, a selective reading of Hobbes, and a misrepresentation of Descartes' hyperbolical doubt.¹⁰⁴ While it is true that Hobbes discusses the fallibility of sense-perception in *The Elements of Law*,¹⁰⁵ Tom Sorell convincingly argues that he does not address himself to the Cartesian doubt, i.e. the idea that *all beliefs* might be caused by the operation of a demon.¹⁰⁶

According to Sorell, Hobbes's *Third Objections* to Descartes's *Meditations* show that he simply did not grasp the hyperbolical doubt.¹⁰⁷ Yet Hobbes's response to Descartes does not necessarily testify to a lack of ingenuity, but may also be explained in view of his concept of natural reason. The latter seems to preclude the idea of a malicious demon, as purported by Descartes in his formulation of the hyperbolical doubt. In *The Elements of Law*, for instance, Hobbes argues that the heathen belief in spirits is due to a lack of knowledge about the causes of phantasms in the mind.¹⁰⁸ Likewise, he suggests in *Leviathan* that people mistake their own imaginings for demons, and traces this misunderstanding back to heathen origins.¹⁰⁹ He also provides figurative readings of biblical passages about spirits, including, for example, the entering of Satan into Judas,

¹⁰² Tuck, *Hobbes*, p. 7. Also see Tuck, "Optics and Sceptics: The Philosophical Foundations of Hobbes's Political Thought", in: *Conscience and Casuistry in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Edmund Leites (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 236-63.

¹⁰³ Tuck, *Hobbes*, pp. 17-19. In addition, Tuck argues that Hobbes shared Grotius' concern to develop a post-sceptical natural law doctrine. This issue was briefly addressed in sec. 3.2.

¹⁰⁴ For these objections to Tuck's claims, see. Tom Sorell, "Hobbes's Objections and Hobbes's System", in *Descartes and his Contemporaries: Mediations, Objections, and Replies*, eds. Roger Ariew and Marjorie Grene (Chicago: The Chicago University Press, pp. 83-96; Sorell, "Hobbes Without Doubt", pp. 121-135; and Perez Zagorin, "Hobbes's Early Philosophical Development", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 54 (1993), 505-518.

¹⁰⁵ See *EL*, II.10, p. 26.

¹⁰⁶ Sorell, "Hobbes Without Doubt", 126f.

¹⁰⁷ Sorell, "Hobbes's Objections and Hobbes's System", pp. 88-90.

¹⁰⁸ *EL*, XI.6, pp. 66f.

¹⁰⁹ *Lev.*, XLV.2-4, pp. 436f. Cf. *Lev.*, II.8, pp. 10f.

which he interprets as the development of a treacherous intention.¹¹⁰ What is more, Hobbes seems to regard the very idea of demons inspiring or infusing thoughts as evidence of deception, yet of a strikingly different kind of deception than the one considered by Descartes. In *Leviathan*, he thus refers to “this superstitious fear of spirits [...] by which crafty ambitious persons abuse the simple people”.¹¹¹

In view of such statements, it seems plausible that Hobbes did not address himself to the Cartesian doubt (i.e. the idea that all beliefs might be caused by the operation of a malicious demon) because this notion is contrary to his concept of natural reason. As was mentioned above, the latter implies scepticism towards supernatural appearances that may also be accounted for in terms of natural causes and effects. Deception may, for instance, be explained with regard to the teaching of seditious doctrines. Indeed, as was shown in sec. 4.2, Hobbes identifies false teachings as one of the main reasons for why human beings fail to realise their inherent potential of natural reason.

Hobbes pays great attention to this kind of deception in Book 4 of *Leviathan*, titled ‘Of the Kingdom of Darkness’. Thereby, he does not merely blame the schoolmen for their ‘vain philosophy’, but also suggests that their doctrines, and the teachings of the Church, have caused a more fundamental deception of all beliefs:

The enemy has been here in the night of our natural ignorance and sown the tares of spiritual errors. And that, first, by abusing and putting out the light of the Scriptures; for we err, not knowing the [OL: the meaning of] the Scriptures. Secondly, by introducing the demonology of the heathen poets, that is to say, their fabulous doctrine concerning demons, which are but idols or phantasms of the brain, without any real nature of their own distinct from human fancy [...]. Thirdly, by mixing with the Scripture diverse relics of the religion and much of the vain and erroneous philosophy of the Greeks (especially

¹¹⁰ *Lev.*, XXXIV.1-14, pp. 261-270, XLV.4-9 pp. 437-441.

¹¹¹ *Lev.*, II.8, p. 11.

of Aristotle). Fourthly, by mingling with both these, false and uncertain traditions, and feigned and uncertain history.¹¹²

Instead of cultivating the seeds of natural reason with the help of the right method, the Church and the schoolmen have thus abused the people's natural ignorance. Among other things, they cause 'darkness' by interpreting Scripture contrary to the light (of reason?), and by falsely applying Aristotelian philosophy to matters of faith. In addition, Hobbes argues that, as a consequence of this deception, Christendom has been haunted by foreign and civil war "almost from the time of the Apostles".¹¹³

Hobbes's account of the 'Kingdom of Darkness' has been interpreted in terms of the more rhetorical nature of *Leviathan*, compared to the two earlier versions of his political philosophy in *De Cive* and *The Elements of Law*. Quentin Skinner, for instance, maintains that the use of eloquence in *Leviathan*, and specifically of the master tropes of simile and metaphor, shows Hobbes's increasing scepticism concerning the power of reason to persuade an audience, as a consequence of which he supposedly returned to his earlier humanist interests.¹¹⁴ According to Skinner's interpretation, Hobbes's scepticism thus primarily concerns the relationship between reason and rhetoric.

Specifically, Skinner claims that Hobbes invokes the image of the 'Kingdom of Darkness' in order to demonise his ecclesiastical opponents.¹¹⁵ Yet surely Hobbes does not simply employ particular figures of speech, but seeks to engage the popular imagination, which was then largely based on biblical themes and motifs. As part of this strategy, he advances a figurative interpretation of conventional religious doctrines, including

¹¹² *Lev.*, XLIV.2, p. 412. Cf. Matt 13:25.

¹¹³ *Lev.*, XLIV.2, p. 412.

¹¹⁴ Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric*, pp. 343-375.

¹¹⁵ Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric*, pp. 389f.

the one of the ‘Kingdom of Darkness’. While Hobbes rejects the idea of a literal dominion of Satan, he seems to suggest in Book 4 of *Leviathan* that the cause of ‘darkness’ are the very people who deceive everyone with their doctrine of evil spirits.¹¹⁶

In seventeenth-century England, the papacy was commonly regarded as the antichrist and enemy of the true church.¹¹⁷ Given Hobbes’s apparent exploitation of this view, commentators have noted with some astonishment that he denies that the pope is actually the antichrist.¹¹⁸ Yet it comes as no surprise that Hobbes rejects the idea of a cosmological struggle between good and evil. Interpreting biblical passages about Satan metaphorically, he reduces the idea of an antichrist to a matter of false pretence.¹¹⁹ At the same time, Hobbes points out that “for all metaphors there is some real ground that may be expressed in proper words”.¹²⁰ In this spirit, he argues that

the kingdom of darkness, as it is set forth in [...] the Scripture, is nothing else but a *confederacy of deceivers that, to obtain dominion over men in this present world, endeavor by dark and erroneous doctrines to extinguish in them the light, both of nature and of the gospel, and so to disprepare them for the kingdom of God to come.*¹²¹

The truth behind the image of the papal antichrist thus lies in the fact that the Church is part of a league that aims to acquire dominion over all Christians.¹²² Far from condemning the ecclesiastics as literally demoniacal—which would commit him to a doctrine of evil spirits—, Hobbes provides a natural explanation of deception. Book 4 of *Leviathan* reaches its finale with a simile between the ‘Kingdom of Darkness’ and a kingdom of

¹¹⁶ By adopting such an interpretation of biblical passages about Satan, Hobbes may seek to subvert the threat of damnation. In *Behemoth*, pp. 4-8, Hobbes identifies the threat of excommunication and damnation as one of the means by which ecclesiastics challenged the sovereign authority, and consequently as one of the causes of the English Civil War.

¹¹⁷ Christopher Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeenth-Century England* (London: Verso, 1990), p. 4.

¹¹⁸ Edwin Curley, footnote 63, in *Lev.*, p. 377; Martinich, *The Two Gods of Leviathan*, pp. 320f; Springborg, “Hobbes on Religion”, p. 367.

¹¹⁹ *Lev.*, XXVIII.12-13, p. 308, XLII.87-88, pp. 376-378.

¹²⁰ *Lev.*, XXVIII.12-13, p. 308.

¹²¹ *Lev.*, XLIV.1, p. 411 (emphasis in the original).

¹²² That Hobbes generally seeks to substitute a metaphorical for a literal understanding of the ‘Kingdom of Darkness’ is affirmed in *Answer*, pp. 356f; and *QLNC*, pp. 210f.

fairies, which exists only “in the fancies of ignorant people”.¹²³ This image suggests that deception can be overcome by natural reason, the sceptical implications of which Hobbes deploys against the application of philosophy to matters of faith, orthodox biblical interpretations, demonology, and other ecclesiastical doctrines. If this reading is granted, it casts doubt on Skinner’s claim that Book 4 in *Leviathan* reveals Hobbes’s increasing scepticism concerning the persuasive power of reason.

To conclude, this section has suggested that Hobbes neither entertains any fundamental doubts about the foundations of knowledge, nor draws a sharp distinction between reason and religion. Rather, he conceives of natural reason as a source of knowledge about the Word of God and the Book of Nature. Hobbes’s scepticism appears to be grounded in this concept of natural reason, and it has been argued that he mainly uses this notion for the purpose of disarming seditious ecclesiastical doctrines.

4.4 Religious analogies for peace and rebellion

Hobbes does not only advance figurative and naturalistic readings of the bible in order to counter the latter’s potential seditious implications, as has been suggested in the last section. He also invokes different religious parallels and analogies to put across his own views on the good of peace. In particular, this section will discuss Hobbes’s claim that the commonwealth offers some sort of salvation on earth, and the related idea that the sin of rebellion is naturally punished with civil war and violent death.

Some Hobbesian interpreters have compared his political philosophy to Augustine’s doctrine of the Fall, although not without some caveats. Michael Oakeshott argues that

¹²³ *Lev.*, XLVII.33, p. 484.

while he resembles Augustine in that he envisions a predicament arising from pride, Hobbes regards the latter as a consequence of human nature, rather than of a depravity of the same.¹²⁴ Similarly, Sheldon Wolin finds that Hobbes's political philosophy does not appropriate the idea of an original sin. Nonetheless, he finds that the state of nature may be understood as "a fall [...] from the highest level of human achievement, life in a civilised society".¹²⁵ According to Tom Sorell's reading, Hobbes's account of the natural condition assumes that human beings have inherited the original sin from Adam, therefore being vulnerable to death and unable to lead an innocent life.¹²⁶

To begin with, it is true that some of Hobbes's statements appear to suggest that he accepts the notion of an inherited sin, i.e. the idea that human nature has been corrupted after the Fall. In *De Cive's* preface to the readers, Hobbes considers the objection that he portrays people as evil by nature, and responds that this "perhaps, though harsh, should be conceded, since it is clearly said in holy Scripture".¹²⁷ However, in the remainder of this passage Hobbes clearly rejects the view that human nature is inherently sinful. To the contrary, "evil is simply want of reason at an age when it normally accrues to men by nature governed by discipline and experience of harm".¹²⁸ This suggests that evil results from a lack of understanding, particularly of the consequences of human actions, which recalls Hobbes's concept of natural reason.¹²⁹ The latter seems to imply that evils such as civil war are neither due to human nature nor an inherited defect, but rather a result from the failure to realise the potential of reason.

¹²⁴ Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, pp. 58-60.

¹²⁵ Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, p. 237.

¹²⁶ Sorell, *Hobbes*, pp. 33-35. A similar interpretation is proposed by M.M. Goldsmith, *Hobbes's Science of Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 177.

¹²⁷ *De Cive*, pref. 12, p. 11.

¹²⁸ *De Cive*, pref. 13, p. 11. In a similar vein, Hobbes states in *De Hom.*, XIII.4, p. 65, that "dispositions are corrected by adverse events".

¹²⁹ As has been suggested in sec. 4.2, Hobbes's concept of natural reason denotes the full potential and inherent limitations of human understanding.

Hobbes does, of course, accept the most obvious implication of the doctrine of the Fall, i.e. that human beings became mortal through the original sin. In *Leviathan*, he states that, after Adam committed the sin of eating from the forbidden tree of knowledge of good and evil, “mortality entered upon himself and his posterity”.¹³⁰ However, it seems that Hobbes also seeks to reduce the practical implications of Adam’s sin, for he rejects the view that individuals need to pay a ransom in order to be redeemed by God. Rather, the entire work of redemption was supposedly accomplished by Jesus’ death.¹³¹ Thus, Hobbes points out that “Jesus Christ hath satisfied for the sins of all that believe in him; and therefore recovered to all believers that ETERNAL LIFE which was lost by the sin of Adam”.¹³² While those who believe that Jesus is the Christ are already redeemed however, they will not come to enjoy eternal life until after the resurrection.¹³³

Yet Hobbes also suggests in *Leviathan* that mortal human beings are eligible to some sort of secular salvation, i.e. peace in the commonwealth. He argues that “to be saved from sin is to be saved from all the evil and calamities that sin hath brought upon us”.¹³⁴ Thereby, Hobbes distinguishes between salvation from all evils, including human mortality, and salvation from particular evils. Specifically, he cites biblical passages that suggest that God—in His capacity as the king of the Israelites—saved them “from their temporal enemies”.¹³⁵ In addition, Hobbes goes at some length to establish the heterodox view that the Kingdom of Heaven (i.e. divine salvation after the resurrection) will be on earth.¹³⁶ This suggests an essential similarity between salvation and the peace provided by the state, which only differ insofar as the former fully restores immortality, while the

¹³⁰ *Lev.*, XXXVIII.2, p. 301.

¹³¹ Cf. Martinich, *The Two Gods of Leviathan*, pp. 267-271.

¹³² *Lev.*, XXXVIII.2, p. 302 (capitalisation in the original). Cf. *Lev.*, XXXVIII.25, pp. 313f.

¹³³ *Lev.*, XXXVIII.3, p. 303.

¹³⁴ *Lev.*, XXXVIII.15, p. 310.

¹³⁵ *Lev.*, XXXVIII.16, p. 310.

¹³⁶ *Lev.*, XXXVIII.17-23, pp. 310-313. Cf. Martinich, *The Two Gods of Leviathan*, pp. 261f.

latter merely takes away the fear of violent death. Conversely, if people return to the state of nature in the event of civil war,¹³⁷ this may, as Wolin suggests, be understood as a fall from the highest level of human achievement.

However, Wolin seems to be mistaken when he claims that this is a fall without sin.¹³⁸ It is true that, according to Hobbes, human beings cannot be blamed for evils they commit in order to preserve themselves in the state of nature.¹³⁹ However, people are liable for reverting to this condition in the first place. This comes out in *De Cive*, where Hobbes alludes to the Genesis when he discusses the doctrine that subjects may judge good and evil for themselves.¹⁴⁰ Thereby, he likens rebellion to the original sin:

[A]nyone whom [authors of sedition] want killed as a *Tyrant*, rules either by right or without right. If without right, he is a public enemy [*hostis*] and is rightly killed, though this should not be called *Tyrannicide* but *hosticide*. If he holds power rightly, the divine question applies: *Who told you that he was a Tyrant, unless you have eaten of the tree of which I told you not to eat?* For why do you call him a *Tyrant* whom *God* made a King, unless you, a private person, are claiming for yourself a knowledge of good and evil?¹⁴¹

Thus, the notion of lawful tyrannicide presupposes that subjects pretend knowledge of good and evil, which Hobbes regards as most dangerous for civil peace.¹⁴²

In his controversy with Bishop Bramhall, Hobbes likewise identifies private knowledge of good and evil with Adam's forbidden judgement of God's command.¹⁴³ In *Leviathan*,

¹³⁷ In *Lev*, XIII.11, p. 77, Hobbes states that "it may be perceived that what manner of life there would be where there were no common power to fear, by the manner of life which men that have formerly lived under a peaceful government use to degenerate into, in a civil war".

¹³⁸ Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, p. 237.

¹³⁹ Hobbes holds that, insofar as human beings in the natural condition possess a natural right to all things, they do not sin if they act contrary to the laws of nature. See sec. 3.2.

¹⁴⁰ *De Cive*, XII.1, pp. 131f. Cf. Gen. 2.17; Gen. 3.5.

¹⁴¹ *De Cive*, XII.3, p. 133 (emphasis and capitalisation in the original). Pat Moloney also notes that Hobbes is referring to Adam's sin, but apparently shares Sorell's view that Hobbes accepts the notion of inherited sin, rather than, as suggested here, merely invoking the idea of the original sin as an analogy. See Pat Moloney, "Leaving the Garden of Eden: Linguistic and Political Authority in Thomas Hobbes", *History of Political Thought* 18 (1997), pp. 242-266, 263f.

¹⁴² *De Cive*, XII.3, p. 133 (emphasis in the original).

he refers to the forbidden tree of knowledge as a “trial of *Adam*’s obedience”.¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, Hobbes discusses the doctrine “That every private man is judge of good and evil actions” in the chapter on things that weaken the commonwealth.¹⁴⁵ Even though he does not draw an explicit analogy to *Adam*’s sin in this context, his description of this seditious doctrine may well be an allusion to the Scripture.

These statements seem to be related to Hobbes’s account of the ‘Kingdom of God by Nature’ in *Leviathan*. In consideration of God as the author of nature, he posits that breaches of natural laws necessarily provoke some evil consequences:

There is no action of man in this life that is not the beginning of so long a chain of consequences as no human providence is high enough to give man a prospect to the end. And in this chain are linked together both pleasing and displeasing events, in such manner as he that will do anything for his pleasure must engage himself to suffer all the pains annexed to it; and these pains are the natural punishments for those actions, which are the beginning of more harm than good.¹⁴⁶

Among other things, Hobbes finds that injustice is necessarily followed by the violence of enemies, negligent government by rebellion, and rebellion by slaughter.¹⁴⁷ This reflects his view that “natural punishments must be naturally consequent to the breach of the laws of nature”.¹⁴⁸ Alluding to the English Civil War, he also points out in the Latin edition of *Leviathan* that those who had advocated seditious doctrines “have been punished by a civil war”.¹⁴⁹ These statements indicate that he regards the state of nature as a fall from peace and a consequence of the ‘original sin’ of rebellion.

¹⁴³ *QLNC*, p. 269.

¹⁴⁴ *Lev.*, XX.17, p. 134 (emphasis in the original). Cf. *Lev.*, XXXV.3, p. 272.

¹⁴⁵ *Lev.*, XXIX.6, p. 212.

¹⁴⁶ *Lev.*, XXXI.40, p. 352. Cf. *Lev.*, XXVIII.8, pp. 204f.

¹⁴⁷ *Lev.*, XXXI.40, p. 352.

¹⁴⁸ *Lev.*, XXXI.40, p. 352.

¹⁴⁹ *Lev.*, XXXI.41 (OL), n. 15, p. 244.

In accordance with his statements on ‘natural punishments’, Hobbes also advances a figurative interpretation of biblical passages about the devil. As he points out in *Leviathan*, “the names of *the Enemy* (or *Satan*), *the Accuser* (or *Diabolus*), *the Destroyer* (or *Abaddon*) [...] set not forth to us any individual person [...] but only an office or quality”.¹⁵⁰ In particular, Hobbes identifies the devil with temporal enemies, which recalls his account of the ‘Kingdom of Darkness’, as discussed in sec. 4.3. In response to Bishop Bramhall, Hobbes also points out that “Satan is evil to us, because he seeketh our destruction, but good to God, because he executeth his commandments.”¹⁵¹ This seems to suggest that evil fulfils a purpose in the greater scheme of things. In the same way as punishments are generally ordained “to the end that the will of men may thereby be better disposed to obedience”,¹⁵² metaphorical devils may act as enforcers for the laws of nature (which prescribe what is necessary for peace and self-preservation).

Hobbes’s controversy with Bramhall on free will and predestination seems to confirm this perspective on evil. Bramhall took issue with Hobbes’s determinism, which “makes the first cause, that is, God Almighty, to be the introducer of all evil and sin into the world”.¹⁵³ To counter the Bishop’s accusation, Hobbes stresses that “God is the *cause*, not the *author*, of all actions and motions”.¹⁵⁴ Although God is the original cause of sin insofar as He is the first mover of the universe, this does not, as argued by Bramhall, imply His responsibility.¹⁵⁵ Rather, Hobbes regards God as the author of nature, which is intelligible to us in terms of necessary causes and effects.¹⁵⁶ In this capacity, He may also be understood to provide guidance for human conduct: “Why may not God make

¹⁵⁰ *Lev.* XXVIII.12, p. 308 (emphasis and capitalisation in the original). Cf. *Answer*, p. 356.

¹⁵¹ *QLNC*, p. 192.

¹⁵² *Lev.*, XXVIII.1, p. 203.

¹⁵³ *QLNC*, p. 111.

¹⁵⁴ *QLNC*, p. 215 (emphasis added).

¹⁵⁵ *QLNC*, pp. 113, 298, 448.

¹⁵⁶ See sec. 4.3.

the affliction [...] the necessary causes of those he hath elected; their own affliction serving therein as chastisements, and the afflictions of the rest as examples?”¹⁵⁷

Hobbes’s reading of the Book of Job points to a similar conception of evil. This book was at the time often interpreted as counselling forbearance of suffering.¹⁵⁸ Similarly, Hobbes expresses that he regards it as a parable about human suffering, rather than as an account of biblical history.¹⁵⁹ However, Hobbes’s political philosophy does not merely advocate forbearance of suffering, but spells out how great suffering (such as civil war) can be avoided by following the laws of nature. Like the Leviathan who, on God’s behalf, caused Job to repent, the Hobbesian sovereign is meant to be the greatest power on earth and king of the children of pride.¹⁶⁰ In *Leviathan*, Hobbes, in fact, acknowledges that such an absolute power may not be without disadvantages.¹⁶¹ Yet, as he points out in the same breath, the greatest evil “proceeds from the subjects’ disobedience and breach of those covenants from which the Commonwealth hath its being”.¹⁶²

Hence, Hobbes invokes different religious analogies to put across the conclusions of his political philosophy. In particular, it has been shown in this section that he likens the peace provided by the state to salvation on earth. Moreover, he proposes a reinterpretation of the biblical story of the Fall as a warning against rebellion, which likens the latter to Adam’s forbidden judgement of good and evil. These parallels indicate that great suffering can be avoided if people follow the precepts of natural reason.

¹⁵⁷ *QLNC*, p. 214.

¹⁵⁸ Gordon Hull, “Against This Empusa: Hobbes’s Leviathan, and the Book of Job”, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 10 (2002), pp. 3-29, 6-10.

¹⁵⁹ *Lev.*, XXXIII.12, p. 254 (emphasis in the original).

¹⁶⁰ *Lev.*, XXVIII.27, p. 210. For an interesting discussion of the Leviathan symbol, see Noel Malcolm, “The Name and Nature of Leviathan: Political Symbolism and Biblical Exegesis”, *Intellectual History Review* 17 (2007), pp. 21-39, 30-35.

¹⁶¹ *Lev.*, XX.18, p. 135.

¹⁶² *Lev.*, XX.18, p. 135 (capitalisation in the original).

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that Hobbes's concept of natural enmity does not preclude reconciliation. To the contrary, Hobbes holds that peace is necessary for self-preservation, and therefore considers seeking it a fundamental natural law. Yet lasting peace does not simply imply the absence of the continual fear of violent death, but also encompasses many other goods that are unavailable in the state of nature. Thus, Hobbes also suggests that the hope to attain peace lets individuals submit themselves to an absolute sovereign power. Similarly, people who already live in the civil state should remain obedient in order to make an already existing peace lasting and secure.

Given that Hobbes describes the laws of nature as rational precepts, this chapter has further examined his views on reason. It has become apparent that Hobbes does not, as is sometimes claimed, reduce reason to syllogistic reasoning. Rather, he adopts a concept of natural reason that denotes the full potential and inherent limitations of human understanding. While this potential can only be completely realised with the help of language, the latter may also deceive people. More specifically, it has been argued that Hobbes draws out the sceptical implications of his concept of natural reason in order to counter the threat of seditious ecclesiastical doctrines. Nevertheless, Hobbes does not seem to entertain fundamental doubts concerning the human capacity to find out truth, and seems to hold that—provided they have not been deceived—even untaught people, whose judgement relies on experience alone, could follow the laws of nature.

Hobbes's views on reason indicate that he does not only regard enmity, but also reconciliation, as natural in some sense. After all, he suggests that human beings are rational creatures that are in principal able to realise the good of peace. Yet Hobbes is also

aware that he does not address people in the natural condition, but an audience that has already been conditioned by what he regards as seditious doctrines.

Following this discussion of Hobbes's views on reason and the good of peace, the next chapter will further consider what is necessary for reconciliation, i.e. trust and subjection to a sovereign. These aspects of Hobbes's political thought explain what distinguishes subjects of the commonwealth from enemies in the state of nature.

5. Enmity, trust, and subjection to the sovereign

This chapter examines how Hobbes's concept of natural enmity relates to his views on subjection to the sovereign, which he considers necessary for realising the promise of civil peace. The first section analyses the distinction between enemies and subjects. It is argued that, for Hobbes, subjection supposes reciprocal trust between sovereign and subjects. The second section reconsiders the distinction between public and private enemies. Analysis of Hobbes's Latin terminology shows that, while he describes all antagonists outside the civil state as *hostes* (public enemies), opponents within the boundaries of the law are merely *inimici* (private enemies). This suggests a dynamic distinction between public and private enemies, which is further examined in the third section with regard to the rights of sovereigns and subjects. It is argued that the right of war and subjection to the sovereign are mutually exclusive. Although people in the civil state may still resist punishment or assaults, Hobbes holds that they are no longer permitted to take pre-emptive action against anyone whom they consider a threat.

5.1 Trust as a condition of subjection to the sovereign

Considering that Hobbes argues for the need of an absolute sovereign power to deliver people from the war of all against all, he seems to attribute great importance to fear. Undoubtedly, this passion plays an important role in law enforcement, and may also motivate submission to the sovereign.¹ Yet the distinction that Hobbes draws between enemies and subjects, which will be examined in this section, shows that his political philosophy is not all about fear, but also attributes great importance to trust.

¹ Hobbes maintains that the fear of violent death motivates people to seek peace. Yet, as was shown in sec. 4.1, he also holds that people could be driven by the hope for a better life.

Hobbes has often been associated with a politics of fear. Leo Strauss, for instance, argues that Hobbes's concern with this passion distinguishes his characteristically modern political philosophy from pre-modern thought, which rather focused on virtue and the good life.² However, it seems that previous writers already considered the importance of fear to some extent. For example, as was shown in sec. 2.2, Augustine clearly discerns the political function of fear of enemies with regard to the fall of Rome. Neal Wood puts forward a different view of the characteristic differences between modern and pre-modern perspectives. He suggests that thinkers such as Machiavelli, Jean Bodin, and Hobbes envisioned a 'domestication' of political fear, i.e. they sought to substitute the fear of an absolute sovereign power for the fear of external enemies.³

Other commentators also consider similarities between the fear of enemies and the fear of an absolute sovereign. For example, Stephen Holmes points out that, for Hobbes, "a foreign enemy and a sovereign ruler are functional equivalents", given that both could provide internal cohesion and prevent faction.⁴ This claim finds some support in Hobbes's writings. In *The Elements of Law*, for instance, we read that alliances in the state of nature come about "by the fear of a present invader, or by the hope of a present conquest, or booty".⁵ Yet Hobbes also states in this work that

even at that time when men are in tumult, though they agree a number of them to one mischief, and a number of them to another; yet, in the whole, they are amongst them-

² Thereby, Strauss draws out apparent similarities between Hobbes and Machiavelli. See Leo Strauss, "Niccolo Machiavelli", in *History of Political Philosophy*, eds. Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1972), pp. 271-292. For similar views, see Ioannis D. Evrigenis, *Fear of Enemies and Collective Action* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 128-130; Corey Robin, *Fear: The History of a Political Idea* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), esp. pp. 3-30; and Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, p. 218.

³ Wood, "Sallust's Theorem", pp. 183-189.

⁴ Holmes, "Does Hobbes Have a Concept of the Enemy?", p. 374.

⁵ *EL*, XIX.4, p. 105.

selves in the state of hostility, and not of peace; like the seditious Jews besieged in Jerusalem, that could join against their enemies, and yet fight amongst themselves [...].⁶

This suggests that fear of common enemies is insufficient for establishing lasting peace.

In *De Cive*, Hobbes argues with regard to concord outside the civil state that human beings “will refuse to help each other or to keep peace among themselves, unless compelled to do so by a common fear”.⁷ Likewise, he expresses in *Leviathan* that people keep peace among themselves if they have a common enemy.⁸ However, they would revert to war among themselves “when either they have no common enemy, or he that by one part is held for an enemy is by another part held for a friend”.⁹

Hobbes’s statements clearly show that cohesion due to the fear of enemies falls short of the lasting peace provided by the commonwealth. In addition, it has been noted that the fear of the sovereign power could not be exactly like fear of enemies, for in this case individuals would have no reason to submit themselves to the sovereign. Peter Steinberger thus distinguishes the immediate fear of others in the state of nature from fear in the civil state, which is “merely hypothetical”. Provided that subjects remain obedient, they have reason to hope that their fear does not materialise.¹⁰ By contrast, people in the state of nature are likely to suffer regardless of how they themselves behave.

Furthermore, it seems that the role of fear cannot be understood in isolation. Some interpreters have recently stressed the role of trust in Hobbes’s political philosophy, which may act as a counterweight to fear. Larry May argues that it is reasonable for people in the state of nature to develop ‘pacifist attitudes’, by which he means the disposition to

⁶ *EL*, XX.2, p. 110.

⁷ *De Cive*, V.4, p. 70.

⁸ *Lev.*, XVII.4-5, p. 107.

⁹ *Lev.*, XVII.5, pp. 107f.

¹⁰ Steinberger, “Hobbesian Resistance“, p. 863.

trust others and only use violence as the last resort.¹¹ May finds that this could explain the transition to the civil state. However, as was suggested in sec. 4.1, such a quasi-historical reading is at odds with statements suggesting that people in the natural condition are absorbed by the pursuit of survival and other short-term desires.

Deborah Baumgold provides an alternative account of the importance of trust. Rather than considering its role in the state of nature, she argues that the social contract institutes a relationship of reciprocal trust between sovereign and subjects.¹² While the sovereign guarantees the life and liberty of subjects, the latter promise obedience in exchange. Baumgold particularly emphasises the distinction between servants and slaves that Hobbes introduces based on an adaption of Roman ideas on this subject. Unlike slaves, who cannot be trusted to obey their master, servants are supposed to enjoy considerable liberty as part of their exchange relationship with the sovereign.¹³

Although Baumgold concentrates on comparing servants with slaves, her reading also points to an important distinction between subjection and hostility. This comes out particularly in Hobbes's reflections on sovereignty acquired by conquest. In *The Elements of Law*, he advances the view that subjects are released from their obligation to obey the sovereign when "the power of a commonwealth is overthrown", implying that they can make a new covenant with the conqueror.¹⁴ Hobbes clearly states that such a covenant supposes that the conqueror has sufficient trust into the one who is to become his servant.¹⁵ *De Cive* contains a similar account of sovereignty acquired by conquest.¹⁶ Unlike

¹¹ May, *Limiting Leviathan*, pp. 224-239.

¹² Baumgold, "'Trust' in Hobbes's Political Thought", pp. 1-18.

¹³ Baumgold, "'Trust' in Hobbes's Political Thought", pp. 11-13.

¹⁴ *EL*, XXI.15, pp. 125f, XXII.2, pp. 126f, XXII.7, p. 128

¹⁵ *EL*, XXII.3, p. 127.

¹⁶ *De Cive*, VIII.1, pp. 102f

in *The Elements of Law*, however, Hobbes does not only point out that those who become servants will enjoy liberty, but also highlights that their lives will be spared.¹⁷ Hobbes also seems to suggest that enslaved prisoners of war remain in a state of hostility and, therefore, retain their natural right to all things, for he points out that if slaves “kill their *Master*, they are not acting against the natural laws”.¹⁸

The account of sovereignty acquired by conquest in *Leviathan* makes the distinction between subjects and enemies even more clear. In this work, Hobbes carefully distinguishes between victory and voluntary submission to a conqueror:

It is not [...] the victory that giveth the right of dominion over the vanquished, but [the latter’s] own consent. Nor is he obliged because he is conquered (that is to say, beaten, and taken or put to flight), but because he cometh in, and submitteth to the victor; nor is the victor obliged by an enemy’s rendering himself (without promise of life) to spare him for this his yielding to discretion [...].¹⁹

This suggests that people remain enemies until the victor and the vanquished have made a covenant. Indeed, Hobbes also states concerning somebody who submits himself to a conqueror that “then only is his life in security, and his service due, when the victor hath trusted him with his corporal liberty”.²⁰ Furthermore, *Leviathan* provides a more developed account of how the commonwealth is dissolved:

[W]hen in a war [...] the enemies get a final victory, so as (the forces of the commonwealth keeping the field no longer), there is no farther protection in their loyalty, then is the commonwealth DISSOLVED, and every man at liberty to protect himself by such courses as his own discretion shall suggest to him.²¹

Thus, Hobbes holds that subjects retain the right to submit themselves to an invading power when the old sovereign can no longer protect them. While the criterion of ‘final

¹⁷ *De Cive*, VIII.1, pp. 102f

¹⁸ *De Cive*, VIII.4, pp. 103f (emphasis in the original).

¹⁹ *Lev.*, XX.11, p. 131.

²⁰ *Lev.*, XX.12, p. 131.

²¹ *Lev.*, XXIX.23, pp. 218f (capitalisation in the original).

victory' is certainly ambiguous, it shows that Hobbes regards the trust relationship that characterises subjection as reciprocal. Once people have no more hope for protection from the sovereign, they cease to be subjects and retain their natural right.

A number of statements throughout Hobbes's works lend further credence to the view that he envisions a relationship of reciprocal trust between sovereign and subjects. In both *De Cive* and *Leviathan*, for example, Hobbes expresses that sovereigns would violate the subjects' trust if they fail to cater for the people's safety.²² He also mentions on some occasions that a sovereign must have great confidence in the fidelity of ministers, counsellors, and other powerful subjects.²³ In the *Dialogue*, Hobbes draws a distinction between crimes committed "by one that has been trusted" and the acts of an "open Enemy",²⁴ which shows that people in the civil state are meant to have different expectations about each other's behaviour than those in the state of nature.

Yet, as Hobbes's distinction between subjects and enemies reveals, trust is not merely a contingent feature of life in the civil state, but a condition of subjection. This can be further clarified in view of the natural law that prescribes pardon. In all of his main political works, Hobbes reasons that people ought to forgive those who repent and promise not to offend in the future.²⁵ For instance, he states in *Leviathan* that

*upon caution of the future time, a man ought to pardon the offences past of them that, repenting, desire it. For PARDON is nothing but the granting of peace, which (though granted to them that preserve in their hostility be not peace but fear, yet) not granted to them that give caution of the future time is sign of an aversion to peace [...].*²⁶

²² *De Cive*, XIII.4, pp. 143f; *Lev.*, XXIV.7, p. 162.

²³ *Behemoth*, p. 83; *Lev.*, XXV.15, p. 171, XXIX.20, p. 218, XXX.28, n. 13, p. 232.

²⁴ *Dialogue*, p. 71. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes also draws a distinction between legal punishment and 'acts of hostility' which will be further considered in sec. 7.2.

²⁵ *EL*, XVI.9, p. 91; *De Cive*, III.10, p. 48; *Lev.*, XV.18, p. 96.

²⁶ *Lev.*, XV.18, p. 96 (emphasis and capitalisation in the original).

This precept of reason seems applicable to the acquisition of sovereignty by conquest, in which case the victor saves the life and liberty of former enemies in exchange for their promise of obedience. Although Hobbes does not explicitly mention trust, he states in the above passage that pardon should not be granted—out of fear alone—to those who remain in a hostile state of mind.²⁷ This shows that, especially in the case of sovereignty acquired by conquest, subjection supposes trust.

However, Hobbes apparently does not consider trust a *pre-condition* of life in the civil state, but rather suggests that trust is created in the event of submission. More specifically, it seems that repentance is supposed to allow for the possibility of establishing a relationship of trust. In the chapter on the passions in *The Elements of Law*, Hobbes points out that revenge “aimeth not at the death, but at the captivity and subjection of an enemy”.²⁸ In addition, he refers in this chapter to the “tears of reconciliation”, which are supposedly shed when somebody’s quest for revenge “is suddenly stopped or frustrated by the repentance of the adversary”.²⁹ In *Leviathan*, Hobbes also mentions “the sudden stop made to their thoughts of revenge, by reconciliation” as one of the causes of weeping.³⁰ This suggests that he conceives of repentance and reconciliation in terms of a sudden change of mind, much in the same way as, for Hobbes, repentance of sins and faith in Jesus Christ are all that is required for divine salvation.³¹

Hobbes further elaborates his ideas on reconciliation in the context of the natural law that dictates gratitude. In *The Elements of Law*, he already argues that nobody ought to

²⁷ The same caveat is expressed in *EL*, XVI.9, p. 91; and *De Cive*, III.10, p. 48.

²⁸ *EL*, IX.6, p. 52.

²⁹ *EL*, IX.14, p. 55.

³⁰ *Lev.*, VI.43, p. 32.

³¹ Cf. *Lev.*, XLIII.19, pp. 407f. For parallels and analogies between the good of peace and salvation, see the discussion in sec. 4.4.

suffer for trusting in others' charity or good affection, for if this was the case "men will not dare to confer mutually to each other's defence, nor put themselves into each other's mercy upon any terms whatsoever; but rather abide by utmost and worst event of hostility".³² Similarly, Hobbes points out in *De Cive* that without gratitude, "all kindness and trust between men will [...] be lost, and all benevolence too".³³ In *Leviathan*, he posits the precept of natural law to show gratitude on the following grounds:

[N]o man giveth but with intention of good to himself, because gift is voluntary, and of all voluntary acts the object is to every man his own good; of which, if men see they shall be frustrated, there will be *no beginning of benevolence or trust; nor, consequently, of mutual help, nor of reconciliation of one man to another*; and therefore they are to remain still in the condition of war [...].³⁴

Thereby, Hobbes seems to refer back to the second law of nature, according to which people ought to relinquish their natural right to all things. As he suggests in this context, the sovereign, who is not a covenanting party, is supposed to receive the subjects' natural right as a free gift.³⁵ This would explain why there could be no beginning of trust and reconciliation without gratitude. If the sovereign disappoints the hope of those who submitted themselves to him, hostility and war are likely to prevail.

To conclude, Hobbes's statements suggest that the social contract requires trust, albeit not among the covenanting parties.³⁶ Rather, trust merely signifies that, on the one hand, individuals repent and promise obedience to the sovereign, and on the other hand, the sovereign accepts them as his subjects. Both of these actions imply a certain amount of trust. As a consequence of subjection to the sovereign, there may also be "reconciliation

³² *EL*, XVI.6, p. 90.

³³ *De Cive*, III.8, p. 47.

³⁴ *Lev.*, XV.16, p. 95 (emphasis added).

³⁵ *Lev.*, XIV.5-12, pp. 80-82.

³⁶ Hobbes's theory does not envision a social contract between sovereign and subjects, but between the subjects themselves. Cf. sec. 5.3.

of one man to another”,³⁷ i.e. peace among all members of society. Understood thus, trust does not replace, but complement and reinforce, the importance of fear in Hobbes’s political philosophy. In particular, it seems that sovereignty supposes trust between ruler and subjects, as the former would otherwise have no reason to spare the vanquished and allow considerable liberty to potential enemies.³⁸

5.2 The distinction between public and private enemies

As has been demonstrated in sec. 3.1 and 3.2, Hobbes’s concept of natural enmity is markedly different from the conventional distinction between public and private enmity. Neither does he conceive of antagonism solely in terms of a public struggle between organised collectives, nor does he regard it as merely a matter of private emotions. Rather, his concept of natural enmity signifies that hostility arises outside the commonwealth because human beings are competitive creatures that, in this condition, also retain a natural right to harm or subdue others in order to satisfy their desires.

Hobbes’s own views on the distinction between public and private enemies will be further examined in this section. Thereby, the focus is on the question of how natural enmity is transformed through subjection to a sovereign. Although human beings are supposed to be at peace with each other in the civil state, Hobbes also considers the possibility that subjects relate to one another as personal rivals. Focussing on his terminology of enmity, this analysis seeks to bring out the differences between antagonisms without

³⁷ *Lev.*, XV.16, p. 95.

³⁸ It has been noted before that Hobbesian sovereigns have to fear that their subjects turn into enemies, and that they are therefore, in some basic sense, *accountable*. See Baumgold, “Trust’ in Hobbes’s Political Thought”, pp. 13f; and Tom Sorell, “The Burdensome Freedom of Sovereigns”, in *Leviathan After 350 Years*, eds. Tom Sorell and Luc Foisneau (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), pp. 183-196, 184. In focussing on the accountability of sovereigns, however, these accounts do not bring out the role of trust in Hobbes’s distinction between subjects and enemies.

and within the civil state. While there is little variation in Hobbes's English works, the Latin writings and translations reveal his use of the different terms *inimicus* (private enemy), *hostis* (public enemy), and *adversarius* (adversary).

To begin with, it needs to be said that Hobbes's terminology of enmity in *The Elements of Law* is not particularly revealing. In this work, Hobbes uses the word 'enemy' indiscriminately for both private opponents and antagonists in the state of nature, and regardless of whether he is referring to groups or individuals.³⁹ He also employs the word 'adversary' as a synonym for 'enemy', signifying private rivals, opposed factions, and enemies in the state of nature.⁴⁰ Sometimes Hobbes specifically refers to 'common enemies'.⁴¹ Yet this phrase does not seem to signify a different kind of antagonist, but merely denotes the fact that the other is an enemy of more than one person.

De Cive is more illuminating as it reveals Hobbes's use of the different Latin terms for enemies. Hobbes employs the word *hostis* (public enemy) when he is referring to foreign enemies or individuals in the state of nature.⁴² Sometimes he adds signifiers for clarification, such as when he argues that private individuals cannot decide who is *hostis publicus* (a public enemy).⁴³ In a similar vein, Hobbes uses the term *hostis externus* (external enemy) when discussing matters of defence.⁴⁴ The word *inimicus* (private enemy) appears on a few occasions, including a reference to an opponent in a democratic assembly, a remark about killing a private adversary, and a biblical quotation that

³⁹ *EL*, IX.2, p. 51, IX.6, p. 52, X.9, p. 63, XIV.13, p. 81, XV.13, p. 86, XVI.9, p. 91, XIX.3, p. 104.

⁴⁰ *EL*, IX.6, p. 52, IX.14, p. 55, XIV.13, pp. 80f, XXV.8, p. 140.

⁴¹ *EL*, XIX.6, p. 106, XX.2, p. 109.

⁴² *De Cive OL*, I.12, p. 96, I.14, p. 97, VI.7, p. 139, VII.18, p. 159, IX.3, p. 165, XII.9, p. 191, XIII.8, p. 198, XIII.13, p. 201, XIV.20, p. 216, XVII.27, pp. 277f.

⁴³ *De Cive OL*, XVII.11, p. 260.

⁴⁴ *De Cive OL*, VI.17, p. 147, XIII.6, p. 197.

adopts *inimicus* as the Vulgate term.⁴⁵ Hobbes occasionally also uses the word *adversarius* (adversary) as a synonym for both *inimicus* and *hostis*.⁴⁶

Hobbes seems to be relatively indifferent towards terminology in purely theoretical considerations, where he also uses verb conjugations to refer to the other, or employs phrases such as *altera pars* (the other side).⁴⁷ However, it appears that Hobbes consistently uses the word *hostis* when he seeks to establish the legal status of particular opponents. For example, he states that the Roman Church is in a *status hostilis* (state of hostility) towards the state in order to show that the Church must not be allowed to govern the subjects' consciences.⁴⁸ In a similar vein, Hobbes argues that declaring the sovereign a tyrant would amount to declaring him *hostis* (a public enemy).⁴⁹

One of the notes that Hobbes added later to *De Cive* provides a helpful clarification of the different meanings of *inimicus* and *hostis*. In this annotation, he seeks to defend his previously stated view that atheists are God's enemies:

Ego vero ita atheis *inimicus* sum, ut legem aliquam, juxta quam condemnare eos injustitiae possem, et diligentissime quaesiverim et vehementer cupiverim; sed cum nullam invenerim quaesivi proxime, quo nomine tantopere Deo exosi homines, ab ipso appellarentur. Deus autem de atheo sic loquitur; dixit insipiens in corde suo, non est Deus. Itaque peccatum eorum in eo genere collocavi, in quod genus ab ipso Deo relatam fuerat. Deinde Atheos *hostes* Dei esse ostendo; nomen autem *hostis* quam a summis imperantibus eo nomine puniri posse confirmo.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ *De Cive OL*, IV.7, p. 124, X.14, p. 179, XV.11, p. 224.

⁴⁶ *De Cive OL*, XIII.7, p. 197, XIV.19, n., p. 215.

⁴⁷ *De Cive OL*, I.14, p. 97, V.3, p. 131.

⁴⁸ *De Cive OL*, XVII.27, p. 277.

⁴⁹ *De Cive OL*, VII.3, p. 151, XII.3, p. 187. Silverthorne translates *hostis* in this context as 'public enemy' (*De Cive*, pp. 93, p. 133), yet it seems more plausible that a tyrant would only be an enemy of those individuals who declare him a tyrant, given that Hobbes states in *De Cive OL*, XVII.11, p. 260, that *hostis publicus* can only be declared by the sovereign.

⁵⁰ *De Cive OL*, XIV.19, n., p. 215 (emphasis added). Silverthorne's English translation: "As a matter of fact I am such an enemy to Atheists that I have strongly desired and diligently sought some law by which I could condemn them for injustice. But since I have not found such a law, I have gone on to ask what name God would give to men who are so exceedingly hostile to him. This is what God says

In this passage, Hobbes uses the word *inimicus* to describe his own sentiments towards atheists that led him probe their criminal liability. He argues that, in the absence of a civil law against atheism, atheists should be punished on the basis of the natural law, which supposedly allows treating them as *hostes*. Elsewhere in *De Cive*, Hobbes invokes the same reasoning to establish that the sovereign can apply his right of war against rebels and traitors, who are *hostes* of the commonwealth.⁵¹

The analysis of Hobbes's Latin terminology so far suggests that *inimicus* puts emphasis on adverse sentiments, while *hostis* implies the application of the right of war. Contrary to the conventional distinction between public and private enemies, however, these terms do not necessarily refer to different kinds of antagonists in his works. Rather, Hobbes uses the word *hostis* to describe all enemies outside the civil state.⁵²

These findings are further confirmed by Hobbes's Latin translation of *Leviathan*, in which he explicitly likens hostility amongst individuals to the international state of war. The pattern of translation is revealing. Whereas Hobbes translates phrases such as 'common enemy' or 'declared enemy' literally into Latin, he considers *hostis* without a signifier an adequate rendering of 'foreign enemy'.⁵³ Usually he employs the singular of *hostis* in reference to individuals, and uses the plural of this word for the English phrase 'the enemy'.⁵⁴ This indicates that Hobbes was aware of whether he was referring to

of the atheist: 'The fool hath said in his heart: there is no God.' And thus I have placed their sin in the same class as it was placed by God himself. And then I show that atheists are enemies of God; and the name, enemy, I think, is sometimes stronger than 'unjust man'. Finally, I insist that he may be justly punished on this account both by God and by sovereigns." *De Cive*, p. 164.

⁵¹ *De Cive OL*, VI.2, p. 137, XIV.22, p. 217.

⁵² In which sense rebels and traitors may be considered as being *outside* the commonwealth will be further examined in sec. 7.1 and 7.2.

⁵³ *Lev OL*, XVII.4, p. 128, XVII.5, p. 129, XXVIII.13, p. 225, XXVIII.21, p. 228, XXIX.10, p. 234, XLII.68, p. 396.

⁵⁴ *Lev OL*, IV.4, p. 24, XIV.17, p. 108, XV.5, p. 113, XXI.22, p. 169, XXIV.9, p. 188, XXVIII.21, p. 228, XXXVIII.13, p. 329, XXXVIII.17, p. 331, XL.10, p. 345. However, it appears that phrases such as

groups or individuals, but deliberately chose the word *hostis* to refer to, and perhaps highlight similarities between, all kinds of opponents in a state of nature.

The word *inimicus* appears in the Latin *Leviathan* only where Hobbes refers to private rivals who wish each other ill, or alludes to the bible.⁵⁵ In accordance with the etymology of this word, he uses *inimicus* as the antonym of *amicus* (friend).⁵⁶ However, it seems that private enemies, that are solely defined in terms of their sentiments, can only exist in the civil state, for otherwise Hobbes consistently refers to hostile individuals as *hostes*. He even employs the latter word when he argues that the passion of anger corresponds with the image of an enemy in the mind.⁵⁷ This confirms that Hobbes's thought differs from the conventional static distinction between private enmity, which is defined by adverse sentiments, and public enmity, understood as a matter of right.

Yet the word *amicus* does not only signify a personal friend, but could also refer to an ally. Hobbes contrasts the status of *hostis* with that of *civis* (citizen or subject) in order to establish that the sovereign can apply his right of war against rebels, who are supposedly public enemies.⁵⁸ However, he also holds that people in the state of nature are either *hostes* (enemies) or *amici* (allies).⁵⁹ Likewise, Hobbes points out that commonwealths become *amici* if they form an alliance.⁶⁰ This suggests that hostility outside the civil state can be described as *natural*, as it is not only defined in terms of public right

communis hostis (common enemy) are generally in the singular.

⁵⁵ *Lev OL*, XIX.8, p. 144, XXVI.24, p. 203, XLIV.3, p. 450, XLV.7, p. 456.

⁵⁶ *Lev OL*, XIX.8, p. 144.

⁵⁷ *Lev OL*, II.6, p. 11.

⁵⁸ *Lev OL*, XXVIII.13, p. 225, XXVIII.23, p. 228.

⁵⁹ *Lev OL*, XVII.5, p. 129.

⁶⁰ *Lev OL*, XXIV.14, p. 190, XXVIII.23, p. 228. Note that the latter passage differs considerably from the English *Leviathan*, a variance that is not marked in the Curley edition (*Lev.*, p. 208).

but also implies adverse sentiments towards the other. Understood thus, natural enmity can be contrasted with the status of *civis* and the disposition of *amici*.⁶¹

In addition to Hobbes's published works, his surviving Latin correspondence gives some further clues to his distinction between public and private enemies. On some occasions Hobbes employs the word *inimicus* to refer to his private opponents.⁶² Furthermore, he contrasts the term *amicus* with *inimicus*. In a 1669 letter, he writes that the congratulations of his friends (*amici*) and the envy of his enemies (*inimici*) are the sweetest consolations of his old age.⁶³ In another letter, Hobbes expresses, in a similar vein, that he values testimonies of his friends (*amici*), but attributes little importance to the rebukes of his enemies (*inimici*).⁶⁴ Thus, he appears to employ the word *inimicus* in the conventional sense to refer to private enemies within the civil state.

To conclude, Hobbes's Latin terminology confirms that his thought is markedly different from the conventional distinction between public and private enmity. He uses the term *hostis*, which usually denotes a public struggle between organised totalities, to refer to all kinds of *natural* enemies, i.e. to both groups and individuals in a state of nature. In addition, his terminology shows that *inimici*, i.e. private enemies that are solely defined in terms of their adverse sentiments, could only exist in the civil state. This suggests that, according to Hobbes, outright hostility can be transformed into private rivalry if people submit themselves to a sovereign power. The next section will further examine this dynamic distinction in view of the rights of sovereigns and subjects.

⁶¹ As has been shown in sec. 3.1 and 3.2, Hobbes holds that hostility in the natural condition is both a matter of right (the natural right of war) and of the passions.

⁶² *Corr. 1*, Letter 52 (1647), p. 156, Letter 112 (1658), p. 428.

⁶³ *Corr. 2*, Letter 187 (1669), p. 710.

⁶⁴ *Corr. 2*, Letter 197 (1674), p. 745.

5.3 The sovereign's exclusive right of war and peace

What is peculiar about Hobbes's social contract theory is that it does not envision a covenant between ruler and subjects, but amongst the subjects themselves. This allows him to use the idea of a contract, which was commonly employed to advocate limitations of power, as the basis of his argument for absolute and undivided sovereignty.⁶⁵ Hobbes's notion of the social contract has implications for the rights that sovereigns and subjects retain in the civil state, which will be analysed in this section.

It is well known that Hobbes's social contract theory conceives of the state's constitution in terms of a transfer of right.⁶⁶ In all of his main political works, he insists that rights cannot be literally transferred. Rather, the transfer of natural right supposedly takes away the subjects' liberty to hinder the sovereign in the exercise of his natural right, which he retains from the natural condition.⁶⁷ All people who agree to the social contract are meant to lay down their right of nature in this way in order to constitute a common power, which also brings into existence the commonwealth. As Hobbes reasons in *The Elements of Law* and *De Cive*, this implies a submission of everybody's strength to the sovereign's will.⁶⁸ In *Leviathan*, he emphasises that individuals, moreover, need to submit their judgement in order to constitute the state:

⁶⁵ As Hobbes spells out in *Lev.*, XVIII.3-7, pp. 110-113, not being a contracting party, the sovereign is neither legally restricted in the exercise of his authority nor directly accountable to the people. Cf. Zagorin, *Hobbes and the Law of Nature*, p. 64. However, there seems to be some tension between the two different models considered by Hobbes, i.e. sovereignty by institution and sovereignty acquired by conquest. As has been shown in sec. 5.1, the latter comes into existence through a covenant between the victor and the vanquished. Hence, the sovereign appears to be a covenanting party in this model, yet not in the case of sovereignty instituted through a social contract.

⁶⁶ In *The Elements of Law*, Hobbes first develops this argument in three steps: first, he spells out how the natural right can be transferred through a covenant (Ch. XV); secondly, he argues that the keeping of covenants is the most fundamental law of nature (Ch. XVI); thirdly, he spells out how people can escape from the natural condition by establishing a sovereign power (Ch. XIX). In *De Cive* (Ch. III), Hobbes integrates the first two steps in his discussion of the fundamental natural law. In *Leviathan* (Ch. XVI), he further introduces a new intermediate step by elaborating issues of authorisation and representation with regard to the artificial personality of the state.

⁶⁷ *EL*, XV.3, p. 82; *De Cive*, II.4, p. 34; *Lev.*, XIV.6, p. 81.

⁶⁸ *EL*, XIX.7, pp. 106f; *De Cive*, V.7-8, pp. 72f.

The only way to erect such a common power as may be able to defend them from the invasion of foreigners and the injuries of one another [...] is to confer all their power and strength upon one man, or upon an assembly of men, that may reduce all their wills, by plurality of voices, unto one will, which is as much as to say, to appoint one man or assembly of men to bear their person, and every one to own and acknowledge himself to be author of whatsoever he that so beareth their person shall act, or cause to be acted, *in those things which concern the common peace and safety*, and therein to submit their wills, every one to his will, and their judgments, to his judgment.⁶⁹

Although *The Elements of Law* and *De Cive* do not mention submission of judgement as a condition for the constitution of a common power, other statements in these writings suggest that Hobbes always regarded this as a requirement of civil peace. For instance, he points out in the two earlier works that subjects must submit their opinions in religious controversies to the sovereign's judgement.⁷⁰ In *De Cive*, Hobbes also pays great attention to the doctrine that subjects can judge good and evil for themselves, which he describes as one of the main causes of the dissolution of the state.⁷¹

Hobbes's argument seems to imply that the sovereign retains his natural right to all things. In particular, Hobbes argues that the sovereign must have a right to everything required for securing the civil peace and defending the state against foreign enemies. In *The Elements of Law* and *De Cive*, he subsumes these rights under the notions of the 'sword of justice' and the 'sword of war', from which he further derives a right to judgement in matters of controversy.⁷² In *Leviathan*, Hobbes states that

because the end of this institution is the peace and defence of them all, and whosoever has the right to whatsoever to the end has right to the means, it belongeth of right to whatsoever man or assembly that hath the sovereignty, to be judge both of the *means of peace and defence*, and also of the *hindrances and disturbances* of the same, and to whatsoever he shall think necessary to be done, both *beforehand* (for the preserving of

⁶⁹ *Lev.*, XVII.13, p. 109 (emphasis added).

⁷⁰ *EL*, XXV.13, p. 153; *De Cive*, XVII.12, p. 215.

⁷¹ *De Cive*, XII.1, pp. 131f. For Hobbes's views on the forbidden judgement of good and evil and other seditious doctrines, see the discussions in sec. 4.4 and 7.1.

⁷² *EL.*, XX.8-10, pp. 112f; *De Cive*, VI.5-9, pp. 78f.

peace and security, by prevention of discord at home and hostility from abroad) and, when peace and security are lost, *for the recovery* of the same.⁷³

This passage recalls Hobbes's conception of the natural right, which specifically contains a right to take pre-emptive action against anyone who is considered a threat.⁷⁴ Similarly, the sovereign has a right to judge "hindrances and disturbances" of peace and security. In addition, Hobbes argues that he is permitted to restore peace and security after a foreign or domestic conflict. This suggests that sovereign authority encompasses a right to decide who the enemy is, and who has ceased being so.

Other statements seem to confirm this view. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes also points out that "against enemies, whom the commonwealth judgeth capable to do them hurt, it is lawful by the [sovereign's] original right of nature to make war".⁷⁵ Furthermore, he maintains that enemies could become subjects upon their promise of obedience to a conqueror.⁷⁶ These passages suggest that the Hobbesian sovereign possesses a right of war and peace that contains a right to discern between subjects and public enemies. This is also how Hobbes describes the sovereign's right of war and peace in *De Cive*:

[N]o citizen may privately determine who is an ally [*amicus*] or public enemy [*hostis publicus*] of the commonwealth, nor when to make war or alliance, peace or truce; nor may he decide what is for or against the interest of the commonwealth in the matter of who are to be citizens [*cives*], and who should have what authority, nor what doctrines, morals, and public pronouncements are useful, and what unions of which men.⁷⁷

Thus, Hobbes holds that subjects must submit themselves to the sovereign's judgement of the enemy. Moreover, the sovereign decides who should be admitted as a member of

⁷³ *Lev.*, XVIII.8, p. 113 (emphasis added).

⁷⁴ See sec. 3.2.

⁷⁵ *Lev.*, XXVIII.23, p. 208.

⁷⁶ *Lev.*, XX.10, pp. 130f, R&C VII, p. 491. As was shown in sec. 5.1, this is how people are supposed to become subjects in the case of sovereignty acquired by conquest.

⁷⁷ *De Cive*, XVII.11, p. 214.

the commonwealth, which seems to suggest that subjects could ultimately jeopardise their own status if they refuse to accept the sovereign's commands.

Hobbes generally conceives the status of subjects in relation to the opposite status of an enemy. In *De Cive*, he introduces this dichotomy as a corollary of his social contract argument: “[W]e derived the origin of a commonwealth [...] from an agreement by a number of men, in such terms that it is apparent that all must consent or be regarded as enemies [*hostes*]”.⁷⁸ Hobbes also specifies this dichotomy in other passages. In a discussion of a child's obligation to obey the mother in the state of nature, he states that “everyone is an enemy [*hostis*] to everyone whom he neither obeys nor commands”.⁷⁹ Similarly, when he argues that atheists should be treated as God's enemies, he points out that “men are enemies [*hostis*] to each other when they are not subject [*subjiciuntur*] one to another or to any common ruler”.⁸⁰ While this statement contains the additional possibility of subjection to a common ruler, it confirms that people either relate to each other as enemies or as members of a commonwealth.

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes likewise argues that “all men that are not subjects [*cives*] are either enemies [*hostes*] or else they have ceased from being so by some precedent covenants”.⁸¹ As the corresponding passage in the Latin *Leviathan* shows, the option of being neither subject nor enemy is only available for commonwealths, which become allies [*amici*] when they form an alliance.⁸² Yet it seems that, unlike states, private individuals must relate to each other as either subjects or enemies [*hostes*].

⁷⁸ *De Cive*, XI.1, p. 127.

⁷⁹ *De Cive*, IX.3, p. 108.

⁸⁰ *De Cive*, XIV.19, p. 164.

⁸¹ *Lev.*, XXVIII.23, p. 208.

⁸² *Lev OL*, XXIV.14, p. 190, XXVIII.23, p. 228. Cf. sec. 5.2.

Hobbes's views on the sovereign's exclusive right of war helps to explain the scope of the right to self-defence that subjects, according to Hobbes, retain.⁸³ Regarding their use of force of against one another, he points out in *The Elements of Law* and *De Cive* that the civil state excludes the right of the 'private sword'.⁸⁴ Yet Hobbes also argues in *De Cive* that people have no obligation to abandon their right to resist "death, wounds or other bodily harms".⁸⁵ For this reason, a subject "is understood to retain the right of defending himself against violence".⁸⁶ In his most extensive treatment of this matter in *Leviathan*, Hobbes further spells out his conception of the right to self-defence:

[N]ot every fear justifies the action it produceth, but the fear only of corporal hurt, which we call *bodily fear*, and from which a man cannot see how to be delivered but by the action. A man is assaulted, fears present death, from which he sees not how to escape but by wounding him that assaulteth him; if he wound him to death, this is no crime; because no man is supposed at the making of the commonwealth to have abandoned the defence of his life and limbs where the law cannot arrive time enough to his assistance. *But to kill a man because from his actions, or his threatenings, I may argue he will kill me when he can* (seeing I have time and means to demand protection from the sovereign power) *is a crime.*⁸⁷

Thus, although people cannot relinquish their right to resist an assault, Hobbes stresses that subjects are not permitted to take pre-emptive action against anyone whom they consider a threat. Based on the analysis so far, it seems that doing so would require a right of war, which only the sovereign possesses in the civil state.⁸⁸

In addition to a right to defend themselves against an assault, Hobbes grants subjects a right to resist punishment. In *The Elements of Law*, he first argues that "the law of na-

⁸³ Discussions of Hobbesian 'resistance rights' include Baumgold, *Hobbes's Political Theory*, ch. 2; Finkelstein, "A Puzzle About Hobbes on Self-Defence", pp. 332-361; and Sreedhar, *Hobbes on Resistance*.

⁸⁴ *EL*, XX.14, p. 115, XX.15, p. 116; *De Cive*, VI.13, xiii, p. 82, VII.4, p. 93. Hobbes also states in *De Cive*, II.18, p. 40, that the "right of killing cannot be allowed to a private person".

⁸⁵ *De Cive*, II.18, p. 39.

⁸⁶ *De Cive*, V.7, p. 72.

⁸⁷ *Lev.*, XXVII.20, p. 196 (emphasis added). Cf. *Lev.*, XXI.15, p. 142, XXVIII.2, p. 203.

⁸⁸ As was shown in sec. 3.2, the natural right of war does not only permit the pre-emptive use of force for self-preservation, but also implies a right to identify others as an enemy.

ture [does not] command any divesting of other rights, than of those only which cannot be retained without the loss of peace”.⁸⁹ Moreover, he expresses in this work that subjects have abandoned their right to resist the sovereign insofar as non-resistance is possible.⁹⁰ In *De Cive*, Hobbes states that the commonwealth does not “require of anyone, as a condition of punishment, an agreement not to resist, but only that no one protect others”.⁹¹ Similarly, he argues in *Leviathan* that, in the social contract, “every man giveth away the right of defending another, but not of defending himself”.⁹²

This suggests that the right to resist punishment explicitly rules out unions for mutual protection, to which Hobbes refers elsewhere as *factions*.⁹³ Given that the latter threaten the civil peace, they may be treated as enemies.⁹⁴ By contrast, mere resistance against one’s own punishment leaves somebody’s status as a subject intact.

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes also advances the view that subjects have a right to refuse dangerous or dishonourable commands as long as this does not frustrate “the end for which sovereignty was ordained”.⁹⁵ Specifically, he argues that

a man that is commanded as a soldier to fight against the enemy [*hostis publicus*], though his sovereign have right enough to punish his refusal with death, may nevertheless in many cases refuse without injustice, as when he substituteth a sufficient soldier in his place; for in this case he deserteth not the service of the commonwealth. And there is allowance to be made for natural timorousness, not only to women (of whom no such dangerous duty is expected), but also to men of feminine courage. When armies fight, there is, on one side or both, a running away; yet when they do it not out of treachery, but fear, they are not esteemed to do it unjustly, but dishonourably.⁹⁶

⁸⁹ *EL*, XVII.2, p. 93.

⁹⁰ *EL*, XX.7, p. 112.

⁹¹ *De Cive*, II.18, p. 40.

⁹² *Lev.*, XXVIII.2, p. 204. Cf. *Lev.*, XXI.17, p. 143.

⁹³ *De Cive*, XIII.13, p. 149; *Lev.*, XX.30-32, pp. 153f.

⁹⁴ In *De Cive*, XIII.13, p. 149, Hobbes compares factions to „an enemy within the walls“.

⁹⁵ *Lev.*, XXI.15, p. 142.

⁹⁶ *Lev.*, XXI.16, pp. 142f.

Only under special circumstances is there an absolute obligation to fight against the enemy, such as when a soldier has committed to do so, or when the defence of the commonwealth requires the help of all.⁹⁷ Yet apart from such extreme cases, Hobbes apparently does not regard desertion in war as an act of treason.

This view of Hobbes can be explained if we consider the difference between fleeing from either the enemy or the sovereign. Hobbes describes the latter in *Leviathan* as a betrayal of the sovereign's trust, upon which a person was initially admitted as a subject. In accordance with his distinction between slaves and servants,⁹⁸ he stresses that those who are accepted as subjects promised "not to run away, nor to do violence to [their] master".⁹⁹ Elsewhere in this work, he also argues that an exile who escaped punishment becomes a public enemy.¹⁰⁰ These statements suggest that, while individuals would reveal their hostility to the commonwealth if they fled from the sovereign, they can 'run away' from the enemy without jeopardising their status as a subject.

Hence, it appears that subjection to the sovereign requires submission to his exclusive right of war and peace. Hobbes argues that people in the civil state retain a right to resist assaults, or punishments that the state inflicts upon them. Yet he also maintains that people may lose their status as subjects if they challenge the sovereign's right of war and peace, such as when they take pre-emptive action against those whom they consider a threat. Ultimately, it is up to the sovereign to discern subjects and enemies, i.e. to decide who should be admitted to, or excluded from, the commonwealth.

⁹⁷ *Lev.*, XXI.16, p. 143.

⁹⁸ See sec. 5.1.

⁹⁹ *Lev.*, XX.10, p. 131.

¹⁰⁰ *Lev.*, XXVIII.21, pp. 207f.

However, this presupposes that there *is* indeed a sovereign. As was shown in sec. 5.1, Hobbes allows for the possibility that people are released from their subjection if the sovereign power effectively ceases to exist, such as in the event of a successful enemy invasion. In this case, they are free to submit themselves to the conqueror.

5.4 Conclusion

It is sometimes suggested that Hobbes's political philosophy is all about fear. Yet this chapter has shown that Hobbes also attributes great importance to trust, which seems to complement the role of fear in the civil state. In particular, it has been argued that subjection supposes reciprocal trust between sovereign and subjects. Without hope for good from each other, there would be no reason for rulers to spare the lives of subjects, or for the latter to submit themselves to an absolute sovereign power. While everyone's submission to the sovereign is meant to pacify society as a whole, Hobbes also allows for the possibility that subjects continue to relate to each other as enemies. Yet the terminology of his Latin works shows that he regards antagonists in the civil state as *inimici* (private enemies), rather than *hostes* (public enemies). Thus, Hobbes appears to envision a political transformation of outright hostility into personal rivalry, which is compatible with civil peace and does not affect the legal status of subjects.

By contrast, Hobbes generally uses the term *hostis* for antagonists in a state of nature, regardless of whether he is referring to groups or individuals. His terminology, thereby, indicates an essential similarity between all actors that are not subject to the same sovereign. Hobbes's distinction between subjects and public enemies appears to be related to the right of war. More specifically, it has been argued in this chapter that subjects need to submit themselves to the sovereign's exclusive right to discern friends and ene-

mies. Although people in the civil state may still resist punishment or assaults, they risk their status as subjects if they challenge the sovereign's right of war. This is because the right of war and subjection to the sovereign are mutually exclusive.

Based on the above findings, the next chapter will address the question why subjects may continue to rival one another in the civil state. This examination will shed further light on Hobbes's dynamic distinction between public and private enmity.

6. Human competitiveness in the civil state

This chapter looks at Hobbes's views on the role of human competitiveness in the civil state. The first section considers the argument that civil peace requires a complete transformation of human nature. It is argued that this claim is unfounded, since Hobbes considers competitiveness a permanent feature of human nature and only condemns particular manifestations of the passions. The second section further examines how, according to Hobbes, the sovereign could limit and direct competitiveness. It is shown that the commonwealth does not merely allow human beings to compete with each other without having to risk their lives, but may also encourage socially beneficial competition. The third section analyses how Hobbes's views on socially beneficial competition relate to the passions of emulation and envy. It is suggested that these passions, which are rarely considered in the literature on Hobbes, help to explain why people continue to rival each other in the civil state. However, it seems that competitiveness, fuelled by emulation and envy, could also provoke a return of hostility. This possibility is considered in the fourth section, which spells out under what conditions competitiveness may undermine the sovereign authority or provoke rebellion and civil war.

6.1 Competitiveness as a permanent feature of human nature

Richard Tuck has argued that Hobbes's political project was more utopian than it is usually supposed.¹ Specifically, Tuck finds that acting on the basis of the laws of nature presupposes the elimination of most passion;² and that lasting peace, therefore, requires a thoroughgoing transformation of human beings.³ Rejecting these claims, this section

¹ Richard Tuck, "The Utopianism of *Leviathan*", in *Leviathan After 350 Years*, eds. Tom Sorell and Luc Foisneau (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), pp. 125-138.

² Tuck, "The Utopianism of *Leviathan*", pp. 133-135.

³ Tuck, "The Utopianism of *Leviathan*", pp. 129, 138.

will show that Hobbes considers competitiveness a permanent feature of human nature and only seeks to suppress certain manifestations of the passions.

Many statements by Hobbes indeed suggest that people do not stop being competitive in the civil state. For instance, the bees-and-ants-argument clearly refers to competition for honours, and the desires for private goods and public offices, as permanent features of human nature.⁴ In *De Cive*, Hobbes explicitly states that “[a]mbition and longing for honour cannot be removed from men’s minds, and sovereigns have no duty to attempt to do so”.⁵ A passage in *Leviathan’s* chapter on crimes also testifies to the enduring presence of passions such as hate, lust, ambition, and covetousness.⁶ In *Leviathan’s* ‘Review & Conclusion’, Hobbes addresses the objection that it is

impossible to entertain a constant civil amity with all those with whom the business of the world constrains us to converse (which business consisteth almost in nothing else but a perpetual contention for honour, riches, and authority).⁷

The fact that Hobbes acknowledges the difficulty of reconciling the prescriptions of his political philosophy with human competitiveness clearly shows that he does not hold any hope that the latter can simply be overcome in society.

In addition, there is a systematic reason for the view that human beings will always remain competitive creatures, which is aptly captured by Tom Sorell:

Hobbes cannot make great claims for the power of the state to transform people for the better, and hold at the same time that were the state to dissolve, its people would immediately revert to savagery. If competitiveness and the hunger for glory are causes of quarrel indelibly engraved in human nature, then there cannot be a state made up of men

⁴ All of Hobbes’s main political works contain versions of this argument, which spells out differences between human beings and other animals that are naturally sociable, particularly bees and ants. See *EL*, XIX.5, p. 105; *De Cive*, V.5, p. 71; *Lev.*, XVII.7-9, p. 108.

⁵ *De Cive*, XIII.12, p. 148.

⁶ *Lev.*, XXVII.18, p. 195.

⁷ *Lev.*, R&C 3, 489.

who are free from the hunger or of the urge to compete. Either the truths about men that Hobbes states are scientific, or they are not.⁸

In view of Hobbes's claim that society reverts back to the state of nature if the sovereign power is dissolved, it seems that human beings must continue to have competitive passions in the civil state. However, this does, of course, not mean that they can still act out their passions in the same way as they do in the war of all against all.

Hobbes generally only seems to condemn certain desires arising from the passions that fuel human competitiveness, not the passions themselves. For instance, he points out in *The Elements of Law* that glorying can be "just and well grounded" when it proceeds from the experience of our own actions, as opposed to 'false glory' and 'vain glory'.⁹ Likewise, he distinguishes in *Leviathan* between well-grounded 'confidence' and 'vain glory' as two different forms of joy over one's own ability.¹⁰ In all of his main political works, Hobbes also states that 'pride', rather than glory, is contrary to the natural law.¹¹ In addition, he argues that 'arrogance' is forbidden by the laws of nature, thereby apparently referring to a kind of vain glory which makes subjects claim exclusive rights for themselves, hence disposing them to break the law.¹² The same passion seems to be at play in a discussion of the pretence to divine revelation in *Leviathan*. As Hobbes points out in this regard, somebody who claims that God has spoken to him may do so because of "self-conceit, foolish arrogance, and false opinion of [his] godliness, or other virtue, by which he thinks he hath merited the favour of extraordinary revelation".¹³

⁸ Sorell, *Hobbes*, p. 125.

⁹ *EL*, IX.1, pp. 50f.

¹⁰ *Lev.*, VI.39, p. 31.

¹¹ *EL*, XVII.1, p. 93; *De Cive*, III.13, p. 50; *Lev.*, XV.21, xxi, pp. 96f. On the distinction between the value-loaded term pride and the descriptive term glory, also see *EL*, IX.1, p. 50. Cf. Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, p. 36.

¹² *De Cive*, III.14, p. 50; *Lev.*, XV.22, p. 97. Note that *EL*, XVII.2, pp. 93f refers to 'encroaching' rather than 'arrogance' in the same context.

¹³ *Lev.*, XXXII.6, p. 247.

Similarly, Hobbes criticises certain manifestations of the desire for riches. As he points out in *Leviathan*, the latter should “be blamed or allowed, according to the means by which the riches are sought”.¹⁴ Hobbes seems to be opposed to the desire for riches whenever it leads to the encroachment of another’s right, in which case he usually employs the value-loaded terms ‘covetousness’, ‘avarice’, or ‘greed’. In this vein, he argues in *The Elements of Law* that contracts of mutual trust are ineffectual in the natural condition, for “he that performeth first, [...] doth but betray himself thereby to the covetousness, or other passion of him with whom he contracteth”.¹⁵ In *De Cive*, Hobbes also describes greed as the passion which motivates breaches of contracts, misuses of authority, and crimes.¹⁶ Similarly, he refers in *Leviathan* to avarice and covetousness as passions that let people break their covenants or commit crimes.¹⁷

While Hobbes generally only condemns particular desires, it is true, however, that some statements in *The Elements of Law* appear to suggest that competitiveness is generally an obstacle to peace.¹⁸ Thus, Hobbes argues that charity is contrary to passions by which we strive “to leave others as far as we can behind us”.¹⁹ In addition, he points out that “most passions, as of anger, ambition, covetousness, vainglory, and the like [...] tend to the excluding of natural equality”.²⁰ Hobbes even claims that “as long as men arrogate to themselves more honour than they give to others, it cannot be imagined how they can possibly live in peace”.²¹ However, it seems that his concern is generally with

¹⁴ *Lev.*, VI.23, p. 30.

¹⁵ *EL*, XV.10, p. 84. Cf. XX.6, p. 112.

¹⁶ *De Cive*, II.11, p. 37, VI.16, p. 87, XIII.16, p. 153.

¹⁷ *Lev.*, XIV.31, p. 88, XXVII.18, p. 195. Hobbes does not clearly define covetousness, avarice, and greed, yet his statements suggest that he does not condemn the desire of riches *per se*.

¹⁸ Note that Tuck’s claim that acting in accordance with the natural laws requires the elimination of most passion is largely based on passages in *The Elements of Law*. See Tuck, “The Utopianism of *Leviathan*”, pp. 133-135.

¹⁹ *EL*, XVI.8, p. 91.

²⁰ *EL*, XVII.9, p. 96.

²¹ *EL*, XVII.1, p. 93.

acknowledging natural equality, showing respect, and treating people as equals before the law, rather than with preventing social inequalities and competition amongst subjects.²² He also states in the same paragraph that the question “which is the better man” needs to be settled by the sovereign power.²³ What is more, he argues in *The Elements of Law* that, despite the precept to acknowledge equality,

if [another person] shall see cause to renounce the same [equality], and make himself inferior, then, if from thenceforth he consider him as inferior, he breaketh not thereby that law of nature that commandeth to allow equality.²⁴

Thus, although Hobbes’s remarks in this work are somewhat ambiguous, he does not seem to hold that inequalities in the civil state are against the natural law.

Some statements in Hobbes’s later works indicate that observance of the laws of nature is not only compatible with human competitiveness, but may also be part of the competition for civil honours. This can be seen, for instance, in his comments on derisive laughter, which is supposedly caused by a sudden occurrence of the other-regarding passion of glory. As Hobbes points out in *Leviathan*, such laughter

is incident most to them that are conscious of the fewest abilities in themselves, who are forced to keep themselves in their own favour by observing the imperfections of other men.²⁵

Yet moral virtue is not simply defined as abstaining from derisive laughter. Rather, Hobbes argues that “of great minds one of the proper works is to help and free others from scorn, and compare themselves *only with the most able*”.²⁶ This suggests that

²² According to Hobbes’s later, more precise formulation in *Leviathan*, one merely ought to acknowledge another as “his equal *by nature*”. *Lev.*, XV.21, p. 97 (emphasis added). Natural equality, thereby, means roughly equal strength and vulnerability, as a consequence of which people cannot remain in the natural condition, but have to submit themselves to a sovereign power.

²³ *EL*, XVII.1, p. 93.

²⁴ *EL*, XVII.11, p. 97.

²⁵ *Lev.*, VI.42, p. 32.

²⁶ *Lev.*, VI.42, p. 32 (emphasis added).

Hobbes does not seek to overcome, but instead to channel, human competitiveness. In *De Homine*, he also points out that persons of authority must conduct themselves justly in the presence of youths, for people “imitate those whom they think worthy”.²⁷ Such imitation may be motivated by a desire to outdo others in their moral virtue.

To conclude, this section has demonstrated that, according to Hobbes, society cannot transcend competitiveness, which is a permanent feature of human nature. Rather than envisioning an elimination of most passions, as suggested by Richard Tuck, Hobbes merely seeks to suppress particular desires that are contrary to peace.

6.2 Socially beneficial competition in the civil state

As has been argued in the last section, Hobbes generally holds that the requirements of civil peace, which are set out by his political philosophy, can be reconciled with human competitiveness. Expanding on this finding, this section will further analyse how competitiveness can be channelled into socially beneficial endeavours.

Hobbesian interpreters differ regarding how they view competitiveness in the civil state. According to Michael Oakeshott, the sovereign power imposes rules on previously unconditional competition so that everyone can pursue their personal desires without having to risk violent death.²⁸ Similarly, Sorell reasons that “[t]he state can inhibit the dispositions, make it dangerous for people to behave aggressively”.²⁹ Thomas Spragens suggests that Hobbes regards it as the principal task of politics to contain the natural

²⁷ *De Hom.* XIII.7, p. 67.

²⁸ Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association*, p. 38.

²⁹ Sorell, *Hobbes*, p. 125.

forces that bring about the war of all against all in the natural condition.³⁰ All of these interpreters seem to agree that Hobbes regards competitiveness as a fundamental fact about human nature which needs to be kept in bounds, thus allowing individuals to live out their passions without threatening each other's lives. This reading implies a negative assessment of human competitiveness. In the words of David Gauthier, the role of the commonwealth consists of "cutting the costs of human interaction".³¹

Other scholars have proposed more positive readings of the role of competitiveness in the civil state. Robert Shaver argues that glory-seekers in this condition can engage in competition for civil honours, the peaceful exchange of which is facilitated by the sovereign.³² Similarly, Philip Pettit points out that the state provides new possibilities of behaviour that were not available in the state of nature.³³ Gabriella Slomp holds that "by defining common standards of *meum* and *tuum*, of right and wrong, or good and bad, etc., [the sovereign can] open up new fields of comparison between people, ranging from property to arts, from games to public morality".³⁴ The institution of property, in particular, is supposed to encourage the production of goods, so that competition ceases to be a zero-sum-game in which gains by some necessarily correspond with others' losses.³⁵ Moreover, Slomp suggests that such competition benefits the 'commodious living' of all, because it leads to the development of industry, navigation, arts, science, and technology, trade, etc., which are lacking in the natural condition.³⁶

³⁰ Spragens, *The Politics of Motion*, p. 193. For a similar view, see Wolin, "Hobbes and the Culture of Despotism", p. 29.

³¹ Gauthier, *Morals by Agreement*, pp. 319f.

³² Shaver, "Leviathan, King of the Proud", pp. 67-70.

³³ Pettit, *Made with Words*, pp. 130f.

³⁴ Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, p. 67.

³⁵ Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, p. 67.

³⁶ Slomp, *Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory*, p. 67.

It is, of course, true that the sovereign is meant to make laws and use coercion to limit rivalry among subjects. Thus, Hobbes points out in *Leviathan* that

the people are to be taught to abstain from violence to one another's person by private revenges, from violation of conjugal honour, and from forcible rapine and fraudulent surreption of one another's goods.³⁷

However, it seems that the commonwealth does not merely allow subjects to pursue their personal desires without having to risk their lives, but also provides new outlets for competitiveness. In this way, the sovereign may direct the subjects' actions towards the common good. Hobbes expresses this position, for instance, in his analogy between the purpose of civil laws and the function of riverbanks in *De Cive*:

Water stagnates and corrupts when it is closed in by banks on all sides; when it is open to all sides it spreads, and the more outlets it finds the freer it is. So with the citizens: they would be without initiative if they did nothing except at the law's command; they would be dissipated if there were no legal restrictions, and the more things left unregulated by the laws, the more liberty they enjoy. Both extremes are faulty; for laws were invented not to extinguish human actions but to direct them; just as nature ordained banks not to stop the flow of the river but to direct it. The extend of this liberty is to be measured by the good of the citizens and of the commonwealth.³⁸

Similarly, Hobbes states in *Leviathan* that the purpose of civil laws is not “to bind the people from all voluntary actions”.³⁹ In addition, he points out in this work that good laws are those which promote the “good of the people”.⁴⁰

The case of property rights illustrates how civil laws can be employed to limit and direct the subjects' actions in a way that is conducive to the common good. Hobbes repeatedly stresses that property does not exist in the natural condition, because this institution depends on the sovereign power.⁴¹ What is more, he suggests that by protecting private

³⁷ *Lev.*, XXX.12, p. 224.

³⁸ *De Cive*, XIII.15, p. 151.

³⁹ *Lev.*, XXX.21, p. 229.

⁴⁰ *Lev.*, XXX.20, p. 229.

⁴¹ *EL*, XX.2, p. 110, XXIV.2, pp. 136f, XXVII.8, p. 168; *De Cive*, I.11, p. 29, IV.4, p. 60, VI.1, p. 76,

property against fellow subjects and foreign enemies, the state provides the basis for peaceful competition for wealth and the accumulation of economic goods. As Hobbes argues in *The Elements of Law*, introducing a common measure of *meum* and *tuum* is a means to prevent violence and rapine.⁴² In *De Cive*, he states that “[s]overeigns can do no more for the citizens’ happiness [*felicitas*] than to enable them to enjoy the possessions their industry has won them, safe from foreign and civil war”.⁴³ Similarly, Hobbes expresses in *Leviathan* that it is the sovereign’s duty to provide for the people’s safety, by which “is not meant a bare preservation, but also all other contentments of life, which every man by lawful industry [...] shall acquire to himself”.⁴⁴

Property rights do not only make it safe for individuals to pursue their personal desires, but also seem to be conducive to the common good. For instance, Hobbes argues in *Leviathan* that the strength of the commonwealth consists of the accumulated wealth of its members.⁴⁵ In a similar vein, he points out in the *Dialogue* that kings who are of sound judgement recognise that it is in their own interest to

make such Laws as the people can endure, and may keep them without impatience, and live in strength and courage to defend their King and Country, against their potent neighbours.⁴⁶

Hence, civil laws could encourage the accumulation of wealth, which also provides the sovereign with means for defending the state against its enemies.⁴⁷

VI.15, p. 85, XII.7, p. 136; *Lev.*, XIII.13, p. 78, XVIII.10, p. 114, XXIV.5, p. 160.

⁴² *EL*, XX.10, p. 113.

⁴³ *De Cive*, XIII.6, p. 144. Cf. *De Cive*, X.1, p. 116; XII.9, p. 138.

⁴⁴ *Lev.*, XXX.1, p. 219. Cf. *Lev.*, XVII.13, p. 109.

⁴⁵ *Lev.*, intr. 1, p. 3; XIX.4, p. 120. Cf. *Lev.*, XVIII.20, pp. 117f.

⁴⁶ *Dialogue*, p. 144 (capitalisation in the original).

⁴⁷ For further consideration of Hobbes’s views on the requirements of defence, see sec. 8.1.

Civil honours are another instrument which can be used to limit and direct the subjects' actions. In *De Cive*, Hobbes suggests that, in order to increase prosperity, the sovereign should stimulate industry and give recognition to the various arts.⁴⁸ In the *Anti-White*, he states that "in every branch of art the engineers, the geometers, the philosophers and all the poets who excelled in their skills attained a fitting reputation".⁴⁹ Hobbes develops his views on civil honours in *Leviathan*, where he argues that

of civil honour the foundation is in the person of the commonwealth, and dependeth on the will of the sovereign, and is therefore temporary and called *civil honour*; such as are magistracy, offices, titles, and in some places, coats and scutcheons painted; and men honour such as have them, as having so many signs of favour in the commonwealth, which favour is power.⁵⁰

In accordance with the claim that the sovereign is the source of civil honours, Hobbes also points out in *Leviathan* that rulers have the right

to give titles of honour, and to appoint what order of place and dignity each man shall hold, and what signs of respect, in public or private meetings, they shall give to one another.⁵¹

Hobbes's views on civil honours suggest that subjects can pursue their desire for glory in accordance with the common good, which is not the case in the state of nature. In this condition, the only source of honour appears to be the trade of war.⁵²

Yet Hobbes is conscious of the fact that rulers do not always succeed in channelling the passions into socially beneficial endeavours, as is evident from his comments on duels in *Leviathan*. Following his discussion of piracy, he points out that

⁴⁸ *De Cive*, XIII.14, p. 150.

⁴⁹ *AW*, XXXVIII.14, p. 474. Cf. *Dialogue*, pp. 92f.

⁵⁰ *Lev.*, X.36, p. 53 (emphasis in the original).

⁵¹ *Lev.*, XVIII.15, p. 115. Cf. *Lev.*, XX.3, p. 128.

⁵² See sec. 3.1.

at this day, in this part of the world, private duels are and always will be honourable, though unlawful, till such time as there shall be honour ordained for them that refuse, and ignominy for them that make the challenge.⁵³

In the chapter on crimes and excuses, Hobbes further specifies that although duels are punishable as a capital crime, somebody who refuses to take part in a duel “is subject to contempt and scorn, without remedy, and sometimes by the sovereign himself thought unworthy to have any charge or preferment in war”.⁵⁴ Thus, Hobbes’s position is that, at present, people are encouraged to take part in duels by an inconsistent policy of punishments and rewards. However, he also holds that duels could be prevented if the sovereign ordained civil honours for abstaining from private revenge.

To conclude, this section has shown that, although people in the civil state are no longer hostile towards one another, they still compete for honour and other goods. Thereby, it has become apparent that the state does not only allow human beings to compete without having to risk their lives, but also provides opportunities for socially beneficial competition. At least, this is the case in a well-governed commonwealth.

6.3 The passions of emulation and envy

Hobbes’s views on socially beneficial competition in the civil state, which have been reconstructed in the last section, are further echoed by his assessment of emulation and envy. As the analysis of these passions in this section will demonstrate, competition amongst subjects is not necessarily motivated by material interests. Rather, rivalry may also be driven by an intrinsic human desire to outdo other people.

⁵³ *Lev.*, X.49, p. 55.

⁵⁴ *Lev.*, XXVII.35, p. 201.

Emulation and envy are rarely discussed in the literature on Hobbes. Leo Strauss notes that, although Hobbes's definitions of these passions are based on Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, he does not retain Aristotle's view that emulation is noble while envy is base.⁵⁵ Stephen Holmes finds that, in *Behemoth*, Hobbes considers envy as one of the causes the English Civil War.⁵⁶ Moreover, Holmes suggests that this other-regarding passion diverts the mind from material concerns.⁵⁷ While these observations are certainly helpful, they do not fully account for Hobbes's various statements on emulation and envy.

Hobbes provides formal definitions of these passions in *The Elements of Law*, *Leviathan*, and *De Homine*. For instance, he states in the first of these works:

EMULATION is grief arising from seeing one's self exceeded or excelled by his concurrent, together with hope to equal or exceed him in time to come, by his own ability. But, ENVY is the same grief joined with pleasure conceived in the imagination of some ill fortune that may befall him.⁵⁸

Similar definitions are included in the later works, where Hobbes also points out that envy makes people "supplant or hinder a competitor".⁵⁹ These definitions suggest that both passions are the counterpart of glory, to which Hobbes generally refers to as a joy resulting from the perception of one's own abilities and superiority over other people.⁶⁰ Therefore, Hobbes's views on these passions seem to lend further credence to the claim that he regards competitiveness as part of the human makeup, rather than as being due to external circumstances (such as scarcity of resources).⁶¹ Other passages also suggest

⁵⁵ Strauss, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes*, pp. 39, 133. Cf. Aristotle, "Rhetoric", trans. W. Rhys Roberts, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: the Revised Oxford Translation*, Vol. 2, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 2152-2269, 2211-2213.

⁵⁶ Stephen Holmes, "Introduction", in Thomas Hobbes, *Behemoth, or the Long Parliament*, ed. Stephen Holmes (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1990), pp. vii-1, xxx-xxxi.

⁵⁷ Holmes, "Introduction", p. xxx.

⁵⁸ *EL*, IX.12, p. 54 (capitalisation in the original).

⁵⁹ *Lev.*, VI.48, pp. 32f. Cf. *De Hom.*, XII.11, p. 61.

⁶⁰ See sec. 3.1.

⁶¹ A discussion of these two different views on the causes of competitiveness, i.e. either external circumstances or an intrinsic desire to outdo others, is provided in sec. 3.1.

that emulation and envy provide an intrinsic motivation for human competitiveness. In his analogy between life and a race in *The Elements of Law* for example, Hobbes refers to these passions as the endeavours “to overtake the next” and to “supplant or overthrow”, respectively.⁶² In addition, he states that “injury, how light soever the damage, is always grievous, as putting us in mind of our disability to help ourselves; and into envy of the power to do us wrong”.⁶³ In *Leviathan*, Hobbes also points out that passions such as envy and emulation may arise from difference of opinion.⁶⁴

The passion of envy, in particular, helps to explain why people’s desires for certain goods provoke enmity between them. For instance, Hobbes expresses in *Leviathan* that riches without liberality “expose men to envy, as a prey”.⁶⁵ While material goods can thus occasion envy, the latter gives rise to a desire to harm another person. In the bees-and-ants-argument in *Leviathan*, Hobbes further argues that

men are continually in competition for honour and dignity, which these creatures [i.e. bees and ants] are not; and consequently, amongst men there ariseth, on that ground, envy and hatred, and finally war.⁶⁶

This suggests that glory-seeking individuals envy one another, which could provoke hatred and hostility. The same claim is made in the earlier versions of the bees-and-ants-argument, which also refer to the passion of envy.⁶⁷ Hobbes, thereby, seems to conceive of the latter as a cause of rivalry distinct from material interests. This is also suggested by his claim that one of the advantages of monarchy over other forms of government is that “a monarch cannot disagree with himself out of envy *or* interest”.⁶⁸

⁶² *EL*, IX.21, p. 59.

⁶³ *EL*, XXIV.2, p. 138.

⁶⁴ *Lev.*, XXX.26, p. 232.

⁶⁵ *Lev.*, X.4, p. 50. Cf. *De Hom.*, XI.7, p. 49.

⁶⁶ *Lev.*, XVII.7, p. 108.

⁶⁷ *EL*, XIX.5, p. 105; *De Cive*, V.5, p. 71.

⁶⁸ *Lev.*, XIX.7, p. 121 (emphasis added).

Envy certainly plays a role in Hobbes's description of the state of nature. In the Latin *Leviathan*, he cites Cain's murder of Abel as an example of the war of all against all, and mentions that it was motivated by envy.⁶⁹ Moreover, this passion helps to explain why competitiveness in the state of nature develops into outright hostility. Hobbes argues in *Leviathan* that "if one plant, sow, build, or possess a convenient seat, others may probably be expected to come prepared with forces united, to dispossess and deprive him".⁷⁰ This may be due to the scarcity of resources in the state of nature, as is often suggested, yet it may likewise be caused by an intrinsic desire to outdo other people and a consequential envy for their possessions. While both interpretations seem plausible, Hobbes's remarks ultimately do not allow for any definite statement on this matter.

In *De Cive*, Hobbes refers to both emulation and envy as natural causes of conflict that prevent people from peaceful co-existence in the natural condition:

[H]owever many come together in a coalition of defence, nothing will be gained if they fail to agree on the best way of doing it, and each one use his resources in his own fashion. The reason is that, having conflicting ideas, they will obstruct each other, or if in the expectation of victory or booty or revenge, they do achieve sufficient agreement for an action, they will still be divided afterwards by differences of purpose and policy or by *envy and rivalry* (natural causes of conflict), that they will refuse to help each other or to keep peace among themselves, unless compelled to do so by common fear.⁷¹

Note that Michael Silverthorne translates *aemulatio* and *invidia* in this passage as "envy and rivalry". However, Hobbes's definitions of *aemulatio* and *invidia* in *De Homine* correspond with the earlier definitions of emulation and envy in *The Elements of Law* and *Leviathan*. Therefore, "emulation and envy" seems to be a more accurate rendering.⁷² In the quoted passage, Hobbes's argument appears to be that, even though people in the state of nature can form alliances in order to achieve a victory, make booty, or take re-

⁶⁹ *Lev.*, XIII.11, p. 77, n. 7.

⁷⁰ *Lev.*, XIII.3, p. 76.

⁷¹ *De Cive*, V.4, p. 70 (emphasis added). Cf. *De Cive OL*, pp. 131f.

⁷² *De Hom. OL*, pp. 110, 211. Cf. *EL*, IX.12, p. 54; *Lev.*, VI.48, pp. 32f.

venge against a common enemy, they will subsequently fall back into rivalry among themselves, whereby everyone envies and emulates everybody else.

Yet envy and emulation do not only cause enmity in the state of nature, they also seem to perpetuate competitiveness in the civil state. Indeed, a number of passages in Hobbes's works suggest that these passions continue to fuel rivalry amongst members of the commonwealth. However, it appears that emulation may be channelled into socially beneficial endeavours. Hobbes already points out in his introduction to *The History of the Grecian War* that Thucydides' great work was inspired by his wish to emulate the historian Herodotus.⁷³ In *Leviathan*, Hobbes argues that

to receive benefits, though from an equal or inferior, as long as there is hope of requital, disposeth to love; for in the intention of the receiver, the obligation is of aid and service mutual; from when proceedeth an *emulation of who shall exceed in benefitting* [the other], the most noble and profitable contention possible, wherein the victor is pleased with his victory, and the other revenged by confessing it.⁷⁴

Thus, Hobbes praises emulation in the mutually beneficial exchange of favours between individuals. Furthermore, he argues in *Leviathan* that admirers of ancient Greece and Rome wrongly “imagine their great prosperity not to have proceeded from the emulation of particular men, but from the virtue of their popular form of government”.⁷⁵ This seems to suggest that he regards emulation amongst subjects, who seek to excel one another in the use of their own abilities, as the true cause of prosperity.

However, some of Hobbes's comments on envy and emulation also show that competitiveness in the civil state is not always socially beneficial, but could also provoke a

⁷³ *History I*, p. xv.

⁷⁴ *Lev.*, XI.7, p. 59 (emphasis added).

⁷⁵ *Lev.*, XIX.14, p. 214.

return of hostility. Again, this is already apparent in his introduction to Thucydides. Endorsing the latter's comments on democracy, Hobbes points out that

upon divers occasions [Thucydides] noteth the emulation and contention of the demagogues for reputation and glory of wit; with their crossing of each other's counsels, to the damage of the public.⁷⁶

This statement has echoes in Hobbes's later works. For instance, he argues in *Leviathan* that members of a public assembly may disagree "to such a height as may produce civil war".⁷⁷ In *De Cive*, he argues that ambitious subjects, who envy those in a position of power, "passionately expect opportunities for revolution".⁷⁸ As Holmes notes, Hobbes also regards envy as one of the causes of the English Civil War.⁷⁹

To conclude, emulation and envy help to explain why people continue to rival each other in the civil state. Hobbes's statements on these passions indicate that competitiveness does not arise because of external circumstances in the state of nature, but rather is due to an intrinsic desire to outdo others. While emulation may be channelled into socially beneficial endeavours, however, it seems that both passions could also provoke a return of hostility, such as when ambitious subjects envy the sovereign.

6.4 Competitiveness and the return of hostility

Although Hobbes maintains that human competitiveness can be channelled into socially beneficial endeavours, he also considers it as a source of danger. This section examines under what conditions it could provoke a return of hostility in the civil state.

⁷⁶ *History I*, p. xvi.

⁷⁷ *Lev.*, XIX.7, p. 121.

⁷⁸ *De Cive*, XII.10, p. 138.

⁷⁹ *Behemoth*, pp. 66, 89. Cf. Holmes, "Introduction", pp. xxx-xxxii.

As mentioned in sec. 6.3, Hobbes suggests on a few occasions that the envy and emulation of members of public assemblies, or other ambitious subjects, could provoke civil war. This view is also expressed in *The Elements of Law*, where he claims that members of sovereign assemblies pursue their own benefits and honour:

[I]n assemblies, those that are of different opinions [...] are apt to fall out amongst themselves, and to cross the designs of commonwealth for one another's sake: and when they cannot have the honour of making good their own devices, they yet seek the honour to make the counsels of their adversaries to prove vain. And in this contention, when the opposite factions happen to be anything equal in strength, they presently fall to war.⁸⁰

Thus, Hobbes holds that contention among members of an assembly, who are competitors for honour, can motivate attempts to undermine collective action, or provoke faction and hostility. Similarly, he points out in *De Cive* that a defeated speaker “makes every effort to ensure that his opponent's policy works out badly for the country; for so he sees that his opponent will lose his glory and he will recover his”.⁸¹ This suggests that competitiveness is detrimental if it interferes with public affairs.

However, it needs to be said that Hobbes does not merely point to dangers arising from rivalries between members of a public assembly, but also considers detrimental effects of the passions of kings. For instance, he argues in *The Elements of Law* that

such monarchs, as affect war for itself, that is to say, out of ambition, or of vain-glory, or that make account to revenge every little injury, or disgrace done by their neighbours, if they ruin not themselves, their fortune must be better than they have reason to expect.⁸²

In other words, kings should not make wars only to satisfy their own desires. In *De Cive*, Hobbes also expresses that it is a great disadvantage of all kinds of commonwealths that sovereigns may put innocent subjects to death because of anger, greed, or

⁸⁰ *EL*, XXIV.8, p. 140.

⁸¹ *De Cive*, X.12, pp. 123f.

⁸² *EL*, XXVIII.9, p. 177.

private feuds.⁸³ Similarly, he admits in *Leviathan* that there is a certain risk that a king might deprive a subject of all his or her possessions.⁸⁴ Hobbes also expresses in this work that sovereigns are sometimes profligate and may venture into costly wars, for no monarch or assembly is “free from human passions and infirmities”.⁸⁵ In addition, he states that princes emulate one another, and that “kings and other persons of sovereign authority, because of their independency, are in continual jealousies”.⁸⁶

The picture emerging from these passages is that monarchs are not free from passions, but compete with other sovereigns, and possibly with their own subjects, for honour, wealth, and other goods. Hence, Hobbes does not only regard the competitiveness of parliamentarians, but also that of kings, as potentially having detrimental effects. However, he also suggests that this is not a necessary feature of monarchy, since it is in a ruler’s own interest to avoid things such as, for instance, unnecessary wars.

Hobbes pays particular attention to the passions of kings in the context of his claim that human beings can never be content, but continually strive to attain further goods. He argues that this also applies to those people who already possess the greatest powers, honours, and riches. Thus, he points out in *The Elements of Law*:

Of those [...] that have attained to the highest degree of honour and riches, some have affected mastery in some art; as Nero in music and poetry, Commodus in the art of a gladiator. And such as affect not some such thing, must find diversion and recreation of their thoughts in the contention either of play, or business.⁸⁷

In the *Anti-White*, where Hobbes claims that people generally desire honours and riches as a means for attaining further goods, he also refers to kings in this context:

⁸³ *De Cive*, X.7, p. 120. Cf. *De Cive*, VI.17, p. 87.

⁸⁴ *Lev.*, XIX.8, p. 121.

⁸⁵ *Lev.*, XXIV.8, p. 162.

⁸⁶ *Lev.*, XXII.32, p. 73, XIII.12, p. 78.

⁸⁷ *EL*, VII.7, p. 45.

If the hope and opportunity of seizing other realms are offered them, kings (whose power is very great in this life) also seek these things, as Alexander; if they have no such hope, they turn to the arts, i.e. [*sic*] to public affairs, as Augustus; or to music, as Nero; or to gladiatorial shows, as Commodus; or to licentious pleasure, as Heliogabalus, Nero and many others.⁸⁸

Thus, Hobbes holds that monarchs only seek military honours if they have hope for attaining them, as they may also distinguish themselves in other fields. In a similar vein, Hobbes states in *Leviathan* that the “perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death”⁸⁹ also applies in the case of monarchs:

[K]ings, whose power is greatest, turn their endeavours to the assuring it at home by laws or abroad by wars; and when that is done, there succeedeth a new desire, in some of fame from new conquest, in others of ease and sensual pleasure, in others of admiration or being flattered for excellence in some art or other ability of the mind.⁹⁰

All of these passages advance the view that kings can live out their passions in fields that do not have detrimental effects for the state. Yet Hobbes is, of course, well aware that some monarchs pursue military honours. As he later argues in the *Dialogue*, statute laws are useful as they make it more difficult “for such Kings as for the Glory of Conquest might spend one part of their Subjects Lives and Estates, in Molesting other Nations, and leave the rest to Destroy themselves at Home by Factions”.⁹¹

In accordance with his reservations about military honours, Hobbes is also wary of the popularity of generals. In *De Cive*, he notes that people follow a leader of rebellion “because they admire his courage and military skill”.⁹² In *Leviathan*, he argues that “all men that are ambitious of military command, are inclined to continue the causes of war, and to stir up trouble and sedition”.⁹³ Furthermore, Hobbes reasons that the popularity

⁸⁸ *AW*, XXXVII.8, p. 467.

⁸⁹ *Lev.*, XI.2, p. 58.

⁹⁰ *Lev.*, XI.2, p. 58.

⁹¹ *Dialogue*, p. 21 (capitalisation in the original).

⁹² *De Cive*, XII.12, p. 139.

⁹³ *Lev.*, XI.4, p. 58.

of a military commander “breed[s] in the soldiers both desire, and courage, to recommend themselves to his favour”.⁹⁴ While he acknowledges that a general’s popularity could thus encourage beneficial competition among his soldiers, Hobbes also regards it as a potential threat to the commonwealth:

But this love of soldiers (if caution be not given to the commander’s fidelity) is a dangerous thing to sovereign power, especially when it is in the hands of an assembly not popular. It belongeth, therefore, to the safety of the people, both that they be good conductors, and faithful subjects, to whom the sovereign commits his armies.⁹⁵

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes mentions Julius Caesar as an example of a popular army commander who then acquired political power.⁹⁶ In *Behemoth*, he reasons that, after a successful military campaign, “it will be in [an army general’s] power, either to take the government upon himself, or to place it where he himself thinks good”.⁹⁷ Thereby, Hobbes specifically refers to the case of Oliver Cromwell. These examples show that a military commander’s popularity may be dangerous for the sovereign.

Furthermore, Hobbes repeatedly stresses that a subject’s ambition for public office is a cause of rebellion. In *The Elements of Law*, he points out that this desire cannot be satisfied in non-democratic commonwealths, which must provoke the discontent of rich and powerful individuals who are excluded from the conduct of public affairs.⁹⁸ Likewise, Hobbes claims in *De Cive* that people dislike monarchy “because [in this form of government] they are not called to play a role in the government of the Country”.⁹⁹ Drawing an analogy between public and military affairs, he argues in *Leviathan* that

⁹⁴ *Lev.*, XXX.28, p. 232.

⁹⁵ *Lev.*, XXX.28, pp. 232f. Hobbes seems to imply that the sovereign competes with army generals for popularity. In *Lev.*, XXX.28, p. 233, Hobbes points out that the popularity of military commanders is not dangerous “when the sovereign himself is popular”.

⁹⁶ *Lev.*, XIX.20, p. 218.

⁹⁷ *Behemoth*, p. 109.

⁹⁸ *EL*, XXVII.3, pp. 163f.

⁹⁹ *De Cive*, X.8, p. 122.

to lose the opportunity to pit your wits against another man, however enjoyable such contests may be to clever debaters, is not such a disadvantage for them, unless we shall say that it is a disadvantage for brave men to be forbidden to fight, for the simply reason that they enjoy it.¹⁰⁰

Hobbes also states in *Leviathan* that people who have a high opinion of their wisdom in matters of government seek to acquire public offices, because “without public employment in council or magistracy the honour of their wisdom is lost”.¹⁰¹ In addition, he maintains in *Leviathan* that civil wars arise “from the contention of those that for an office of so great honour and profit [i.e. the sovereign's office] may become competitors”.¹⁰² This shows that, according to Hobbes, competitiveness could endanger the civil peace if it lets powerful subjects contend for the sovereign’s office.

Hobbes generally holds that subjects ought not to compare themselves with the sovereign. In *The Elements of Law*, we read that “sovereignty [...] comprehendeth so much honour, riches, and means whereby to delight the mind, as no private man’s wealth can attain unto”.¹⁰³ Likewise, Hobbes states in *Leviathan* that “the honour of the sovereign ought to be greater than that of any or all of the subjects”.¹⁰⁴ In *De Cive*, he suggests that “the wrath of Kings is directed only at those who cause trouble by ill-judged advice or insolent language, or are personally opposed to them”.¹⁰⁵ This seems to suggest that ambitious subjects who challenge the sovereign could provoke the latter’s hostility. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes also expresses that rivalry between popular subjects and the sovereign can affect the latter’s will to govern for the common good, as “that sovereign can-

¹⁰⁰ *De Cive*, X.9, p. 122.

¹⁰¹ *Lev.*, XI.13, p. 60.

¹⁰² *Lev.*, XIX.9, p. 121.

¹⁰³ *EL*, XXIV.2, p. 136.

¹⁰⁴ *Lev.*, XVIII.19, p. 117.

¹⁰⁵ *De Cive*, X.7, p. 120.

not be imagined to love his people as he ought that is not jealous of them, but suffers them by the flattery of popular men to be seduced from their loyalty”.¹⁰⁶

What is more, Hobbes argues in *Leviathan* that rulers should not give money or other preferment to ambitious subjects in order to win their allegiance, for this could trigger competitive dynamics that further damage the state. His reasoning is that

when the stubbornness of one popular man is overcome with reward, there arise many more (by the example) that do the same mischief, in hope of the like benefit; and as all sorts of manufacture, so also malice increaseth by being vendible.¹⁰⁷

Likewise, Hobbes argues in *Behemoth* that princes who try to buy the obedience of their subjects with preferment create “a market where honour and power is to be bought with stubbornness”.¹⁰⁸ These statements suggest that competitiveness is only conducive to the common good if the sovereign creates the right incentives, such as when he encourages the arts and sciences or the accumulation of wealth by trade and industry.

Even if subjects concentrate on private affairs, such as acquiring goods through their own industry, this is not entirely without risks. In *De Cive*, Hobbes thus suggests that immoderate private wealth implies faction, “for everything obeys money”.¹⁰⁹ This statement is echoed in *De Homine*, where he also mentions that the Roman politician Lucullus “defined the wealthy man as one that can support an army of his own”.¹¹⁰ In some of his writings, Hobbes also condemns the immoderate riches of great cities.¹¹¹ His reasoning seems to be that subjects who control a great city have sufficient re-

¹⁰⁶ *Lev.*, XXX.8, p. 223.

¹⁰⁷ *Lev.*, XXX.24, p. 231.

¹⁰⁸ *Behemoth*, p. 72.

¹⁰⁹ *De Cive*, XIII.13, p. 149.

¹¹⁰ *De Hom.*, XI.7, p. 49.

¹¹¹ *Lev.*, XXIX.21, p. 218; *Behemoth*, p. 126.

sources to challenge the sovereign power. In addition, Hobbes suggests in *Leviathan* that wealth could be an incentive for crimes:

[S]uch [people] as value themselves by the greatness of their wealth adventure on crimes, upon hope of escaping punishment by corrupting public justice or obtaining pardon by money or other rewards.¹¹²

Similarly, Hobbes points out in *Leviathan* that crimes proceeding from presumption of strength, riches, or friends are particularly severe, “for presumption of impunity by force is a root from whence springeth, at all times and upon all temptations, a contempt of all laws”.¹¹³ Thus, subjects should only be permitted moderate riches, because otherwise their wealth may pose a challenge to the sovereign authority.

To conclude, Hobbes holds that human competitiveness could, under certain conditions, provoke rebellion and civil war. As this section has shown, he is particularly wary of the competition for glory in democratic assemblies, the ambition for public office, and the quest for military honours. Yet it seems that all kinds of competition could provoke a return of hostility if they are not sufficiently controlled by the sovereign. For instance, the accumulation of excessive riches may encourage disobedience.

6.5 Conclusion

Although the commonwealth is meant to establish civil peace, its subjects still compete with each other for honours, riches, and authority. This chapter has shown that, ultimately, people in the civil state remain the same creatures that Hobbes describes as natural enemies. In particular, it has been argued that he regards competitiveness as a permanent feature of human nature, which is largely fuelled by an *intrinsic* desire to outdo

¹¹² *Lev.*, XXVII.14, p. 194.

¹¹³ *Lev.*, XXVII.30, p. 199.

others. Yet unlike people in the state of nature, subjects of the commonwealth can distinguish themselves without having to risk their lives. Moreover, this chapter has shown that Hobbes also envisions opportunities for socially beneficial competition that are not available in the natural condition. Thus, it seems that he does not merely assess competitiveness in negative terms, but also considers positive effects of certain forms of competition, including prosperity and achievements in the arts and sciences.

At the same time, Hobbes emphasises that human competitiveness could, under certain conditions, provoke a return of hostility to the commonwealth. For example, if subjects compete with the sovereign, envy his honour and authority, become popular army commanders, or accumulate immoderate wealth, this could undermine the sovereign authority and eventually lead to rebellion and civil war. In general, Hobbes seems to be wary of human competitiveness whenever it interferes with public affairs. Thus, it has been argued in this chapter that the sovereign needs to set the right incentives, and control competition amongst subjects, in order to preserve the civil peace.

Hobbes's views on this subject, thereby, appear to distinguish his thought from the liberal conception of economic competition, which does not seem to consider the possibility that the competition of private individuals could provoke hostility and civil war. Likewise, Hobbes's perspective appears to differ from Schmitt's view that political enmity, which concerns the relations between organised totalities, is strictly separate from personal rivalry, economic competition, and intellectual contention.¹¹⁴ Following this discussion of competitiveness in the civil state, the next chapter will further consider Hobbes's views on the return of hostility in the event of rebellion.

¹¹⁴ Cf. sec. 1.1.

7. The status and punishment of the rebel

This chapter considers the status of the rebel in Hobbes's political philosophy. The first section shows that Hobbes regards utterances as sufficient evidence of a treacherous design. In particular, it is argued that those who call the sovereign a tyrant reveal their hostility to the commonwealth. The second section further analyses in which sense the rebel becomes a public enemy. It is shown that Hobbes insists on this legal status in order to establish a basis for punishing individuals who defy the sovereign authority. The third section examines how rulers can effectively exercise their sovereignty in the face of rebellion. It is suggested that Hobbes envisions the sovereign to hold authors of sedition responsible, while pardoning other participants of an insurgence in order to win back their allegiance as subjects. This might prevent the outbreak of civil war, in the event of which the commonwealth would be effectively dissolved. The fourth section re-examines recent scholarship on Hobbes's so-called 'reply to the fool' and proposes an alternative interpretation. It is argued in this section that Hobbes seeks to persuade his audience that authors of sedition, who reveal their denial of justice by calling the sovereign a tyrant, ought to be treated as enemies of mankind.

7.1 'Bare words' as evidence of hostility

In marked contrast to his account of the natural condition (where people treat one another as enemies on the ground of distrust) Hobbes generally emphasises the importance of evidence and testimony in the civil state.¹ In *De Cive* and *Leviathan*, he expresses that it is a law of nature that a judge hears the testimony of witnesses before deciding a

¹ As was shown in sec. 3.2, Hobbes conceives of distrust as the opposite of assurance, and regards it as permissible in the state of nature to treat others as enemies on the ground of suspicion.

matter of fact.² Hobbes considers witnesses crucial in a trial, as only they will have perceived with their senses whether or not a crime has been committed.³

Hobbes is generally critical of decision-making bodies that attempt to judge matters of fact without considering the required evidence. In the *Dialogue*, he argues against the view that a jury can establish testimony, because “there cannot possibly be any Judge of Fact besides the Witnesses”.⁴ As he further states with particular reference to the crime of treason, “the Jury has no more to do than to consider the Legality of the Witnesses, the Harmony of their Testimonies, or whether the words were spoken advisedly”.⁵ Similarly, Hobbes questions whether parliamentary assemblies can competently judge matters relating to other commonwealths. In this vein, he points out in *De Cive* that “[v]ery few people have any knowledge of these things [i.e. foreign affairs] in a large assembly of men who are for the most part inexperienced, not to say incompetent”.⁶ In order to aid his judgement on matters of foreign policy, the sovereign should therefore not rely on the opinions of an assembly, but send out spies to other countries, and employ counsellors who are well acquainted with foreign affairs.⁷

In particular, Hobbes finds it necessary to acquire knowledge of enemy designs in order to counter potential threats.⁸ In his discussion of the sovereign’s office in *De Cive*, he

² *De Cive*, III.23, p. 52; *Lev.*, XV.33, p. 98.

³ Jeremy Waldron argues that Hobbes accepts a version of what John Rawls has called ‘the principle of publicity’, i.e. the idea that political order should not be grounded in arbitrary or false beliefs, but instead requires that people know the truth about their political arrangements. This is because, according to Waldron’s reading of Hobbes, “any attempt to base [sovereign authority] on falsehood or myth or mystery [...] will leave political allegiance terribly vulnerable to the ability of actual individuals to figure things out for themselves”. See Jeremy Waldron, “Hobbes and the Principle of Publicity”, *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 82 (2001), pp. 447-474, 454.

⁴ *Dialogue*, pp. 31 (capitalisation in the original).

⁵ *Dialogue*, p. 76 (capitalisation in the original).

⁶ *De Cive*, X.10, pp. 122f. Cf. *Lev.*, XIX.5, p. 120.

⁷ *De Cive*, XIII.8, p. 146; *Lev.*, XXV.14, p. 170.

⁸ For further consideration of Hobbes’s views on intelligence in international relations, see sec. 8.1.

emphasises that the latter needs “to detect the Designs of neighbouring states” in order to protect the commonwealth.⁹ In *Leviathan*, Hobbes points to the political utility that the sacrament of confession has for the Roman Church:

[F]rom auricular confession they obtain, for the assurance of their power, better intelligence of the designs of princes and great persons of the civil states than these can have of the state ecclesiastical.¹⁰

Other statements in Hobbes’s works also indicate the importance of getting to know enemy plans in advance. In *Behemoth*, Hobbes recalls that Cromwell had intelligence of the (then exiled) king’s designs through a traitor.¹¹ He also mentions how a newly built Dutch fleet was taken as evidence for a plan to attack the English navy.¹²

Hobbes’s most pronounced statement on the need to make judgements on the basis of evidence can be found in the *Dialogue*, where he argues that it is a sin

if rashly, and relying upon his own Natural sufficiency, [the sovereign] make War, or Peace without Consulting with such, as by their Experience and Employment abroad, and Intelligence by Letters, or other means have gotten the Knowledge in some measure of the strength, Advantages and Designs of the Enemy, and the Manner and Degree of the Danger that may from thence arise.¹³

Thus, Hobbes maintains that the sovereign ought to rely on intelligence when making war and peace with other states. Likewise, rulers should “consult [...] with [men] of Military Condition” before attempting to subdue a rebellion.¹⁴

From *De Cive* onwards, Hobbes stresses that enemies commonly try to hide their designs. For instance, he states that deliberations in democratic assemblies have “the dis-

⁹ *De Cive*, VI.10, p. 80 (capitalisation in the original).

¹⁰ *Lev.*, XLVII.11, p. 479.

¹¹ *Behemoth*, p. 184.

¹² *Behemoth*, p. 177.

¹³ *Dialogue*, pp. 20f (capitalisation in the original).

¹⁴ *Dialogue*, p. 21 (capitalisation in the original).

advantage that the commonwealth's policies which it is normally of the highest importance to keep secret, are revealed to enemies before they can be put into effect".¹⁵ This seems to suggest that certain policies might be subverted if enemies get to know them in advance. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes likewise points to the dangers to the commonwealth that arise from public deliberations.¹⁶ In addition, he mentions the great crime of "revealing [...] the secrets of the commonwealth to an enemy".¹⁷

This emphasis on the importance of secrecy seems to imply that it might sometimes be impossible to discover the enemy's plans before they are put into practice. However, a passage in the Introduction of *Leviathan* suggests that Hobbes nonetheless considers it possible to detect hostile designs with the help of introspection:

And though by men's actions we do discover their designs sometimes, yet to do it without comparing them with our own, and distinguishing all circumstances by which the case may come to be altered, is to decipher without a key, and be for the most part deceived, by too much trust, or by too much diffidence [...].¹⁸

In later chapters in *Leviathan*, Hobbes actually expresses great confidence regarding the chances of detecting a hostile design. In particular, he points out in this regard that authors of sedition, who endeavour to deceive their neighbours and "think their designs are too subtle to be perceived", have a false opinion of their own wisdom.¹⁹

In Book 4 of *Leviathan*, Hobbes uses the key of introspection to decipher designs of the Church and the schoolmen, thereby identifying them as a "confederacy of deceivers".²⁰ Interpreting various ecclesiastical doctrines as evidence of a great conspiracy, Hobbes

¹⁵ *De Cive*, X.14, p. 124.

¹⁶ *Lev.*, XXV.15, p. 171.

¹⁷ *Lev.*, XXVII.37, p. 201.

¹⁸ *Lev.*, intr. 3, p. 4.

¹⁹ *Lev.*, XXVII.16, p. 195.

²⁰ *Lev.*, XXIV.1, p. 411. Cf. sec. 4.3.

claims that the Roman Church's universal dominion over the Christian world only came about because sovereigns lacked "insight into the designs of their teachers".²¹ He maintains that these designs become apparent if one applies the *qui bono* principle, for "amongst presumptions there is none that so evidently declareth the author as doth the benefit of the action".²² In other words, the very doctrine of universal dominion reveals that its ecclesiastical proponents only pursued their own advantage. What Hobbes seems to suggest here is that the Church's claim to universal dominion reveals its hostility, because it implies a challenge to the authority of Christian sovereigns.

Concerning Hobbes's analysis of the political designs of the Church, there seems to be an interesting parallel to Machiavelli. The latter argued in *The Prince* that the pope's power is not grounded in military capability, but "sustained by ancient religious institutions, which have been sufficiently strong to maintain their rulers in office however they live and act".²³ In a similar vein, Hobbes interprets religious institutions as a means for securing the Roman Church's temporal power.²⁴ Unlike Machiavelli, however, he does not limit his analysis to the worldly possessions of the papal state, but is primarily concerned with claims to universal ecclesiastical dominion. In his *Historia Ecclesiastica*, Hobbes describes in even greater detail than in *Leviathan* how generations of popes employed frauds and secret machinations to pursue their own interests. For instance, he claims that the crusades served the purpose of reducing the power of Christian sovereigns.²⁵ Hobbes also emphasises the power of religious institutions, specifically refer-

²¹ *Lev.*, XLVII.18, p. 480.

²² *Lev.*, XLVII.1, p. 477.

²³ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, eds. and trans. Quentin Skinner and Russell Price (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), ch. 11, p. 40.

²⁴ Hobbes had access to Machiavelli's works in the Hardwick Library. See Hamilton, "Hobbes's Study and the Hardwick Library", p. 450. On Hobbes's familiarity with the 'reason of state' literature more generally, also see Noel Malcolm, *Reason of State, Propaganda and the Thirty Years' War: An Unknown Translation by Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007).

²⁵ *Hist. Eccl.*, p. 549.

ring to the ecclesiastical foundation of universities as “a machine for capturing kingdoms”.²⁶ In addition, he argues in the *Historia Ecclesiastica* that popes use the promise of salvation and the threat of purgatory to manipulate their friends and enemies, and restates that confession turns every subject into a spy.²⁷ Thereby, he apparently takes the use of such stratagems as evidence for the Church’s hostility to the state.

With regard to authors of sedition, Hobbes’s view appears to be that they reveal their hostility to the commonwealth through their private judgement of good and evil, which equals a pretence to the power of judicature. In a discussion of the notion of lawful tyrannicide in *The Elements of Law*, Hobbes reasons that

howsoever [a sovereign] might deserve punishment, yet punishment is unjust without judgment preceding, and judgment unjust without power of judicature, which a subject hath not over his sovereign.²⁸

Thus, subjects cannot commit tyrannicide without judging the sovereign worthy of punishment, which implies a breach of law. Similarly, Hobbes expresses in his controversy with Bishop Bramhall that “to judge of what is good and evil in others, belongs not to him, but to those whom the sovereign power appointeth thereunto”.²⁹ To illustrate this point, Hobbes draws a parallel with Adam’s unlawful judgement of God’s commandment not to eat from the forbidden tree of knowledge of good and evil.³⁰

In *De Cive*, Hobbes invokes the same analogy to Adam’s original sin when he discusses the intentions of those who incite others to rebellion:

²⁶ *Hist. Eccl.*, p. 545.

²⁷ *Hist. Eccl.*, pp. 551, 553.

²⁸ *EL*, XVII.10, p. 168.

²⁹ *QLNC*, p. 269.

³⁰ *QLNC*, p. 269.

[A]nyone whom [authors of sedition] want killed as a *Tyrant*, rules either by right or without right. If without right, he is a public enemy [*hostis*] and is rightly killed, though this should not be called *Tyrannicide* but *hosticide*. If he holds power rightly, the divine question applies: *Who told you that he was a Tyrant, unless you have eaten of the tree of which I told you not to eat?* For why do you call him a *Tyrant* whom *God* made a King, unless you, a private person, are claiming for yourself a knowledge of good and evil?³¹

This reflects Hobbes's position that the word 'tyranny' does not denote a kind of government, as Aristotle argues, but merely the speaker's dislike of his or her sovereign.³² His rhetorical question seems to imply that in the moment subjects judge the sovereign a tyrant, they no longer obey his absolute power of judicature.³³

The view that subjects reveal their hostility through the act of calling the sovereign a tyrant appears to be related to Hobbes's opposition to the conventional notion of lawful tyrannicide, which he criticises in all of his main political works. In the chapter on rebellion in *De Cive*, for example, he states that this doctrine puts every monarch at "risk of being condemned by the judgement, and murdered by the hand, of one solitary assassin".³⁴ In view of this danger, Hobbes apparently seeks to prevent all talk of tyranny by declaring it a sufficient proof for a subject's hostility to the commonwealth.

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes invokes a different religious analogy to express the same point in more general terms. Alluding to the Third Commandment, which forbids using the name of God in vain, He expresses that the people need to be taught

how great a fault it is to speak evil of the sovereign representative [...], or to argue and dispute his power, or any way to use his name irreverently, whereby he may be brought into contempt with his people, and their obedience [...] slackened.³⁵

³¹ *De Cive*, XII.3, p. 133 (emphasis in the original).

³² *De Cive*, VII.3, p. 93; *Lev*, XIX.2, pp. 118f; *Lev.*, R&C 9, p. 492.

³³ In addition, Hobbes's analogy indicates that the forbidden act of judging the sovereign could ultimately provoke the breakdown of the political order. Cf. sec. 4.4.

³⁴ *De Cive*, XII.3, pp. 133f.

³⁵ *Lev.*, XXX.9, p. 223. Cf. Ex. 20:7

Like the earlier statements in *The Elements of Law* and *De Cive*, this passage points to utterances that undermine the sovereign's authority as the origin of disobedience and rebellion. A few pages later, Hobbes specifically mentions the doctrine of lawful tyrannicide, which "make[s] it lawful and laudable for any man [to kill the monarch], provided, before he do it, he call him a tyrant".³⁶ This clearly demonstrates what gravity Hobbes ascribes to the speech act of calling the sovereign a tyrant.

In accordance with his views on the power of language,³⁷ he apparently seeks to establish that those who reveal their hostility through their utterances are *hostes* (public enemies), against whom the sovereign could apply his right of war. In *De Cive*, Hobbes thus argues that the crime of *lèse-majesté* (high treason) consists of

a deed or word by the citizen or subject by which he reveals that he no longer intends to obey the man or council to whom the sovereign power in the commonwealth has been committed.³⁸

Considering that the traitor does not merely violate any particular law, but the grounds of political obligation (as defined by the laws of nature), Hobbes further insists in *De Cive* that he can be treated as a public enemy.³⁹ Similarly, he expresses in *Leviathan* that *lèse-majesté* covers 'facts of hostility' against the state, including "all endeavours *by word or deed* to diminish the authority of the [sovereign]".⁴⁰

In his discussion of high treason in the *Dialogue*, Hobbes rejects an alternative position expressed by the common lawyer and former chief justice Edward Coke. In his work *Third Institutes*, Coke claims that the legal status of rebellious traitors is not *hostis* (a

³⁶ *Lev.*, XXX.14, p. 225.

³⁷ Cf. sec. 4.2.

³⁸ *De Cive*, XIV.20, p. 165 (emphasis added).

³⁹ *De Cive*, XIV.21-22, p. 166.

⁴⁰ *Lev.*, XVII.36, pp. 201f (emphasis added).

public enemy) but *inimicus* (a private enemy).⁴¹ Hobbes finds this argument “not [...] worthy of the meanest lawyer”,⁴² and considers it manifest that traitors are public enemies. In this regard, he emphasizes the importance of hostile designs:

Then for the Nature of Treason by Rebellion; is it not a return to Hostility? What else does Rebellion signifie? William the Conqueror Subdued this Kingdom; some he Killed; some upon promise of future obedience he took to Mercy, and they became his Subjects, and swore Allegiance to him; if therefore they renew the War against him [the sovereign], are they not again open Enemies; or if any of them lurking under his Laws, seek occasion thereby to kill him, secretly, and come to be known, may he not be proceeded against as an Enemy, who though he had not Committed what he Design's, yet had certainly a *Hostile Design*? Did not the long Parliament declare all those for Enemies to the State that opposed their Proceedings against the late King?⁴³

Against Coke, Hobbes maintains that “not only the killing [of the monarch], but the Design is made High Treason [by the law]”.⁴⁴ Furthermore, Hobbes insists that there is no need of proof by an open deed, because apart from the act of treason itself, actions are generally too ambiguous to provide clear evidence. Thus, he points out:

[H]ow a Jury from providing, or buying of Armour, or buying of Gunpowder, or from any other overt Act, not Treason in itself, can infer a Design of Murdering the King, unless there appear some words also, signifying to what end he made such Provision, I cannot easily conceive.⁴⁵

This leaves Hobbes with the position that a speech act is the best possible proof. He defends this view against Coke's claim that ‘bare words’ may be sufficient evidence for the crime of heresy, yet not for high treason.⁴⁶ Strictly speaking, Hobbes reasons, statute law “maketh not the words High Treason, but the Intention, whereof the words are but a Testimony”.⁴⁷ Yet this specification does not seem to make much of a difference. After

⁴¹ Edward Coke, “The Third Part of the *Institutes of the Laws of England*” [first published in 1644], in *The Selected Writings and Speeches of Sir Edward Coke*, vol. 2, ed. Steve Sheppard (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 2003), pp. 944-1052, 973.

⁴² *Dialogue*, p. 72.

⁴³ *Dialogue*, p. 73 (emphasis added, capitalisation in the original).

⁴⁴ *Dialogue*, p. 74 (capitalisation in the original). In *Lev.*, XXX.13, p. 224, and *Dialogue*, p. 84, Hobbes advances the same view with regard to breaches of the natural law and the crime of murder.

⁴⁵ *Dialogue*, p. 76 (capitalisation in the original).

⁴⁶ *Dialogue*, pp. 74f.

⁴⁷ *Dialogue*, pp. 75 (capitalisation in the original).

all, Hobbes effectively argues that the sovereign retains the right to treat subjects as enemies if they reveal their traitorous designs through their utterances.

To conclude, Hobbes holds that, in the civil state, all judgements should be based on evidence. Although enemies often operate in secret, Hobbes considers it possible to detect their designs if one applies the *qui bono* principle. In particular, he argues that ‘bare words’ may be sufficient evidence of high treason, because words can reveal an intention to defy the sovereign’s authority. Thus, it seems that subjects become public enemies if they declare the sovereign a tyrant and incite others to rebellion.

7.2 The legal status of rebels and their punishment

Despite Hobbes’s insistence that rebels are public enemies (*hostes*), their legal status remains somewhat ambiguous. If a rebel effectively renounces his subjection by revealing his hostility to the commonwealth, as was suggested in the last section, it is unclear how the sovereign could still inflict legal punishments on such individuals.

Hobbes generally holds that, as a matter of natural law, punishment should not be ordained to revenge past evils, but in view of future goods. Specifically, the purpose of punishment is to correct an offender, or direct a wider audience.⁴⁸ In *Leviathan*, he defines punishment as an evil inflicted “to the end that the will of men may thereby be better disposed to obedience”.⁴⁹ Regarding rebellious subjects in particular, Hobbes repeatedly emphasises that they have to be severely punished. In *The Elements of Law*, he expresses that the sovereign has a duty “to ordain severe punishments, for such as shall by

⁴⁸ *EL*, XVI.10, pp. 91f; *De Cive*, III.11, p. 49; *Lev.*, XV.19, p. 96.

⁴⁹ *Lev.*, XXVIII.1, p. 203.

reprehension of public actions, affect popularity and applause amongst the multitude”⁵⁰

Similarly, Hobbes argues in *De Cive* that sovereigns must “suppress factious citizens as forcefully as they can”.⁵¹ In *Leviathan*, he points out that

the severest punishments are to be inflicted for those crimes that are of most danger to the public, such as are those which proceed from malice to the government established, those that spring from contempt of justice, [and] those that provoke indignation in the multitude [...].⁵²

Considering Hobbes’s characterisation of such particularly dangerous crimes that need to be severely punished, he seems to be referring to the actions and utterances of authors of sedition, i.e. those individuals who incite others to rebellion.

Yet penalties for such people, whom Hobbes considers public enemies, are difficult to reconcile with the theory of punishment in *Leviathan*. According to the latter, the right to punish is derived from the natural right that the sovereign retains from the natural condition. As Hobbes further suggests in this regard, “the subjects did not give the sovereign that right [to punish], but only (in laying down theirs) strengthened him to use his own [...], for the preservation of them all”⁵³. Thus, he seems to conceive of the sovereign’s right to punish as an implication of the social contract, in which everyone but the sovereign supposedly renounced his or her natural right to all things.⁵⁴

In general, it seems to follow from Hobbes’s theory that, even if subjects have no obligation to assist in enforcing their own punishment, legal penalties presuppose subjection to the sovereign.⁵⁵ In *Leviathan*, Hobbes, indeed, draws a sharp distinction between le-

⁵⁰ *EL*, XVIII.7, p. 176.

⁵¹ *De Cive*, XIII.12, pp. 148f.

⁵² *Lev.*, XXX.23, p. 230.

⁵³ *Lev.*, XXVIII.2, p. 204.

⁵⁴ Cf. sec. 5.3.

⁵⁵ As has been shown in sec. 5.3, Hobbes holds that subjects are permitted to resist their own punishment

gal penalties and ‘acts of hostility’ that do not meet the requirements of his definition, including evils that are not inflicted by public authority, excessive harm, and punishment without law.⁵⁶ Hobbes also argues in this context that

harm inflicted upon one that is a declared enemy falls not under the name of punishment, because seeing they were either never subject to the law, and therefore cannot transgress it, or having been subject to it and professing to be no longer so, by consequence they deny they can transgress it, all the harms that can be done them must be taken as acts of hostility.⁵⁷

Given that rebels effectively cease to be subjects, according to Hobbes, it seems to follow that the sovereign cannot inflict legal punishments on them.

However, the fact that rebels cannot be punished on the grounds of the civil law does not preclude any kind of penalty. Rather, as Hobbes expresses in *Leviathan*, it implies that rebels are subject to an *extra-legal* jurisdiction:

But in declared hostility all infliction of evil is lawful. From when it followeth, that if a subject shall, by fact or words, wittingly and deliberately deny the authority of the representative of the commonwealth, (whatsoever penalty hath been formerly ordained for treason) he may lawfully made to suffer whatsoever the representative will. For in denying subjection he denies such punishments as by the law hath been ordained, and therefore suffereth as an enemy of the commonwealth [...]. For the punishments set down in the law are to subjects, not to enemies; such as are they, that having been by their own act subjects, deliberately revolting, deny the sovereign power.⁵⁸

Thus, rebels do not enjoy legal certainty and suffer at the sovereign’s will, regardless of what penalties have previously been ordained for their crimes. In this vein, Hobbes also responds to Bishop Bramhall’s objection that rebels should be punished as disloyal traitors rather than as public enemies.⁵⁹ In the *Answer*, Hobbes points out that “the traitor loseth the privilege of being punished by a precedent law; and therefore may be pun-

as long as they do not challenge the sovereign authority. In this case, people would reveal their hostility toward the state and are likely to lose their status as subjects.

⁵⁶ See *Lev.*, XXVIII.5-23, pp. 204-206.

⁵⁷ *Lev.*, XXVIII.13, p. 206.

⁵⁸ *Lev.*, XXVIII.13, pp. 206f.

⁵⁹ *Answer*, p. 291.

ished at the king's will, as Ravailiac was for murdering Henry IV of France".⁶⁰ As this passage demonstrates, Hobbes conceives of the difference between legal and extra-legal punishment in terms of privileges granted or not granted to an offender.⁶¹ Yet he also states in the *Answer* that "a rebel is still a subject *de jure*, though not *de facto*",⁶² which may suggest that rebels still commit an offence against the civil law.

Hobbes's discussion of treason in *De Cive* indicates that he mainly insists on the applicability of the sovereign's right of war against rebels in order to resolve a problem of law enforcement. In particular, he seems to maintain that rebels cannot be legally punished for high treason, because this crime consists of the rejection of their political obligation, and a transgression of the entire system of civil law:

If a sovereign prince made a civil law in the form: *do not rebel!*, he would achieve nothing. For unless the citizens are previously obligated to obedience, i.e. not to rebel, every law is invalid; and an obligation which binds one to do something which one is already obligated to do is superfluous.⁶³

Hobbes does not deny that there are civil laws against *lèse-majesté* (high treason). Indeed, he discusses the legal definition of this crime in *De Cive*, *Leviathan*, and the *Dialogue*.⁶⁴ However, Hobbes holds that rebels can only be effectively 'punished' with reference to the natural law, which allows for the application of the sovereign's right of war against subjects who have revealed their hostility to the state.

Hobbes's discussion of exile in *Leviathan* lends further credence to the suggestion that he only invokes the legal status of rebels in order to establish a basis for their punishment. Affirmatively citing Cicero on this point, Hobbes argues that a banished person is

⁶⁰ *Answer*, p. 294.

⁶¹ Cf. sec. 8.2.

⁶² *Answer*, p. 294.

⁶³ *De Cive*, XIV.21, p. 166 (emphasis in the original). Cf. *Lev.*, XXX.4, p. 220.

⁶⁴ See sec. 7.1.

a lawful enemy of the state, and that exile should therefore not be regarded as punishment but as refuge from danger.⁶⁵ In the quoted passage from the speech *Pro Caecina*, Cicero spells out the implications of this conception of exile:

[A]s men wished to avoid imprisonment, execution, or infamy, which are penalties appointed by the laws, they flee to banishment as to the altar, though, if they chose to remain in the city and to submit to the rigour of the law, they would lose their rights of citizenship sooner than they lost their lives; but because they do not choose, their rights of citizenship are not taken from them, but are abandoned and laid aside by them.⁶⁶

This suggests that people either renounce their citizenship through escaping from punishment, or are deprived of their rights and thereafter punished with death.

In a similar vein, Hobbes repeatedly expresses the view that, far from getting to enjoy any privileges, banished subjects who have escaped punishment are exposed to great dangers. In *The Elements of Law*, he thus points out that “exile perpetual, is a release from subjection, forasmuch as being out of the protection of the sovereignty that expelled him, he hath no means of subsisting but from himself”.⁶⁷ In other words, banished persons (or at least those who are in *perpetual* exile) return to the state of nature where they have to rely on their own strength and resources in order to preserve themselves. Consequently, it seems that such people must also retain their natural right to all things. Yet as Hobbes clearly expresses in *De Cive*, this does not imply any privileges, because to banished subjects, “freedom is given as a punishment”.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ *Lev.*, XXVIII.21, p. 207. This view seems to reflect Hobbes’s own decision to go into exile to escape persecution for his political views. In 1640 Hobbes moved to Paris, as he apparently feared being punished for his defence of absolute and undivided sovereignty in *The Elements of Law*. Although this work had not been published, the manuscript was widely circulated and discussed in political circles. See John Aubrey, “Life of Hobbes”, in *Lev.*, ed. Edwin Curley, pp. lxxv-lxxi, lxxvii.

⁶⁶ Cicero, “For Aulus Caecina”, in *The Orations of Marcus Tullius Cicero*, Vol. 2, trans. C. D. Yonge (London: George Bell & Sons, 1856), pp. 35-76, 64f.

⁶⁷ *EL*, XXI.14, p. 125.

⁶⁸ *De Cive*, VIII.9, p. 105.

In *Leviathan's* discussion of exile, Hobbes expresses a somewhat different view. He argues that, in order to be a proper punishment, banishment must be accompanied by a deprivation of lands and goods.⁶⁹ This is because, according to Hobbes, “the mere change of air is no punishment”.⁷⁰ In making this argument however, he seems to refer to exiles that are allowed to live in another country, whereas in the earlier works his concern was with individuals that return to the natural condition. The latter possibility is also mentioned in *Leviathan*, namely in a passage that is widely known as the ‘reply to the fool’. There Hobbes argues that someone who denies justice cannot be admitted into any commonwealth, and if being “left or cast out of society, he perisheth”.⁷¹ In the appendix to the Latin *Leviathan*, Hobbes also suggests a close connection between banishment and death. Regarding heresy, he states that God (as the author of nature) has “a right to expel the blasphemers from the whole earth, i.e., to kill him”.⁷²

A similar view on banishment can be found in the *Dialogue's* discussion of the crime of *Praemunire* (i.e. the assertion of papal jurisdiction in England). In this context, Hobbes provides a summary of Edward Coke's position on outlawry, which

is equivalent to Capital [punishment]: For [the outlaw] lives secretly at the Mercy of those that know where he is, and cannot with the like Peril to themselves, but discover him. And it has been much disputed before the time of Queen *Elizabeth*, whether he might not be lawfully killed by any Man that would, as one might kill a Wolf.⁷³

In addition, Hobbes states that outlawry is “like the Punishment amongst the old *Romans* of being barred the use of Fire and Water”.⁷⁴ Thereby, Hobbes might be drawing

⁶⁹ *Lev.*, XXVIII.13, pp. 207f.

⁷⁰ *Lev.*, XXVIII.13, p. 207.

⁷¹ *Lev.*, XV.5, p. 92. Cf. the discussion of Hobbes's ‘reply to the fool’ in sec. 7.4.

⁷² *Lev.*, Appendix II.40, p. 530.

⁷³ *Dialogue*, p. 104 (capitalisation in the original). Cf. Coke, “The First Part of the *Institutes of the Common Laws of England*” [first published in 1628], in *The Selected Writings and Speeches of Sir Edward Coke*, vol. 2, ed. Steve Sheppard (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 2003), pp. 554-744, 712f.

⁷⁴ *Dialogue*, p. 104 (capitalisation in the original).

on a passage by the jurist Paulus from the *Digest* of Roman law. Paulus mentions the interdict of fire and water as one implication of the loss of citizenship, which occurs when the Roman Senate declares a rebel *hostis* (a public enemy).⁷⁵

Understood thus, the punishment of former subjects as enemies appears to be a functional equivalent to legal penalties. Both legal and extra-legal penalties are ultimately meant to deter crimes, which is what Hobbes seems to have in mind when he repeatedly calls for severe, exemplary punishments for those who incite others to rebellion.⁷⁶ In addition, such an extra-legal jurisdiction may serve the purpose of subverting the plans of rebels before they get the chance to put them into practice. According to Hobbes, the right of war generally permits pre-emptive action against anyone who constitutes a threat.⁷⁷ The goals of deterrence and pre-emption are compatible on account of Hobbes's theory of punishment, which holds that all penalties ought to be ordained in view of future goods, and particularly to secure the obedience of subjects.

To conclude, this section has confirmed that Hobbes regards rebels as public enemies (*hostes*). He apparently insists on this status in order to justify severe, extra-legal penalties for those subjects who defy the sovereign authority and denounce the grounds of political obligation. Yet it has also been suggested that these extra-legal punishments serve as a functional equivalent to legal jurisdiction.

⁷⁵ *Digest of Justinian*, Vol. 1, Latin text edited by Theodor Mommsen with aid of Paul Krueger, English translation edited by Alan Watson (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), IV.V, 5, p. 140. Quentin Skinner suggests that Hobbes draws heavily on the *Digest*, particularly in the conceptual apparatus of *Leviathan*. See Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics, Vol. III: Hobbes and Civil Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 179.

⁷⁶ See *EL*, XVIII.7, p. 176; *De Cive*, XIII.12, pp. 148f; *Lev.*, XXX.23, p. 230.

⁷⁷ See sec. 3.2.

7.3 Exercising sovereign authority in the face of rebellion

The last section has shown that rebels can, according to Hobbes, be treated as public enemies. This section further considers how the sovereign can effectively exercise his authority during an insurgence. It will be suggested that Hobbes recommends a strategy of divide and conquer for breaking up an ongoing rebellion.

Hobbes was certainly aware that making war upon subjects is highly controversial and likely to provoke further hostilities. At least, this is suggested by his account of the events leading to the outbreak of the English Civil War in *Behemoth*:

I believe the English would never have taken well that the Parliament should make war upon the King, upon any provocation, unless it were in their own defence, in case the King should first make war upon them; and, therefore, it behoved them to provoke the King, that he might do something that might look like hostility.⁷⁸

In other words, members of the Parliament party sought to provoke acts of hostility by the king in order to win the people's support. This example suggests that exercising the right of war against those who challenge the sovereign's authority does not necessarily conduce to suppressing a rebellion, but may also stir up rebellion. In particular, it seems plausible that a sovereign who is accused of tyrannical government only lends further credence to this allegation if he makes war on his own subjects.

In order to examine whether Hobbes provides a solution for this problem, it may be fruitful to consider one passage from *Leviathan* that is sometimes cited in support of the claim that Hobbes grants subjects a right of rebellion. Bishop Bramhall, who accused

⁷⁸ *Behemoth*, p. 28.

Leviathan of being a ‘rebel’s catechism’, was among the first to express this view.⁷⁹ The said passage appears in the chapter on the liberty of subjects:

[I]n case a great many men together have already resisted the sovereign power unjustly, or committed some capital crime for which every one of them expecteth death, whether have they not the liberty then to join together, and assist, and defend one another? Certainly they have; for they but defend their lives, which the guilty man may as well do as the innocent. There was indeed injustice in the first breach of their duty; their bearing of arms subsequent to it, though it be to maintain what they have done, is no new unjust act. And if it be only to defend their persons, it is not unjust at all. *But the offer of pardon taketh from them to whom it is offered the plea of self-defence, and maketh their perseverance in assisting or defending the rest unlawful.*⁸⁰

Susanne Sreedhar argues that—despite acknowledging that rebellion is ‘indeed injustice’—Hobbes regards it as morally permissible for a group of rebellious subjects to continue in their collective resistance, especially since they cannot expect pardon.⁸¹ As Sreedhar correctly notes, Hobbes indeed seems to refer to rebels in the above quotation. This is because there are crucial similarities with another passage in *The Elements of Law’s* chapter on rebellion. However, the parallel statement in the earlier work also casts doubt on Sreedhar’s argument for a *right* to rebellion:

The presence of bodily pain disposeth not to sedition; the fear of it doth. As for example: when a great multitude, or heap of people, have concurred to a crime worthy of death, they join together, and take arms to defend themselves for fear thereof. So also the fear of want, or in present want the fear of arrests and imprisonment, dispose to sedition.⁸²

The context of this passage suggests that Hobbes is not concerned with whether or not resistance against the sovereign is morally permissible, but rather identifies causes of

⁷⁹ John Bramhall, “The Catching of Leviathan, or of the Great Whale” [1658], in *Leviathan: Contemporary Responses to the Political Theory of Thomas Hobbes*, ed. G.A.J. Rogers (Bristol, UK: Thoemmes Press, 1995), pp. 115-179, 145. More recently, Susanne Sreedhar has defended the view that Hobbes grants subjects a right of rebellion. See Sreedhar, *Hobbes on Resistance*, pp.136-143. It is telling that both Bramhall and Sreedhar, *Hobbes on Resistance*, pp. 156f, refuse to accept Hobbes’s claim that rebels become public enemies of the state, and thus lose their status as subjects.

⁸⁰ *Lev.*, XXI.17, p. 143 (emphasis added).

⁸¹ Sreedhar, *Hobbes on Resistance*, pp. 138f.

⁸² *EL*, XXVII.2, p. 163.

rebellion in order to show how civil war can be avoided.⁸³ In this vein, he also points out that there would be no rebellion without pretence of right, nor without the organisation of rebels into one single body, which gives them hope of success.⁸⁴ This indicates that Hobbes considers group resistance not as a right, but as a factor that the sovereign needs to take into account in his government of the commonwealth.

The same is likely to be true for the above quotation from *Leviathan*. In particular, it seems that Hobbes's specification that the offer of pardon takes away the plea of self-defence does not so much, as Sreedhar suggests, give rebels an additional reason to resist the sovereign. Rather, granting pardon to some participants of an insurgence while declaring others an enemy might allow the sovereign to effectively exercise his authority in face of a rebellion. Sreedhar identifies the distinction between subjects and enemies as problematic in practice, and takes this as support for her view that rebels do not really become enemies of the state.⁸⁵ However, as was previously shown, Hobbes generally does not conceive of membership of the commonwealth in static terms, but holds that the sovereign establishes and maintains the distinction between insiders and outsiders on the grounds of his right of war and peace.⁸⁶ This right to discern subjects from enemies appears to be of particular significance in times of rebellion.

Hobbes states in all of his accounts of the natural law that peace should be granted to everyone who repents their former hostilities.⁸⁷ Regarding the right to discharge penal-

⁸³ Hobbes clearly states in *EL*, XXVII.1, pp. 162f, that without the subjects' discontent, pretence of right, and hope of success "there can be no rebellion". His intention in this passage seems to be to explain how rebellion, which he compares to sickness of the commonwealth, can be avoided. This seems to be related to the more general view of Hobbes that the main practical benefit of political philosophy is that it allows us to avoid the evils that would follow from civil war. See sec. 4.2.

⁸⁴ *EL*, XXVII.4, pp. 164f, XXVII.11, p. 169. Cf. *De Cive*, XII.11, p. 138.

⁸⁵ Sreedhar, *Hobbes on Resistance*, p. 157.

⁸⁶ See sec. 5.3.

⁸⁷ *EL*, XVI.9, p. 91; *De Cive*, III.10, p. 48; *Lev.*, XV.18, p. 96.

ties, he argues in *Leviathan* that the sovereign may pardon all breaches of law that are offences against the state, such as the crime of high treason.⁸⁸ At the same time, as has been mentioned in sec. 7.2, Hobbes insists that the sovereign has a duty to discourage rebellion by ordaining severe punishments.⁸⁹ The following passage from *Leviathan* shows how pardon and severe penalties can go together:

[In the case of] crimes of infirmity (such as those which proceed from great provocation, from great fear, great need, or from ignorance whether the fact be a great crime or not), there is place many times for lenity, without prejudice to the commonwealth; and lenity, when there is such place for it, is required by the law of nature. *The punishment of the leaders and teachers in a commotion, not the poor and seduced people, when they are punished, can profit the commonwealth by their example.* To be severe to the people is to punish that ignorance which may in great part be imputed to the sovereign, whose fault it was they were no better instructed.⁹⁰

A plausible reading of this passage seems to be that, by declaring leaders of a rebellion an enemy, the sovereign singles out and attributes responsibility to these individuals. At the same time, the ‘poor seduced people’ are to be excused on the basis of their ignorance. This is in accordance with Hobbes’s accounts of the causes of rebellion. In all of his main political works, he points out that authors of sedition, who pursue their own ambition, incite a multitude of ignorant people to take up arms against the sovereign.⁹¹ Given that Hobbes generally conceives of pardon as granting of peace, this strategy could be used to restore participants of a rebellion as obedient subjects.⁹²

⁸⁸ *Lev.*, XXX.15, p. 226. However, he also states in this regard that sovereigns cannot pardon all offences against private persons. Equity demands that such crimes are only pardoned upon the consent of those who have been harmed. By contrast, offences against the state do not affect any private person in particular, and can therefore simply be pardoned by the sovereign. For Hobbes’s distinction between these two kinds of offences see *Lev.*, XXVII.36-54, pp. 201-203.

⁸⁹ *EL*, XXVIII.7, p. 176; *De Cive*, XXIII.12, pp. 148f; *Lev.*, XXX.23, p. 230.

⁹⁰ *Lev.*, XXX.23, p. 230 (emphasis added).

⁹¹ *EL*, XXVII.11-12, p. 169; *De Cive*, XII.10-11, pp. 138; *Lev.*, XXIX.20, p. 218.

⁹² Hobbes’s views on how the sovereign should use his right of war and peace in the face of rebellion may also be informed by the view that leaders are *morally* responsible. Llyod argues that there is a ‘hierarchy of responsibility’ with regard to the sovereign, who bears sole responsibility for breaches of the natural law, yet she does not consider whether this also applies to leaders and participants of a rebellion. See S.A. Lloyd, *Morality in the Philosophy of Hobbes: Cases in the Law of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 7, 282, 284-287.

In recommending a strategy of *divide et impera* (divide and conquer),⁹³ Hobbes might be drawing on Roman sources, and particularly on Sallust's history of the Catilinarian conspiracy. In both *The Elements of Law* and *De Cive*, Hobbes refers to Catiline as the archetype on an author of sedition, arguing that he had great oratory skills but little wisdom.⁹⁴ This demonstrates Hobbes's familiarity with the work. As part of his historical account of this rebellion, Sallust describes how the Roman Senate

pronounced Catiline and [his co-conspirator] Manlius enemies [*hostis*] and appointed a day before which the rest of their crowd (apart from those condemned of capital charges) could put down their arms with impunity.⁹⁵

This passage is echoed in Hobbes's above statements on rebellion, pardon, and the punishment of leaders in *The Elements of Law* and *Leviathan*. In the same way as the Roman Senate declared Catiline and Manlius public enemies with the intention of restoring peace, the Hobbesian sovereign may condemn the authors of sedition and offer pardon to the rest in order to win back their allegiance as subjects.

Understood thus, the right of war and peace seems to provide the sovereign with an instrument for breaking up an ongoing rebellion. It has been noted before that Hobbes advocates a series of political discriminations in the administration of justice, intended to keep ambitious and rebellious subjects under control.⁹⁶ Yet as the above stated reading suggests, these discriminations do not only concern the treatment of rebel leaders. Rather, Hobbes also seems to suggest that the ignorant multitude of individuals that take part in an insurgence should be excused by the sovereign. Therefore, it may be said that the measures recommended by Hobbes amount to a strategy of divide and conquer. The

⁹³ Many historians refer to *divide et impera* (divide and conquer) as a maxim of Roman statecraft. See, for example, William E. Dunstan, *Ancient Rome* (Lanham, MD : Rowman & Littlefield), p. 55.

⁹⁴ *EL*, XXVII.13, p. 169; *De Cive*, XII.12, p. 139.

⁹⁵ Sallust, *Catiline's War, The Jugurthine War, Histories*, 36.2-3, p. 24.

⁹⁶ Baumgold, *Hobbes's Political Theory*, pp. 113f.

latter might allow the sovereign to effectively exercise his authority in the face of rebellion, and thus prevent the outbreak of civil war.

In this regard, it is important to note the distinction between rebellion and civil war that Hobbes draws in all of his main political works. It is true that he sometimes writes as if there was no such distinction. Thus, he refers to “times of sedition and civil war” in *The Elements of Law* and *De Cive*.⁹⁷ When he is more precise, however, Hobbes describes rebellion or sedition as a situation in which the commonwealth is weakened, and civil war as a condition in which the state is effectively dissolved. For instance, he expresses in *The Elements of Law* that the sovereign power is dissolved into two factions in the event of civil war.⁹⁸ In *Leviathan*, Hobbes argues that civil war implies a return to the state of nature, because there is no longer “a common power to fear”.⁹⁹ In both of these works, he also compares sedition to sickness and civil war to death.¹⁰⁰

This suggests that the sovereign might still be able to exercise his authority in the face of rebellion, whereas the outbreak of civil war implies that he has lost his power over the commonwealth. Indeed, Hobbes argues in *De Cive* that sovereigns ought to

encourage obedient citizens, and to suppress factious citizens as forcefully as they can; for this is the only way by which public power [*potentia publica*], and with it the citizens’ quiet, can be preserved.¹⁰¹

This passage points to a fundamental tenet of Hobbes’s political philosophy, i.e. the idea that sovereign power ultimately relies on the subjects’ obedience, which comes out most clearly in *De Cive*. Earlier in the same chapter, Hobbes already states that “the

⁹⁷ *EL*, XVII.1, p. 93; *De Cive*, VI.13, p. 82.

⁹⁸ *EL*, XXIV.8, p. 140.

⁹⁹ *Lev.*, XIII.11, p. 77. Cf. *Lev.*, XVIII.20, pp. 117f.

¹⁰⁰ *EL*, XXVII.1, pp. 162f; *Lev.*, intro. 1, p. 3.

¹⁰¹ *De Cive*, XIII.12, p. 149.

power [*potentia*] of the citizens in the power of the commonwealth, that is, his power who holds the sovereignty”.¹⁰² In addition, he points out:

In every commonwealth, the *Man* or *Assembly* to whose will individuals have subjected their will [...] is said to hold sovereign authority [*summam potestatem*] or sovereign power [*summum imperium*] or dominion [dominium]. This *Authority* [*Potestas*], this *right to give Commands* [*Jus imperandi*], consists in the fact that each of the citizens has transferred all his own force and power [*potentia*] to that *man* or *Assembly*.¹⁰³

Hobbes sometimes refers to power as *potentia*, i.e. a matter of physical force, and at other times describes it as *potestas*, i.e. a matter of rights and authority.¹⁰⁴ However, both seem to converge in his concept of sovereignty. The latter effectively identifies the ruler’s supreme authority (*summa potestas*) with the commonwealth’s united force (*potentia*), which is under the sovereign’s command due to the subjects’ obedience. Hence, coercive power and the subjects’ consent cannot be in contradiction.¹⁰⁵

Given this conception of sovereign power, rebellion may be understood as a test case for whether or not a state has dissolved into civil war. A sovereign who retains his authority (i.e. his command over the subject’s united strength and resources) should be able to use his right of war and peace in order to break up an insurgence. He may, as suggested above, punish rebel leaders and restore the ‘poor seduced people’ as obedient subjects. If a sovereign is no longer able to respond to a rebellion in this way, however, this may signify the end of sovereignty and the advent of civil war. Thereby, Hobbes’s views on how sovereign authority can be exercised in the face of rebellion may be contrasted with Schmitt’s concept of sovereignty. In *Political Theology*, Schmitt argues:

¹⁰² *De Cive*, XIII.2, p. 143.

¹⁰³ *De Cive*, V.11, p. 73 (emphasis and capitalisation in the original).

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Luc Foisneau, “Le Vocabulaire de Pouvoir: Potentia, Potestas”, in *Hobbes et Son Vocabulaire: Études de Lexicographie Philosophique*, ed. Yves Charles Zarka (Paris: J. Vrin, 1992), pp. 83-102.

¹⁰⁵ This relationship between the state’s power and the subjects’ obedience seems to work both ways. On the one hand, people submit themselves to a sovereign in hope of protection. On the other hand, subjects are no longer obliged to obey the sovereign if his power can no longer defend the commonwealth, such as after a successful enemy invasion. See sec. 5.1.

“Sovereign is he who decides on the exception [*Ausnahmezustand*]”.¹⁰⁶ This statement is somewhat ambiguous, yet it becomes clearer in light of Schmitt’s declared opposition to a merely juristic definition, and his corresponding intention to set out the nature of sovereignty against the reality of societal life. More specifically, Schmitt argues that sovereignty consists of the “authority to suspend valid law”.¹⁰⁷ In this context, ‘exception’ means neither anarchy nor normal jurisprudence, but a situation in which the state persists despite the suspension of its ordinary legal order.¹⁰⁸

There is an obvious parallel to Hobbes’s views on rebellion, which may—in Schmitt’s terms—be understood as a state of exception.¹⁰⁹ Hobbes also envisions the sovereign to revert to extra-legal measures in such an exceptional situation. Schmitt himself claims that Hobbes was a ‘decisionist’ who attempted to give sovereignty a legal form that “lies in the concrete decision, one that emanates from a particular authority”.¹¹⁰ Yet as Tom Sorell and Stephen Holmes point out, Hobbes does not merely conceive of sovereignty in terms of the authority to decide, but with reference to the natural law.¹¹¹ Indeed, Hobbes points out in *Leviathan’s* account of the sovereign’s office that the latter is obliged by the laws of nature to procure the safety of the people.¹¹² This suggests that, unlike Schmitt, Hobbes conceives of sovereignty in terms of a ruler’s ability to establish, maintain, and restore peace. With regard to rebellion in particular, this would imply

¹⁰⁶ Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, translated by George Schwab with a foreword by Tracy B. Strong (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ Schmitt, *Political Theology*, p. 9.

¹⁰⁸ Schmitt, *Political Theology*, p. 12.

¹⁰⁹ Tom Sorell suggests that Hobbes’s entire project can be described as a politics of emergency, for it mainly seeks to prevent civil war. See Sorell, *Emergencies and Politics: A Sober Hobbesian Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 204. While this is a plausible reading, it misses the point that rebellion poses an exceptional threat to the Hobbesian state.

¹¹⁰ Schmitt, *Political Theology*, pp. 33f.

¹¹¹ Tom Sorell, “Schmitt’s unHobbesian Politics of Emergency”, in *Leviathan Between the Wars: Hobbes’s Impact on Early Twentieth Century Political Philosophy*, eds. Luc Foiseneau, Jean-Christophe Merle and Tom Sorell (Frankfurt, Germany: Peter Lang, 2005), pp. 129-140, 136; Holmes, “Does Hobbes Have a Concept of the Enemy?”, p. 385.

¹¹² *Lev.*, XXX.1, p. 219.

that *sovereign is he who can terminate a state of exception*. As was shown above, a sovereign may be able to do so by using a strategy of divide and conquer.

To conclude, Hobbes understands group resistance as a challenge to a ruler's authority. The section has developed a reading according to which the sovereign may still exercise his authority in a state of exception, namely by using his right of war and peace as an instrument for breaking up an ongoing rebellion. Attributing responsibility to rebel leaders while pardoning the rest seems to be crucial in this regard, as it might allow the sovereign to win back the subjects' allegiance, on which his power relies.

7.4 Hobbes's 'fool' as an enemy of mankind

The passage about the fool in Chapter 15 of *Leviathan* has attracted much attention among twentieth-century commentators. After Hobbes introduces the natural law that prescribes the keeping of covenants (which he calls justice), he considers the position of a fool who "hath said in his heart: 'there is no such thing as justice'".¹¹³ The fool does not deny that people make and keep covenants, also accepting that the breach of covenants is injustice, but he "questioneth whether injustice [...] may not sometimes stand with that reason which dictate to every man his own good".¹¹⁴ This section will consider how the fool passage relates to Hobbes's views on enmity.

Often the fool passage has been interpreted as an argument against the rationality of free-riding. Hobbes's apparently rather unsuccessful attempt to refute the position that the breach of covenants sometimes conduces to one's benefit gained special signifi-

¹¹³ *Lev.*, XV.4, p. 90.

¹¹⁴ *Lev.*, XV.4, p. 90.

cance in the context of the debate on the ‘received view’.¹¹⁵ Howard Warrender, who holds that there is more to the laws of nature than prudence and self-interest, advances the view that the fool passage reveals a conflict between political obligation and rational self-interest in Hobbes’s political philosophy. Warrender finds that this conflict can only be resolved if the laws of nature are understood as divine commands.¹¹⁶

Other commentators, notably David Gauthier and Jean Hampton, defend the view that Hobbes seeks to develop a moral system for utility-maximising individuals, yet criticise his ‘reply to the fool’ for being implausible, or in contradiction with other tenets of his thought. Gauthier finds the ‘reply’ unconvincing, but holds that Hobbes’s theory contains the elements for refuting the fool’s position.¹¹⁷ According to Hampton, Hobbes adopts a different account of rationality to establish that it is rational to keep covenants. However, she argues, if this account was applied to the state of nature, it would be impossible for people to agree on the social contract in the first place.¹¹⁸

From a similar perspective, Gregory Kavka provides a more positive assessment of Hobbes’s ‘reply’. Emphasising the difference between first- and second-performer contracts and the principle of disaster-avoidance, as opposed to utility-maximisation, he finds that “Hobbes’s reply succeeds generally but fails in special cases in which the risks due to violation are both low (compared to the potential gains) and calculable”.¹¹⁹ Thus, although Kavka is less critical than other interpreters and seeks to rescue

¹¹⁵ Cf. sec. 2.4.

¹¹⁶ Howard Warrender, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes*, p. 276. For a somewhat similar position, see Martinich, *The Two Gods of Leviathan*, p. 118.

¹¹⁷ Gauthier, *Morals by Agreement*, pp. 161f. Cf. Gauthier, *The Logic of Leviathan*, pp. 87-89.

¹¹⁸ Hampton, *Hobbes and the Social Contract Tradition*, pp. 78f.

¹¹⁹ Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, p. 378. For the principle of disaster-avoidance, also see Kavka, “Right Reason and Natural Law in Hobbes’s Ethics”, *The Monist* 66 (1983), pp. 120-133.

Hobbes's 'reply', he ultimately admits that the breach of covenants may still be rational *under certain conditions*, which is essentially the fool's position.¹²⁰

In recent years the debate on the 'reply' has moved away from abstract philosophical reflection on reason and morality to more directly political considerations. A number of Hobbesian interpreters suggest that Hobbes is, in this passage, not arguing against free-riding in general, but more specifically, seeks to discourage rebellion.¹²¹ In particular, Kinch Hoekstra has proposed an important reinterpretation that identifies the fool with the author of sedition who publicly justifies rebellion against the sovereign.¹²² Hoekstra exploits an ambiguity in Hobbes's characterisation of the fool, namely the fact that the latter is said to deny justice both "in his heart" and "sometimes also with his tongue".¹²³ This may suggest that the fool either secretly or openly rejects the obligation to keep covenants. According to Hoekstra, the possibility of a 'silent fool' would require ascribing to Hobbes a position that is obviously false, i.e. that it is *never* rational to break a covenant. The alternative possibility of what he calls an 'explicit fool' seems more plausible, since a fool that declares his doctrine "gives notice that he is not to be trusted in covenants, and so diminishes the benefit he can reap therefrom".¹²⁴

Hoekstra's reading is appealing as it suggests how this passage could be linked with Hobbes's views on the causes of rebellion that he expresses in other parts of his writ-

¹²⁰ The fool holds the view that it *sometimes* conduces to one's benefit to break a covenant, not that the breach of agreements is *generally* beneficial. Cf. Hoekstra, "Hobbes and the Foole", p. 635; A. Zaitchik, "Hobbes's Reply to the Fool: The Problem of Consent and Obligation", *Political Theory* 10 (1982), pp. 245-266, 246f.

¹²¹ See Hoekstra, "Hobbes and the Foole", p. 632; S.A. Lloyd, *Ideals as Interests in Hobbes's Leviathan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 95f; Lloyd, *Morality in the Philosophy of Hobbes*, pp. 308f; Springborg, "Hobbes's Fool the *Insipiens*", p. 96; Sreedhar, *Hobbes on Resistance*, pp. 146f.

¹²² Hoekstra, "Hobbes and the Foole", pp. 622-629.

¹²³ *Lev.*, XV.4, p. 90.

¹²⁴ Hoekstra, "Hobbes and the Foole", p. 623.

ings, particularly the claim that language is a “trumpet of war and sedition”.¹²⁵ Moreover, considering Hobbes’s statement that the fool “*declares* he thinks it reason to deceive those that help him”,¹²⁶ he clearly does not seem to be entirely silent. However, a number of problems remain with Hoekstra’s interpretation. First, it is unclear how the Hobbesian fool can both deny justice and justify rebellion. S.A. Lloyd cogently observes that such an expressed position made it very unlikely that anyone would join the fool in his attempt to overthrow the sovereign, for an ‘explicit fool’ who publicly denies justice effectively declares his willingness to betray his co-conspirators.¹²⁷

Second, Hoekstra’s reading has difficulties in accommodating the fact that Hobbes identifies the fool who denies justice with the fool who “hath said in his heart that there is no God”.¹²⁸ Unlike the Hobbesian fool, the biblical fool does not *publicly* deny the existence of God, as Hoekstra himself acknowledges.¹²⁹ What is more, as Peter Hayes points out, some of the authors of sedition whom Hoekstra identifies as ‘explicit fools’, and particularly those in *Behemoth*, are not atheists but ecclesiastics.¹³⁰

A third problem concerns the fool’s deceptive intent and the likelihood of its disclosure. Hoekstra appears to understand ‘deception’ as cheating,¹³¹ and indeed this seems to be the only way how the notion of deception can be reconciled with his idea of an ‘explicit fool’. In other passages in *Leviathan*, however, Hobbes uses the word in the sense of

¹²⁵ *De Cive*, V.5, p. 71.

¹²⁶ *Lev.*, XV.5, p. 91 (emphasis added).

¹²⁷ Lloyd, *Morality in the Philosophy of Hobbes*, p. 314.

¹²⁸ *Lev.*, XV.4, p. 90. Cf. Ps. 14.1.

¹²⁹ Hoekstra, “Hobbes and the Foole”, p. 625.

¹³⁰ Peter Hayes, “Hobbes’s Silent Fool: A Response to Hoekstra”, *Political Theory* 27 (1999), pp. 225-229, 227. Hayes is particularly referring to *Behemoth*, yet it seems that, in all of Hobbes’s works, authors of sedition are supposed to invoke religion to justify rebellion.

¹³¹ See Hoekstra, “Hobbes and the Foole”, pp. 623, 630, 636.

making somebody believe something that is untrue.¹³² This points to the possibility that the fool is neither entirely silent nor honestly declares his doctrine, but says one thing and believes another. Lloyd shows that there are crucial parallels between Hobbes's characterisation of the fool who hopes to get away with deceiving everybody else and his claim that authors of sedition have great oratory skills but little wisdom.¹³³ Yet it remains unclear how the fool's true beliefs are 'declared' by what he says in order to incite others to rebellion, and why people might nonetheless allow him into society.¹³⁴ Hoekstra's reading brushes aside this problem by assuming that the fool openly denies justice, rather than using speech strategically for reaching his goals.¹³⁵

Fourth, Hoekstra's interpretation does not provide a convincing answer to the question of Hobbes's audience. Traditional readings assumed that Hobbes is genuinely responding to an objection to his political theory, hence the much-used phrase 'reply to the fool'. Yet Hoekstra rejects this possibility as, on his interpretation, Hobbes could only seek to discourage the fool from *publicly declaring* his doctrine.¹³⁶ Without giving any further reasons, Hoekstra also rules out the option that Hobbes is addressing the people in order to encourage them "to treat the explicit Fool as a fool and menace".¹³⁷ Instead, Hobbes is supposed to speak to the sovereign, whose responsibility it is to regulate which doctrines are to be publicly proclaimed.¹³⁸ Hobbes indeed advances this view in

¹³² Note that Hoekstra, "Hobbes and the Foole", pp. 67, 630, cites two passages in which Hobbes clearly uses the word deception in the sense of believing something that is untrue. Only in this sense can people also be said to "deceive themselves", a phrase that Hobbes uses in *Lev.*, IV.4, p. 17, V.3, p. 23, XXVII.16, p. 195, and XL.13, p. 443.

¹³³ Lloyd, *Morality in the Philosophy of Hobbes*, pp. 317-322.

¹³⁴ Hobbes states that if the fool is allowed into society despite denying justice, this must be "by the error of them that receive him". See *Lev.*, XV.5, p. 92.

¹³⁵ See Hoekstra, "Hobbes and the Foole", p. 629. Also see note 49, p. 648.

¹³⁶ Hoekstra, "Hobbes and the Foole", p. 625.

¹³⁷ Hoekstra, "Hobbes and the Foole", p. 625.

¹³⁸ Hoekstra, "Hobbes and the Foole", p. 625. For a somewhat similar view, see Lloyd, *Morality in the Philosophy of Hobbes*, 332.

the chapter on the sovereign's duties,¹³⁹ as Hoekstra correctly notes. Yet Hoekstra does not conclusively show that this is also his concern in the fool passage.

Based on the findings of sections 7.1 and 7.2, it is possible to develop an alternative reading of this passage that helps to resolve these problems in Hoekstra's interpretation. As was suggested above, authors of sedition may reveal their hostility through speech acts that defy the sovereign authority, such as when they call him a tyrant. This equals an unlawful attempt to administer justice. Therefore, Hobbes also maintains that utterances are sufficient evidence of the crime of high treason, as a consequence of which offenders can be treated as public enemies. Hobbes is critical of talk of tyranny, above everything else, because such accusations invoke the conventional notion of lawful tyrannicide, which he condemns as one of the causes of rebellion.¹⁴⁰

Hoekstra rightly emphasises the importance of 'bare words', which reveal the fool's hostility. However, it seems that the fool does not simply publicly announce his doctrine, but only 'declares' his denial of justice insofar as it can be inferred from speech acts such as the one of calling the sovereign a tyrant. A passage from *Leviathan's* 'Review & Conclusion' suggests that this may indeed be Hobbes's position:

[B]ecause the name of tyranny signifieth nothing more or less than the name of sovereignty (be it in one or many men), saying that they that use the former word are understood to be angry with them they call tyrants, I think the toleration of a professed hatred of tyranny is a toleration of hatred to the commonwealth in general [...].

Similarly, Hobbes points out elsewhere that the reason why people call a government tyrannical is "that they are governed, not as every one of them would himself, but as the

¹³⁹ See *Lev.*, ch. XXX.

¹⁴⁰ See sec. 7.2.

public representant [...] thinks fit”.¹⁴¹ These statements seem to suggest that talk of tyranny reveals a fundamental aversion towards the foundations of the commonwealth, particularly the obligation to keep the social contract in which all subjects renounced their right to govern themselves. It is this obligation that people manifestly oppose when they believe that they are in a position to judge good and evil for themselves, which they do, according to Hobbes, when they declare the sovereign a tyrant.

This reading also helps to explain why Hobbes suggests that the fool’s denial of justice also “tak[es] away the fear of God”.¹⁴² Hobbes, as was shown in sec. 4.4, draws an analogy between Adam’s original sin to eat from the forbidden tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the author of sedition’s sin of judging the sovereign. In addition, he compares talk of tyranny with a breach against the Third Commandment, which forbids using God’s name in vain.¹⁴³ These analogies show that people who invoke the word of God in order to stir up a rebellion can still sin against the laws of nature.

Regarding the fool’s deceptive intent, the proposed interpretation suggests that he makes others believe that the sovereign is a tyrant in order to reach his private goals. Authors of sedition succeed, or at least are not excluded from society, if other people accept the propositional content of their utterance. However, those who reason properly would recognise that ‘tyrant’ is what Hobbes calls ‘inconstant name’, i.e. a word that does not merely signify an image or conception of an object of sense, but also the “nature, disposition, and interest of the speaker”.¹⁴⁴ On this basis, they would be able to discern the fool’s denial of justice from his speech act, as suggested above.

¹⁴¹ *Lev.*, XLVI.35, p. 465.

¹⁴² *Lev.*, XV.4, p. 90.

¹⁴³ See sec. 7.1.

¹⁴⁴ *Lev.*, IV.24, pp. 20f.

Although Hobbes argues from *De Cive* onwards that enemies seek to hide their designs, he also holds that the latter can be discovered from their utterances with the help of introspection and the *qui bono* principle.¹⁴⁵ In *Leviathan's* chapter on crimes, he suggests that this applies, in particular, to those who initiate a rebellion:

[S]uch as have a great opinion of their own wisdom take upon them to reprehend the actions, and call in question the authority, of them that govern, and so to unsettle the laws with their public discourse, as that nothing shall be a crime but what their own designs require shall be so. It happeneth also to the same men to be prone to all such crimes as consist in craft and in deceiving their neighbours; because they think their designs are too subtle to be perceived. These I say are effects of a false presumption of their own wisdom. For of them that are the first movers in the disturbance of the commonwealth [...], very few are left alive long enough to see their new designs established, so that the benefit of their crimes redoundeth to posterity [...] which argues they were not so wise as they thought they were.¹⁴⁶

This discussion of crimes that people commit upon a false assessment of their own wisdom bears a striking resemblance to the fool passage.¹⁴⁷ Hobbes's characterisation of such individuals, moreover, lends further credence to our interpretation, for these people question the sovereign's authority, and initiate a rebellion, "with their public discourse". Yet the above quotation differs from the fool passage in that Hobbes does therein not consider the possibility that people succeed in deceiving their neighbours, due to the latter's error. This feature of the fool passage indicates that Hobbes may be addressing a wider audience in order to convince them how they *ought* to treat the fool.

An interpretation that highlights the prescriptive implications of the fool passage would also be better in line with its context in *Leviathan*. Given that the chapters on the natural law generally set out how people should act in order to establish lasting peace, it seems plausible to read Hobbes's statements in terms of how everyone *ought* to treat those who effectively reveal their denial of justice. This would be in accordance with the oth-

¹⁴⁵ See sec. 7.1.

¹⁴⁶ *Lev.*, XXVII.16, pp. 194f.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Lloyd, *Morality in the Philosophy of Hobbes*, pp. 317-322.

er laws of nature, most notably Hobbes's discussion of the fifth law that prescribes complaisance in *Leviathan*. As he argues in this context,

a man that (by asperity of nature) will strive to retain those things which to himself are superfluous and to others necessary, and (for the stubbornness of his passions) cannot be corrected, *is to be left or cast out of society*.¹⁴⁸

This passage clearly implies how individuals who disobey the natural laws should be treated in order to secure peace for everybody else. Likewise, Hobbes's statement in the fool passage that "all men that contribute not to [the fool's] destruction forbear him only out of ignorance of what is good to themselves" may be intended as a plea to everyone not to make the error of admitting those who deny justice into society.

There is an interesting parallel to another passage in the preface to *De Cive*, where Hobbes seeks to persuade his audience that they should not believe those who defend the notion of lawful tyrannicide, but instead regard them as enemies:

As for those who refuse to be subject to the civil Magistrate and want exemption from public burdens and yet demand to be in a commonwealth and to be protected by it from violence and wrongs, *I hope that you will regard them as enemies [hostes] and saboteurs* and not gullibly accept all that they put before you openly or securely as the Word of God. I will speak more plainly. If any preacher or confessor or casuist says that this doctrine is consistent with the Word of God: that a sovereign may rightly be killed, [...] or that citizens may rightly take part in any rebellion, conspiracy or covenant prejudicial to their commonwealth, *do not believe him, but report his name*.¹⁴⁹

Like the fool passage, this statement highlights the two possibilities that people either believe those individuals who pursue their own interests by justifying rebellion against the sovereign, or treat them as enemies. Specifically, Hobbes suggests that those who claim that tyrannicide is lawful should be reported to the authorities.

¹⁴⁸ *Lev.*, XV.17, p. 95 (emphasis added).

¹⁴⁹ *De Cive*, pref. 21, p. 14 (emphasis added).

Even if Hobbes is addressing a wider audience, however, his discussion may also work as a deterrent against possible authors of sedition. As Kavka convincingly argues, the success of Hobbes's 'reply to the fool'—if it is indeed understood in this way—depends on whether or not “society is sufficiently punitive to seriously punish violators that it does identify and catch”.¹⁵⁰ This condition would be met if Hobbes were to succeed in persuading a wider audience how they should treat those that effectively deny justice, and declare their hostility to the state, through their rebellious speech acts.

Hence, Hobbes's argument could at the same time address a wider audience and serve as a deterrent against authors of sedition. He does not simply threaten the fool with death, as Patrick Neal claims.¹⁵¹ Nor does he depict the fool a madman or Antichrist, as Patricia Springborg suggests in view of the passage's possible religious symbolism.¹⁵² Rather, it seems that the fool has to fear being banished from the commonwealth. Unlike exiles that can find refuge in another country,¹⁵³ however, those who deny justice must return to the natural condition. Thus, Hobbes states that the fool

cannot be received into *any* society that unite themselves for peace and defence but by the error of them that receive him; nor when he is received, be retained in it without seeing the danger of their error [...].¹⁵⁴

In other words, the fool should not be admitted into any commonwealth. This view is in accordance with the universal scope of Hobbes's laws of nature, and particularly with

¹⁵⁰ Gregory S. Kavka, “The Rationality of Rule-Following: Hobbes's Dispute with the Foole”, *Law and Philosophy* 14 (1995), pp. 5-34, 28.

¹⁵¹ Patrick Neal, “Hobbes and Rational Choice Theory”, *The Western Political Quarterly* 41 (1988), pp. 635-652, 650f.

¹⁵² Springborg, “Hobbes's Fool the *Insipiens*”, p. 96. It is true that Hobbes's suggestion that those who deny justice may be cast out of society invites a comparison with casting out devils, yet in *Leviathan* Hobbes often employs the phrase ‘cast out’ metaphorically to refer to the exclusion from any kind of human association. See *Lev.*, XV.5, p. 92, XV.17, p. 95, XLII.19, p. 344, XLII.23, p. 346, XLVII.34, p. 484, Appendix II.38, p. 529. Only on some occasions does Hobbes refer to devils being ‘cast out’. See *Lev.*, VIII.25, p. 44, XLI.7, p. 301, XLI.7, p. 331, XLII.55, p. 360.

¹⁵³ For Hobbes's views on exile, see sec. 7.2.

¹⁵⁴ *Lev.*, XV.5, p. 92 (emphasis added).

the universalist tone of his discussion of justice in *Leviathan*. As Hobbes points out earlier in the same chapter, this natural law—which prescribes the keeping of covenants—is required for achieving “the peace of mankind”.¹⁵⁵ Indeed, Hobbes’s argument seems to imply that those individuals who effectively declare their denial of justice do not, as some interpreters suggest, merely become enemies of one particular state.¹⁵⁶ Rather, their disposition is contrary to the grounds of political obligation in general. If there is one thing that all commentators agree upon, it is the fact that as a consequence of his denial of justice, the fool cannot be trusted to keep his covenants.¹⁵⁷

For this reason, there is a striking resemblance between the Hobbesian fool and the figure of the enemy of mankind. Cicero famously referred to pirates, in particular, as a common enemy of all (*communis hostis omnium*). After noting in that fidelity is required even in times of war, he argues that pirates have a special status, because their oaths cannot be trusted.¹⁵⁸ Later writers adapted this notion, thereby using the somewhat different phrase ‘enemy of mankind’ (*hostis humani generis*). Gentili states, in this vein, that pirates have a different status than lawful enemies, for a war with them “has never been terminated by agreement or brought to an end by a treaty of peace”.¹⁵⁹ Either they saved their lives by victory, or they were defeated and punished with death.¹⁶⁰ Thus, Gentili also highlights the fundamental untrustworthiness of such enemies. In addition,

¹⁵⁵ *Lev.*, XV.1, p. 89.

¹⁵⁶ See, for example, Samantha Frost, “Faking It: Hobbes’s Thinking Bodies and the Ethics of Dissimulation”, *Political Theory* 29 (2001), pp. 30-57, 45; Goldsmith, *Hobbes’s Science of Politics*, p. 115; and Hoekstra, “Hobbes and the Foole”, p. 648, n. 50.

¹⁵⁷ See Gauthier, *Morals by Agreement*, p. 169; Hampton, *Hobbes and the Social Contract Tradition*, p. 65; Hoekstra, “Hobbes and the Foole”, p. 623; Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, p. 140; May, *Limiting Leviathan*, pp. 230-233; Pasquale Pasquino, “Hobbes, Religion and Rational Choice: Hobbes’s Two Leviathans and the Fool”, *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 82 (2001), pp. 406-419, 413f; Zaitchik, “Hobbes’s Reply to the Fool”, p. 260.

¹⁵⁸ Cicero, *On Obligations*, Book 3.107, pp. 120f.

¹⁵⁹ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.IV 35, p. 22.

¹⁶⁰ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.IV 35, p. 22.

he suggests that the damage of piracy extends to human society as a whole, implying that “war should be made against pirates by all men”.¹⁶¹

The notion of enemies of mankind appears in several ancient, medieval, and early modern sources.¹⁶² Cicero’s view that pirates are common enemies of all was, in particular, seems to have been widely shared at Hobbes’s time, being, for instance, also expressed in Edward Coke’s *Institutes of the Common Laws*.¹⁶³ Yet it is important to note that this notion was not a clearly defined legal concept restricted to piracy, but somewhat ambiguous and largely rhetorical in nature. Thus, the ‘enemy of mankind’ concept was also applied to tyrants such as Nero, and writers in the Christian Middle Ages used the phrase to refer to the devil.¹⁶⁴ In the early-modern period, the Spanish jurist Balthazar de Ayala explicitly likened the status of pirates and robbers to that of rebels, who are no lawful enemies even though the right of war could be applied against them.¹⁶⁵ Likewise, Gentili tars pirates, proscribed persons, and rebels with the same brush, for they all lack a right to make war and recognition under the law of nations.¹⁶⁶

Considering Hobbes’s endorsement of Cicero’s conception of exile as an escape from punishment in *Leviathan*,¹⁶⁷ however, he might also be directly drawing on Cicero’s *In Verrem*. In the fourth speech of the prosecution against Verres, Cicero accuses the for-

¹⁶¹ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.XXV 202, p. 124.

¹⁶² For accounts of the development of the ‘enemy of mankind’ concept, see Dan Edelstein, “*Hostis Humani Generis*: Devils, Natural Right, and Terror in the French Revolution”, *Telos* 141 (2007), pp. 57-81, 62-69; Heller-Roazen, *The Enemy of All*, esp. ch. 10; Kempe, ““Even in the Remotest Corners of the World’: Globalized Piracy and International Law, 1500-1900”, *Journal of Global History* 5 (2010), pp. 353-372; and Rech, *Enemies of Mankind*, chs. 1-2.

¹⁶³ Coke, “The Third Part of the *Institutes*”, p. 965.

¹⁶⁴ See Rech, *Enemies of Mankind*, pp. 35f.

¹⁶⁵ Balthazar Ayala, *Three Books on the Law of War, And on the Duties Connected with War, And on Military Discipline* [1582], Vol. 2: The Translation, ed. John Westlake, trans. John Pawley Bate (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment, 1912), I II.14-15, pp. 11f.

¹⁶⁶ See sec. 2.3.

¹⁶⁷ See sec. 7.2.

mer governor of Sicily of having acted *like* pirates are accustomed to do, i.e. with the intention to make booty.¹⁶⁸ It is in this context that Cicero first mentions that pirates are the common enemy of all.¹⁶⁹ Thus, the pirate's emblematic lack of fidelity could also be found in citizens, in particular those like Verres who betray the allegiance of Rome. Similarly, the Hobbesian fool is not literally a pirate but a subject who, in the pursuit of his private good, must reveal his fundamental untrustworthiness. Therefore, Hobbes apparently suggests that he should be treated as an enemy of mankind.¹⁷⁰

Carl Schmitt alludes to the 'enemy of mankind' concept in his book on Hobbes's *Leviathan*. He claims that Hobbes advances a notion of the enemy that also informed the cabinet wars between absolute monarchies on the European Continent.¹⁷¹ In a later work, Schmitt argues that this type of 'conventional' enmity characterised conflicts within the confines of the *jus publicum Europaeum* (i.e. the system of positive international law that developed in Europe following the Peace of Westphalia). In his book on *Leviathan*, Schmitt contrasts this supposedly *terrestrial* conception with

a concept of enemy that had been derived from sea and trade wars, namely, the concept of a nonstate enemy that does not distinguish between combatants and noncombatants and hence is truly 'total'.¹⁷²

Schmitt associates this *maritime* conception, which reminds of the idea of the piratical 'enemy of mankind', with the seafaring English nation. Thus, he also finds that the "evolution of England proceeded in a direction contrary to the concept of the state ad-

¹⁶⁸ Cicero, "In Verrem", II.4.21, in *The Orations of Marcus Tullius Cicero*, vol. 1, trans. C. D. Yonge (London: George Bell & Sons, 1909), p. 407.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Rech, *Enemies of Mankind*, pp. 29f.

¹⁷⁰ Hobbes himself states in his English prose autobiography that he published the Latin version of his political theory, *De Cive*, "to the end that *all nations* which should hear what you [the mathematician John Wallis] and your Con-Covenanters [i.e. the members of the Parliament party] were doing in England, *might detest you*". See *Answer*, p. 415 (emphasis added).

¹⁷¹ Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Hobbes*, p. 80.

¹⁷² Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Hobbes*, p. 80.

vanced by Hobbes [...] in respect to government, law, and war¹⁷³. As this reading of the fool passage suggests, however, the notion of an enemy of mankind was neither restricted to maritime conflicts, nor foreign to Hobbes's thought.

To conclude, this section has proposed a reading according to which the fool in *Leviathan* is neither entirely silent nor openly denies justice. Rather, the fool's conviction can be inferred from his rebellious utterances, and particularly the speech act of calling the sovereign a tyrant. Moreover, it has been suggested that, in the fool passage, Hobbes seeks to establish how society *ought* to treat those who effectively reveal their denial of justice. In this regard, there is a striking parallel between the Hobbesian fool and the figure of the enemy of mankind, who cannot be trusted to keep faith.

7.5 Conclusion

From *De Cive* onwards, Hobbes argues that the sovereign can apply his right of war against subjects who reject the grounds of political obligation, such as when they commit the 'original sin' of calling the sovereign a tyrant. In making this claim, Hobbes seems to envision an extra-legal jurisdiction on the basis of which severe, exemplary punishments can be inflicted upon rebel leaders. At the same time, he holds that other participants of an insurgence should be pardoned. By using such a strategy of divide and conquer, a ruler might be able to effectively exercise sovereignty in the face of rebellion. Conversely, it may be said that a sovereign's inability to restore peace in society may signify the end of sovereignty and the advent of civil war.

¹⁷³ Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Hobbes*, p. 80.

In accordance with his argument for the applicability of the sovereign's right of war, Hobbes insists that the rebel is not merely *inimicus* (i.e. a private enemy within the confines of the civil law), but *hostis* (i.e. a public enemy who has *de facto* ceased to be a subject). Unlike other enemies of the state, however, there can be no reconciliation with authors of sedition. In the well-known passage about the fool, Hobbes appears to suggest that rebel leaders reveal their denial of justice in the pursuit of their private ambition, and should therefore be excluded from society. Thus, it was argued that Hobbes effectively depicts rebel leaders as enemies of mankind, whose fundamental untrustworthiness precludes their admission into any kind of human association.

Considering that Hobbes attributes this exceptional status to rebel leaders, they appear to be the real 'outsiders' in his political thought. The fact that such individuals might live among other subjects within a state's territory is merely contingent, because they ought to be excluded from all well-ordered commonwealths. By contrast, people who happen to live in other countries are not necessarily 'outsiders' but, as the next chapter will show, could become 'insiders' in the aftermath of successful enemy invasions. As will become apparent, the possibility to decompose and reassemble states implies that international hostility does not necessarily lead to mutual annihilation.

8. International enmity and reconciliation

This chapter examines the role of foreign enemies in Hobbes's political philosophy. The first section reconsiders the well-known analogy between the state of nature and international relations. It is argued that Hobbes regards wars of aggression as a possibility that states need to take into account in order to secure themselves against their enemies. However, he also holds that international hostility can ultimately be overcome if individuals re-establish a protection-obedience relationship after a successful foreign invasion. The second section examines the status of sovereigns in his theory of international relations. It is shown that the self-preservation of rulers is always at stake in the making of foreign policy. Therefore, it seems that sovereigns have prudential reasons to obey the natural laws, which Hobbes identifies with the law of nations. The third section further analyses his views on the limits of international hostility. As will be demonstrated, Hobbes does not envision the possibility of wars of annihilation between different commonwealths. Moreover, it appears that no matter what desires sovereigns pursue in making war, practicing restraint is conducive to reaching their ends.

8.1 International enmity and the dissolution of states

The analogy between the state of nature and international relations has attracted much attention in our time. Hannah Arendt first advanced the view that, due to the desire for power after power that Hobbes posits in *Leviathan*, states can only preserve themselves by constantly extending their authority.¹ Following Arendt on this point, International Relations (IR) theorist Hans Morgenthau associated Hobbes's political thought with an

¹ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, pp. 186-196.

“an urge toward expansion that knows no rational limit”.² Proponents and critics of Realism in IR have since identified Hobbes as a forerunner of this school of thought who regarded international relations as free from objective moral principles, inherently unstable, and dominated by power politics and the struggle for survival.³

As one eminent critic of this reception of Hobbes has put it, this reading of the analogy would suggest that the state “is little more than Hobbesian man writ large”.⁴ Yet many scholars have called attention to important differences between states and individuals. For instance, Mark Heller finds that Hobbes does not regard the international state of nature as disastrous as the interpersonal one, because—unlike individuals—states do not have equal capabilities to destroy one another.⁵ Other commentators, such as Tom Sorell, also suggest that there is considerable room for cooperation among Hobbesian commonwealths, in particular with regard to international trade.⁶

In addition, it has been noted that Hobbes does not seem to treat states as unitary actors, but pays much attention to domestic constraints on foreign policy. Stanley Hoffmann

² Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, seventh edition (Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill, 2006), p. 67.

³ See esp. Charles Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 27-50; Hedley Bull, “Hobbes and the International Anarchy”, *Social Research* 48 (1981), pp. 717-738; E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, with an introduction by Michael Cox (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 63, 140, 163; Jack Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 13-15, 34, 100-103; Kenneth N. Waltz, “Realist Thought and Neorealist Theory,” in *The Evolution of Theory in International Relations*, ed. Robert L. Rothstein (Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina Press, 1992), pp. 21-38, 35; Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, 4th ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2006), pp. 3-20; Wendt, “Anarchy is what States Make of it”, pp. 391-425.

⁴ Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, p. 434.

⁵ Mark A. Heller, “The Use & Abuse of Hobbes: The State of Nature in International Relations”, *Polity* 13 (1980), pp. 21-32, 24f. Some interpreters also addressed the question whether nuclear proliferation could lead to equality in the international state of nature. See esp. Gauthier, *The Logic of Leviathan*, pp. 207f; and Warrender, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes*, p. 119. For an overview and historical contextualisation of the debate on this issue, cf. David Boucher, “Inter-Community & International Relations in the Political Philosophy of Hobbes”, *Polity* 23 (1990), pp. 207-232, 210f.

⁶ Sorell, “Hobbes on Trade”, pp. 253f. Also see Boucher, “Inter-Community & International Relations”, pp. 228-230; Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, p. 452; and May, *Limiting Leviathan*, pp. 186f.

suggests, in this vein, that every commonwealth has a domestic interest in self-restraint, “since, should it implicate its population in all-out wars of extermination, the duty of obedience of the subjects to the state would disappear”.⁷ This possibility may also explain why “there is, in Hobbes, no anticipation of the nation in arms”, as Donald Hanson observes.⁸ Other Hobbesian interpreters, such as Murray Forsyth, find that the laws of nature considerably modify the international state of nature, which therefore becomes more tolerable than the war of all against all in the natural condition.⁹

Furthermore, it has been argued that Hobbes’s reception as a forerunner of Realism in IR is anachronistic. According to David Armitage, Hobbes only came to be regarded as a theorist of international anarchy after political scientists and international lawyers established a clear analytical distinction between the domestic and international realms in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.¹⁰ Gabriella Slomp also notes that a conception of ‘the domestic’ and ‘the international’ as self-enclosed worlds, which many IR theories presuppose, does not pertain to Hobbes’s political philosophy.¹¹ Rob Walker argues that Hobbes leaves open many questions regarding the interaction of commonwealths in the international state of nature, such as whether a great power could change the nature of the system from anarchy to hierarchy, or what constraints the international system imposes on individual states. In the absence of such considerations, Hobbes “can scarcely be counted as a serious theorist of international relations at all”.¹²

⁷ Hoffmann, “Rousseau on War and Peace”, p. 320.

⁸ Donald W. Hanson, “Thomas Hobbes’s ‘Highway to Peace’”, *International Organization* 38 (1984), pp. 329-354, 351. On the influence of domestic factors on foreign policy, also see Williams, *The Realist Tradition*, p. 42.

⁹ Forsyth, “Thomas Hobbes and the External Relations of States”, pp. 446-448; May, *Limiting Leviathan*, pp. 196-199; and Tuck, “The Utopianism of *Leviathan*”, pp. 134f.

¹⁰ David Armitage, “Hobbes and the Foundations of Modern International Thought”, p. 231.

¹¹ Slomp, “The Politics of Motion”, pp. 34-36.

¹² R.B.J. Walker, “Hobbes, Origins, Limits”, in *International Political Theory After Hobbes: Analysis, Interpretation and Orientation*, eds. Raia Prokhovnik and Gabriella Slomp (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 168-188, 180.

Indeed, it is worth keeping in mind that the analogy between the state of nature and international relations serves Hobbes primarily as an example of life in the natural condition. In *The Elements of Law*, he only refers to the relations between Native American families and Germanic tribes as instances of the state of nature.¹³ *De Cive* contains a wider range of examples, including the observation that mutual distrust (which characterises the war of all against all) can also be encountered in international relations. In this context, Hobbes states that “all commonwealths, even if they are at peace with their neighbours, still defend their borders with garrisons of soldiers, their cities with walls, gates and guards”.¹⁴ In *Leviathan*, Hobbes likewise mentions hostile relations among commonwealths, alongside civil war and the experience of the New World, as an example of the natural state of war that would materialise in the absence of a common power.¹⁵ This suggests that his references to international relations are largely instrumental for putting forth an argument on the need of an absolute sovereign power.

What is more, analysis of the relevant passages clearly shows that international relations and the state of nature are not meant to be identical in all respects. For instance, Hobbes acknowledges in *De Cive* that there are times of international peace:

[T]hose who have not grown together into unity of person are, as shown above at v.6, in a state of enmity with each other. Never mind that they are not always fighting (for enemies too make truces); hostility is adequately shown by distrust, and by the fact that the borders of their commonwealths, Kingdoms and empires, armed and garrisoned, with the posture and appearance of gladiators, look across at each other like enemies, even when they are not striking each other.¹⁶

Interpreting armed borders and the appearance of gladiators as evidence of a natural state of war between commonwealths, Hobbes leaves open the possibility that there can

¹³ *EL*, XIV.12, p. 80.

¹⁴ *De Cive*, pref. 11, p. 10.

¹⁵ *Lev.*, XIII.12, p. 78.

¹⁶ *De Cive*, XVII.27, pp. 231f (capitalisation in the original).

be periods without actual warfare. His definition of the state of war surely implies that enemies are willing to attack one another.¹⁷ Yet it seems that they may also be deterred from putting their intention into practice by the very defensive devices that Hobbes takes as evidence of hostility. Elsewhere in *De Cive*, Hobbes argues that international peace must be fragile and uncertain because commonwealths are not restrained by a common power.¹⁸ This confirms that there can, indeed, be times of peace. However, states must ultimately rely on their own power to defend themselves.

Hobbes's discussion of the international state of nature in *Leviathan* also clearly indicates that war between commonwealths does generally not have the same catastrophic effects on most people as the war of all against all in the natural condition:

[K]ings and persons of sovereign authority, because of their independency, are in continual jealousies and in the state and posture of gladiators, having their weapons pointing and their eyes fixed on one another, that is, their forts, garrisons, and guns upon the frontiers of their kingdoms, and continual spies upon their neighbours, which is a posture of war. But *because they uphold thereby the industry of their subjects, there does not follow from it that misery which accompanies the liberty of particular men.*¹⁹

As previously in *De Cive*, Hobbes argues that international relations is a state of war in which actors distrust one another, and have to rely on their own capacities to defend themselves. However, he also emphasises in the above passage that the international state of nature is compatible with peace inside the commonwealth.

While Hobbes does not develop the analogy between the state of nature and international relations beyond the quoted passages, his more detailed comments on defence suggest that states have better chances than individuals to sustain themselves in a condition of

¹⁷ See sec. 3.3.

¹⁸ *De Cive*, X.17, p. 126.

¹⁹ *Lev.*, XIII.12, p. 78 (emphasis added).

anarchy. In *The Elements of Law*, he makes some remarks on what is necessary for defending the commonwealth. In particular, he points out that

before men have sufficient security in the help of one another, their number must be so great, that the odds of a few which the enemy may have, be no certain and sensible advantage.²⁰

Likewise, Hobbes describes insufficient numbers as an incentive for aggression in *De Cive*.²¹ In the corresponding passage in *Leviathan*, he argues that

[t]he multitude sufficient to confide in for our security is not determined by any certain number, but by comparison with the enemy we fear, and is then sufficient, when the odds of the enemy is not of so visible and conspicuous moment, to determine the event of war, as to move him to attempt.²²

In other words, roughly equal sizes between commonwealths deter foreign enemies from invading their neighbours. This consideration marks a clear difference between international relations and Hobbes's account of the natural condition, where equal strength and vulnerability tempt individuals to attack one another.

Hobbes also stresses in all of his main political works that the population's joined force and resources must be truly united by a sovereign authority. Thus, he points out in *The Elements of Law* that defence "consisteth partly in the obedience and unity of the subjects".²³ Similarly, he argues in *De Cive* that the people need to be forced to employ their joined resources for mutual defence.²⁴ As Hobbes further spells out in *Leviathan*, enemies that are small but united can easily overthrow great multitudes:

[I]f their actions be directed according to their particular judgements and particular appetites, they can expect thereby no defence, nor protection, neither against a common enemy, nor against the injuries of one another. For being distracted in opinions concern-

²⁰ *EL*, XIX.3, p. 104.

²¹ *De Cive*, V.3, p. 70.

²² *Lev.*, XVII.3, p. 107. Cf. *Lev.*, XX.15, p. 132.

²³ *EL*, XXVIII.9, p. 177. Cf. *EL*, XIX.4, p. 104.

²⁴ *De Cive*, V.4, p. 70.

ing the best use and application of their strength, they do not help, but hinder one another, and reduce their strength by mutual opposition to nothing; whereby they are easily, not only subdued by a very few that agree together, but also when there is no common enemy, they make war upon each other, for their particular interests.²⁵

Thus, even sufficiently large groups can only enjoy relative security if they are truly united by a sovereign. This view is echoed in Hobbes's later account of the international state of nature in the *Dialogue*, according to which

mutual fear may keep [commonwealths] quiet for a time, but upon every visible advantage they will invade one another, and the most visible advantage is then, when the one Nation is obedient to their King, and the other not [...].²⁶

Hobbes's contention, that the disobedience of subjects is such an obvious weakness that it must encourage attacks by foreign enemies, seems to imply that, conversely, secure domestic peace can have a pacifying effect on international relations.²⁷

Despite his statements regarding unity and sufficient numbers, Hobbes does not seem to envision a total mobilisation of the population. Rather, passages in his works suggest that there is a division of labour amongst subjects of the commonwealth. This can be clearly seen in the discussion of defence in *De Cive*:

To be forearmed is to be equipped with troops, weapons, a navy and fortifications in a state of readiness before danger threatens, and with funds already accumulated. For it is late, and may be impossible, to conscript soldiers and procure armaments after suffering a defeat. [...] Those too who think it is time enough to exact the funds for providing the troops and other army expenses when danger begins to appear, are surely failing to consider how difficult it is to scrape together such an amount of money all at once.²⁸

²⁵ *Lev.*, XVII.4, p. 107.

²⁶ *Dialogue*, p. 12.

²⁷ Perhaps this provides an explanation for Hobbes's claim in *De Cive* that, if political philosophy was as far advanced as the science of geometry, humanity "would enjoy such secure peace that (apart from conflicts over space as the population grew) it seems unlikely that it would ever have to fight again". See *De Cive*, epistle 6, p. 5. For a discussion of Hobbes's statements on overpopulation and the consequential lack of space as a cause of war, see Paolo Pasqualucci, "Hobbes and the Myth of 'Final War'", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 51 (1990), pp. 647-657.

²⁸ *De Cive*, XIII.8, p. 145.

Thus, Hobbes suggests that most subjects will contribute to the common defence by paying their taxes, rather than through active military service. The account of the sovereign's right of war in *Leviathan* likewise refers to subjects who provide funds for sustaining an army instead of being conscripted themselves.²⁹ In view of such a division of labour, public funds appear to be an indicator for the strength and unity of a commonwealth. This reading finds some support in Hobbes's statement in the *Dialogue* that "want of publick Treasure inviteth Neighbour Kings to incroach".³⁰

The idea that unity and sufficient numbers provide relative security for states seems to presuppose that they have mutual intelligence. As was shown in sec. 7.1, Hobbes actually regards spying as a common practice and maintains that it is part of the sovereign's office to acquire knowledge of other states. A passage in *De Cive* even suggests that intelligence is equally important for defence as armament:

Two things are necessary to a people's defence: to be *Forewarned* and to be *Forearmed*. For the state of commonwealths towards each other is a natural state i.e. a state of hostility. Even when the fighting between them stops, it should not be called Peace, but an intermission during which each watches the motion and aspect of its enemy and gauges its security not on the basis of agreement but by the strength and designs of the adversary.³¹

This emphasis on intelligence supports Hobbes's contention that a commonwealth's unity and resources encourage or deter enemy attacks. Considering that states are supposed to monitor each other's moves, the international state of nature seems to be characterised by a higher degree of predictability than the interpersonal one.

Yet despite these differences between international relations and the natural condition, various passages make it clear that war between states remains a constant possibility.

²⁹ *Lev.*, XVIII.12, p. 114.

³⁰ *Dialogue*, pp. 16f (capitalisation in the original).

³¹ *De Cive*, XIII.7, pp. 144f (emphasis and capitalisation in the original).

For instance, Hobbes argues in *The Elements of Law* that sovereigns ought to avoid *unnecessary* wars, thereby leaving open the possibility that some wars may, indeed, be required for the state's defence.³² As he points out in *De Cive*, rulers

may [...] do anything that seems likely to subvert, by force or craft, the power of foreigners whom they fear; for the rulers of commonwealths are obliged to do all they can to ensure that the calamities they fear do not happen.³³

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes argues that, like families in the state of nature, states endeavour to weaken or subdue their neighbours in order to anticipate enemy attacks:

[A]s small families did then [in the natural condition], so now cities and kingdoms [...] for their own security enlarge their dominions upon all pretences of danger and fear of invasion or assistance that may be given to invaders, [and] endeavour as much as they can to subdue or weaken their neighbours, by open force and secret arts for want of other caution, justly (and are remembered for it in after ages with honour).³⁴

Thus, Hobbes holds that fear can lead states to adopt imperialist and expansionist policies. The quotation further suggests that such wars are just, which recalls Hobbes' view that the right of war permits pre-emptive action.³⁵

Hobbes does not derive the desire for expansion from the striving for power after power which he posits in *Leviathan*.³⁶ Rather, his view that commonwealths sometimes seek to invade one another, which is clearly expressed in *The Elements of Law* and *De Cive*, appears to be grounded in historical experience. Hobbes was certainly familiar with conquests in ancient times through his translation of Thucydides' *The History of the Grecian War*.³⁷ Moreover, he notes in *Leviathan* that Athens,

³² *EL*, XXIX.9, p. 177.

³³ *De Cive*, XIII.8, p. 146. Cf. *De Cive*, epistle 2, p. 4.

³⁴ *Lev.*, XVII.2, p. 107. Cf. *Lev*, XXIX.3, p. 211.

³⁵ Cf. sec. 3.2.

³⁶ There seems to be no textual basis for Hannah Arendt's aforementioned claim that, on Hobbes's account, states can only preserve themselves by constantly extending their authority. For a different critique of this view, also see Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, p. 442.

³⁷ This work contains plenty of references to attempted and successful conquests by both Greek and non-

by the overthrow of the *Persian* armies, had gotten the dominion of the sea, and thereby, of all the islands and maritime cities of the *Archipelago* (as well of *Asia* as *Europe*), and were grown wealthy.³⁸

In addition to Athenian imperialism, Hobbes's writings mention conquests by the Romans,³⁹ Alexander the Great,⁴⁰ and Germanic tribes.⁴¹ The Norman acquisition of England also features in many of his later works,⁴² and *Behemoth* reveals Hobbes's familiarity with contemporary wars, such as Oliver Cromwell's conquest of Ireland.⁴³ The claim in *Leviathan* that sovereignty is "subject to violent death by foreign war"⁴⁴ seems to reflect this historical experience of conquest and state expansion.

That Hobbes considers enemy invasions a possibility to be reckoned with is further suggested by the fact that all of his main political works discuss the case of sovereignty acquired by conquest.⁴⁵ As was shown in sec. 5.1, Hobbes holds that subjects retain the right to submit themselves to an invading power when their old sovereign can no longer protect them. In addition, he suggests that a conqueror can establish a relationship of reciprocal trust with those whom he accepts as his subjects. Thereby, Hobbes identifies sovereignty by institution with sovereignty acquired by conquest. Statements in his later writings, moreover, suggest that he regards conquest as the actual origin of most com-

Greek political communities. See e.g. *History 1*, pp. 17, 19, 21, 27, 72, 99, 116, 185, 263, 277, 329-332, 364f, 435, 455; *History 2*, pp. 63, 101f, 128, 134, 187, 193, 197, 201f, 210, 314f, 323, 368.

³⁸ *Lev.*, XLVI.7, p. 455 (emphasis in the original).

³⁹ *De Cive*, XIII.4, p. 150; *Lev.*, XIX.23, p. 126; *Behemoth*, pp. 31, 33f; *Dialogue*, pp. 136, 139.

⁴⁰ *AW*, XXXVII.8, p. 467; *Lev.*, XXXIII.20, p. 257; *Dialogue*, p. 16.

⁴¹ *Lev.*, XXX.25, p. 232.

⁴² *Lev.*, XXIV.6, p. 161, XXIV.8, p. 162, XXIX.3, p. 211, R&C 8, p. 492; *Behemoth*, p. 119; *Dialogue*, pp. 73, 137, 146.

⁴³ *Behemoth*, p. 163.

⁴⁴ *Lev.*, XXI.21, p. 144. Cf. *Lev.*, XX.19, p. 135.

⁴⁵ This also provides an answer to R.B.J. Walker's above-mentioned objection that Hobbes does not consider if a great power could change the nature of the international system from anarchy to hierarchy. See Walker, "Hobbes, Origins, Limits", p. 180. On Hobbes's account, the constitution of hierarchy after a successful foreign invasion simply marks the end of the conquered state's sovereignty. Hence, there would also be no longer *international relations* between the two states.

monwealths. For instance, he points out in the *Dialogue* that great monarchies, such as England, France, and Spain, developed on the basis of conquests.⁴⁶

Hobbes does apparently not regard pre-existing cultural identities and differences as an insuperable obstacle to reconciliation.⁴⁷ In *Leviathan*, he states that “strangers (that is, men not used to live under the same government, nor speaking the same language) do commonly undervalue one another”.⁴⁸ Yet he points out in the same breath that the oppression of subjects proceeds “not necessarily from the subjection to a stranger’s government, but from the unskillfulness of the governors, ignorant of the true rules of politics”.⁴⁹ In addition, there may be a shift of identities. As Hobbes highlights in *Leviathan*, the Romans used to give “sometimes to whole nations and sometimes to principal men of every nation they conquered, not only the privileges but also *the name of Romans*.”⁵⁰ In *Behemoth*, Hobbes also states (with particular reference to England and Scotland) that political unity due to the subjection to a common sovereign is ultimately more important than pre-existing identities. While he admits that both nations have not been fully integrated, he maintains that, being subject to the same sovereign, “they were mistaken, both English and Scots, in calling one another foreigners”.⁵¹

Furthermore, it seems that Hobbes generally prefers an explicitly political conception of group identity, which reflects his conception of the state as an artificial construct. As he argues in *The Elements of Law*, a people is not only a multitude of individuals that hap-

⁴⁶ *Dialogue*, p. 138.

⁴⁷ On Hobbes’s views on reconciliation more generally, see sec. 5.1.

⁴⁸ *Lev.*, XIX.23, p. 126.

⁴⁹ *Lev.*, XIX.23, p. 126. Cf. *Lev.*, XIX.23 (OL), n. 10, p. 126. Yet in the *Dialogue*, p. 16, Hobbes refers to “Proud and Insolent Strangers that speak another Language, that scorn us, that seek to make us Slaves”. This statement is seemingly at odds with Hobbes’s other comments on this matter, as it appears to suggest that peoples with different cultural identities cannot be reconciled.

⁵⁰ *Lev.*, XIX.23, pp. 126f (emphasis added). Cf. sec. 8.3.

⁵¹ *Behemoth*, pp. 34f.

pen to live in one place, but also “a person civil, that is to say, either one man, or one council, in the will whereof is included and involved the will of every one in particular”.⁵² On a number of occasions, Hobbes also uses the word ‘nation’ as a synonym for ‘state’ or ‘commonwealth’, rather than as denoting cultural identity.⁵³

To conclude, this section has shown that commonwealths can enjoy significantly greater security than individuals do in the natural condition. Despite this, however, aggressive and expansionist wars remain a constant possibility in international relations. Hobbes takes this into account by elucidating how states can be dissolved and reassembled in the aftermath of a successful enemy invasion. Unlike in the war of all against all in the natural condition, international hostility, therefore, does not have to result in annihilation, but could also be overcome if the sovereign of one state re-establishes a protection-obedience relationship with another state’s former subjects.

8.2 The diplomatic recognition of sovereigns

As the last section has shown, subjects may (under certain conditions) abandon their old sovereign and submit themselves to a conqueror in order to save their lives. This raises the question of the status of sovereigns in Hobbes’s theory of international relations. This section examines how sovereignty is recognised by other states, and what kind of treatment rulers can expect if the enemy has defeated their forces. It will be argued that Hobbes’s views on these issues help to explain in which sense sovereigns are bound by the natural laws, which Hobbes identifies with the law of nations.⁵⁴

⁵² Hobbes, *Elements of Law*, XXI.21, 124.

⁵³ See, for example, *EL*, XX.18, p. 117, XXIX.10, p. 182; *De Cive*, epistle 11, p. 6, V.2, p. 69; *Lev.*, XVIII.12, p. 114, XXX.7, p. 222, XXX.30, p. 233.

⁵⁴ It is often noted that Hobbes identifies the law of nations with the laws of nature, thus rejecting the alternative position according to which international law is derived from customs and agreement of all

It has sometimes been suggested that Hobbes regards states as ‘moral persons’. For instance, Carl Schmitt argues in his *Nomos* that—like all other significant writers in the history of international law—Hobbes held that “states live as ‘moral persons’ in a state of nature”.⁵⁵ Thus, Schmitt associates Hobbes with the ‘Westphalian system’ of mutually recognised sovereign states. As David Boucher helpfully points out, however, Hobbes does not seem to consider states as compound moral persons that have a capacity to will independent of the individuals who institute or represent them.⁵⁶ Noel Malcolm argues, in a similar vein, that Hobbes does not draw a complete parallelism between commonwealths and individuals, and specifically emphasises that the laws of nature apply to the sovereign rather than to the person of the state.⁵⁷ Sharon Lloyd also observes that Hobbes exclusively blames the sovereign for state actions against the natural laws, while excusing subjects for whatever they do at his command.⁵⁸

Associating Hobbes with the so-called ‘Westphalian system’, moreover, seems anachronistic, as he never shows any interest in the contemporary development of positive international law.⁵⁹ If Hobbes rejects the idea that sovereign states are compound moral persons and subject to positive international law, however, this raises the question how they can recognise one another as artificial persons. This issue seems to be underexplored in the literature on Hobbes. William Sacksteder merely notes, but does not further elaborate, that enmity between nations “presuppose[s] reciprocal recognition of

nations. See, for instance, Armitage, “Hobbes and the Foundations of Modern International Thought”, pp. 224-228; Forsyth, “Hobbes and the External Relations of States”, p. 208; Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, p. 439; Thivet, “Thomas Hobbes: a Philosopher of War or Peace?”, pp. 717f..

⁵⁵ Carl Schmitt, Carl, *The Nomos of the Earth*, p. 163. Cf. sec. 1.1.

⁵⁶ David Boucher, “Resurrecting Pufendorf and Capturing the Westphalian Moment”, *Review of International Studies* 27 (2001), pp. 557-577, 567.

⁵⁷ Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, pp. 443-446.

⁵⁸ S.A. Lloyd, “International Relations, World Government, and the Ethics of War”, in *Hobbes Today: Insights for the 21st Century*, ed. S.A. Lloyd (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 288-303, 298-301. Also see Lloyd, *Morality in the Philosophy of Hobbes*, pp. 7, 282, 284-287.

⁵⁹ See Armitage, “Hobbes and the Foundations of Modern International Thought”, p. 234.

personhood”.⁶⁰ David Runciman argues (in view of the theoretical apparatus of authorisation and representation that Hobbes introduces in *Leviathan*) that foreign enemies perceive the threats or actions that individuals commit on the state’s behalf, but would be unable to, thereby, discern the artificial person of the state.⁶¹

Yet Hobbes himself does apparently not consider the recognition of another state’s personality as problematic. Throughout his works he uses phrases that suggest that commonwealths can in practice be identified with their holders of sovereign power. For instance, he writes in *The Elements of Law* about “such commonwealths, or such monarchs, as affect war for itself”.⁶² In *De Cive*, he refers to “the will of the commonwealth, or of the holder of sovereign power”.⁶³ Moreover, he points out “how absurd it is that a commonwealth or its sovereign should commit to an enemy the governance of its citizens’ consciences”.⁶⁴ *Leviathan* contains phrases such as “the dominions of several princes and states”.⁶⁵ Hobbes also uses similar expressions in *Behemoth*, such as when he writes about “the authority of Kings and States”.⁶⁶ In the *Dialogue*, he distinguishes between the sovereign’s courts and “Courts of the Forraign States, and Princes”, which seems to imply the recognition of another state’s jurisdiction.⁶⁷

Furthermore, Hobbes’s remarks on international diplomacy suggest that he assumes that states recognise each other’s personalities in practice. In *The Elements of Law*, he argues that it is a law of nature “[t]hat all messengers of peace, and such as are employed

⁶⁰ Sacksteder, “Mutually Acceptable Glory”, pp. 111f.

⁶¹ Runciman, *Pluralism and the Personality of the State*, p. 17.

⁶² *EL*, XXVIII.9, p. 177.

⁶³ *De Cive*, VIII.5, p. 104.

⁶⁴ *De Cive*, XVII.27, p. 231.

⁶⁵ *Lev.*, XXXIX.5, p. 316.

⁶⁶ *Behemoth*, p. 53. Cf. *Behemoth*, p. 176.

⁶⁷ *Dialogue*, p. 110 (capitalisation in the original).

to procure and maintain amity between man and man, may safely come and go”.⁶⁸ This seems to presuppose that such messengers are recognised as representatives of another political entity. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes discusses the role of public ministers who are appointed by the sovereign and act in the name of the commonwealth, including “[p]ublic ministers abroad [...] that represent the person of their own sovereign to foreign states”.⁶⁹ In addition to such considerations, *Behemoth* provides a number of examples of international diplomacy from the Interregnum. For instance, Hobbes describes how (after the victory of the Parliament party in the Civil War) the Rump “received ambassadors from Portugal and from Spain, acknowledging their power”.⁷⁰

How states recognise each other’s sovereignty can be further clarified with reference to the legal notion of *justus hostis* (‘just enemy’). Alberico Gentili provides a paradigmatic formulation of this idea in *De iure belli*. Unlike Hobbes, Gentili insists that only public authorities that have an equal status under the law of nations can properly wage war. Thus, he defines *hostis* (the enemy) as “a person with whom war is waged and who is the equal of his opponent”.⁷¹ In addition, Gentili states that the term

is sometimes extended to those who are not equal, namely, to pirates, proscribed persons, and rebels; nevertheless it cannot confer the rights due to enemies, properly so called, and the privileges of regular warfare.⁷²

Hence, Gentili holds that the status of a lawful enemy implies the recognition of right and a granting of the ‘privileges of regular warfare’. The nature of the latter becomes clearer by comparison with unlawful enemies such as pirates, who can, for example, not

⁶⁸ *EL*, XVI.13, p. 92.

⁶⁹ *Lev.*, XXVIII.11, p. 158.

⁷⁰ *Behemoth*, p. 169.

⁷¹ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.II 18, p. 12.

⁷² Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.IV 41, p. 25.

expect any mercy upon defeat. Rather, as Gentili points out, they “have either saved their lives by victory, or have been conquered and compelled to die”.⁷³

While Hobbes does not refer to just enemies in his main political works, he critically comments on the idea that sovereigns are treated differently than other kinds of enemies in his *Answer* to Bramhall. The latter took issue with Hobbes’s position in *Leviathan* that rebels should be treated as enemies [*hostes*], arguing that a rebellious subject “ought to be punished not as a just enemy, but as a disloyal traitor”.⁷⁴ Thus, Bramhall effectively adopts Gentili’s position that lawful and unlawful enemies are treated differently at war. By contrast, Hobbes insists that the status of a just enemy does not imply any privileged treatment, which seems to reflect his view that enmity generally implies a willingness to kill or subdue the other.⁷⁵ Hobbes states:

An open enemy and a perfidious traitor are both enemies. Had not his Lordship [Bramhall] read in the Roman story, how Perseus and other just enemies of that state were wont to be punished?⁷⁶

How leaders of the enemy used to be treated is described by many Roman sources, an extensive summary of which can be found in Gentili’s *De iure belli*.⁷⁷ For instance, Perseus of Macedon, whom Hobbes mentions above, was imprisoned after Rome had conquered his kingdom. In view of such examples, Gentili argues “that it is not right that captive leaders of regular enemies should be slain, unless their death is justified by special reasons”.⁷⁸ In contrast to this view, Hobbes rejects the idea that just enemies enjoy any privileged treatment, such as sparing of their lives, on empirical grounds. His posi-

⁷³ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, I.IV 35, p. 22.

⁷⁴ *Answer*, pp. 290f.

⁷⁵ Cf. sec. 3.3.

⁷⁶ *Answer*, p. 294.

⁷⁷ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, III.VIII, pp. 322-327.

⁷⁸ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, III.VIII 534, p. 327.

tion seems to be that, like all enemies, those who possess public authority have to fear for their self-preservation if their forces have been defeated at war.

This suggests that Hobbes assumes *de facto* rather than *de jure* recognition of sovereignty. As long as rulers exercise authority over their state, the latter's artificial personality can be identified with the person of the sovereign.⁷⁹ Yet Hobbes rejects the view that rulers are recognised regardless of whether or not they retain their power, and specifically holds that they do not enjoy any privileged treatment at war. To the contrary, some passages in his works indicate that there is a particular danger to the person of the sovereign.⁸⁰ Most notably, Hobbes states in *The Elements of Law* that “[t]he head always is that part [...] against which the stroke of an enemy most commonly is directed”.⁸¹ That the sovereign requires particular protection in times of war is also indicated by a passage in *Leviathan's* ‘Review & Conclusion’, according to which subjects ought “to protect in war the authority by which he is himself protected in time of peace”.⁸² In *Behemoth*, Hobbes points out that the fact that a former sovereign is still alive poses a security risk to those who have deprived him of his authority.⁸³

At first it may seem that only monarchies can thus be identified with the holder of sovereign power. However, it is important to note that, on Hobbes's account, the exercise of sovereignty is generally transferred to particular individuals in times of war. In *The Elements of Law*, he mentions the office of the Roman dictator and argues that all gen-

⁷⁹ On this basis, it also seems possible for Hobbesian states to maintain diplomatic relations, trade with one another, and engage in other transactions.

⁸⁰ There is an obvious parallel to Hobbes's views on rebellion. As was shown in sec. 7.3, he maintains that sovereigns should attribute exclusive responsibility to authors of sedition while at the same time pardoning other participants of an insurgence.

⁸¹ *EL*, XXIV.2, p. 136.

⁸² *Lev.*, R&C 5. p. 490.

⁸³ *Behemoth*, p. 133.

erals “exercise [...] the whole sovereignty” at war.⁸⁴ Likewise, Hobbes reasons in *De Cive* that democracies and aristocracies “invariably confer full power to conduct a war on one man alone; and that power is the most absolute power possible”.⁸⁵ In *Leviathan*, he even draws a comparison with protectors of an infant king:

[A]s a child has need of a tutor, or protector, to preserve his person and authority, so also (in great commonwealths) the sovereign assembly, in all great dangers and troubles, have need of *custodes libertatis* [guardians of liberty]; that is of dictators or protectors of their authority, which are as much as temporary monarchs, to whom (for a time) they may commit the entire exercise of their power; [...].⁸⁶

If enemies only recognise *de facto* sovereignty, as was previously suggested, the question whether sovereignty is exercised on a temporary or permanent basis is without consequences. Hobbes’s comments suggest that, in times of war, those who have *de facto* control of the state’s forces may be targeted as the holders of sovereign power. This could be either a monarch or (in a democracy or aristocracy) a military dictator.

Hobbes’s translation of Thucydides’ *History of the Grecian War* provides examples of enemies specifically targeting a *de facto* holder of sovereign power in a democracy, rather than the state’s entire population. For instance, we read in this work that Sparta requested the extradition of the Athenian statesman and military commander Pericles, whom they made responsible for waging war against them:

[T]hey thought if Pericles were banished, the Athenians would the more easily be brought to yield to their desire. Nevertheless, they hoped not so much that he should be banished, as to bring him into the envy of the city; as if the misfortune of him were in part the cause of the war. For being the most powerful of his time, and having the sway of the state, he was in all things opposite to the Lacedaemonians; not suffering the Athenians to give them the least way, but inciting them to the war.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ *EL*, XX.17, p. 116. Cf. *EL*, XXI.9, p. 122.

⁸⁵ *De Cive*, X.17, p. 126.

⁸⁶ *Lev.*, XIX.9, p. 122 (emphasis in the original).

⁸⁷ *History 1*, pp. 130f.

According to this passage, Pericles was abhorred due to his *de facto* authority and influence on the Athenian decision to make war against Sparta. Hobbes himself adopts a similar position when he mentions in *De Cive* that Pericles used speech as a “trumpet of war”,⁸⁸ thus emphasising the responsibility of a particular individual.

Hobbes’s views on the *de facto* recognition of sovereignty and the specific targeting of sovereign representatives at war may be related to his claim that rulers are bound by the natural laws, which he identifies with the law of nations.⁸⁹ In particular, it appears that the sovereign’s life is always at stake in the making of foreign policy, so that he has strong prudential reasons to obey the laws of nature. Rulers, for instance, have to avoid unnecessary wars in order not to endanger their self-preservation. This also helps to explain why Hobbes claims in *De Cive* that subjects do not sin if they go to war at the sovereign’s command.⁹⁰ Other passages similarly indicate such a ‘hierarchy of responsibility’, as Lloyd has shown.⁹¹ While Lloyd emphasises that people should not be responsible for personal wrongdoings in response to government commands, however, this reading highlights that sovereigns are liable with their lives and liberty.

Understood thus, Hobbes’s naturalist conception of the law of nations is in contradiction to the ‘Westphalian system’ of mutually recognised sovereign states. According to Schmitt’s account, one fundamental feature of the *jus publicum Europaeum* (i.e. the system of international law that developed in the aftermath of the Peace of Westphalia) was that that rulers were not criminalised for making war. As was previously mentioned, Schmitt suggests that Hobbes likewise regarded states as moral persons who recognise

⁸⁸ *De Cive*, V.5, pp. 71f.

⁸⁹ For Hobbes’s comments on the laws of nature and the law of nations, see *EL*, XXIX.10, p. 182; *De Cive*, XIV.4, p. 156; and *Lev.*, XXX.30, p. 233.

⁹⁰ *De Cive*, XII.2, p. 133.

⁹¹ Lloyd, “International Relations, World Government, and the Ethics of War”, pp. 288-303.

each other's equal rights to wage war. Contrary to Schmitt's suggestion, it seems that Hobbes only assumes recognition of *de facto* sovereignty. Moreover, he emphasises that sovereign representatives are personally liable for state actions, with rulers being likely to lose their lives and liberty if their forces have been defeated at war.

To conclude, this section has shown that Hobbes's theory of international relations attributes great importance to the status of sovereigns. In particular, Hobbes maintains that the self-preservation of holders of sovereign power is always at stake in the making of foreign policy, implying that rulers have prudential reasons to obey the laws of nature. This also helps to explain in which sense sovereigns are personally bound by the natural laws, which Hobbes identifies with the law of nations.⁹²

8.3 Limits of international hostility

The last section has suggested that holders of sovereign power have prudential reasons to obey the laws of nature, for their self-preservation is always at stake in the making of foreign policy. This section will further examine whether there are limits of hostility between states due to the prudential reasoning of sovereign representatives. Thereby, analysis focuses on the three causes of quarrel that Hobbes posits in *Leviathan*, i.e. gain, glory, and fear,⁹³ which also seem to apply to international conflicts.

⁹² Larry May, *Limiting Leviathan*, pp. 187-190, has attempted a defence of international criminal law on the grounds of Hobbes's account of the laws of nature. However, this analysis shows that Hobbes does clearly not envision an enforcement of the prescriptions of the natural law through international institutions, such as the International Criminal Court. Rather, what he seems to have in mind is closer to his own notion of 'natural punishment' (cf. sec. 4.4), i.e. the idea that people will suffer at the hands of their enemies if they fail to obey the laws of nature.

⁹³ *Lev.*, XIII.6-7, p. 76.

To begin with the first motive, gain, there are passages in Hobbes's works that refer to commonwealths waging war solely for the purpose of acquiring economic goods. For instance, he states in *De Cive's* chapter on the sovereign's duties that

great commonwealths, particularly Rome and Athens, at certain times so enlarged their country from the spoils of war, foreign tribute and the acquisition of territory by arms, that they did not impose taxes on the poorer citizens; in fact they actually distributed money and land to individuals. But we should not take enrichment by these means into our calculations. For as a means of gain, military activity is like gambling; in most cases it reduces a person's property; very few succeed.⁹⁴

While Hobbes notes that commonwealths in the past prospered as a result of wars for gain, he also compares such endeavours with gambling. An illustration of the risks involved in wars for gain can be found in *Behemoth*, where Hobbes briefly mentions the failed English Siege of Santo Domingo during the Interregnum:

In the year 1655 the English, to the number of near 10,000, landed in Hispaniola, in hope of the plunder of the gold and silver, whereof they thought there was great abundance in the town of Santo Domingo; but were well beaten by the Spaniards, and with the loss of near 1,000 men, went off to Jamaica, and possessed it.⁹⁵

This example illustrates that wars that are solely fought for gain can be devastating in economic terms. Even if such campaigns do not carry a direct security risk, it seems that great losses could ultimately endanger the commonwealth's survival.⁹⁶ What is more, Hobbes argues in *Leviathan* that there is a less risky, and therefore preferable, way to acquire necessary goods from abroad, namely international trade.⁹⁷

Despite his preference for trade over war as a means for importing goods from abroad, Hobbes acknowledges that wars are sometimes necessary to acquire the immovable good of territory. In *Leviathan*, he defines colonies as "numbers of men sent out from

⁹⁴ *De Cive*, XIII.14, p. 150. Similarly, Hobbes notes in *De Cive*, epistle 1, p. 3, that the Romans "plundered nearly all the world".

⁹⁵ *Behemoth*, pp. 185f.

⁹⁶ Cf. sec. 8.1.

⁹⁷ *Lev.*, XXIV.4, p. 160.

the commonwealth, under a conductor or governor, to inhabit a foreign country, either formerly void of inhabitants, or *made void then by war*".⁹⁸ This suggests that force must sometimes be used for establishing settlements abroad. Hobbes also points out in this regard that colonies ought to be founded in order to fight poverty:

The multitude of poor (and yet strong) people still increasing, they are to be transplanted into countries not sufficiently inhabited, where, nevertheless, *they are not to exterminate those they find there*, but constrain them to inhabit closer together, and not range a great deal of ground to snatch what they find, but to court each little plot with art and labour [...].⁹⁹

While Hobbes thus regards it as permissible to acquire new territories by force, he also argues for the need of restraint in such endeavours. Specifically, he holds that colonies should only be sent out to thinly populated lands; settlers ought to occupy only as much territory as they need for their self-preservation; and native inhabitants are not to be exterminated. Hobbes does not spell out the reasons for these conditions, yet he seems to envision wars that are limited to the purpose of acquiring new lands, therefore allowing for the exercise of some restraint towards the native people.

Insofar as resources are needed for the sustenance of an army, making gain may also be a subordinate motive in wars that are fought for other reasons. While Hobbes's works contain no reflection on the devastating effects of pillaging armies, some passages seem to indicate that he prefers wars to be entirely paid for by the commonwealth that wages them. Thus, Hobbes reasons in *Leviathan* that gold and silver

have the privilege to make commonwealths move, and stretch out their arms, when need is, into foreign countries, and supply not only private subjects that travel, but also whole armies with provision.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ *Lev.*, XXIV.14, p. 164 (emphasis added).

⁹⁹ *Lev.*, XXX.19, pp. 228f (emphasis added).

¹⁰⁰ *Lev.*, XXIV.12, p. 164.

Given that the value of gold and silver is recognised everywhere, these currencies can be used to *pay for* the sustenance of an army in a foreign country. In *Behemoth*, Hobbes also considers the possibility that pillaging the local population may be detrimental to the main motive of war. This is exemplified by the Scottish invasion of Northern England prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, intended to deliver a petition to the king who was marching towards Scotland. Thereby, the Scottish army was “giving out all the way, that their march should be without damage to the country”.¹⁰¹

The desire for glory is another cause of quarrel in the natural condition that Hobbes also considers as a motive of international war. As he notes in both *The Elements of Law* and *Leviathan*, victories in battle are generally regarded as honourable.¹⁰² In this regard, however, it is important to note that Hobbes is not concerned with national glory but with military honours as pertaining to sovereigns and military commanders. For this reason, wars for glory are subject to the prudential reasoning of individuals, who may seek civil instead of military honours if there is no opportunity for war.¹⁰³

Hobbes repeatedly expresses his reservations about wars that are solely motivated by glory. For instance, he states in *The Elements of Law* that

such commonwealths, or such monarchs, as affect war for itself, that is to say, out of ambition, or of vain-glory, or that make account to revenge every little injury, or disgrace done by their neighbours, if they ruin not themselves, their fortune must be better than they have reason to expect.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ *Behemoth*, p. 35.

¹⁰² *EL*, VIII.5, p. 49; *Lev.*, X.39, p. 53. Cf. *Lev.*, XVII.2, p. 107.

¹⁰³ See sec. 6.4.

¹⁰⁴ *EL*, XXVIII.9, p. 177.

As in the case of wars for gain, wars for glory require states and sovereigns to take a gamble, and Hobbes suggests that it is likely that such wars ruin those that wage them.

This point is further elaborated in *Leviathan*, where Hobbes refers to the

Bulimia, of enlarging dominion, with the incurable wounds thereby many times received from the enemy, and the wens, of ununited conquests, which are many times a burden, and with less danger lost than kept.¹⁰⁵

Hence, even if wars for glory end in victory, the conquest of another country may turn out to be a burden. In the *Dialogue*, Hobbes specifically mentions the wars of Alexander the Great as an example of such unsustainable wars for glory:

The Subjects of those Kings who affect the Glory, and imitate the Actions of *Alexander the Great*, have not always the most comfortable lives, nor do such Kings usually very long enjoy their Conquests. They March to and fro perpetually, as upon a Plank sustained only in the midst, and when one end rises, down goes the other.¹⁰⁶

This case illustrates how certain expansionist wars may initially be sources of honour for the sovereign, but do not pay off in the long-term.

Further examples of such prudential reasoning can be found in Hobbes's translation of Thucydides' *History of the Grecian War*. Regarding a possible Athenian conquest of Sicily, for instance, we read in this work that "it were madness to invade such, whom conquering you cannot keep; and failing, should lose the means for ever after to attempt the same again".¹⁰⁷ Similarly, Hobbes himself appears to suggest on some occasions that only madmen commit acts of hostility that do not conduce to their own benefit. For example, he points out in *The Elements of Law* that it would be madness to rebel against the sovereign power without hope of success.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ *Lev.*, XXIX.22, p. 218.

¹⁰⁶ *Dialogue*, p. 16 (capitalisation in the original).

¹⁰⁷ *History 2*, p. 124.

¹⁰⁸ *EL*, XXVII.1, p. 163. Hobbes also states in *EL*, X.9, p. 63, that "rage and madness of love, are but indignations of them in whose brains are predominant the contempts of their enemies, or their mistress-

What is more, Hobbes clearly expresses in all of his main political works that the end of military honours prescribes certain limitations in the conduct of war. In *The Elements of Law*, he states that “all men in whom the passion of courage or magnanimity have been predominated, have abstained from cruelty”.¹⁰⁹ In *De Cive*, Hobbes addresses the issue of cruelty with particular reference to the trade of war, which he considers the only source of honour available in the natural condition:

It is a commonplace that *laws are silent among arms*. This is true not only of the *civil laws* but also of the *natural law*, if it is applied [...] to actions rather than to state of mind, and if the war in question is understood to be the war of every man against every man. Such is *the state of pure nature*, though in wars between nations a degree of restraint has normally been observed. Thus in early times there was a way of life, which was also a kind of trade [...]; in those conditions it was not against the law of nature, nor without glory, if practiced with courage and without cruelty. Though they would take anything else, their way was to spare life and not touch plough-oxen and agricultural equipment.¹¹⁰

In this important passage, Hobbes clearly states that international conflicts are usually characterised by a certain degree of restraint. In particular, he suggests that those who pursue military honours do not destroy their enemies’ means of living, presumably because this would prevent them from acquiring the kind of reputation they desire.¹¹¹ Likewise, Hobbes claims in *Leviathan* that people in ancient times who practiced the trade of war “observed no other laws therein but the laws of honour, that is, to abstain from cruelty, leaving men their lives and instruments of husbandry”.¹¹²

es”. In general, what Hobbes calls ‘madness’ seems to be due to the fact that exceptionally strong passions inhibit the capacity to reason. See *EL*, X.9, p. 63; *Lev.*, VIII.16, p. 41.

¹⁰⁹ *EL*, XIX.2, p. 104.

¹¹⁰ *De Cive*, V.2, pp. 69f (emphasis in the original).

¹¹¹ Other interpreters, most notably Larry May, also note the prohibition of cruelty. May, *Limiting Leviathan*, p. 201, finds that Hobbesian cruelty “has two important components: 1) harm that is unnecessary for self-preservation; and 2) disregard for the needs of others”. Although May suggests that there may be both moral and prudential reasons for the prohibition from cruelty, however, he fails to acknowledge the link that between abstaining from cruelty and the desire for honour.

¹¹² *Lev.*, XVII.2, pp. 106f. However, it needs to be said that Hobbes’s statements in *Leviathan* on this subject are not entirely consistent. He also states in the chapter on the state of nature that “[f]orce and fraud are in war the two cardinal virtues”. See *Lev.*, XIII.13, p. 78.

Regarding fear as the third motive of war, it seems that commonwealths do not have to annihilate their enemies in order to increase their security. As Hobbes indicates in *Leviathan*, states may rather have the more limited target to “weaken their neighbours”.¹¹³ Elsewhere in this work, Hobbes also reasons that “if a weaker prince make a disadvantageous peace with a stronger, for fear, he is bound to keep it, unless [...] there ariseth some new and just cause of fear, to renew the war”,¹¹⁴ which may imply that weakening a foreign enemy could be sufficient to force them into a peace agreement.

The account of the final battles of the First Anglo-Dutch War in *Behemoth* provides an example of how international wars can be brought to an end through destruction of military capacities, and without directly affecting most of the population:

This victory was great enough to make the Dutch send over ambassadors into England, in order to a treaty; but in the meantime they prepared and put into sea another fleet, which likewise, in the end of July, was defeated by General Monk, who got now a greater victory than before, and this made the Dutch descend so far as to buy their peace with the payment of the charge of the war [...].¹¹⁵

Thus, defeats may prompt a state to agree to a peace agreement. Similarly, Hobbes also mentions in *Behemoth* that, after Cromwell’s victories over the Scots during the Interregnum, “there was nothing more to be feared from Scotland”.¹¹⁶

However, other passages in Hobbes’s writings suggest that weakening the enemy is usually only a preliminary military goal, and that commonwealths ultimately seek to subdue one another. Thus, Hobbes also notes in *Behemoth* that Cromwell’s victories prepared the ground for a reincorporation of Scotland into a united commonwealth with

¹¹³ *Lev.*, XVII.2, p. 107. Cf. *Lev.*, XXIX.3, p. 211.

¹¹⁴ *Lev.*, XIV.27, p. 86.

¹¹⁵ *Behemoth*, p. 184.

¹¹⁶ *Behemoth*, p. 171.

England and Ireland.¹¹⁷ Despite being critical of unsustainable wars for glory, such as those of Alexander the Great, Hobbes seems to be more positive about conquests that succeed in increasing a state's power and security. He particularly praises Roman expansionism, such as when he points out in *Leviathan* that

the Romans, when they had subdued many nations, to make their government digestible were wont to take away that grievance [of being ruled by strangers] as much as they thought necessary by giving, sometimes to whole nations and sometimes to principal men of every nation they conquered, not only the privileges but also the name of Romans, and took many of them into the senate and offices of charge, even in the Roman city. And this was it our most wise king, king *James*, aimed at, in endeavouring the union of his two realms of *England* and *Scotland*.¹¹⁸

Unlike those kings who only invade their enemies for glory, the Romans thus acted prudently by extending citizenship to conquered peoples.¹¹⁹ What is more, Hobbes holds that England and Scotland should have been integrated in the same way as the Roman provinces.¹²⁰ As he states in *Behemoth*, he believes that this would have prevented the Scottish quarrel with the king at the beginning of the Civil War.¹²¹

Considering that the victor needs to establish a relationship of reciprocal trust with the vanquished in order to acquire sovereignty,¹²² invaders may also not want to inflict the greatest possible harm on another nation. Rather, Hobbes's views on the acquisition of sovereignty by conquest suggest that subjects are likely to retain their lives and liberty, which may be conducive to the victor's benefit. Wars can, of course, still cause great suffering. Regarding Cromwell's conquest of Ireland, we read in *Behemoth*:

¹¹⁷ *Behemoth*, pp. 171-173, 181.

¹¹⁸ *Lev.*, XIX.23, pp. 126f (emphasis in the original).

¹¹⁹ Hence, it seems that Hobbes is not generally critical of imperialist expansion, as it is suggested by Hanson, "Thomas Hobbes's 'Highway to Peace'", p. 350; and Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, p. 441.

¹²⁰ *Lev.*, XIX.23, pp. 126f.

¹²¹ *Behemoth*, pp. 33-35.

¹²² See sec. 5.1 and 8.1.

[W]ith extraordinary diligence and horrid executions, in less than a twelvemonth that he stayed there, [Cromwell] subdued in a manner the whole nation; having killed or exterminated a great part of them.¹²³

Through the interlocutor's voice, Hobbes blames the misery caused by this war on the influence of religious doctrines. However, even if the war was unnecessarily cruel, Hobbes notes that it was "one step more towards Cromwell's exaltation to the throne",¹²⁴ i.e. it principally followed an instrumental rationality.

To conclude, no matter what desires sovereigns pursue in making war, Hobbes's statements suggest that practising some restraint will conduce to reaching their ends. Hence, he seems to assume that there are limits of international hostility due to the prudential reasoning of individuals. This even appears to be the case if rulers make war for merely personal motives, such as military honours. Yet, above all, this section has shown that Hobbes's political philosophy does not envision the possibility that commonwealths engage in wars of mutual annihilation. Ultimately, individuals are permitted to promise obedience to a foreign invader, who ought to grant peace to them (and accept them as his subjects) in order to sustain the conquest of another nation.

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter has confirmed that although Hobbes draws an analogy between the state of nature and international relations, there are important differences between both conditions. Despite this, however, he is clear that wars of aggression remain a constant possibility in international relations. Hobbes's political philosophy takes this into account by elucidating how commonwealths could be decomposed and reassembled after a success-

¹²³ *Behemoth*, p. 163.

¹²⁴ *Behemoth*, p. 163.

ful foreign invasion. Hobbes holds that international hostility can ultimately be overcome if people establish a protection-obedience relationship with the conqueror. His reflections on sovereignty acquired by conquest seem to distinguish his thought from modern IR theories that focus on the interaction of pre-given units within the international system, rather than on the constitution and dissolution of states.

In addition, this chapter has examined Hobbes's views on the diplomatic recognition of states and the status of sovereign representatives. According to Hobbes, commonwealths do not, as Schmitt suggests,¹²⁵ recognise each other as compound moral persons that have equal rights and legitimacy to wage war. Rather, Hobbes's statements indicate that states maintain diplomatic relations based on mutual recognition of their *de facto* sovereignty. What is more, he argues that holders of sovereign power are specifically targeted in times of war, implying that their life and liberty is at stake in the making of foreign policy. Thus, it has been suggested that rulers have prudential reasons to obey the laws of nature. This helps to explain Hobbes's claim that sovereigns are personally bound by the natural laws, which he identifies with the law of nations.

These findings point to a vision of international order that crucially differs from the legal order of the *jus publicum Europaeum* (the system of international law that developed after the Peace of Westphalia), as described by Schmitt. In particular, Hobbes's reflections on international relations seem to suggest that mutual recognition of *de facto* sovereignty, the personal liability of sovereigns, and the imperative of self-preservation are supposed to provide a basis for prudential self-restraint, the coexistence of states, and—in the extreme case—the reconciliation of former enemies.

¹²⁵ Cf. sec. 1.1.

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