

HOBBS'S THEORY OF SOVEREIGNTY IN *LEVIATHAN*

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THE THEORY OF SOVEREIGNTY forms a central concern of Hobbes's political science. Part 1 of *Leviathan*, which culminates in the discussion of the state of nature, is intended to establish the necessity of Hobbes's theory of sovereignty and therewith its justification. Yet the theory of sovereignty bears a problematic relationship to his psychology. There is no necessary, logical dependence of the theory of sovereignty in *Leviathan* upon statements concerning man in the state of nature, yet it is on the strength of such a dependence that Hobbes claimed to be the first political scientist. The theory of sovereignty, I will argue, is a purely analytical concept proceeding from Hobbes's adherence to a deductive model of science, not from his discussion of man as a rational egoist. He did, of course, intend to ground it on his view of man.¹ I argue that he failed. If we are to understand the real apart from the intended ground of sovereignty, we must look to his method—that is, his concept of science—rather than his psychology. The latter will simply not yield the results Hobbes intended.

For Hobbes, the soul of science is logic, not experience. Science must be freed of prudential considerations, as these cannot surpass the limitations of experience (chap. 5, p. 117). While there is much in his writings which is merely prudential, he was confident that his civil philosophy did not rest upon any empirical propositions (save one, the truth of which he took to be admitted by all men²). In at least one respect, Hobbes succeeded. His concept of sovereignty does not rest upon empirical grounds. Neither, then, does it rest upon any propositions concerning man. Though men may vary greatly from Hobbes's description, the concept of sovereignty would remain unchanged. In short, they are not logically dependent; their linkage is too weak to support Hobbes's scientific claims.

I

Hobbes's method, of course, combines the "resolutive-compositive" method of Galileo and Harvey with principles of geometric reasoning. Whereas scientific inquiry today, particularly that undertaken by social scientists, is inductive in approach, Hobbes adhered to a strictly deductive model, which helps to account for his fascination with geometry (chap. 5, *passim*). Harvey's use of the resolutive-compositive method was crucial to

Hobbes because the study of the human body encounters the same difficulty as the study of the body politic. Neither can be literally resolved into its simplest constituent elements and then reconstructed. Just as Harvey's discovery of the circulatory system is an imaginative inference from clues given in the behavior of the partially dissected body, Hobbes's state of nature is an imaginative inference from the behavior of men in society. The most concise explanation of the method is given in the preface to *De Cive*.

Concerning my method, I thought it not sufficient to use a plain and evident style in what I have to deliver, except I took my beginning from the very matter of civil government, and thence proceeded to its generation, and form, and the first beginning of justice; for everything is best understood by its constitutive causes. For as in a watch, or some such small engine, the matter, figure, and motion of the wheels cannot well be known, except it be taken in sunder, and viewed in parts; so to make a more curious search into the rights of states, and duties of subjects, it is necessary, (I say not to take them in sunder, but yet that) they be so considered, as if they were dissolved, that is, that we rightly understand what the quality of human nature is, in what matters it is, in what not, fit to make up a civil government, and how men must be agreed amongst themselves, that intend to grow up into a well-grounded state.³

The resolute-compositive method is undertaken in thought only, particularly as one analyzes the rudiments of society. This, of course, suggests the necessity for developing clear and, if possible, infallible rules of thought. It is this necessity which gives such poignancy to Hobbes's interest in geometry. While the materials to be studied dictated the use of the resolute-compositive method, Hobbes's insistence upon syllogistic certainty dictated the use of geometric principles of reason.

It is interesting to note that Hobbes understood geometry to be a deductive system of thought but not a purely formal, abstract one.⁴ It will be recalled that he located geometry on his table of the classification of sciences in the division of natural philosophy under the subclass "consequences from quantity, and motion determined: by figure" (chap. 9, p. 149). That is, Hobbes understood Euclidean geometry to be nothing less than the demonstration of the resolute-compositive method applied to existent shapes. If I am not mistaken, the more orthodox view holds (at least today) that geometry is a purely abstract system of deductions from a set of postulates.

The use and end of the resolute half of the method is to render apt definitions which may serve as first principles in any of the particular sciences.

Reason [which compounded is science] is not as Sense and Memory,

born with us; nor begotten by experience only; as Prudence is; but Attained by Industry; first, in the apt imposing of Names; and secondly by getting a good and orderly Method in proceeding from the elements, which are names, to Assertions made by connexion of one of them to another; and so to Syllogisms, which are the Connexions of one assertion to another, till we come to a knowledge of all the consequences of names appertaining to the subject in hand; and that it is, men call *science*. [Chap. 5, p. 115]

Science is the knowledge of Consequences, and dependence of one fact upon another. [Ibid.]

. . . When the Discourse is put into Speech, and begins with the Definitions of Words, and proceeds by Connexion of the same into generall Affirmations, and of these again into Syllogisms; the End or last summe is called the Conclusion; and the thought of the mind by it signified, is that conditional knowledge, or knowledge of the consequences of words, which is commonly called *Science*. [Chap. 6, p. 131]

Accordingly, science is that activity which proceeds from apt definitions and moves by successive calculations to indisputable sums or remainders. The definitions are best derived by the resolution of complex wholes (or events) into their simplest conceivable elements. The compositive, or demonstrative, task of science is undertaken by a strict adherence to logical relations between the elements. The model science is geometry; the method of demonstration is deductive logic. Prudence, on the other hand, is derived from reflection upon experience. The model is history (we might even say Thucydidean history); the method of demonstration is inductive reasoning.

There seems to be no dependence of a logical kind (i.e., deductive) between the theory of pre-civil man and the character of sovereignty in *Leviathan*. I do not contend that the discussion of man and his insecure condition outside civil society is incorrect. I make no statement in this regard. Nor do I contend that this discussion is irrelevant to Hobbes's purpose. Rather, it seems to me dispensable in terms of his theory of sovereignty. This is not to gainsay the symmetry that the discussion of man gives to *Leviathan*, which may be of greater value than Hobbes's faithfulness to the canons of deductive science. Moreover, the discussion of man, specifically the treatment of man's capacity to apprehend the laws of nature through natural reason, is intimately connected to the theory of obligation, which would be groundless without it. But in turn the theory of obligation may be, and is, subject to diverse interpretations without changing the theory of sovereignty in *Leviathan*.⁵ The theory of sovereignty stands alone (save for its connection with the idea of contract); it is self-sufficient and does not

require for the reader's agreement prior acceptance of Hobbes's state of nature nor his theory(ies) of obligation.

II

We may treat the state of nature briefly. Men are placed by their will to predominate in deadly opposition to one another; no one can predominate without threatening others. But those who stand above their competitors are also threatened, for their predominance makes them enviable and insecure. It happens, then, that men feel threatened not only because it is their nature to compete for predominance but additionally because no one can rest certain with the presumption that what he has, he will keep; nor what he wants, he will continue to command the means to acquire.

Men are afforded an escape from this unhappy condition by the institution of civil society. Now the purpose of civil society is not to promote a good life as such nor to guarantee the predominance of a few, though as a consequence of the institution of civil society, given forms of predominance are made secure and righteous by law. Civil society is instituted by men to remove the fear which necessarily accompanies their existence in the state of nature. Its fruits are not to be confused with the impetus for its generation—which is fear, not goodness.

In civil society, relations between men are rendered secure because there is evident to all a clear locus of sovereignty, i.e., overwhelming power, which resides in the person of a monarch or assembly of persons. The security which derives from the institution of a commonwealth does not consist in a disarmed, impotent citizenry. The subjects are not really made harmless to one another. Quite the contrary, there will be present in the commonwealth great inequalities, including an inequality in the capacity of subjects to harm one another. This point aside, the power of every subject in Hobbes's commonwealth, or the power of every group of subjects, must seem puny and insignificant in comparison to that of the sovereign. The sovereign authority must be strong enough to deter the ambition of the strong who would plunder the weak, as well as the weak who would seek to despoil the powerful. In short, there must be unmistakable inequality of strength, according to Hobbes, between subjects and the sovereign, whatever the condition of subjects one to another. It is not, by the way, a proper criticism of Hobbes's view of sovereignty to argue that he overstated the role of coercion in giving life and permanence to the commonwealth. Hobbes was aware that the strength of the sovereign is in good measure derivative of the more or less freely given allegiance of the subjects. He was not, in other words, oblivious to the contemporary concern for "consensus" as a feature of civil life (chap. 18, p. 238; chap. 19, pp. 241–42). What is missing from Hobbes's treatment of sovereignty is the view that fear may be dispensed with once habits of citizen virtue are sufficiently inculcated.

The above, in brief, is the connection between the condition of men in the state of nature and the theory of sovereignty in *Leviathan*. Does the premise, the state of nature, lead by logical necessity to the conclusion, sovereignty? Or, what is a connected question, is there another form of commonwealth (and sovereignty) which is consistent with Hobbes's view of pre-civil man? The answer seems to be yes. Hume apparently thought so when he stated that

both these systems [referring to the Hobbesian and Lockean theories of sovereignty] of speculative principles are just, though not in the sense intended by the parties; *and* that both the schemes of practical consequences are prudent, though not in the extremes to which each party, in opposition to the other, has commonly endeavored to carry them.⁶

It is noteworthy that some recent scholars have argued that Locke constructed a different form of civil society upon foundations essentially similar to Hobbes's. Locke, they contend, was no less concerned with the "great inconveniences" of the natural condition than was Hobbes, though he sought to conceal the extent to which he began from similar propositions.⁷

Let us turn now to a more detailed answer to the above question, whether sovereignty is logically entailed in the treatment of the state of nature.

III

Though Hobbes's theory of sovereignty is not logically dependent upon arguments deduced from the discussion of man, it is nonetheless a correct one. "The Essence of the Commonwealth," Hobbes states,

is One Person, of whose Acts a great Multitude, by mutuall Covenants one with another, have made themselves every one the Author, to the end he may use the strength and means of them all, as he shall think expedient, for their Peace and Common Defence.

And he that carryeth this Person, is called Sovereaigne, and said to have Sovereaigne Power; and every one besides his Subject. [Chap. 18, p. 228]

It is most important to understand correctly what is meant in the above by the words *person*, *author*, and *covenant*, for they bear a precise and somewhat technical relationship to the theory of sovereignty in *Leviathan*. We will turn to a discussion of these terms shortly.

Let us single out two conflicting interpretations of Hobbes's theory of sovereignty. These two interpretations—one we may loosely call Tory, the other Whig—turn on differing answers to Hobbes's inquiry into the source or foundation of the sovereign's rights. The one view (Tory) states that the *rights* of sovereigns are not conditional in any sense whatsoever upon an original contract instituting the commonwealth. According to this interpretation, the *rights* of sovereigns are drawn exclusively from the nature of

sovereignty itself, that is, from the very meaning of the word. It is maintained that the concept of sovereignty alone determines the rights of sovereigns. Any contingent relationship of sovereign rights to an original contract would dissolve the concept into an absurdity. It is true, however, that the *existence* of the sovereign, the matter of rights aside, by institution or by acquisition is dependent upon a contract.

On several occasions, Hobbes speaks of the consistent and inconsistent use of names, the latter of which he calls absurdity. "When men make a name of two Names, whose significations are contradictory and inconsistent; as this name, an *incorporeal body*, or (which is all one) an *incorporeal substance*, and great number more," including *conditional* or *limited sovereignty*, they engage in absurdities (chap. 4, p. 108). However, it is important to note in criticism of Hobbes that absurdity concerning empirical things is not strictly equivalent to absurdity concerning concepts. One cannot, for example, take a ghost by the tail, not because such a thing is absurd, but because it is impossible. On the other hand, men have repeatedly designed and lived with systems of limited sovereignty, which under a system of two-valued logic designates an absurd *concept* but not necessarily an absurd *thing*. I'll grant that limited sovereignty is an absurd concept, but it is not impossible as taking a ghost by the tail is. Most Western democracies are so designed as to make it difficult or impossible to locate sovereignty. Where, for example, does it reside in the American democracy? There is nothing in the constitutional features of the American democracy which resembles Hobbes's view of sovereignty. Indeed, the framers of the American Constitution took it to be their great contribution to statecraft to have constructed a mixed regime which deliberately divided sovereignty. There were many occasions during the constitutional convention on which they observed that logical consistency must give way to the prudent reconciliation of opposed objectives.⁸

The second interpretation (Whig) states that the rights of sovereigns are conditional upon an original contract. According to this view, the rights of sovereigns are derived from a contract between subjects and owe their continuation to the abiding force of the contract.

Of the two interpretations, the first is the more consistent with Hobbes's intention, though the second is partially correct. Hobbes states clearly that sovereigns do not owe their power (or rights) to a contract.

The opinion that any Monarch receiveth his Power by Covenant, that is to say on Condition, proceedeth from want of understanding this easie truth, that covenants being but words, and breath, have no force to oblige . . . but what it has from the public Sword; that is, from the untied hands of that Man, or Assembly of men that hath the Sovereignty, and whose actions are avouched of them all, . . . [Chap. 18, p. 231]

If we examine the specific *rights* of sovereigns, it is clear that these belong to the sovereign authority by virtue of what is contained in the concept of sovereignty itself. For example, sovereigns cannot be deposed for any reason, for "that King [or sovereign assembly] whose power is limited, is not superior to him, or them that have the power to limit it; and he that is not superior, is not supreme; that is to say not soveraigne" (chap. 19, p. 246). Sovereigns are sole judges of what is necessary for the peace and defense of their subjects. Lacking this right, the sovereign must again defer to those who retain it (chap. 18, p. 234). Sovereigns are judges as well of what doctrines and opinions may go abroad among the people—the reasoning here is the same as that above. It applies as well to the remaining rights of sovereigns—the right to the making of rules whereby subjects will live, the right of judicature, of making war and peace, of choosing ministers, of rewarding and punishing subjects, etc. In plain, sovereignty cannot be divided. As Samuel Johnson said, "In sovereignty there are no gradations."⁹

This great Authority being Indivisible, and inseparably annexed to the Sovereignty, there is little ground for the opinion of them, that say of Sovereign Kings, though they be *singulis majores*, of greater Power than every one of their Subjects, yet they be *Universis minores*, of less power than them all together. For if by *all together*, they mean not the collective body as one person, then *all together*, and *everyone*, signifie the same; and the speech is absurd. But if by *all together*, they understand them as one person (which person the Sovereign bears) then the power of all together, is the same with the Sovereign's power; and so again the speech is absurd. . . . [chap. 18, p. 237]

The contention that sovereignty cannot be divided is not uttered as a prudential one; it is logically entailed in the meaning of sovereignty itself. Nor is the statement to be taken as a denial of any other form of sovereignty but monarchy. That sovereignty is indivisible refers, not to the number of individuals who may bear the sovereign person, but to the realization that sovereignty cannot be anything but absolute, final. Sovereignty signifies an authority beyond which there is no appeal; in this sense it is and must be absolute. It should be clear now why there can be no argument with Hobbes on the character of sovereignty. Either it is unitary and absolute, or it is not at all. Sovereigns are limited only by themselves; but authority which is empowered to restrain itself is by this power enabled to free itself of its restraints. Is it argued that sovereignty may be divided such that no single person or group however large retains final authority, then, according to Hobbes's accounting, the society is not a civil one, but a collection of men who are related to one another as enemies at war, actually or potentially (chaps. 18, 19, passim).

What of the second interpretation concerning the rights of sovereigns? Do

these rights derive from, are they dependent upon, an original contract? Are we to suppose that an original contract not merely institutes a sovereign authority among a multitude of men but also designates what rights the sovereign authority is to hold? Hobbes speaks at several points as if the rights of sovereigns were conditional upon a contract:

Every one, as well he that *Votes for it*, as he that *Voted against it*, shall *Authorise* all the actions and Judgements, of that Man, or Assembly of men, in the same manner, as if they were his own, to the end, to live peaceably amongst themselves, and be protected against other men. [Chap. 18, p. 229]

But by this Institution of a Common-wealth, every particular man is Author of all the Sovereigne doth; and consequently he that complaineth of injury from his Sovereigne, complaineth of that whereof he himself is Author. [Ibid., p. 232]

No man that hath Sovereigne power can justly be put to death, or otherwise in any manner by his Subjects punished. For seeing every Subject is Author of the actions of his Sovereigne; he punisheth another, for the actions committed by Himselfe. [Ibid.]

Earlier Hobbes states what he means by the term *Author*: "Of Persons Artificiall, some have their words and actions *Owned* by those whom they represent. And then the Person is the *Actor*; and he that owneth his words and actions, is the *Author*: in which case the Actor acteth by Authority . . . and *done by Authority*, done by Commission, or licence from him whose right it is" (chap. 16, p. 218). Now it would seem that if subjects own and authorize all the actions of the sovereign, they can by contract own and authorize only a specified set of actions or rights of sovereignty. Hobbes defines a contract as a "mutuall transferring of Right" (chap. 14, p. 192). Why, then, cannot certain rights be transferred while others be retained? If it were not sovereign authority which was being instituted, such a contract would be possible. Because of the character of sovereign authority, however, a contract can only call it into existence; it cannot institute a limited form of sovereignty. Why? Because such a contract would be an absurdity and therefore void. The *character* or *nature* of sovereignty can never be at issue between parties to the social contract, for a contract establishing anything but an absolute sovereign is an absurdity and need not be honored by the sovereign or his subjects. For example, if subjects were to contract for a sovereign who would hold all rights and powers, except the right to name his successor, the sovereign and his subjects are not obliged to honor the contract, for it does something other than what it claims to do; namely, it establishes a minister with limited, albeit broad, powers, yet it falsely declares him to be sovereign while the contracting powers retain rights in themselves.¹⁰

A collection of persons may well contract for the following: that a minister

shall be instituted who shall hold all rights and powers but one, the right to name his successor, which the people shall retain to be exercised at their will. This is a valid contract, *ceterus paribus*, for it is fully consistent with the concept of sovereignty. It is in fact a contract for a popular sovereign.

In sum, it is correct to say that sovereign authority owes its *existence* to a contract, but it cannot be instituted by degrees—it must be established in whole measure, all at once, or not at all.

If the *rights* of sovereigns are derived not from a contract but from the definition of sovereignty itself, then a contract instituting sovereignty is meaningful only in this respect: it declares of these men collected that they are no longer a multitude without form; they are now a corporate person, and it falls upon their person the right to make all decisions, to undertake any desired activity, to deal with itself in any way that it chooses. The right of this person to do these things is expressed as its sovereign authority, and the *bearer* of their person (the one or assembly designated by the rest to act in its name and by its authority) shall be their sovereign.

"A *Person*," Hobbes writes, "is he whose words or actions are considered, either as his own, or as representing the words or actions of an other man, or of any other thing to whom they are attributed, whether Truly of by Fiction" (chap. 16, p. 217). To personate is to represent. And it is important to note that individuals may personate or represent themselves. This is precisely what is involved in the term *popular sovereignty*, or the sovereignty of all together. In this case a multitude of men choose to represent themselves. Of course, Hobbes allows no distinction in the rights or character of sovereign authority though it be born by one man, a few, or all men together.

We may conclude that Hobbes's theory of sovereignty is scientific in the following sense: the rights of sovereigns are logically derived from the definition of sovereignty; the existence of sovereignty is derived from a contract. If the contracting parties decide among themselves, or behave as if they had made a decision, to institute sovereignty, then the only consistent and valid way of proceeding is to establish a sovereign which is absolute and indivisible. But all of this begs a question which in Hobbes's formulation of the word can only be answered prudentially, that is, from experience. Why establish sovereignty at all? Why not some other alternative? Assuming that the arguments concerning man in the state of nature are correct, is sovereignty the only political alternative available? The answer is no; and history, which for Hobbes is the ultimate source for prudential understanding, gives numerous examples, such as our own, in which a non-Hobbesian "sovereign" was chosen on the basis of Hobbesian theories of man.¹¹ Herein marks a failure by Hobbes to do what he set out to do. Science for Hobbes proceeds by demonstration from principles; it is deductive, and Hobbes's rights of sovereignty are deduced from the definition of sovereignty. So far so good. But the *necessity* for sovereign authority is not

logically entailed in the discussion of the state of nature as the rights of sovereignty are logically entailed in its definition. In fact, sovereignty can only be inductively derived from the treatment of the state of nature. The logic of the geometrician gives way to the logic of the historian; science concedes to prudence.

IV

This brings us to a consideration in the theory of sovereignty which in some ways is the most interesting. The definition of sovereignty, from which are deduced the rights of sovereigns, is not altered by, nor does it alter, any choice concerning the *locus*, or bearer, of sovereignty.

When the Representative [sovereign] is One man, then is the Common-wealth a Monarch: when an Assembly of All that will come together, then it is a Democracy, or Popular Common-wealth; when an Assembly of a Part onely, then it is called an Aristocracy. Other kind of Common-wealths there can be none; for either One, or More, or All must have the Sovereigne Power (which I have shewn to be indivisible) entire. [Chap. 19, p. 239]

The *locus* of sovereignty is a question separate from the *rights* of sovereigns—the first may vary; the second is always the same. “The difference between these three kindes of Common-wealth,” Hobbes writes in referring to the three loci of sovereignty, “consisteth not in the difference of Power; but in the difference of Convenience, or Aptitude to produce the Peace, and Security of the people; for which end they were instituted” (chap. 19, p. 241). In other words, the question of the *locus* of sovereignty is a prudential one, while an inquiry into the rights or character of sovereigns is a scientific one.

We may note some interesting implications of the distinction between the locus and the rights of sovereignty.

First, the existence and the locus, but not the rights, of sovereignty have their source in a contract. This means that Hobbes is only formally correct when he argues in chapter 18 that subjects can never replace the sovereign. As *subjects* they cannot, but when subjects are also together the bearer of sovereignty, as in a democracy, then they may change their sovereign themselves, once. They may give it to another. It is also clear that the lengthy discussions Hobbes gives to the freedom sovereigns enjoy from interference by their subjects, is rendered nugatory when sovereignty is democratic. Indeed, the rather harsh appearance Hobbes gives to his theory of sovereignty (due in large part to his emphasis on monarchical sovereignty) is softened by the implications of popular sovereignty.

Second, the character of sovereignty, being always the same, can never legitimately be subject to dispute; however, the locus of sovereignty, being

conditional upon a contract, or upon a political tradition within which the contract is said to reside, can be a subject of dispute. In fact, is not the question of the locus of sovereignty, who should rule, the more compelling one? We must note that Hobbes's relative disinterest in the question of who should rule marks a revolutionary change in the direction of political theory. To his day, this had been the primary question for political theory. An indication of the secondary status Hobbes gives to the question is found in his treatment of the forms of government. His theory of sovereignty permits the distinction between forms of government only on the basis of the number who rule. Accordingly, rule by one is monarchy; by a few, aristocracy; by many, democracy. The classical division of three true forms and three corrupt—tyranny, oligarchy, democracy—has no place in Hobbes's classification because he denies any rational basis for making the distinction. Either a government keeps peace and is therefore true, or it does not and is therefore no government at all (chap. 21, p. 272).

When the political tradition of a society, which is tantamount to Hobbes's contract, becomes a matter of dispute, then the locus of sovereignty may also become unclear—and this without violence to the rights of sovereigns. For example, the controversy between the American colonies and England preceding the Revolution involved not only a dispute over the rights of the sovereign, centering on the extent of the power to tax, but also a challenge to the locus of sovereignty; that is, the colonies claimed that they held sovereignty in matters of strictly intercolonial concern.

V

Hobbes's rejection of the classical distinction between true and corrupt regimes would seem to follow from his insistence upon peace and not, for example, justice as the proper and chief aim of civil society.¹² Further, his argument of the equality of all men, stemming from the equal ability of each to harm one another and the great similitude of the passions among men, precludes the possibility of the natural ruler, the great-souled man, because, having entirely different passions, such a man would lack the incentive to harm others.¹³ As peace is the true end of civil society, any sovereign who confers it fulfills the purpose for which sovereignty was instituted. Consequently, if the sovereign is serving this function there is no basis in Hobbes's philosophy for distinguishing monarchy from tyranny or aristocracy from oligarchy except on the grounds that some "mislike" them while others approve.

But it is precisely in view of Hobbes's failure to appreciate the passion for justice—the passion to see things in their proper, natural, order; however misguided and self-interested this passion often is—that he treated the question of who should rule, the locus of sovereignty, as a secondary and merely prudential consideration. The locus of sovereignty could not for him

be a scientific question because the passion for justice was not understood by him to be natural. Moreover, as no class in society, neither the one, the few, nor the many, could assert a claim to rule which is rooted in nature, none could prove the justice of its assertions and claims. Hence, the question of locus, which is primary in the classical tradition, is reduced to a matter of convenience and efficiency. But so long as men seek more than peace, so long as they seek justice, however confusedly, the question of who should rule, as the correlate of that search, will compel more attention than the question of sovereign rights. More than this, when it is observed that the one, the few, and the many can each assert a just but partial claim to rule, the very wisdom of an absolute, unitary sovereign is dispelled.

The tally, then, is as follows:

nature of sovereignty: deductive, scientific;
 locus of sovereignty: inductive, prudential;
 necessity of sovereignty: inductive, prudential;
 maintenance of sovereignty: inductive, prudential.

If the locus of sovereignty is a more compelling question than the character of sovereignty, then a study of politics which is based upon science alone would be a limited thing—this because the questions such a science could answer would be limited. If it is to what Hobbes calls prudence that one must turn for a guide to sound political construction and maintenance—for example, concerning the locus of sovereignty—then Hobbes's work reduces itself to a concern which was central to the tradition which he sought to supplant, namely, the concern for the best form of regime and the means most appropriate to bringing it about.

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1. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. with an introduction by C. B. Macpherson (Baltimore, 1968), pp. 226–27. All page references in the text are to this edition of *Leviathan*.

2. Hobbes admitted that he could not demonstrate the assertion that all men share the same passions, desire, fear, hope, etc., but believed nonetheless that disinterested introspection would furnish sufficient proof of his argument. *Leviathan*, "The Introduction," pp. 82–83; chap. 13, pp. 186–87.

3. *De Cive*, ed. Sir William Molesworth (London, 1839), 2: xiv. The Molesworth edition is hereafter cited as *E.W.*, abbreviated from *English Works*, with appropriate volume number following.

4. *De Corpore* (*E.W.*, 1: 176).

5. See A. E. Taylor, "The Ethical Doctrine of Hobbes," reprinted in *Hobbes Studies*, ed. K. D. Brown (Cambridge, 1965); Howard Warrender, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: His Theory of Obligation* (Oxford, 1957); Brian Barry, "Warrender and His Critics," in *Hobbes and Rousseau*, ed. M. Cranston and R. S. Peters (New York, 1972); F. C. Hood, *The Divine*

Politics of Thomas Hobbes (Oxford, 1964). The debate over Hobbes's theory of obligation is closely argued on all sides; so far as I know, however, none of the disputants has challenged the others' treatment of Hobbes's theory of sovereignty.

6. David Hume, "Of the Original Contract," *Political Essays* (Indianapolis, 1953), p. 43.

7. Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago, 1953); Richard H. Cox, *Locke on War and Peace* (Oxford, 1960).

8. See Paul Eidelberg, *The Philosophy of the American Constitution* (New York, 1968), and, among others, *The Federalist*, nos. 9, 10, 51, 62, 63.

9. Quoted in A. J. Beitzinger, *A History of American Political Thought* (New York, 1972), p. 116.

10. See *Leviathan*, chap. 14, pp. 196-97, for a treatment of the conditions which render contracts null and void.

11. See Frank M. Coleman, "The Hobbesian Basis of American Constitutionalism" (Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Northeastern Political Science Association, November 9, 1972).

12. It is interesting to compare Hobbes with the intention of the framers of the American Constitution. The Preamble to the Constitution lists the following as the purposes of union: justice, domestic tranquility, common defense, promotion of the general welfare, the blessings of liberty. Now each of these has a place in Hobbes's civil philosophy, but the primary end of civil society for Hobbes, namely, domestic tranquility, was understood by the authors of the Constitution to be only an instrumental and not the primary goal of union. See Madison's argument in *The Federalist*, nos. 10, 51.

13. Compare Aristotle, *The Politics*, 1283, secs. 13-20, Barker translation: "If there be one person so pre-eminently superior in goodness that there can be no comparison between the goodness and political capacity which he shows and what is shown by the rest, such a person can no longer be treated as part of the state. Being so greatly superior to others in goodness and political capacity, they will suffer injustice if they are treated as worthy only of an equal share; for a person of this order may very well be like a god among men."