IS THERE AN HOBBESIAN TRADITION
IN INTERNATIONAL THOUGHT?

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B.A. (Hons), The University of British Columbia, 1989

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
Department of Political Science

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

September 1990

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ABSTRACT

Hobbes' argument in *Leviathan* can be viewed as a response to the question of why rational human beings should choose to organize themselves into a state. In Hobbes' words, the argument, in large part, attempts to establish the 'causes' of a 'commonwealth'.

However, the fact of the matter is that human beings do not organize themselves into a state; rather, they organize themselves into a plurality of states. The question then becomes one of determining -- again in Hobbes' words -- the 'causes' of a plurality of 'commonwealths'. In other words, why do rational human beings choose to organize themselves into separate states? It is not clear to me that Hobbes answered this question; nor is it clear to me that Hobbes' arguments can be extended in order to provide a satisfactory answer to this question.

Since international theory is concerned with the plurality of states, it seems reasonable to suppose that an 'Hobbesian' tradition in international thought would have provided at least some insight into the question of the 'causes' of such a plurality. In other words, an 'Hobbesian' tradition in international thought must have at least considered why it is that several Leviathans would emerge from the state of nature. However, having examined the current conception of the 'Hobbesian' tradition, I found that it was simply the 'realist' tradition under a different label; a tradition to which Hobbes' name had been appropriated. Furthermore, I found that the appropriation
of Hobbes' name was justified on the basis of his chapter 13 analogy which compared -- albeit in a limited way -- his theoretical inference of the state of nature with his observations of relations among sovereigns. I argue that the analogy, being neither a definition nor an inference, has no theoretical relationship with Hobbes' main argument, in which case it cannot form the basis of a genuine Hobbesian tradition.

Having established that the current Hobbesian tradition is not a genuine one, I propose that a genuine tradition should at least render an account of the emergence of several Leviathans from the state of nature and conclude that this cannot be done without compromising Hobbes' account of the state.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This essay would have been very difficult to complete successfully without Professor Robert Jackson's continuous support and encouragement. In addition to making me feel that my contribution was important, his manner gave me the confidence to pursue my questions more or less my own way. Professor Sam LaSelva introduced me to analytical political theory and he was always—without notice—prepared to discuss my ideas, difficulties, and concerns throughout this project. I admire these two scholars and offer my sincere thanks. My two good friends Michael and Kim Meade volunteered for the painstaking task of proof-reading this essay and consequently prevented me from doing too much damage to the English language. Michael was my initial and only contact with political science during my two years at Malaspina College; and although our particular interests within the discipline may have diverged, Michael—in perhaps many more ways than he can imagine—is still my teacher. And finally, to my dearest friend Kirsten Sigerson—whose infinite patience often had to contend with the sharp end of my frustrations during this project—thank you for continuing to be my friend.
INTRODUCTION

Perhaps the best way to begin this discussion concerning the question of whether or not there is a Hobbesian tradition in international thought is by answering it more or less directly. No, I do not think that such a tradition exists; at least not based on his argument in *Leviathan*. Having clearly stated my reply, however, I must immediately qualify it. The tone of my answer, rather than being one of self-satisfaction, is one of disappointment. I had hoped that there could be a genuine Hobbesian tradition in international thought so that it could help me to move one step closer to settling the larger and more disturbing question of why abstract 'natural' men would choose to create a plurality of separate political communities out of the state of nature.

Since I assume that there is nothing inherently natural about the state, nor any political community for that matter,¹ I am curious as to why human beings should choose to organize themselves into separate political communities rather than one global polity. In short, unlike many participants in contemporary academic discourse, I accept neither the state nor the plurality of states as given. This, however, is not to say that I think the plurality of states ought not exist. Intuitively, I suspect that there are good reasons for its existence. My problem, however, is translating my intuition into concrete reasons.

I think that finding the reasons—or causes as Hobbes
might have put it—-for the plurality of states would satisfy much more than simple curiosity. Having established those reasons, perhaps we would be better armed to handle questions about how states ought to relate to each other; or we might feel more comfortable dealing with questions of international justice. Finally, we might even be better prepared to deal with questions of political decentralization (or centralization), division of powers, and perhaps even secession, in federally organized societies. I think that in order to address the above concerns with any degree of confidence, we must first establish theoretical reasons as to why the human artifact of separate political communities exists. In other words, human beings do not create the state, rather, they create a plurality of states. The problem is to determine the causes of such a creation.

Due to my concern with the human causes of political artifacts, it is not surprising that I should turn to Thomas Hobbes and his argument in *Leviathan* for insight and possible answers. *Leviathan*, it will be argued in due course, addresses the question about causes of a particular political artifact known to Hobbes as the commonwealth. The term 'Leviathan' refers to the court of final appeal within the commonwealth; a court which embraces what has come to be known as the three branches of government, namely: the judiciary, the legislature, and the executive. In other words, Leviathan is the human manifestation and
source of 'right reason' in the community who also controls the 'purse' and the 'sword'. For Hobbes, both the state and the Leviathan are human artifacts; they are products of conscious human design and actions. They are the necessary consequences of the choice human beings make to live a social life rather than an anti-social one.

It should be noted that the title of Hobbes' argument is Leviathan and not Leviathans. Although it is reasonably clear that Hobbes did not refer to one global Leviathan during the course of his discussion, he gives us hardly any reason to suppose that a plurality of Leviathans would emerge from the state of nature. In other words, Hobbes begins his argument with a consideration of man and not this or that particular group of men, and because of this starting point the logic of his argument would lead us to expect only one Leviathan to emerge. However, at the outset of part two of Leviathan, it is reasonably clear to me that Hobbes expects us to assume that a plurality of leviathans have emerged. I find this quite puzzling because it seems to me that, beginning with a consideration of man, the emergence of a plurality of social contracts would defeat the purpose of the social contract in the first place.

My hope of finding a ready made solution to this puzzle was raised when I happened to read about the 'Hobbesian' tradition in international thought. I had inferred from the name of this tradition that these international theorists had managed to bridge the
Hobbesian gap between the causes of the state and the causes of the plurality of states. However, when I came to understand what international theorists meant by using the term 'Hobbesian tradition', and when I further learned the textual basis for the ascription of his name to this tradition, I was, needless to say, disappointed. I was nevertheless inspired to try to bridge the gap myself. Thus, I have undertaken to attempt to answer the question: Is there really an Hobbesian tradition in international thought?

In chapter one of this essay I shall present my findings about the current 'Hobbesian tradition' in international thought and I shall employ an argument which, I believe, should cast doubt on the practice of ascribing Hobbes' name to this particular tradition. Essentially, I shall argue that the textual remarks from Leviathan that are used to justify the ascription of his name to the Realist tradition have very little bearing on Hobbes' political theory and virtually no bearing on his particular scientific approach to understanding the world.

In chapter two I undertake to search for a new and firmer basis for an Hobbesian tradition in international thought. I speculate that such a basis might be found by first posing a very specific question and then by trying to answer it with arguments from Leviathan. In short, I am asking Hobbes: What causes the plurality of states? Although Hobbes does reply to the question with "defence
against a common enemy", I find that his answer simply creates a new puzzle. The new problem, a problem which I could not solve, is to determine how it comes to pass that the predicament of mankind becomes transformed from a condition of defence of all against all to a condition of defence of group against group. This new puzzle, I believe, also has implications for Hobbes' domestic political theory. For the meantime, however, let us turn to the first problem at hand; the problem of the existing conception of the Hobbesian tradition in international thought.
CHAPTER ONE

The Problem with the Current Hobbesian Tradition

Of all the constraints upon the political philosopher's freedom to speculate, none has been so powerful as the tradition of political philosophy itself. In the act of philosophizing, the theorist enters into a debate the terms of which have been largely set beforehand.

It appears that the label 'Hobbesian tradition' is but simply another name for the 'Realist tradition' in international thought. In other words, the two expressions, 'Hobbesian' and 'Realist', have been used interchangeably to represent the same tradition in international thought. Thus, an otherwise innocent observer—perhaps an undergraduate—could not be blamed for reasonably concluding that Hobbes was a realist alongside figures such as Machiavelli and Morgenthau. It is not surprising, then, that Hobbes is viewed often unquestionably as one of Martin Wight's 'blood and iron and immorality men.' It seems that the well entrenched practice of labelling the Realist tradition as 'Hobbesian' may contribute to a form of academic prejudice which, I believe, adds little to the advancement of international thought.

(1) The Legacy of Hobbes' Analogy

There must be some basis, however, for the practice of labelling Realism with Hobbes' name. Academics of the stature of Martin Wight and John Vincent, for example, could not possibly make the connection purely on the basis of something that one of their teachers had said during their
undergraduate years. The basis of the practice must lie in something that Hobbes himself had written -- something that surely would serve to convict him, beyond a shadow of a doubt, as one of the villains in the history of political thought.

The textual basis of Hobbes' self incrimination, it seems, is an analogy he presented to his audience in chapter 13 of *Leviathan*. The analogy reads:

> But though there had never been any time, wherein particular men were in a condition of warre one against another; yet in all times, kings, and Persons of Soveraigne authority, because of their Independency, are in continuall 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 Kingdomes; and continuall Spyes 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.ª

Martin Wight will be the first theorist that I shall examine in the following discussion.ª There seems to be little doubt that Wight felt that Hobbes' analogy lies at the core of international theory. It is also clear that Wight categorized Hobbes under the rubric of 'realist'. However, in all fairness, I am not convinced that Wight either coined or used the expression 'Hobbesian tradition' as a synonym for Realism.

Following the discussion of Wight, I shall briefly consider the arguments advanced by John Vincent.ª Vincent, like myself, is concerned about the 'Realist' prison into
which Hobbes had been locked. He would prefer to have us view Hobbes as occupying the 'marchlands' between the Wightian categories of 'realism' and 'rationalism'. It seems to me, however, that Vincent falls short of freeing Hobbes entirely from the realist yoke because Hobbes' analogy remains very much in his field of vision.

Next, I shall present Cornelia Navari's view. Although Navari's paper has given me a great deal of comfort because of our shared intentions, I am not sure that she has succeeded in distancing Hobbes' theory from the realist tradition. Rather, it seems that a significant part of her argument serves to entrench Hobbes within realism. Briefly stated, her decision to treat the state of nature as a logical category unto itself, rather than as a logical construct in the course of a larger argument, has consequences she may not have been aware of. In short, by doing so she has adopted an essentially realist interpretation of Hobbes' analogy.

The following discussion of the views advanced by these theorists will serve primarily to establish the agenda for my argument in the last part of this chapter. To reiterate, the purpose of this chapter is to cast doubt on the practice of associating Hobbes' name with the realist tradition in international thought. This end, I believe, is best achieved by first examining the textual grounds used as justification for this practice, namely Hobbes' chapter 13 analogy; and secondly by determining the precise
relationship that the analogy has with Hobbes' theory. I shall argue that there is no relationship between the two. Consequently, any theoretical tradition which lays claim to the analogy as constituting its basis is certainly free to do so, but it may not be entirely justified in calling itself 'Hobbesian'. In short, I shall argue that the analogy was simply one of Hobbes' rhetorical devices, and as such it has little theoretical value in terms of Hobbes' own project.

MARTIN WIGHT

'International theory', according to Wight, is "a tradition of speculation about relations between states, a tradition imagined as the twin of speculation about the state to which the name 'political theory' is appropriated." Given this definition, it is not surprising that Wight spends a great deal of intellectual energy searching for the roots of this tradition. Although Wight feels that the bulk of the tradition has been borne by the classical international lawyers, he argues that it is "the identification of international politics with the pre-contractual state of nature" that lies at the heart of the tradition. In other words, Hobbes' analogy constitutes the core of international theory.

Having established the 'core' of international theory—an "... identification first made by Hobbes and ... carried from him into the law of nations by Pufendorf"—Wight goes on to discuss an 'inconsistency' or 'ambiguity' at that core. Wight concludes that Hobbes'
analogy is "empirically true. . . But theoretically odd." Wight concludes this because "for individuals, the state of nature . . . leads to the social contract. For sovereign states, it does no such thing." This ‘ambiguity’, Wight continues, "becomes a persistent feature in international theory." 10

At this time, I would like to draw particular attention to Wight’s conclusion that Hobbes’ analogy is empirically true but theoretically odd. Although I must agree with this conclusion, it causes me no great discomfort. I shall argue in due course that the key to isolating Hobbes’ analogy from his theory is by simply acknowledging it as a purely empirical statement; a statement to which Hobbes ascribed virtually no theoretical value. As such, the ‘theoretical oddity’ that Wight noticed is not a concern in terms of Hobbes’ political theory. Thus, if Hobbes did introduce an inconsistency or ambiguity into the core of international theory, he did so with what is perhaps one of his more ingenious rhetorical devices. However, this is to anticipate my argument in the last part of this chapter. In the meantime, let us turn to a consideration of Vincent’s views on the ‘Hobbesian tradition’ in international thought.

JOHN VINCENT

Vincent begins his treatment of the ‘Hobbesian tradition’ by explicitly stating that his concern is with the current importance of the tradition. He wants "to be self-conscious about the way in which we now think about
international relations [in order] to discover the extent to which it is shaped by the legacy of Hobbes." That tradition, he adds, "can be characterized as having at its center the problem, grim and insoluble, of the coexistence of states in the absence of international government." It is clear that Vincent is speaking about the realist tradition, but he is using Hobbes' name to describe it. More important to my analysis, however, Vincent argues that the 'Hobbesian tradition' provides "a starting place for thought about international politics." 

Although this starting place, according to Vincent, "is often thought to be a realist one, indeed to constitute with Machiavelli, the definition of realism," he goes on to argue that 'Hobbesians' such as Morgenthau and Kissinger display a 'Rationalist' influence in their work. In other words, these theorists seem to fit into Wight's category of 'law and order and keep your word men' in addition to the category of 'blood and iron and immorality men.' Vincent then asks, "how far can this [rationalist] concern be said to belong to the Hobbesian tradition?"

The essence of Vincent's response is that they do remain within the tradition because Hobbes was also a rationalist. In terms of the Wightian 'realist' and 'rationalist' categories, Vincent concludes that "Hobbes occupied the marchlands between these two, and constantly kept one as a check on the enthusiasm of the other. Academic international relations . . . has, in this regard,
flattered Hobbes by imitating him." In terms of my concern in this chapter, however, the most interesting part of Vincent's argument is the textual basis he used for the claim that Hobbes was also a rationalist.

Whereas Vincent employed Hobbes' analogy to support the claim that Hobbes could be classified as a realist, he used Hobbes' qualification of the analogy as the textual basis for his claim that Hobbes was also a rationalist. According to Vincent, "Hobbes' remark that the international anarchy is, because it upholds the industry of the subjects of sovereigns, more bearable than anarchy among individual human beings, has been the starting place, and a very productive one, of much thought about the nature of international politics." Against Vincent's claim that "Hobbes first had the wit to notice the important distinction," I shall argue that Hobbes was forced by his own logic to make the distinction, lest he be compelled to incorporate his observations about relations among sovereigns into his theory. Hobbes carefully distinguished knowledge gained by experience (his observations about sovereigns) and knowledge gained by his conception of scientific reasoning (his inference about the state of nature). Hobbes would be the first to recognize that mixing the two forms of knowledge as he did in his analogy was unacceptable scientific reasoning. Although this reasoning may have been unacceptable to himself, he nevertheless recognized that much of his audience—in particular, those
ascribing to Aristotelean or Scholastic doctrine—would probably accept his analogy as constituting a valid proof of his earlier inference about the state of nature. Regardless, by qualifying his analogy—i.e. by explicitly stating that the state of nature and relations among sovereigns are not the same—he effectively freed himself to state the analogy without having to employ his rigorous method to check and see if an actual theoretical relationship existed between his earlier inference and his observations about relations among sovereigns. I shall develop this reasoning further in the last part of this chapter following the discussion of Navari's argument.

CORNELIA NAVARI

Although the form and substance of Navari's argument may differ somewhat, the intent of her project is identical to mine. It is clear that she objects to the practice of using Hobbes' name to describe the realist tradition in international thought.

Her discussion which contrasts realism and Hobbes' philosophy achieves a considerable degree of depth and I find it quite convincing. Nevertheless, I am uncomfortable with her decision to treat the state of nature as a logical category; especially in light of her conviction that a genuine Hobbesian tradition in international thought would employ these categories. I do not deny that Hobbes' 'natural condition of mankind' is a logical construct or, as Hobbes put it, an "inference, made from the passions;"
but I do have difficulty conceiving this construct as a logical category similar to some of the other concepts Navari mentions, such as sovereignty and justice. Categories which, Navari argues, can "be applied to any political phenomena wherever they appear."^20

In light of the intent of Navari’s paper, I was surprised that she would consider the state of nature as a logical category because it seems to me that this is precisely how the realists consider it when they apply it to the relations of states. In contrast with Navari’s contention, they do not seem to be employing it in any descriptive way. By applying it as a logical category rather than as a descriptive parallel, realists are able to conceive the core of their project as the "problem, grim and insoluble, of the coexistence of states in the absence of international government."^21 For the realists, in other words, international relations does not appear like the state of nature, it is the state of nature. For Hobbes, on the other hand, international relations appeared like the state of nature. In short, by choosing to treat the state of nature as a logical category, it appears that she may have inadvertently sanctioned the practice of calling realism the Hobbesian tradition.

(2) Hobbes’ Analogy — Rhetoric or Theory?

The primary aim of the foregoing discussion was to establish that Hobbes’ analogy in fact does constitute the basis of the realist tradition in international thought.
Although I have no objection to such use, I do object to the appropriation of Hobbes' name because the analogy has no bearing on Hobbes' theory.

As I have mentioned earlier, the key to my argument in this chapter is to establish that Hobbes' analogy is a rhetorical rather than a theoretical device. Thus, any tradition of thought that uses the analogy as constituting the core of that tradition cannot properly call itself Hobbesian. My assumption here is that a genuine Hobbesian tradition would at least establish a substantive theoretical link with Hobbes, rather than simply adopting portions of Hobbes' text which may have little bearing on his theory.

I believe that this objection is an important one because it seems that a less than careful selection and application of labels, especially when classical theorists are involved, ultimately serves to limit rather than expand the spectrum of intellectual inquiry. If, for example, an undergraduate in international relations, while attempting to grapple with the realist perspective, constantly encountered the 'Hobbesian' label as signifying this perspective, this person might never be inclined to read Hobbes because he or she apparently already knows what it is that he had to say. But, whether or not the Hobbesian label is correctly applied depends on the following argument.

Let me suggest that the most significant reason why Hobbes' name is ascribed to the realist tradition is
because of the apparent *theoretical* link between his observations about relations among sovereigns and his inference about the state of nature. Thus, it seems to me that the key to distancing Hobbes from the realist tradition is to sever the apparent theoretical link between his observations and his inference. This, however, would raise the question of why Hobbes employed the analogy in the first place if it did not in fact have any substantial theoretical value. After all, the analogy *does* seem to play an important role in his argument. I shall address this question by demonstrating that the analogy did, if fact, play a vital *influential* role in his argument, but it played virtually no role in his political theory. Having established this, we can thus conclude that the analogy was simply a *rhetorical* and not a *theoretical* device.

In order to identify Hobbes' analogy as a rhetorical device, I proceed in two stages. In the first stage, I shall hold constant the assertion that the analogy has no theoretical value while explaining why the analogy played an important influential role in his argument. During the second stage of the argument, I shall demonstrate why the analogy could not hold any theoretical value for Hobbes. In summary, my argument can be conceived as follows:

1. If the analogy plays an important influential role in terms of Hobbes' argument; and
2. If the analogy has no value in terms of Hobbes' theory;
then (3) the analogy must simply be a rhetorical device. And (4) since the analogy is a rhetorical device, it cannot therefore form the basis of a genuine Hobbesian tradition in international thought.
The first stage in the following discussion will attempt to establish that the analogy did play an important role and the second stage will attempt to establish that the analogy did not have any substantial theoretical value.

THE ANALOGY AS AN 'APPARENT' PROOF

In order to establish the role Hobbes’ analogy may have played in his argument, it is perhaps a good idea to first determine what Hobbes’ argument was. One way of establishing this, however, is to first determine what the question was that his argument was meant as a reply to. By doing this, I am essentially conforming to R.G. Collingwood’s technique of ‘question and answer’; a technique which is used to help the reader to ‘get into the author’s mind’, so to speak. "You cannot find out what a man means," argues Collingwood,

by simply studying his spoken or written statements even though he has spoken or written with perfect command of language and perfectly truthful intention. In order to find out his meaning you must also know what the question was (a question in his own mind, and presumed by him to be in yours) to which the thing he has said or written was meant as an answer.22

In terms of Hobbes, this task proved to be much more difficult for me than it sounds. It virtually meant hesitating after reading each of Hobbes’ propositions and asking myself: What is the question that Hobbes’ is trying to answer with this proposition? In the case of a particularly difficult passage, the problem of providing a question for Hobbes’ answer involved a considerable degree
of trial and error.

With respect to Hobbes' definitions, however, the job was much easier because the question seemed obvious. For example, after reading Hobbes' definition of the 'will', I simply posited the question: what is the will? Oddly enough, in this case and many others, Hobbes' answer seemed to 'fit', but it did not seem to fit quite right. These occurrences, because they were repeated occurrences, led me to suspect that perhaps it were my questions that were not quite right; although I could not begin to imagine what was wrong with them. On the one hand, Hobbes' discourse seemed to have a continuous and motion-like quality about it whereas, on the other hand, my questions beginning with 'what is' did not seem to be capable of grasping that quality in his work.

My discomfort continued until the word 'consequence' captured my attention while I was re-reading chapter 5, "Of Reason and Science". "Science," Hobbes argues, "is the knowledge of consequences, and the dependence of one fact upon the other." It then occurred to me that perhaps Hobbes was employing this scientific method throughout his discussion. If this were the case, I concluded that a 'consequence' is not a reply to the question 'what is X?' rather, it is a reply to the question 'what causes X?'. For example, Hobbes advanced the following proposition on the idea of 'will':

In deliberation, the last appetite, or aversion, immediately adhaering to the action, or to the
omission thereof, is that we call the will, the act (not the faculty) of willing.\textsuperscript{24}

If this proposition was meant as a reply to the question 'what is the will?', there is a reasonable fit between the supposed question and the given answer. However, by substituting the active verb 'causes' for 'is', we find that the meaning of Hobbes' reply is considerably enhanced. We can now envision a continuous connection between deliberation and will. The will now appears to be an active stage in a larger and continuous process rather than as a lifeless thing. It turns out that the commonwealth lies at the end of this continuous chain of processes.

Perhaps, then, Part one of \textit{Leviathan} is Hobbes' response to the question 'what causes the commonwealth?' Part two of \textit{Leviathan}, on the other hand, appears to be an answer more suited the the question 'What is the commonwealth?'

Since Hobbes' analogy is an apparent proof of his inference, or logical construct, of the state of nature, and since the state of nature is included in Part one of \textit{Leviathan}, I shall examine this construct, in addition to the apparent proof he offers in support of it, in the context of the question which seeks to determine the causes of the commonwealth. In other words, I will not be examining Hobbes' analogy in terms of any questions which might be of immediate interest or concern to international theorists. Rather, I will be examining it in terms of what I suppose to be the question that Hobbes set out to answer in part one of \textit{Leviathan}.\textsuperscript{25}
Hobbes' construct, or 'inference' as he prefers to call it, of the natural condition of mankind is a vital link in the chain of processes which culminate in the human creation of the commonwealth. Hobbes begins this chain of processes with a consideration of man. Whereas the inherent human inclination towards acquiring the means of self preservation can be viewed as the end or consequence of a chain of processes generated by the passions in solipsistic man, the condition of the state of nature is the immediate consequence when these men are placed in proximity to each other. In other words, man is naturally equipped with the inclination and ability to get along well enough by himself; it is when he comes into contact with others who are similarly equipped that problems begin to arise. Although man, according to Hobbes, is designed to live alone, the fact is that he does not live alone. It is because of this predicament that problems arise. For Hobbes, there is no such thing as natural social harmony among men. Rather, social harmony is something that requires an active and conscious effort on the part of individual human beings. It seems to me that there is indeed at least a kernel of truth in Hobbes' position that man is not naturally a social creature. We need only reflect on what is perhaps a very common admonishment between parent and child—'you must learn that you can't have everything your own way!'—in order to appreciate that element of truth. In short, we must learn how to be social creatures. Even after we have
supposedly learned to be social, we can perhaps imagine situations where it takes a considerable effort on our part in the form of self-restraint in order to maintain our sociability. I think that Hobbes was keenly aware of this and because of this awareness he was unable to honestly accept the Aristotelean precept that man was a social creature; a precept which was undoubtedly founded on the observation that everywhere men live in societies. Hobbes was also keen enough to imagine situations in which even self-restraint was not enough to maintain a social condition among men. Sometimes particular men might have to be subdued by force in order to maintain a social condition between them or among men at large. Thus, self-restraint on behalf of individual persons is a necessary but insufficient precondition for the establishment and maintenance of society because we can imagine situations where two people perceive themselves to be exercising extreme self-restraint while nevertheless perceiving the other to be exercising virtually none. Man is, according to Hobbes, "for want of right reason constituted by nature", and because of this natural deficiency of man,

when there is a controversy in an account, the parties must by their own accord, set up for right Reason, the Reason of some Arbitrator, or Judge, to whose sentence they will both stand, or their controversie must either come to blowes, or be undecided. . . . And when men that think themselves wiser than all others, clamor and demand right Reason for judge; yet seek no more, but that things should be determined, by no other mens reason but their own, it is as intolerable in the society of men, as it is in play after trump
is turned, to use for trump on every occasion, that suite whereof they have most in their hand. Society, then, can be said to exist when two pre-conditions are met. The first condition is that individual human beings exercise self-restraint consistent with the self-restraint of others. In other words, because men exist in the company of other men, they must learn that they cannot have everything they want. The second condition is that they must ‘set up’ for right reason in that they must establish a judge and must agree to submit to his judgements. But because "Of the difference of Manners" of men, there is a possibility that some men will not submit when their perceived vital interests are at stake. Consequently, the judge must be armed with sufficient power in order to enforce his or her judgements. It is only when these two conditions are met, according to Hobbes, that a society can be said to exist among men.

Conversely, when neither of these conditions exist, there is no society among particular men and Hobbes’ state of nature is an attempt at inferring in the abstract what such a predicament would be like. However, such a predicament is at odds with one of the fundamental human passions namely, self preservation. But, according to Hobbes, it is the passion of self preservation that puts men into this condition in the first place. The passion of self-preservation when man is alone in the world is conducive to his own preservation, however, once persons are placed in proximity with each other, that same passion leads
ultimately to self destruction. The problem for Hobbes, and
presumably for individuals that might be in this
predicament, is to find a way of interrupting the chain of
events that lead from self-preservation to self-destruction.
Man is not totally lost, however, because in addition to his
passions he is endowed with the faculty of reason. Through
the use of reason he can break the inevitable link between
self-preservation and self-destruction by creating society;
and the creation of society simply involves establishing the
two conditions that were mentioned above, namely, self-
restraint and a common power to keep them all in awe.

The story, however, does not end here because Hobbes
goes on to translate the foregoing into ethical and legal
terms via the language of natural law. In this translation
the fundamental human passion of self-preservation becomes
the "Law of Nature": which is, for Hobbes,

> a Precept, or generall Rule, found out by Reason,
> by which a man is forbidden to do, that, which is
> destructive of his life, or taketh away the means
> of preserving the same; and to omit, that, by
> which he thinketh it may be best preserved.\(^\text{27}\)

In other words, the law of nature commands that man
endeavour to preserve himself.

The right of nature, on the other hand, is not the
'right of self preservation', rather, it is the right to
the means of self preservation. "The Right of Nature," in
Hobbes' terms,

> is the Liberty each man hath, to use his own
> power, as he will himselfe, for the preservation
> of his own Nature; that is to say, of his own
Life; and consequently, of doing any thing, which in his own Judgement, and Reason, he shall conceive to be the aptest means thereunto.  

Thus, in the state of nature, men are commanded to preserve themselves and they also have the liberty to acquire and use whatever means they deem necessary for their survival. Having recognized their miserable condition, they are commanded by the law of nature to do something about it because the existing state of affairs is not conducive to their own preservation. Thus, they lay down their natural right (a form of self-restraint) by concurrently transferring it to a common power. In short, the way out of an otherwise miserable condition is to create society. They are obliged to create society because the law of nature commands that they do not omit to do anything that is conducive to their preservation, and their reason tells them that society is the only solution.

By translating his otherwise social-psychological construct of the state of nature into ethical-legal terms, Hobbes succeeds in giving society and the Leviathan a dual source of moral legitimacy. On the one hand, society is good because the individual can lead a better and longer life within it. Because it contributes to self-preservation, its continued existence carries with it a degree of moral force. On the other hand, the law of nature commands, albeit indirectly, that individuals enter into society, and since society, by definition, means self-restraint in addition to the institution of the sovereign,
acts against the sovereign, again indirectly, constitute violations against natural law. However, by translating the state of nature into legal ethical terms via the language of natural law, Hobbes denies himself the possibility of making a distinction between society, on the one hand, and polity, on the other. Thus, for Hobbes, the commonwealth, or state as we prefer to call it, is society.

Reflecting on what I understand to be the essence of Hobbes' argument in part one of *Leviathan*, it appears that the state of nature is a crucial component of his theory for at least two reasons. First of all, in terms of the question of causes, it provides an account of what existence without the state would be like in order to establish a motive for establishing one. In other words, the state of nature construct might suitably provide an answer to the question: If the state did not exist, why would men be inclined to create it?

The second, and perhaps more important reason why the state of nature construct is crucial to Hobbes' theory is that it provides a suitable scenario in which he can translate the social-psychological condition of man into moral and ethical terms by employing the language of natural law. Hobbes perhaps found it difficult, as I certainly would, to introduce the concept of natural law into a pre-existing social setting. In summary, the state of nature is crucial to Hobbes' theory because, in addition to providing the basis for the creation of society, it
provided the basis for the particular kind of society he wanted to create. Thus, the rest of Hobbes' theory would remain either meaningless or unconvincing to anyone who would not, or could not, accept his state of nature construct. It is not surprising, then, that Hobbes would depart from his usual method and employ extraordinary means to convince his readers to accept the state of nature as a valid construct.

Immediately following what is perhaps Hobbes' most quoted statement—"and the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short"—he introduces his apparent analogical proof in this way:

> It may seem strange to some man, that has not well weighed these things; that nature should thus dissociate, and render men apt to invade, and destroy one another: and he may therefore, not trusting to this inference, made from the passions, desire perhaps to have the same confirmed by experience.  

Here Hobbes appears to be speaking directly to a particular group of readers who were probably sympathetic with Aristotelean doctrine; a group who felt rather comfortable with the notion that man is a 'political animal' and the belief that society is an entity which is natural in its own right. He also may have been aware that this same group of readers placed a great deal of weight on the scientific validity of their experience and observations with respect to the natural and ethical worlds. Since Hobbes anticipated that not only would his depiction of the natural condition of mankind find objections among these readers, his method of establishing the causes of such a condition would appear
entirely foreign to them. However, Hobbes may have supposed that he offered them something that they could more comfortably relate to as a 'proof' of his inference, perhaps they might just accept that crucial element of his theory.

Regardless, let us return to the above quotation for a moment and consider two important words contained within it. The words I would like to emphasize are 'inference' and 'experience'. It should also be noted that 'inference' appears to refer to the type of knowledge that Hobbes had developed in the passages preceding this paragraph; and the word 'experience' refers to the type of knowledge that will be recorded in the few passages which follow it.

What Hobbes essentially does in the following paragraphs—the last part of chapter 13—is that he describes some of his experiences and observations of the political world in terms of his logical construct. Thus he is constructing an analogy between, on the one hand, what he claims to perceive about the political world and, on the other hand, his scientific inference about the state of nature. His analogy is clearly a descriptive one in that he is in essence saying: this is what I, Thomas Hobbes, claim to perceive about the political world; and my claimed perception is similar in 'apparence' to my inference about the state of nature. In short, he is simply reporting and describing a fact—a fact which is unrelated to his theory. "The Register of Knowledge of Fact", according to Hobbes, "is called History"; and Hobbes draws a
clear distinction between history and science. Hobbes' analogy, then, can only have historical value in the twentieth century because all he has told us is that relations among sovereigns in his time appeared to be similar, but not entirely similar, to his inference about the state of nature. This historical fact, on the other hand, tells us nothing about his inference.

Nevertheless, I speculate that in his time he hoped that many of his contemporaries would draw a different conclusion by taking it upon themselves to inflate the apparent theoretical importance of his analogy because of its 'empirical' pretensions. Perhaps his contemporaries would draw the conclusion that Hobbes himself could not possibly draw without compromising his philosophy of science. Perhaps they would simply accept it as 'proof' of the validity of his theory's linchpin, namely, the state of nature. Thus, it seems that Hobbes' analogy was a rhetorical device which he offered as an apparent proof for an important juncture in his theory; a juncture which attempts to establish the causes of the commonwealth. However, the burden of proof still rests with me to demonstrate that, in view of his philosophy of science, Hobbes would have surely rejected the analogy as constituting a valid proof of his inference.

THE ANALOGY AND HOBBES' PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

Although the analogy seems to be intended as an apparent proof of his state of nature construct, the
question now, however, is whether or not Hobbes himself would have accepted it as such. If he himself would not accept it as a valid proof, but he nevertheless employed the analogy in order to influence others to accept his state of nature construct, we can perhaps safely conclude that the analogy is simply a rhetorical rather than a theoretical device. Consequently it is difficult to justify the practice of basing a 'Hobbesian' tradition upon the analogy.

The argument that the analogy does not constitute a valid proof in Hobbes' view very much rests on the strength of the distinction he makes between, on the one hand, knowledge obtained by experience (knowledge of fact) and, on the other hand, knowledge obtained by reason (knowledge of the consequences of one affirmation to another). Since the force of this distinction is crucial to my argument, it will be necessary to examine it in light of Hobbes' philosophy of science so that we can determine why he made such a distinction. What is even more important, however, is not so much the distinction itself, but rather the relationship Hobbes' method attempts to establish between both forms of knowledge. Essentially, it is inferences that are used to prove observations, according to Hobbes, and not the other way around. Once we have reflected upon the one way direction of this relationship, we should be able to conclude that there is virtually no theoretical link between, on the one hand, his observations about
relationships among sovereigns and, on the other hand, his inference about the state of nature. For there to be a theoretical link between his theory and his observations, Hobbes would have to construct a new inference which would serve to confirm the validity of his observations about sovereigns. As I shall argue in chapter two, there is much to be done before such an inference can be made.

In the meantime, however, let us consider the following remarks taken from chapter five of *Leviathan*. These remarks, I believe, capture the essence of Hobbes' philosophy of science. "Reason", Hobbes argues,

is not as Sense, and Memory, borne with us; nor gotten by Experience onely; as Prudence is; but attayned by Industry; first in 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 Syllogismes, 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 is it, men call Science. And whereas Sense and Memory are but knowledge of Fact, which is a thing past, and irrevocable; *Science* is the knowledge of consequences, and dependance of one fact upon another: by which, out of that we can presently do, we know how to do something else when we will, or the like, another time: Because when we see how any thing comes about, upon what causes, and by what manner; when the like causes come into our power, we see how to make it produce the like effects.\(^{32}\)

Although these remarks might at first seem insignificant, they nevertheless deserve some reflection because they describe the particular approach to knowledge that Hobbes adopts in *Leviathan*. I think that trying to make sense of *Leviathan* without this approach in mind can
lead to—and perhaps has led to—grave misunderstandings about what it is that he had to say. In addition, philosophy of science was not a trivial concern for Hobbes. Rather, it seems to have informed his entire approach to understanding the natural and political worlds. There is also reason to suggest that in terms of his contemporaries such as Galileo, Bacon, and Descartes, Hobbes was a philosopher of science par excellence. However, I think that the significance of Hobbes’ approach—and thus his distinction between ‘inference’ and ‘observation’—cannot fully be appreciated without a discussion about how Hobbes came to develop his philosophy.

Let us first lay the historical groundwork for his philosophy through a brief discussion of the various ‘schools’ of thought that were prevalent among Hobbes’ contemporaries. The purpose of this historical discussion is simply to assist us in gaining a better purchase on the particular philosophical problems facing Hobbes in his day. Against this background his arguments in Leviathan should become that much more clear and significant.

The three dominant philosophical orientations which prevailed during Hobbes’ time were that of Aristotelianism, skepticism, and modern natural science (for lack of a better term). Each orientation could perhaps be distinguished by their particular view on what kind of knowledge, if any, constituted valid scientific knowledge. In other words, each orientation had its own distinct answer to questions
about what it is that human beings can possibly come to know about the world external to the self, and how they can come to acquire that knowledge.

For example, the thinkers who called themselves Aristotelians tended to argue that perceptions acquired by the human senses were more or less accurate for determining the reality, and the nature of that reality, of the world external to the self. For Aristotle, "if something looks white to an ordinary healthy observer, then it is white." Thus, the Aristotelians were confident that a more or less complete body of knowledge about the external world could be compiled, and that such a body of knowledge could be acquired through human observation. In other words, for the Aristotelians, objective truths lay beyond and external to the self and those truths could be perceived through the senses. This confidence in the existence of objective truths also seemed to pervade their view of the ethical world in that "Aristotle had expressed great confidence in the universality of (roughly) the conventional moral beliefs of a middle class Athenian of his day."

However, both Aristotle in his time and the Aristotelians of the late sixteenth century were faced with a serious skeptical challenge. This new orientation emphasized the limitations of the ability of the senses to accurately perceive the real nature of the external world. From a twentieth century vantage point we do not find this assertion all that unreasonable. We learn in elementary
school, despite appearances to the contrary, that the earth is actually round. We also learn, despite our sensation to the contrary, that the earth rotates on its axis and hurtles through space at a tremendous speed. We are also quite familiar with optical illusions and the apparently 'real' impact of dreams on those nights when we awaken startled and disoriented. Considering these experiences, the skeptical argument seems to go like this: If our sense perceptions are clearly wrong in some instances, how do we know for sure that they are correct in other instances? Perhaps those senses are correct when we consider them to be wrong, and wrong when we consider them to be correct. Perhaps when we are dreaming we are in fact awake, and when we are awake we are in fact dreaming. The problem for the skeptic, then, is determining illusion from reality; and since the only means we have of doing this (the senses) are not accurate, we therefore cannot possibly know anything about the world. However, despite their pessimism about the possibility of compiling any valid body of knowledge about the external world, they still firmly believed that such a world existed and that it had a nature independent of the self.

This pessimism also carried itself into the ethical and political world which, for the skeptics and non-skeptics alike, was characterized by practices of deceit, manipulation, and intimidation, rather than by those of virtue and honour. This provided more fuel for the skeptical assault on Aristoteleanism. Paradoxically, the
doctrines born by skepticism such as cultural and moral relativism and reason of state were themselves acquired through observation of 'real' political practices. The inconsistencies inherent in skeptical arguments did not go unnoticed by theorists who held to the third philosophical orientation namely, the modern natural scientists.

The modern natural scientists were also familiar with optical illusions and the like and concluded, like the skeptics, that observation and experience on their own could not constitute the basis for valid scientific knowledge. However, they recognized one, perhaps fatal, flaw in the skeptical argument. Essentially, if the skeptics asserted that the senses were unreliable, how could they possibly conclude that any reality actually existed outside the self at all? Perhaps we simply imagine that such a reality exists. Richard Tuck expressed this new 'super-skeptical' doubt in this way:

If we can imagine a language which is complete in itself but which does not refer to any real objects (like the language which Tolkein invented to accompany Lord of the Rings), so why can we not imagine an orderly and systematic sequence of images which do not refer to anything?

In short, the modern natural scientists responded to the skeptics by demonstrating the full implications of their shared assertion that human senses are unreliable with respect to perceiving reality. The modern natural scientists, however, had an entirely different agenda in mind. They believed that a systematic and more or less complete body of knowledge was possible; a body of knowledge
that included both the natural and ethical-political realms.
At the outset they were entirely consistent in that they
were not prepared to simply accept the existence of an
external world. They believed that the reality of such a
world had to be argued into existence; a world that had to
be explained and that explanation had to be grounded on
reason and not the senses. Descartes was one of the first
theorists to attempt such an explanation.

Richard Tuck tells us that, against the Aristoteleans
and skeptics alike, Descartes argued that there "is no
reason to suppose that there are colours . . . in the real
external world at all. . . ." For that matter, "perhaps not
only colours are non-existent, but also the material objects
in which they seem to inhere."39

Having presented his doubt, Descartes goes on to argue
why the external world that we perceive must exist and that
our perceptions of that world, at least to some minimal
extent, must reflect the nature of that reality. Descartes
performs this task with basically two arguments. The
first asserts that "though there may be nothing outside, we
know there is something inside, for we have direct
experience of the interior world of colours, sounds and so
on."40 In other words, although our knowledge of the world
external to ourselves is more or less speculative, we have
absolutely compelling knowledge of what goes on inside us.
Thus we have established Descartes' famous maxim: Cogito ergo
Sum (I think therefore I am). The puzzle, however, is
whether or not this internal world reflects anything about the external world. At this point Descartes deploys his second argument which, to his own satisfaction, establishes the existence of a benevolent God. From this argument he concludes that "such a God would not mislead his favoured creation, man. What we genuinely think we perceive must therefore be more or less what is actually out there."*41

Hobbes, among others, recognized that Descartes' solution to the puzzle rested on the cogency of his particular argument for God's existence, and Hobbes felt that this argument was rather shaky. Hobbes thus set out "with characteristic intellectual self confidence" to solve the puzzle for himself.*42

Hobbes begins his argument by accepting Descartes' maxim (I think therefore I am) and, perhaps more forcefully than Descartes, he asserts that human perceptions bear no relationship of versimilitude to the external world. Accordingly, "man is effectively a prisoner within the cell of his own mind, and has no idea what in reality lies outside his prison walls."*43 In Elements of Law, Hobbes tells us that

Whatever accidents or qualities our senses make us think there be in the world, they are not there, but seemings and apparitions only . . . . And this is the great deception of sense, which also is by sense corrected. For as sense telleth me, when I see directly, that the colour seemeth to be in the object; so also sense telleth me, when I see by reflection, that colour is not in the object."*44

Tuck interprets this to mean—and I have no reason to
suppose a different interpretation—that "we have only to reflect on the implications of such things as a reflected image to realize that seeing something does not in itself give us any grounds for supposing that the thing seen is really in the place it appears to be or has the properties which we think it has."*  

At this point we are no closer to a solution to the problem of whether or not anything exists outside the self. In fact, we seem to be further away from a solution than we were at the beginning of Descartes' argument. Because of the way that Descartes poses his question, we can still detect the assumption that a real external world does exist. It seems that the problem Descartes set out to solve was simply that of making the connection between internal reality and the external world; and, as we have already seen, this connection was made by establishing the existence of a benevolent creator who could not possibly wish to deceive us. The problem that Hobbes sets out for himself, on the other hand, seems to be more fundamental and clearly focussed. In other words, he seemed to see more clearly than Descartes that before one can establish a link between the internal and external worlds—without reverting to theological speculations—one first had to clearly establish the existence of such a world. In this sense, the hyperbolical doubt that Hobbes introduced was even more skeptical than Descartes'. Hobbes' solution, perhaps because of its elegance and simplicity, is quite
fascinating.

In addition to establishing what I consider to be a more fundamental problem, Hobbes also constructs an image of the self which clearly diverges from Descartes' construct. Whereas Descartes depicted the self as a mind which was separate "from its own perceptions and witnessing these like an observer witnesses the events outside him", Hobbes insists that the self would think of him or herself "just as the train of perceptions, because he could not perceive anything (so to speak) doing the thinking . . . . The self in this sense is imaginary, simply a construct arising from our inability to conceive of thinking without a thinker to do it."^6

In addition to Hobbes' construct of the self, perhaps his greatest innovation in terms of the immediate problem at hand—-that is, determining the existence of an external world—is that Hobbes emphasizes the fact that the images we perceive are moving images. The question then becomes one of determining what it is that causes the self to have these changing images.^7

Hobbes employs three metaphysical propositions in order to answer the question of what causes moving images in the self. The first proposition is based on the 'principle of sufficient reason'—-that is, the principle that there has to be some new feature in a situation to explain some new alteration in it. The proposition simply asserts that nothing can move itself. The second proposition is that
nothing could be moved except bodies in space, and the third is that only bodies could move other bodies."

Based on these three propositions and the idea that the self experiences change in his or her perceptions, Hobbes concludes that there must be "some material object outside himself which was causing him to have the perceptions which he had." Although Hobbes' solution is elegant and simple, the very limited nature of his solution must be emphasized. Richard Tuck tells us that this is actually as far as Hobbes ever went, or intended to go. . . . Everything else -- that is, the actual character of the external world and of our relationship to it -- must remain conjectural or hypothetical, though some hypotheses are better than others.

In other words, the external world exists only through our ability to reason that it does exist; and as far as its nature is concerned, the most that we can assert is that some hypotheses are better than others. Leviathan embodies such a hypothesis about the commonwealth and its causes; whereas the causes are human passions combined with reason, the effect is society.

Since scientific knowledge, for Hobbes, is knowledge about causes and their effects, such knowledge can only remain conditional. Thus, not only does he leave room for improvement in terms of his own hypothesis about society, he actually invites it. What he does not seem to compromise, however, is the method through which such an hypothesis is
to be established because his method of establishing such knowledge is grounded in his philosophy of science. A philosophy which can perhaps be summed up by the expression: 'things are not necessarily the way they seem to be'. But Hobbes is not prepared to assert that his scientific method of establishing causes and effects through reasoning will tell us anything about the way things actually are. For Hobbes, we can never know the way things actually are; we can only advance hypotheses about the way things are and, it will be recalled, some hypotheses are better than others depending on the cogency of the reasoning. "No discourse whatsoever", according to Hobbes,

\[ \text{can End in absolute knowledge of fact, past, or to come. For as the knowledge of fact, it is originally, sense; and ever after, Memory. And for the knowledge of Consequence, which I have said before is called Science, it is not Absolute, but conditional. No man can know by discourse, that this, or that, is, has been, or will be: which is to know absolutely; but onely, if this be [then] that is; [or] if this has been [then] that has been; [or] if this shall be [then] that shall be; which is to know [something] conditionally; [and conditional knowledge does not include] the consequence of one thing to another; but [rather] of one name of a thing, to another name of the same thing.}

\[ \text{And therefore, when the Discourse is put into speech, and begins with the definitions of words, and proceeds by Connexion of the same into general affirmations, and or these again into Syllogismes; the End or last summe is called the conclusion; and the thought of the mind by it signified, is that conditional knowledge, or the knowledge of consequences of words, which is commonly called science. But if the first ground of such Discourse, be not definitions; or if the Definitions be not rightly joyned together into Syllogismes, then the End or conclusion, is again opinion ... .} \]

It should be noted that Hobbes' last sentence in this
passage can be said to refer specifically to his analogy—that is, if he intended his analogy to be some kind of conclusion or end, as he puts it. Although sovereigns in his day were actual men who were more or less unconstrained by their respective populations, they were nevertheless different from natural men. They were 'actors' who acted on behalf of their 'authors' to maintain peace and commodious living in the community. Thus, if he were to construct an inference about 'the natural condition of sovereigns' by employing the same meticulous method that he used to construct 'the natural condition of mankind', the inference would be necessarily different from the state of nature because he would have begun his inference with a definition of 'sovereign' and not of 'natural man'. In addition, as I shall argue in the next chapter, it is not clear that Hobbes satisfactorily accounted for a plurality of sovereigns in the first place. Thus, if Hobbes meant his analogy as some kind of conclusion which was inferred from basic definitions and so on, he would consider such a conclusion--in his own words--as an 'opinion' at best. However, although Hobbes' analogy could be conceived as an opinion on his part, I prefer to conceive it as a rhetorical device in view of the important influential role it seems to play in his argument; but it was nevertheless an 'opinion', by Hobbes' own criteria, which played that influential role.
CHAPTER TWO

Toward a Genuine Hobbesian Tradition

In chapter one of this essay I argued that there seems to be little justification for the current practice of ascribing Hobbes' name to the realist tradition in international thought. The current textual basis of that practice, it will be recalled, is the analogy which Hobbes used to compare his inference of the state of nature with his observations of relations among sovereigns. Although many of his contemporaries may have accepted the analogy as constituting proof of his inference, Hobbes himself certainly would not have because, for Hobbes, it is observations themselves which require proof. Hobbes' philosophy of science required that any observation be tested by inferring its causes through a rigorous process of reasoning. The proof of the inference itself is not established by the degree to which its conclusions correspond to observed phenomena; rather, its proof is established by the cogency of the reasoning used in the inference. In order to appreciate the validity of this assertion, we need only reflect on the possibility of constructing--through faulty reasoning--an inference which establishes that one's image is in a mirror.

Thus, in order to test his own observations of relationships among sovereigns, Hobbes would have had to construct an inference in the same meticulous fashion as he did to construct the commonwealth in part one. The problem,
then, for international theory—that is, any international theory which purports to be Hobbesian—is to begin
"first in apt imposing of names, and secondly by getting a good and orderly method in proceeding from the elements which are names, to assertions . . . till we come to a knowledge of all the consequences of names appertaining to the subject in hand." If such a theoretical approach were to proceed in this fashion, we at the turn of the twenty first century might have to be prepared to accept that the resulting inference of relationships among sovereign states might not necessarily be identical to Hobbes' seventeenth century observations of relationships among sovereign princes; nor do I think that Hobbes would be at all surprised if such was the case.

It seems to me that one of the first inferences that such a theory would have to make is one which establishes the causes of the plurality of states. Only after such an inference is made could we then begin to infer anything about relations among states. Although it is clear that Hobbes inferred the causes of the state, it is not entirely clear to me that he inferred a plurality of states. In other words, Hobbes' argument in part one of Leviathan gives me no reason to suppose that more than one Leviathan should emerge from the state of nature. What I am suggesting is that something has to be added to Hobbes' argument in order for such an inference to be made. If this is in fact the case, we can conclude that Hobbes' theory—as it stands—cannot
form the basis of a genuine Hobbesian tradition in international thought.

I shall begin my argument by stating the problem as I understand it. In other words, I will present my understanding of Hobbes' logical dynamic of the state of nature and indicate why I think that only one Leviathan can be inferred from it. Immediately following my statement of the problem, I shall consider two objections to my thesis. The first objection is an anticipated one and the second objection is an existing one. Whereas the anticipated objection concerns Hobbes' notion of 'defence against a common enemy', the actual objection is an argument advanced by Murray Forsyth.

(1) The Problem

The problem, as I see it, in making an inference about a plurality of states emerging from the state of nature can be stated in this way. Given that the relative nature of man—an abstract entity conceived as an otherwise complete person minus any attributes of social learning—causes a condition of war when he is placed in proximity with other similarly conceived men, and given that men are also equipped with the ability to reason, each man will determine that such a condition is not conducive to their end of self preservation. Consequently they will be driven by their basic passion to use their reason to find a way out of this predicament. In time, all reasonable persons reach the conclusion that in order to survive and
live a commodious life, they must create society. To create such an entity, however, they must do certain things. They must first undertake to restrain themselves by laying down their natural right to all things and conform to certain rules of reason which would predictably create a condition of peaceful coexistence among them. However, because they have intimate knowledge of their relative natures, they can anticipate controversial situations in which reason and self restraint, by themselves, are insufficient for maintaining social peace among them—the abortion issue, for example. Consequently, they create a Leviathan to enforce the laws of nature and to establish and enforce any other laws which may, from time to time, become necessary to coordinate and maintain an orderly and peaceful coexistence in the community—laws such as weights and measures, traffic laws, a common currency, rules of ownership, public goods, providing for the disadvantaged, dispute settling mechanisms, and so on. However, if these are the reasons why men should wish to leave the state of nature, why do they do so by establishing separate societies? Why do they not contract into one society under one global Leviathan? By contracting into separate societies, do they not only partially solve the problem for which they decided to enter society in the first place? Do they not exacerbate their original condition because what was previously small scale unorganized violence, now has the potential of becoming large scale organized violence?
Because Hobbes did not address these concerns, it remains unclear to me how Hobbes inferred a plurality of states from the state of nature.

(2) Objections

DEFENCE AGAINST A COMMON ENEMY

The notion of 'defence against a common enemy' is entirely consistent with reason and the passion of self preservation. Thus it appears as though it can be considered as an additional reason for human beings to contract into the commonwealth. It is interesting, however, that Hobbes does not introduce this idea until part two of *Leviathan*. Hobbes begins part two with a summary of his argument in part one. I must quote him at length in order to demonstrate the similarity between his summary and mine, in addition to showing that 'defence against a common enemy' is not included as one of the causes of the commonwealth.

The finall Cause, End, or Designe of men, (who naturally love Liberty, and Dominion over others,) in the introduction of that restraint upon themselves, (in which we see them live in Commonwealths,) is the foresight of their own preservation, and of a more contented life thereby; that is to say, of getting themselves out from that miserable condition of Warre, which is necessarily consequent (as hath been shewn) to the natural passions of men, when there is no visible Power to keep them in performance of their Covenants, and observation of those Lawes of Nature set down in the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters.

For the Lawes of Nature (as Justice, Equity, Modesty, Mercy, and (in summe) doing to others, as we would be done to,) of themselves, without the terrour of some power, to cause them to be observed, are contrary to our naturall Passions, that carry us to Partiality, Pride, Revenge, and
the like. And Covenants, without the Sword, are but words, and of no strength to secure a man at all. Therefore notwithstanding the Lawes of Nature, (which every one hath then kept, when he has the will to keep them, when he can do it safely,) if there be no Power erected, or not great enough for our security, every man will and may lawfully rely on his own strength and art, for caution against all other men.

Here the phrase I have emphasized is important because of its ambiguity. The words 'our security' can perhaps be interpreted to mean internal security (protecting citizens from criminal activity), external security (defence against a common enemy), or both. However, the immediate context in which he uses these words, it seems to me, clearly implies the former meaning. I think this because if an enemy commonwealth were to successfully invade the friendly commonwealth, the latter would then become a commonwealth by acquisition; in which case men would certainly not be lawfully permitted to "rely on his own strength and art, for caution against all other men".

No doubt the reader is becoming impatient with this wearisome exegesis. However, it is important to point out that Hobbes delicately shifts the meaning of 'security' during the course of the discussion immediately following his summary of part one. In short, Hobbes rather ingeniously alters the meaning by altering the context in which it is used. Whereas in part one and at the beginning of part two 'security' means domestic security, the meaning is changed to external security through the course of a few short paragraphs. This surreptitious shift in meaning
through delicately changing the context of its use led me to suspect that Hobbes himself may have been quite aware of the logical problem of inferring a plurality of states from the state of nature. Essentially, I am suggesting that Hobbes established a plurality of sovereigns through the 'apparence' of an inference rather than an actual inference.

Immediately following the passage which is quoted above, Hobbes changes the nature of his discussion—without breaking paragraph—from one which summarizes his analytical arguments to one which is quasi-historical in nature. It is through the course of this quasi-historical discussion that Hobbes changes the meaning of 'security' from domestic security to external security. In the course of the same discussion he then reintroduces the former meaning alongside the new meaning in this way:

And be there never so great a multitude . . . they can expect thereby no defence, nor protection, neither against a common enemy, nor against the injuries of one another.**

Finally, Hobbes simply discontinues using 'security' in the domestic sense. In short, it seems to me that Hobbes exploited the potential dual meaning of 'security' in order to account for the emergence of a plurality of states, rather than overcoming the potentially insoluble logical problem of inferring such a plurality. By encountering the notion of 'defence against a common enemy', we are simply led to suppose that a plurality of states has already been accounted for. Let us now consider the logical problem that I suspect Hobbes may have attempted to cover up with what
seems to be another one of his ingenious rhetorical devices.

I have already asserted that Hobbes gives us no reason to suppose that more than one sovereign should emerge from the state of nature. In fact, the emergence of more than one sovereign would seem to undermine the reasons for establishing a sovereign in the first place. However, the idea of 'defence against a common enemy' appears as though it could be a logical device which serves to generate a plurality of sovereigns. I shall argue that although the idea of a 'common enemy' presupposes the existence of several sovereigns, it cannot serve to generate them. In fact, when the idea is used in the context of the state of nature, it reinforces the emergence of only one sovereign.

It will be recalled that the state of nature is a war of all against all; a condition that follows from the idea that every man is the enemy of every other man. This latter idea, it will also be recalled, is inferred from the natural passions of man. It seems, then, that if we are to speak of a common enemy in this condition, it must be that every man is every other man's common enemy. It would of course be desirable for each man to be able to muster for himself sufficient power to defend himself against every other man; but he cannot accomplish this because every man is trying to do the same thing. One man cannot effectively subdue another because they are all more or less equally endowed with natural power. One cannot subdue another unless the other is asleep or his back is turned. Transitory, single
purpose confederacies might arise in order to exploit the goods of a single man, but these confederacies will immediately collapse as the confederates themselves quarrel over the distribution of the spoils. Thus everyone is afraid to sleep, turn their backs, or accumulate goods.

It is because of this stalemated condition of perpetual fear of the imminent threat of violent death that men use their reason to derive the laws of nature and establish a Leviathan to enforce them. Thus, they create society because the condition of life without society is intolerable. The laws of nature are universal precepts which any reasonable man ought to be able to infer as a solution to the miserable condition in addition to establishing a Leviathan to enforce them. Consequently, if all reasonable persons reach the same conclusion about the laws of nature and that a Leviathan is needed to enforce them, once they establish the Leviathan and create a commonwealth thereby, there is no further grounds for enmity among them. Of course, conflicts will arise between men within the commonwealth because of their 'difference of manners', but the Leviathan can handle these conflicts more or less effectively without disturbing social peace.

However, if we introduce a 'common enemy' as an additional reason why reasonable men would constitute a commonwealth, the only people could be the 'common enemy' would be unreasonable men. But these unreasonable men,
presumably an unorganized multitude of barbarians, could not—by definition—constitute a commonwealth. Thus, the introduction of a 'common enemy' as an additional reason for men to create a commonwealth does not change the fact that only one commonwealth would emerge from the state of nature. If anything, it reinforces the logic which generates only one commonwealth.

In short, the idea of a 'common enemy' exacerbates the problem of inferring a plurality of sovereigns from the state of nature. We simply have a situation where there are two classes of persons, namely those who are part of the commonwealth and those who choose, for whatever unimaginable reason, to remain in the state of nature. Thus, against my thesis that a plurality of sovereigns cannot be inferred from the state of nature, the anticipated objection that a 'common enemy' serves as a basis for inferring such a plurality, does not seem to be a viable one. I suspect that Hobbes recognized the logical difficulty of inferring a plurality of sovereigns and that is why he carefully and deliberately introduced the 'common enemy' as an apparent cause. Leaving this objection aside, let us now turn to Forsyth's objection.

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Since it appears that Hobbes' theory, as it stands, has not satisfactorily inferred a plurality of sovereigns, it is difficult to conclude that it can form the basis of a genuine tradition in international thought. Murray Forsyth,
however, suggests that Hobbes did account for such a plurality. Forsyth bases his argument on the notion of defensive associations which somehow spontaneously emerge in the state of nature in order to counteract the threat of a common enemy which presumably also spontaneously emerged in the state of nature. But it seems to me that this proposed solution to the problem of the emergence of a plurality of states only serves to introduce a new puzzle; namely, how does it come to pass that, in the state of nature, defence of every man against every man transforms itself into a condition of defence of group against group?

Notwithstanding this new puzzle, however, let us examine Forsyth's argument in greater detail.

Forsyth's argument has stimulated much of my thought on the question of inferring a plurality of sovereigns from Hobbes' state of nature. It is because of this that I consider his article to be a very important one. Forsyth is also interested in displacing the Hobbesian debate from one of analogies and parallels to one that attempts to illuminate the central core of his theory. "After all", Forsyth notes,

Hobbes . . . never begins his political theory with this or that particular group of men, but always with a consideration of man. Why then is the political community that emerges in his theory a body designed for common defence against foreigners? Why does not Leviathan logically embrace the whole of mankind?

Although it may appear that Forsyth's question is virtually identical to mine, there is nevertheless one very important
difference in the assumptions upon which each of our questions are based. Whereas Forsyth begins with the assumption that Hobbes’ theory is an international theory—consequently he takes on the task of demonstrating why it is so—my inquiry begins with the opposite assumption. I begin with the assertion that Leviathan does logically embrace the whole of mankind and the problem is therefore to add something to Hobbes’ theory so that it can account for the plurality of states. Whatever this new addition is, however, it cannot compromise Hobbes’ account of the state if the resulting international theory is to remain genuinely Hobbesian. It is for this reason that Forsyth’s argument is critical to whether or not I can sustain mine. Whereas Forsyth concludes that Hobbes’ theory does infer the plurality of sovereigns, I conclude that it does not do so.

There are essentially two independent parts to Forsyth’s argument. Although each part represents a separate argument, they nevertheless direct us toward the same conclusion that Hobbes’ theory does satisfactorily account for the plurality of sovereigns. The first part of the argument is based on Elements of Law and De Cive, and the second part is based on Leviathan. I shall limit my discussion to Forsyth’s second argument which is based on his interpretation of Leviathan.

I think that the key to Forsyth’s argument is the particular way that he envisions the state of nature. Although Forsyth clearly accepts that it is an abstract
construct, he seems to view it in terms of an historical era. That is, he views it as a certain block of time encompassing a sequence of events. Thus, for Forsyth, the state of nature was an imaginary time when all men lived in a state of war. As time passed during this imaginary era, men began to form a series of defensive unions. Although these men were capable of forming alliances when the era began, being equipped with reason and their passion for self preservation, they nevertheless did not do so at first. However, after a while these men began to recognize the instability of these defensive unions and they established Leviathans in order to maintain peace and commodious living within the particular communities. Once these communities were 'perfected' by the institution of Leviathans, the era of the state of nature came to an end. Thus, for Forsyth, it is the threat of a common enemy which first molds men into groups, but it is the desire for peace and commodious living within the particular groups that leads men to lay down their right to all, to determine the laws of nature, and finally, to establish a Leviathan.

It seems to me that such an interpretation of the sequence of events in the state of nature—that is, if it can be viewed as a kind of abstract era—must presuppose an inherent human attribute of social bonding, at least in the first instance. It also seems that Hobbes would surely reject such a suggestion because society, in that case, would be a natural entity rather than a creation of reason.
and the passion for self-preservation. Hobbes' philosophy of science was particularly directed against such Aristotelean notions.

It is interesting that Forsyth would conceive the state of nature as a kind of quasi-historical sequence of events in addition to adopting Hobbes' 'common enemy' device. This suggests to me that Forsyth may have been inadvertently steered off course amidst Hobbes' smoke screen at the beginning of part two of *Leviathan*. Regardless, even if Hobbes' state of nature could be conceived in such a way, I would still have difficulties with accepting Forsyth's argument.

In terms of conceptions of Hobbes' state of nature, I think that it is important to distinguish, on the one hand, the natural state of man and, on the other hand, the condition which would ensue if all these natural men were placed in proximity with each other. The state of nature can be conceived of as an attempt by Hobbes to answer the question: what would it be like if there were men but no society? Since no one has ever experienced 'no society', the answer to the question would obviously have to be an imagined one. The first step in imagining such a condition would be to imagine what man would be like if he had somehow managed to reach biological maturity without any social contact or social learning. The description of such a creature would thus be conceived as the natural state of man; that is, a single minded bundle of passions directed
exclusively to the end of his own self-preservation; and anything he came into contact with would simply be a means to his end as far as he was concerned. The inference about 'what it would be like without society' or, 'the state of nature', simply imagines these men placed in proximity with other men.

In addition to the question, 'what would it be like without society?', Hobbes attempts to answer another question, namely, 'what would men do about it if there were no society?'. To this question he simply offers the reply that they would create it. This reply, it seems, demonstrates a great deal of optimism, rather than pessimism, about human nature. However, the question that I do not think Hobbes answers is: Why do men create separate societies?

Forsyth, on the other hand, by conceiving the state of nature as a kind of quasi-historical era, argues that Hobbes does answer the question concerning the creation of several societies. Forsyth's conception of the 'natural state of man' is virtually identical to mine in that he conceives man as naturally endowed with reason and is thus capable of creating society, but he conceives the first event in his sequence of events as one in which men form discreet groups on the basis of friend and enemy. By definition man already knows who his enemies are—that is, all other men—but what criteria does this natural man use to determine who his friends are? We know how he maintains this distinction
after the commonwealth is formed, but how does man create the distinction, let alone maintain it, before commonwealths are formed? This, I believe, is the puzzle that Forsyth creates by virtue of his apparent solution. There seems to be no way of determining how it comes to pass that mutual enemies become mutual friends within the constraints of Hobbes' conception of the characteristics of natural man; at least not while they exist in a state of nature.

There is no question that, during his discussion of the state of nature, Hobbes makes reference to others coming "prepared with forces united, to disposse, and deprive him, not only of the fruit of his labour, but also of his life, or liberty", but this "confederacy" cannot, by definition, be anything but a purely situational and exploitative act by a multitude of passers-by who just happen to have the same objective in mind. In other words, a multitude of men see what they want (which happens to be the fruit of one man's labour), and they simply endeavor to take it for themselves (as they have a natural right to do). But Hobbes himself indicates that this single act of many would itself degenerate into a battle over the spoils; that is, "the invader again is in the like danger of another." In addition, this small exploitative force of maybe ten or twenty men could hardly form the basis of a commonwealth as Hobbes conceived it.

Thus, Forsyth's solution does not seem to be a solution after all and, if my argument is correct, my thesis remains
intact. But Forsyth does succeed, however, in narrowing the scope of the problem of inferring a plurality of states. I suspect that whatever the characteristic is that must be added to Hobbes' conception of natural man in order to be able to infer a plurality of states, it must have something to do with an inherent ability to distinguish friend from potential foe. And this characteristic, I believe, would put Hobbes dangerously close, if not within, the conception of man as a social creature by nature. The resulting formulation, it seems, would constitute a rather interesting 'paradox of the passions'; whereas man's selfish passions lead him to create a universal society, his more altruistic passions (if they exist) would lead him to create particular and distinct societies. In order to appreciate the kernel of truth in such a formulation, we need only reflect on the similarity between 'altruism' and 'dying for one's country'.
CONCLUSION

I began this discussion with the question of whether or not there is an Hobbesian tradition in international thought. It will be recalled that I answered 'no' to this question and proceeded to argue why I thought this was the case. Having established to my satisfaction that the current 'Hobbesian tradition' is based on a rhetorical rather than a theoretical device. I then proceeded to demonstrate that a genuine Hobbesian approach, as I understand it, has difficulty inferring the causes of a plurality of sovereigns, let alone relations among them.

These findings, it will be recalled, caused great disappointment rather than satisfaction on my part because I had hoped that a genuine Hobbesian tradition in international thought might provide insight and answers to the larger question of why human beings choose to organize themselves into separate political communities. I sensed that the answer to this question might provide some kind of basis for discussions about international justice and even for discussions about domestic concerns such as the appropriate divisions of power in federal societies. In addition, I felt that if I had some idea, in the abstract, as to why human beings choose distinct political communities, I might be able to get a better handle on concepts such as 'self determination' and its ultimate consequence of 'secession'.

Although examining Leviathan in terms of its potential
contribution to international theory has not provided me with any conclusive answers to my concerns, the exercise may have provided me with some idea of what might be the right questions to ask. In one sense Hobbes does provide a solution to the problem. Essentially, he equips human beings with the faculty of reason and because of this faculty they can simply choose to create separate societies out of the state of nature. He does not, however, provide a solution in another sense, that is, why would they choose to do so?
On this assumption I am aligned with Hobbes rather than Aristotle. Aristotle felt that human beings were political or social animals whereas Hobbes insisted that social or anti-social existence was a matter of choice. He argued, however, that social existence was much more conducive to self preservation despite the sacrifice of one’s right to whatever means that were deemed necessary for self preservation. Thus, the political community is a product of human artifice. I shall return to this point in due course.

Of course there are many 'common sense' reasons why one global state would be inconceivable: reasons such as language, culture, history, and pure geographical limitations. The reasons I am looking for, however, are those which would apply independently of the aforementioned reasons. In other words, if were to assume linguistic, cultural, and historical homogeneity, and if we were to take into consideration the capabilities of modern transportation and telecommunications technology, it still seems that there might be reasons for human beings to organize themselves into separate political communities. Hobbes approach, it seems, is perhaps one way of determining those non-common sense reasons.


Vincent 91 - 101.


Wight 17.

Wight 30 - 31.

Wight 31.

Vincent 91.

Vincent 93.
It should be noted that Richard Tuck does not seem to make a clear distinction between the law of nature as an *obligation* to preserve oneself and the right of nature as the right to the *means* of self preservation. Because he refers to natural right as the 'right of self preservation' rather than as the 'right to the *means* of self preservation', he concludes rather awkwardly that by 'right of nature' Hobbes implies that if we wish to preserve ourselves, we *must* do something. However, this element of obligation that Tuck perceives in Hobbes 'right of nature' might be better conceived as stemming from Hobbes' law of nature.

Richard Tuck notes that "in many ways Hobbes's philosophy is closer to the assumptions on which modern science rests than any of the competing philosophies on offer in the seventeenth century. It shared with
Descartes's the stress on the need to think of the real world as essentially different from how we experience it, and this stress has been characteristic of the most important achievements of the physical sciences -- beginning with Galileo pointing out that the experience of someone on the earth itself could not determine whether the earth was rotating, and ending with the utterly unimaginable postulates of modern theoretical physics about the objects which really make up the material universe. But, unlike Descartes, Hobbes was able to make sense of a material world outside our minds without bringing in elaborate theological postulates, which fits the secular cast of mind of many modern scientists. It should be said, however, that Hobbes (despite his own pleas) has rarely been seen as the key theoretician of modern science. . . . Seventeenth and eighteenth-century scientists in fact disowned the one truly secular philosophy of science on offer to them, preferring instead the elaborate theological speculations in which Newton indulged. In this respect, Hobbes's theory of science represented an exploration of intellectual possibilities which were not to be opened up again for another two hundred years. Richard Tuck, *Hobbes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) 50.

34 The following discussion is a boiled down version of Richard Tuck's. Tuck 6 - 10, 13 - 17.

35 Tuck 9.

36 Tuck 9.

37 Tuck 7.

38 Tuck 17.

39 Tuck 16 - 17.

40 Tuck 17.

41 Tuck 17.

42 Tuck 18.

43 Tuck 40.


45 Tuck 41.

46 Tuck 43.

47 Tuck 44.

48 Tuck 44 - 45. Although these propositions may seem
entirely plausible, they are currently being challenged by the incredulous findings of quantum mechanics. "What Quantum theory seems to challenge is nothing less than the whole concept of continuity in nature. Words like cause and effect appear to lose their meaning. One speaks of motion but no longer dares to imagine a continuous path. The very functioning of reality on its ultimate level seems reduced to a cosmic dice game, everything is subject to the whims of chance." Robert H. March, Physics for Poets 2nd ed., (New York: McGraw Hill, 1978) 212 - 213. Although these new hypotheses tend to undermine Hobbes' basic propositions, the point is that not only did Hobbes' philosophy of science invite such new hypotheses, but embodied a way of thinking about the world that is crucial for the development of such hypotheses.

49 Tuck 45.
50 Tuck 45.
51 Hobbes 131.
52 Hobbes 217 - 222.
53 Hobbes 115.
55 Hobbes 224.

57 Forsyth 196.

58 I have adopted the perhaps plausible assumption that Leviathan was Hobbes' most mature work. However, not having studied Elements of Law or DeCive, I obviously cannot be certain of this, nor can I challenge Forsyth's arguments in the first part of his essay.

59 Hobbes 184.
60 Hobbes 184.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


