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HOBBES AND THE TRAGEDY OF DEMOCRACY¹

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Introduction

One of the more interesting new developments within recent Hobbes scholarship is that effort to locate within the Hobbesian civil science the conceptual foundation for a variety of distinct modern understandings of democratic life. Although scholars have argued for a long time that Hobbes can be seen as prefiguring, participating in, or stimulating the development of the modern liberal tradition³, and that despite his preference for the monarchical sovereign form, this form remains nonetheless grounded in an affirmation of democratic will⁴, newer interpretations suggest that Hobbes can be seen as

¹ My thanks to Iain Hampsher-Monk and two anonymous reviewers at *History of Political Thought* for providing thoughtful commentary on the manuscript. An earlier version of the paper was presented at the 2019 meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, and I would like to thank the attendees of my panel for their engagement. Research for the project of which this paper is a part was supported by a Singapore Ministry of Education AcRF Tier 1 Grant.

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³ See, for example, Richard Ashcraft, "Hobbes's Natural Man: A Study in Ideology Formation," *The Journal of Politics*, 33.4 (1971), pp. 1111–17; Theodore Waldman, "Hobbes on the Generation of a Public Person," in *Thomas Hobbes in His Time*, ed. Ralph Ross, Herbert W. Schneider, and Theodore Waldman (Minneapolis, 1974), pp. 77–79; Frank M. Coleman, *Hobbes and America: Exploring the Constitutional Foundations* (Toronto, 1977); George Mace, *Locke, Hobbes, and the Federalist Papers* (Carbondale, 1979); Robert P. Kraynak, "Hobbes's *Behemoth* and the Argument for Absolutism," *American Political Science Review* 76.4 (1982), p. 847; Gregory S. Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory* (Princeton, 1986); David van Mill, *Liberty, Rationality, and Agency in Hobbes* (Albany, 2001); Vickie B. Sullivan, *Machiavelli, Hobbes, & the Formation of a Liberal Republicanism in England* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 105; Lucien Jaume, "Hobbes and the Philosophical Sources of Liberalism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes's Leviathan*, ed. Patricia Springborg (Cambridge, pp. 181–98); Noel Malcolm, "Thomas Hobbes: Liberal Illiberal," *Journal of the British Academy*, 4 (2016), pp. 113–36.

⁴ See, for example, Howard Warrender, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: His Theory of Obligation* (Oxford, 1957), p. 111; J.W.N. Watkins, *Hobbes's System of Ideas* (London, 1965), p. 43; Michel Villey, "Le droit de l'individu chez Hobbes," in *Hobbes-Forschungen*, ed. Reinhart Koselleck and Roman Schnur (Berlin, 1969), p. 188; A.P. Martinich, "Hobbes's Reply to

contributing more substantive content to various robust, normative conceptions of democracy. These readings range from interpreting Hobbes as theorizing a modern interest-based type of “protective democracy;”⁵ to a “duly chastened democratic politics” in which government is institutionally moderated so as to maximize the scope of the individual pursuit of the good;⁶ to a more logically consistent form of representative democracy, as a specifically corporate representation of the commonwealth as opposed to a representation of individual subjects;⁷ to the modern democratic separation of government from the administration of government;⁸ to anti-liberal, post-Marxist democracy;⁹ to the radically democratic affirmation of anti- or counter-sovereign politics.¹⁰

In this paper I do not want to argue that Hobbes can be interpreted, however creatively, as an advocate of democratic rule. He clearly was not.¹¹

Republicanism,” *Rivista di storia della filosofia*, 59.1 (2004), p. 228; Peter J. Steinberger, “Hobbes, Rousseau, and the Modern Conception of the State,” *The Journal of Politics*, 70.3 (2008), p. 603.

⁵ Gian Franco Borrelli, “Hobbes e la teoria moderna della democrazia rappresentanza assoluta e scambio politico,” *Trimestre*, 24.3-4 (1991), pp. 243–63.

⁶ Richard E. Flathman, *Thomas Hobbes: Skepticism, Individuality, and Chastened Politics* (Lanham, 2002), p. 170.

⁷ David Runciman, “Hobbes’s Theory of Representation: Anti-Democratic or Proto-Democratic?,” in *Political Representation*, ed. Ian Shapiro et al. (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 15–34.

⁸ Richard Tuck, “Hobbes and Democracy,” in *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, ed. Annabel Brett, James Tully, and Holly Hamilton-Bleakley (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 171–90; Richard Tuck, *The Sleeping Sovereign: The Invention of Modern Democracy* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 91–94.

⁹ Paul Downes, *Hobbes, Sovereignty, and Early American Literature* (Cambridge, 2015).

¹⁰ James Martel, *Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat* (New York, 2007); Patrick Craig, “Jacques Rancière, Thomas Hobbes, and a Politics of the Part That Has No Part,” *Theory & Event*, 18.1 (2015); Patrick T. Giamario, “The Laughing Body Politic: The Counter-Sovereign Politics of Hobbes’s Theory of Laughter,” *Political Research Quarterly*, 69.2 (2016), pp. 309–19.

¹¹ For various accounts of Hobbes’s critique of democracy see Leo Strauss, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: Its Basis and Genesis* (Chicago, 1952), 59–60; Alan Apperley, “Hobbes on Democracy,” *Politics*, 19.3 (1999), pp. 165–71; Flathman, *Thomas Hobbes*, pp. 135–42; Tomaž Mastnak, “Godly Democracy,” in *Hobbes’s Behemoth: Religion and Democracy*, ed. Tomaž Mastnak (Exeter, 2009), pp. 210–40; Kinch Hoekstra, “A Lion in the House: Hobbes and Democracy,” in *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, ed. Annabel Brett, James Tully, and Holly Hamilton-Bleakley (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 191–218; William Lund, “Neither ‘Behemoth’ nor ‘Leviathan’: Explaining Hobbes’s Liberal Politics,” in *Hobbes and Behemoth: Religion and Democracy*, ed. Tomaž Mastnak (Exeter, 2009), pp. 288–91; Mikko

That said, Hobbes was nevertheless an outstanding anatomist of democracy, even if at first glance the democratic configuration appears to be relatively under-theorized in his work.¹² Despite this under-theorization of democracy as a sovereign form, Hobbes has a clear understanding of its mechanics, and more notably of the ontological conditions that render it a human potential. I argue that it is his comprehension of these fundamental conditions of democracy, and the consequences that follow from them, which allows him to grasp it as an inherently tragic political regime, our recognition of this permitting us to further contextualize his effort to discredit democracy relative to its sovereign counterparts, in particular monarchy.

The tragic character of democracy emerges from the fact that the historical world is one of nondetermination. This is not to say that it is a world of indetermination, of the general emergence of phenomena lacking causal origins, but rather that the world is perpetually open to the generation of new determinations, and this because it lacks a transcendent ground that structures its being in a teleological way. The basis of the institution of society are individuals themselves, there existing no extra-social source exterior to the instituting political community – be it God, natural law or right, laws of history, and so on – that gives the community its social norms. Democracy, regardless of its specific institutional configuration, is then the form of society in which all individuals participate in those legislative activities looking

Jakonen, "Needed But Unwanted: Thomas Hobbes's Warnings on the Dangers of Multitude, Populism and Democracy," *Las Torres de Lucca*, 9 (2016), pp. 89–118; Daniel J. Kapust, "The Problem of Flattery and Hobbes's Institutional Defense of Monarchy," *The Journal of Politics*, 73.3 (2011), pp. 680–91.

¹² Larry May, for example, writes that "Hobbes is generally so focused on monarchy that he fails to heed his own remarks about how this is only one of three main forms of government." Larry May, *Limiting Leviathan: Hobbes on Law and International Affairs* (Oxford, 2013), p. 165.

toward the generation of the rules by which they live. Democracy depends on the lucid recognition of the capacity of the people of society to collectively institute and reinstitute the complex of laws governing their lives in common, independently of reference to external sources that would structure or regulate said institution or reinstitution. Any limitation on instituting power, and such limitation is essential for stable collective life, must thus be a self-limitation. The problem is that there is no guarantee that the people will practice such self-limitation, and indeed, as we will see, Hobbes argues that the very nature of deliberation in democratic assemblies tends to militate against this. The people, understanding their unconstrained power to institute in a world lacking natural constraints on their legislative self-activity, are prone to hubris.¹³ There are innumerable things that the people as sovereign should not do, and yet their hubris may lead them to do such things anyway. It is precisely this capacity for hubris on the part of the people, the fact that they can do anything to the degree that their action is not constrained by a fundamental and higher law, that so worries Hobbes.

In the first section of the paper I outline Hobbes's recognition of the first ontological condition for the affirmation of democratic potentiality: the openness of the world to creative human reinstitution that is unconstrained by external standards or norms that would circumscribe the scope of political self-activity. In the second section I outline Hobbes's thoughts on the second

¹³ I deploy the language of Cornelius Castoriadis in characterizing democracy in terms of tragedy, self-limitation, and hubris. Castoriadis writes, for example, that "In a democracy, the people *can* do anything – and must know that they *must not* do anything. Democracy is the regime of self-limitation; it is thus also the regime of historical risk – which is another way of saying that it is the regime of freedom – and a tragic regime." Cornelius Castoriadis, "La polis grecque et la création de la démocratie," in *Domaines de l'homme: les carrefours du labyrinthe*, 2 (Paris, 1986), p. 371.

condition of democracy: a specific type of human equality that legitimates equal participation in legislative modes. Hobbesian equality speaks not to a literal identity of interests, traits, or desires, but rather a formal capacity for natural reason. It is not an equality in identity, but rather a nominalist equality in difference, always distinct individuals having the equal capacity to articulate the specificity of their good and the potential modes for the latter's actualization. Based on this fact of equality Hobbes rejects all specific titles to govern, each individual being as qualified as any other to participate in legislative processes. Lastly, in the third part of the paper I demonstrate why Hobbes's perception of these two conditions of democracy does not generate for him a normative ground for the defence of democratic life, but rather leads him to reject it on the basis of its inherently unstable and tragic being.

I

Genuine democracy depends in the first place on the openness of the world to its creative reorganization, independently of foundational schemata that would delimit the range of the human capacity to institute the norms that regulate social life. Hobbes's natural philosophy articulates this openness through its account of the perpetual motion of the always singular objects of the world, which exist in a complex web of mutual determination that forecloses the possibility of the systematization of natural movement. Speaking to the empirical world's lack of teleological direction, Thomas Spragens writes that "It has no order, no structure, no end or limitation. It is endless, aimless

motion.”¹⁴ Hence the common characterization of Hobbes’s as an “*antifoundational project*.”¹⁵ The lack of a foundational ground structuring the motion of natural objects renders the production of a comprehensive philosophy of being an impossibility. This fact is often overlooked by readers, who presume that Hobbes has totalizing pretensions to generate a systematic philosophy accounting for the movement of the whole of natural and civic life.¹⁶ As he himself maintains on many occasions, however, there remain innumerable facts of existence, beyond merely those immediately pertaining to the sphere of the divine, which we can never hope to acquire complete knowledge of. Most simply, natural philosophy cannot aspire to the level of certainty that fields such as geometry and civil philosophy may.¹⁷ Because geometry, politics, and ethics work with elements that we construct ourselves, they allow for an a priori demonstration and thus a precision wholly lacking in the study of natural objects, whose being always eludes us in the final instance.¹⁸ Hence Hobbes’s account of the truth of the proposition as being hypothetical as opposed to categorical in form, the former adhering not in demonstration of the being of the object, but in the demonstration of the logical

¹⁴ Thomas A. Spragens, *The Politics of Motion: The World of Thomas Hobbes* (Lexington, 1973), p. 63. On the lack of a divine or transcendent source that directs natural motion see also Michael Bray, “The Hedges That Are Set: Hobbes and the Future of Politics,” *Epoché: A Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 11.1 (2006), pp. 174–75; Timothy Stanton, “Hobbes and Locke on Natural Law and Jesus Christ,” *History of Political Thought*, 29.1 (2008), p. 71.

¹⁵ Joshua Mitchell, “Hobbes and the Equality of All,” *Political Theory*, 21.1 (1993), pp. 78–100.

¹⁶ For example, Gabriella Slomp writes that “Hobbes had a plan: to offer a philosophical system that explained everything from cosmology and natural science to morality and politics.” Gabriella Slomp, “The Politics of Motion and the Motion of Politics,” in *International Political Theory after Hobbes: Analysis, Interpretation and Orientation*, ed. Raia Prokhovnik and Gabriella Slomp (Basingstoke, 2000), p. 21.

¹⁷ Donald W. Hanson, “Science, Prudence, and Folly in Hobbes’s Political Theory,” *Political Theory*, 21.4 (1993), pp. 646–47.

¹⁸ Thomas Hobbes, “On Man,” in *Man and Citizen (De Homine and De Cive)*, trans. Charles T. Wood, T.S.K. Scott-Craig, and Bernard Gert (Indianapolis, 1991), pp. 41–42.

ordering of words.¹⁹ Our capacity to order words should not deceive us into thinking we possess an equivalent capacity to order nature, causally outlining the various determinations structuring the being of things: “we must take heed that we do not think, that as names, so the diversities of things themselves may be searched out and determined by such distinctions as these.”²⁰

The impossibility of systematically thematizing the contours of the world, thus generating a closed order of natural being that could direct and regulate our lives, is perhaps most clearly articulated in Hobbes’s concept of contingency. Hobbes understands the category of contingency as the conceptual representation, not of the manifestation of phenomena lacking causal determination, but rather of the lack of knowledge of such determination: “For by contingent, men do not mean that by which hath no cause, but which hath not for cause any thing which we perceive.”²¹ Clearly the lack of knowledge of the form of relation between cause and effect is no legitimate ground upon which to declare that no such cause exists. This, however, is the error of many natural philosophers in the Aristotelian tradition: “And in many occasions they put for cause of Naturall events, their own Ignorance; but disguised in other words: As when they say, Fortune is the cause of things contingent; that is, of things whereof they know no cause.”²² In

¹⁹ Thomas Hobbes, *Thomas White’s De Mundo Examined*, trans. Harold Whitmore Jones (London, 1976), XXVI.2, p. 305.

²⁰ Thomas Hobbes, “Elements of Philosophy. The First Section, Concerning Body,” in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Volume One*, ed. Sir William Molesworth (London, 1839), 2.16, p. 27. On the specificity of those methods that depend upon the voluntary construction of definitions, and the inapplicability of such methods to the study of natural bodies, see also Hobbes, *Thomas White’s De Mundo Examined*, 22.1.

²¹ Thomas Hobbes, “The Questions Concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance,” in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Volume Five*, ed. Sir William Molesworth (London, 1841), p. 222.

²² Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Three: The English and Latin Texts (ii)*, ed. Noel Malcolm (Oxford, 2012), XLVI, p. 1088.

Of Liberty and Necessity Hobbes specifies that every event is necessarily determined by a confluence of causes: “*That which I say necessitateth and determinateth every action...is the sum of all things, which being now existent, conduce and concur to the production of that action hereafter, whereof if any one thing now, were wanting, the effect could not be produced.*”²³ That said, this confluence is not linearly ordered such as to be open to codification by an observing mind, but is rather a complex web of a multiplicity of causes that potentially overdetermine the production of the phenomenon. Hence Hobbes writes, “Nor does the *concourse of all causes* make one simple *chain* or concatenation, but an innumerable number of chains; joined together, not in all parts but in the first link God Almighty; and consequently the whole cause of an event, doth not always depend on one single chain, but on many together.”²⁴ In the *Anti-White* Hobbes ultimately concludes that we must give up the false hope of ever achieving a complete systematization of the operation of the natural world, one that would allow for the isolation and identification of all necessary or entire causes, thereby generating a comprehensive explanatory framework that could grant us rational mastery of our shared environment.²⁵ In this sense, “Hobbes’s determinism is so complex as to not be determinable.”²⁶

This natural complexity characterized by the intertwined motion of innumerable bodies is only further complicated by the particulars of human

²³ Thomas Hobbes, “Of Liberty and Necessity: A Treatise, Wherein All Controversy Concerning Predestination, Election, Free-Will, Grace, Merits, Reprobation, &c Is Fully Decided and Cleared,” in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Volume Four*, ed. Sir William Molesworth (London, 1840), p. 246.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 246–47.

²⁵ Hobbes, *Thomas White’s De Mundo Examined*, XXIV.1, p. 277.

²⁶ Samantha Frost, *Lessons from a Materialist Thinker: Hobbesian Reflections on Ethics and Politics* (Stanford, 2008), p. 84. For a reading of Hobbes that attempts to draw democratic conclusions from the complexity and interdependence of causal orders, see Diego A. Fernández Peychaux, “The Multitude in the Mirror: Hobbes on Power, Rhetoric, and Materialism,” *Theory & Event*, 21.3 (2018), pp. 652–72.

sense-perception. Any one human organism is as singular as any other body, it not being possible to abstract from this one common properties identifiable within all human beings in order to generate some universal conception of human beingness.²⁷ The radical difference between particular individuals grounds Hobbes's much-debated nominalism. I agree with those readers who argue that this nominalism is not restricted only to certain domains of existence, that is, moral, political, and religious ones, with the objects of the natural world capable of being identically organized by subjects through a process of conceptual subsumption objectively grounded in perceivable resemblances, which generate within all subjects similar motions.²⁸ We know that for Hobbes the ground of human conception is sensuous perception, during which the motion of an object external to the organism is impressed on one or more of this organism's sense organs, producing an internal counter-

²⁷ Thomas Hobbes, *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic*, ed. Ferdinand Tönnies (London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co., 1889), I.5.6, p. 20; Hobbes, "Elements of Philosophy. The First Section, Concerning Body," 5.8, p. 60; Hobbes, *Thomas White's De Mundo Examined*, II.6, p. 6; Hobbes, "The Questions Concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance," pp. 62–63. On the lack of a universal human essence in Hobbes's philosophy see J.W.N. Watkins, "Philosophy and Politics in Hobbes," in *Hobbes Studies*, ed. K.C. Brown (Oxford, 1965), pp. 254–55; Fred Dallmayr, "Hobbes and Existentialism: Some Affinities," *The Journal of Politics*, 31.3 (1969), p. 619; Paul J. Johnson, "Hobbes and the Wolf-Man," in *Thomas Hobbes: His View of Man*, ed. J.G. van der Bend (Amsterdam, 1982), p. 44; Bernard Willms, "Liberty as *Conditio Humana*," in *Thomas Hobbes: His View of Man*, ed. J.G. van der Bend (Amsterdam, 1982), p. 103; Andrzej Rapaczynski, *Nature and Politics: Liberalism in the Philosophies of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau* (Ithaca, 1987), p. 49; Bernard Gert, "Hobbes's Psychology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes*, ed. Tom Sorell (Cambridge, 1996), p. 164.

²⁸ On Hobbes's radical nominalism see, for example, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Philosophical Papers and Letters*, ed. and trans. Leroy E. Loemker (Dordrecht, 1989), p. 128; Watkins, *Hobbes's System of Ideas*, p. 103; Kerry H. Whiteside, "Hobbes's Ultranominalist Critique of Natural Right," *Polity*, 20.3 (1988), pp. 457–78; Andrew Lister, "Skepticism and Pluralism in Thomas Hobbes's Political Thought," *History of Political Thought*, 29.1 (1998), pp. 49–50; Gordon Hull, "Hobbes's Radical Nominalism," *Epoché: A Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 11.1 (2006), pp. 201–23. For the view that Hobbes's nominalism adheres only with respect to moral concepts as opposed to those corresponding to natural objects, if at all, see F.S. McNeilly, *The Anatomy of Leviathan* (London, 1968), p. 89; Gary Remer, "Hobbes, the Rhetorical Tradition, and Toleration," *The Review of Politics*, 54.1 (1992), pp. 18–19; Bernard Gert, "Hobbes on Language, Metaphysics, and Epistemology," *Hobbes Studies*, 14.1 (2001), pp. 40–58; Noel Malcolm, "Hobbes's Science of Politics and His Theory of Science," in *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford, 2002), p. 152; Philip Pettit, *Made with Words: Hobbes on Language, Mind, and Politics* (Princeton, 2008), p. 40.

impression manifesting as a “*seeming, or fancy,*” which we call sense.²⁹ The external motion of objects is imaginatively marked through the production of various types of images, the latter of course being not reproductions of the qualities of the things themselves, but fantasies of the motion of the object acting upon the senses. Sensation is hence not direct representation, no quality internal to the object resembling the quality generated by the internal motion. As Hobbes writes, “Perception is therefore a motion in the inner parts of the person perceiving, and is brought about by the motion of the object acting on the sensorium.”³⁰

The persistence of the image created by the motion of the object after the latter’s removal from the sense organs constitutes imagination, which we are able to transform into understanding in a unique way through our capacity to organize our conceptions in speech, which Hobbes calls “the most noble and profitable invention” of humanity.³¹ Speech is used to articulate our mental discourse, thereby converting this latter succession of one thought to another into an order of words that recalls and communicates our conceptions. Although Hobbes identifies four grounds upon which names may be generated, the radical singularity of both the objects of the world and the subjects of sense perception necessitates a non-identity of linguistic reference, common names lacking an objective basis for the conceptual subsumption of different objects, which individuals in any case appropriate uniquely as a result of the variance of bodily constitution and education.³² The inconstancy of signification is thus

²⁹ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, ed. Noel Malcolm (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2012), I, p. 22.

³⁰ Hobbes, *Thomas White’s De Mundo Examined*, XXX.3, p. 364.

³¹ Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, IV, p. 48.

³² In *De homine* Hobbes famously identifies six potential sources for specific human inclinations or dispositions toward particular objects: the constitution of the body, and in

largely rooted in the diversity of individual beings: “The names of such things as affect us, that is, which please, and displease us, because all men be not alike affected with the same thing, nor the same man at all times, are in the common discourses of men, of *inconstant signification*.”³³ Given the diversity of perception, there can be no expectation of a commonality of naming arising naturally: “For seeing all names are imposed to signifie our conceptions; and all our affections are but conceptions; when we conceive the same things differently, we can hardly avoid different naming of them. For though the nature of that we conceive, be the same; yet the diversity of our reception of it, in respect of different constitutions of body, and prejudices of opinion, gives every thing a tincture of our different passions.”³⁴

We can thus see how, given Hobbes’s identification of the radical singularity of individual minds, the qualities generated by these minds as a result of the impression of the motion of external objects upon sensoria must of necessity be highly differentiated. He hence writes that “it is apparent enough, that the smell and taste of the same thing, are not the same to every man, and therefore are not in the thing smelt or tasted, but in the men.”³⁵ This diversity in modes of subjective perception is further intensified as a result of the variable movement of the objects of the world: “body or *materia prima* can be changed, and its parts moved in innumerable ways; and by means of motions of this sort it can arouse innumerable fantasies in the minds of percipient

particular variation in the movement of the imagination (which importantly is itself not biologically fixed but subject to alteration); experience; habit; good fortune; self-opinion; and the influence of authorities. Hobbes, “On Man,” pp. 63–67.

³³ Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, IV, p. 62.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Hobbes, *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic*, I.2.9, p. 7.

creatures, i.e. numerous kinds of images.”³⁶ There is not, in other words, any stable object whose fixity would allow individuals to perceive it identically, even if they were structurally inclined to via the possession of a shared sensorium. We also see how from the diversity of conceptions of things, grounded in the singularity of sense-perception, there is generated a diversity of names, one object producing multiple conceptions and names, and the same conceptions and names being deployed in relation to differing objects.³⁷ Hence in the final instance, we understand lastly Hobbes’s judgement on social conflict as being grounded in the inevitable diversity of experience and judgment, and his contention that the fixing of words must therefore remain a necessary and fundamental sovereign right.³⁸

The fact of human difference, of the lack of a natural homogeneity between sensuous beings, forecloses the possibility of establishing a harmonious social existence grounded in the coalescence of human interest or desire.³⁹ For Hobbes there are no natural principles that ground human sociality. Indeed, the presumption of such a ground is characteristic of those

³⁶ Hobbes, *Thomas White’s De Mundo Examined*, VII.4, p. 81.

³⁷ It is nevertheless important to note that each individual does not privately name, but rather those names that achieve common assent are integrated into the order of words and passed down through the generations via instruction. Hobbes, “On Man,” p. 38. The meanings handed down to us, however, come from a variety of sources given the above, and hence the common confusion and equivocation we often see with respect to meaning.

³⁸ Hobbes, *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic*, II.1.10, p. 112; Thomas Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, ed. and trans. Richard Tuck and Michael Silverthorne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), VI.9, p. 79; Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, XVIII, p. 272. On the extent to which Hobbes’s project may be interpreted in terms of overcoming difference through stabilizing the linguistic order of things, thereby generating a fixed standard of comprehension, see, for example, Dorothea Krook, “Thomas Hobbes’s Doctrine of Meaning and Truth,” *Philosophy*, 31.116 (1956), pp. 3–22; Frederick G. Whelan, “Language and Its Abuses in Hobbes’s Political Philosophy,” *American Political Science Review*, 75.1 (1981), pp. 59–75; Terence Ball, “Hobbes’s Linguistic Term,” *Polity*, 17.4 (1985), pp. 739–76; Kenneth Minogue, “From Precision to Peace: Hobbes and Political Language,” *Hobbes Studies*, 3.1 (1990), pp. 75–88; Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought* (Princeton, 2004), pp. 231–32; Gordon Hull, *Hobbes and the Making of Modern Political Thought* (London, 2009), p. 114.

³⁹ Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, III.9, p. 48.

whom Hobbes labels the *dogmatici*, “they that take up maxims from their education, and from the authority of men, or of custom, and take the habitual discourse of the tongue for ratiocination.”⁴⁰ Traditional moral philosophy proceeds dogmatically, asserting certain abstract ethical principles as natural and grounding subsequent reasoning in such baseless opinions, be they those of human nature, natural law, or so on. The extreme diversity of forms of past and existing societies, however, is an obvious fact. Although civil laws exist to give a voice to the natural law imperative that looks toward the preservation of the safety of the people, natural law itself is incapable of specifying the positive legal conditions that would affirm this end. There is no natural standard for society that emanates from the structure of the world, no substantive content, for example, generated by natural law that might concretely orient our lives in common. As Hobbes famously writes, “*Theft, Murder, Adultery* and all *wrongs* are forbidden by the laws of nature, but what is to count as a *theft* on the part of a citizen or as *murder* or *adultery* or a *wrongful act* is to be determined by the *civil*, not the *natural, law*.”⁴¹ The laws of nature are incapable of functioning as such a ground to the degree that on Hobbes’s account they are, beyond the concern with self-preservation, empty of substantive content, the latter becoming invested within them only through the institution of civil law.⁴² Positive law is thus generated independently of reference to substantive natural conceptions that exist prior to them. Human

⁴⁰ Hobbes, *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic*, I.13.4, p. 67.

⁴¹ Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, VI.16, p. 86.

⁴² See especially Norberto Bobbio, “Natural Law and Civil Law in the Political Philosophy of Hobbes,” in *Thomas Hobbes and the Natural Law Tradition*, ed. Daniela Gobetti (Chicago, 1993), pp. 114–48; Norberto Bobbio, “Hobbes and Natural Law Theory,” in *Thomas Hobbes and the Natural Law Tradition*, ed. Daniela Gobetti (Chicago, 1993), pp. 149–71.

beings, in other words, have sole responsibility for instituting the laws that structure their lives in common.

In *De cive* Hobbes clarifies that to maintain that human beings are not naturally directed to life in civil society is not to maintain that they are not naturally inclined to sociality: “*I am not therefore denying that we seek each other’s company at the prompting of nature. But civil Societies are not mere gatherings; they are Alliances, which essentially require good faith and agreement for their making.*”⁴³ Hobbes wants simply to specify that we cannot delineate in advance some foundational law of laws governing the nature of human association or sociality, which takes a variety of different forms and is achieved through a variety of different modes, the nature of association being structured by the particular motivations of the associating agents, who are always in possession of different desires, inclinations, interests, and so on. Hobbes thus writes, “Closer observation of the causes why men seek each other’s company and enjoy associating with each other, will easily reach the conclusion that it does not happen because by nature it could be otherwise, but by chance.”⁴⁴ As Hobbes notes as early as his discourse on Tacitus, “The first form of any government in any State is accidental.”⁴⁵ The accidental origins of the emergence of commonwealths ensures that they cannot be finitely organized on any categorical list, no matter how exhaustive: “The variety of Bodies Politique, is almost infinite: for they are not onely distinguished by the several affaires, for which they are constituted, wherein there is an unspeakable diversitie, but also by the times, places, and numbers, subject to many

⁴³ Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, I.2, p. 24.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Thomas Hobbes, “A Discourse on the Beginning of Tacitus,” in *Three Discourses*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds and Arlene W. Saxonhouse (Chicago, 1995), p. 31.

limitations.”⁴⁶ This diversity is a reflection of the fact that human beings themselves have responsibility for determining the form of the commonwealth and the structure of its positive laws, independently of any necessary external constraints that would delimit the political potential germinating within the specific social-historical situation.⁴⁷

II

The ontological openness of the world to creative human reinstitution via legislative activity is certainly a condition for democratic self-activity, yet it cannot in-itself function as a normative basis for the affirmation of democracy. The latter depends most especially on a demonstration of an equal capacity on the part of all citizens to competently contribute to the formulation of decisions regarding the orientation of the political community. It therefore necessitates a rejection of all titles to govern grounded in the possession of unique knowledge, skill, faculty, and so on. It is precisely such a movement that we find in Hobbes’s account of natural human equality, which is often mistakenly reduced to the equal capacity to kill – or the equal vulnerability to being killed – which Hobbes says is simply one manifestation of a more general equality irreducible to this fact.⁴⁸ As A.P. Martinich notes, however, most readers have a difficult time taking this account seriously, he himself suggesting that “One might well think that Hobbes is joking. Surely, he knew that there are great

⁴⁶ Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, XXII, p. 358.

⁴⁷ Many readers of Hobbes thus emphasize the extent to which the latter’s project presupposes and affirms a unique human capacity for artifice. See, for example, Anthony K. Kronman, “The Concept of an Author and the Unity of the Commonwealth in Hobbes’s *Leviathan*,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 18.2 (1980), pp. 159–75; William Sacksteder, “Hobbes: Man the Maker,” in *Thomas Hobbes: His View of Man*, ed. J.G. van der Bend (Amsterdam, 1982), pp. 77–88; Amos Funkenstein, *Theology and the Scientific Imagination: From the Middle Ages to the Seventeenth Century* (Princeton, 1986), pp. 334–35; Hull, *Hobbes and the Making of Modern Political Thought*, p. 20.

⁴⁸ Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, I.3, p. 26.

differences in intelligence.”⁴⁹ Hobbes for his own part contends that if certain individuals are scandalized by the thought of human equality, finding it implausible or even inconceivable, such results only from their own overestimation of their faculties in relation to others. Incredulity at the idea of equality “is but a vain concept of ones owne wisdom, which almost all men think have in a greater degree, than the Vulgar.”⁵⁰ More significantly, however, I think that the rejection of the sincerity of Hobbesian equality results from not fully appreciating its specificity, and in particular its relation to Hobbes’s nominalism as glossed in the previous section.

In his questioning of the literalness of the Hobbesian positing of equality, Kinch Hoekstra argues that Hobbes himself specifies that individuals remain naturally unequal in all four aspects of human nature that he discusses – strength of body, experience, reason, and passion – and that his affirmation of equality must be read only in terms of a conventional acknowledgement of equal respect as a precondition for the establishment of civil peace. In the final instance “Hobbesian equality is not ultimately physical or metaphysical, but

⁴⁹ A.P. Martinich, *Hobbes* (New York, 2005), p. 65. For similar rejections of the sincerity of the presentation of equality in Hobbes, see Gary B. Herbert, “Thomas Hobbes’s Counterfeit Equality,” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 14.3 (1973), pp. 269–83; Paul A. Rahe, *Republics Ancient & Modern, Volume II: New Modes and Orders in Early Modern Political Thought* (Chapel Hill, 1994), pp. 150–51; A.P. Martinich, *Hobbes: A Biography* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 144–45; Art Vanden Houten, “Prudence in Hobbes’s Political Philosophy,” *History of Political Thought*, 33.1 (2002), pp. 278–79; Leon Howard Craig, *The Platonian Leviathan* (Toronto, 2010), pp. 418–27; Ioannis Evrigenis, *Images of Anarchy: The Rhetoric and Science in Hobbes’s State of Nature* (Cambridge, 2014), p. 234. For readings that take seriously Hobbes’s pronouncements regarding natural equality see Martin A. Bertman, “Equality in Hobbes, with Reference to Aristotle,” *The Review of Politics*, 38.4 (1976), pp. 534–44; Joel Kidder, “Acknowledgements of Equals: Hobbes’s Ninth Law of Nature,” *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 33.131 (1983), pp. 133–46; Gayne Nerney, “The Hobbesian Argument for Human Equality,” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 24.4 (1986), pp. 561–76; van Mill, *Liberty, Rationality, and Agency in Hobbes*, p. 161; Flathman, *Thomas Hobbes: Skepticism, Individuality, and Chastened Politics*, p. 80; Hull, *Hobbes and the Making of Modern Political Thought*, p. 31; Julie E. Cooper, “Vainglory, Modesty, and Political Agency in the Political Theory of Thomas Hobbes,” *The Review of Politics*, 72.2 (2010), pp. 241–69; Eleanor Curran, “Hobbes on Equality: Context, Rhetoric, Argument,” *Hobbes Studies*, 25.2 (2012), pp. 166–87.

⁵⁰ Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, XIII, p. 188.

political.”⁵¹ Literally the best we can do is assert the “truism that those who have substantially equal natures (being of the same age, education, etc.) are naturally substantially equal.”⁵² Hoekstra’s idea of ontological equality as presupposing an ideal of a literal equality of capacities or traits seems to me to be misguided, however. It is clear that human nature cannot be reduced to the possession of a set of universal properties or faculties given the fact of human difference as was detailed above. Differing life-histories or experiences, the variability of the passions, and so on, do not constitute inequality, for equality is irreducible to identity, the latter being an ontological impossibility.⁵³ Hobbes is not theorizing an equality in identity, but an equality in difference, each individual being equally capable of deploying natural reason for the sake of the articulation of highly specific goods, and the modes through which these goods are most likely to be actualized. Equality is not a conceptual representation of the generalized possession of equivalent traits, characteristics, or passions, but rather of the universal formal capacity to reason about objects, the interest in of which is structured by necessarily particular traits, characteristics, and passions.

In *De cive* Hobbes is explicit that the differentiation of individual desire, and the particularity of goods and evils that results from such differentiation, is not in tension with the affirmation of equality.⁵⁴ As I have suggested, this is precisely because Hobbes understands natural equality as

⁵¹ Kinch Hoekstra, “Hobbesian Equality,” in *Hobbes Today: Insights for the 21st Century*, ed. S.A. Lloyd (Cambridge, 2013), p. 112. See also Alan Ryan, “Hobbes’s Political Philosophy,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes*, ed. Tom Sorell (Cambridge, 1996), p. 217.

⁵² Hoekstra, “Hobbesian Equality,” p. 100.

⁵³ This characterization of equality – not as a conceptual representation of identity but as a nominalistic equality that is expressed in difference – is recognized by Andrzej Rapaczynski: “Far from being the unifying bond among men, equality is, for Hobbes, the most important dividing principle.” Rapaczynski, *Nature and Politics*, p. 51.

⁵⁴ Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, I.7, p. 27.

expressed through the equal potential to reason about difference, that is, to deploy natural reason to outline as far as possible (given the contingency of the world) the various dimensions of the relation between the consequent and its manifold antecedents. Hence Hobbes begins *De corpore* by noting that “every man brought Philosophy, that is, Natural Reason, into the world with him”.⁵⁵ The problem is simply that this germinal capacity for natural reason has not been properly cultivated, such that for many individuals complex reckonings have a tendency to lose their way for lack of instructed method. Hence the ultimate aim of Hobbes’s philosophical project: “my purpose is, as far forth as I am able, to lay open the few and first Elements of Philosophy in general, as so many seeds from which pure and true Philosophy may hereafter spring up little by little.”⁵⁶

If the basic principles of moral philosophy, for example – whose final object is the only genuinely universal human good, the extension and affirmation of life itself⁵⁷ – are not generally known, such is not a failure of natural intelligence, but of pedagogy, the failure of a society to adequately educate and socialize its members.⁵⁸ Even if reason is not a natural faculty that one immediately possesses or does not possess, it is a natural potential shared by all, which may be equally actualized through industry: “For all men reason alike, and well, when they have good principles.”⁵⁹ The rational principles upon which the commonwealth is constructed, for example, can be grasped

⁵⁵ Hobbes, “Elements of Philosophy. The First Section, Concerning Body,” 1.1, p. 1.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.1, p. 2.

⁵⁷ On this point see, for example, Dallmayr, “Hobbes and Existentialism: Some Affinities,” p. 625; Francis Edward Devine, “Hobbes: The Theoretical Basis of Political Compromise,” *Polity*, 5.1 (1972), p. 66; Noel Malcolm, “Hobbes and Spinoza,” in *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford, 2002), pp. 31–32.

⁵⁸ Hobbes, “Elements of Philosophy. The First Section, Concerning Body,” 1.7, p. 8.

⁵⁹ Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, V, p. 72.

adequately by any person, understanding being a matter of will and interest, blocked typically not by cognitive deficiency but by external factors that interrupt or delay this will and interest, such as lack of reading, or leisure, or desire.⁶⁰ In the final instance “few are those who cannot be taught,”⁶¹ and hence the sovereign imperative to so provide the people with proper instruction and education in relevant matters of civil science.⁶²

In his debate with Bramhall Hobbes is explicit that the universal capacity to reason from definition is the basis for the recognition of the general ability of all individuals to excel in a wide variety of spheres of human activity. Hobbes reproaches Bramhall for his contention that the common people are incapable of grasping the meaning of words such as “*empty* and *body*,” replying in fact that “yes, but they do, just as well as learned men.”⁶³ All individuals are capable of mastering such definitions, and from them participating in reason, a capacity that is only further augmented through exposure to productive educating forces: “A man is born with a capacity after due time and experience to reason truly; to which capacity of nature, if there be added no discipline at all, yet as far as he reasoneth he will reason truly; though by a right discipline he may reason truly in *more numerous and various matters*.”⁶⁴ This idea of universal natural reason as the foundation for excellence in a wide variety of social roles and functions is elaborated on in *A Dialogue between a Philosopher and a Student of the Common Law of England*, where Hobbes again contends that if individuals are not born with

⁶⁰ Thomas Hobbes, *Behemoth, or the Long Parliament*, ed. Paul Seaward (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2010), pp. 158–59.

⁶¹ Hobbes, “On Man,” p. 52.

⁶² Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, XXX, p. 524.

⁶³ Hobbes, “The Questions Concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance,” p. 398.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* Emphasis added.

reason, each and every one has the potential to acquire as proficient a use of it as those who are too often taken to be uniquely rational: “Though it be true, that no man is born with the use of reason, yet all men grow up to it as well as lawyers; and when they applied their reason to the laws, (which were laws before they studied them, or else it was not law they studied), may be as fit for and capable of judicature, as Sir Edward Coke himself, who whether he had more or less use of reason, was not thereby a judge, but because the King made him so.”⁶⁵ There thus exists no natural reason predisposing particular individuals to excellence in technical fields such as law or government.

Hobbes specifies in *Leviathan* that it is no doubt true that one can be worthy of a position or office in the sense of being fit or able to perform the range of tasks associated with it. There is no movement, however, from the recognition of this worthiness to the affirmation of an entitlement grounded in it: “WORTHINESSE, is a thing different from the worth, or value of a man; and also from his merit, or desert; and consisteth in a particular power, or ability for that, whereof he is said to be worthy: which particular ability, is usually named FITNESSSE, or *Aptitude*.”⁶⁶ Individuals themselves have no inherent worth or value that would merit possession of a thing, which emerges only where one has a right to it, this right itself presupposing a social relationship whereby access is granted via promise. There is thus no natural inequality between individuals sufficient to sanction a unique title to govern: “The question, which is the better man, is determinable only in the estate of government and policy, though it be mistaken for a question of nature, not only

⁶⁵ Thomas Hobbes, “A Dialogue between a Philosopher and a Student of the Common Laws of England,” in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Volume Six*, ed. Sir William Molesworth (London, 1840), p. 14.

⁶⁶ Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, X, p. 148.

by ignorant men, that think one man's blood better than another's by nature; but also by him, whose opinions are at this day, and in these parts of greater authority than any other human writings (Aristotle). For he putteth so much difference between the powers of men by nature, that he doubteth not to set down, as the ground of all politics, that some men are by nature worthy to govern, and others by nature ought to serve."⁶⁷ There is simply no substantive qualification for holding sovereign office, beyond the title to govern generated through the act of institution, and hence Hobbes's non-concern about any particular characteristics or traits – be they moral, technical, or otherwise – that an occupier of sovereign office should possess.⁶⁸

The general capacity of all individuals to deploy reason in order to participate in affairs of government is specifically affirmed by Hobbes in an important passage in Chapter 8 of *Leviathan*, in which he simultaneously dissociates the question of equality from the substantive variability that might emerge from differing trajectories of desire. He notes firstly that even differences in what we consider to be *natural* as opposed to acquired intellectual virtues are irreducible to a biologically predetermined inequality of capacity: "By Naturall, I mean not, that which a man hath from his Birth; for

⁶⁷ Hobbes, *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic*, I.17.1, p. 87-88. See also Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, III.13, p. 49; Hobbes, "On Man," pp. 65–66; Hobbes, *Behemoth*, pp. 141–42. On Hobbes's rejection of the principle that the right to rule may be grounded in superior reason to the extent that there is a general inequality of intelligences, see Strauss, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes*, pp. 158–59; M.M. Goldsmith, *Hobbes's Science of Politics* (New York, 1966), p. 148; Harvey C. Mansfield, "Hobbes and the Science of Indirect Government," *American Political Science Review*, 65.1 (1971), p. 100; Coleman, *Hobbes and America*, p. 59; Mace, *Locke, Hobbes, and the Federalist Papers*, p. 33; Nerney, "The Hobbesian Argument for Human Equality"; Jean Hampton, *Hobbes and the Social Contract Tradition* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 24–26; Don Herzog, *Happy Slaves: A Critique of Consent Theory* (Chicago, 1989), pp. 87–88; Geoffrey M. Vaughan, *Behemoth Teaches Leviathan: Thomas Hobbes on Political Education* (Lanham, 2002), p. 34; David Runciman, "The Sovereign," in *The Oxford Handbook of Hobbes*, ed. A.P. Martinich and Kinch Hoekstra (Oxford, 2016), p. 359.

⁶⁸ Sheldon Wolin, "Hobbes and the Epic Tradition," in *Fugitive Democracy and Other Essays*, by Sheldon Wolin, ed. Nicholas Xenos (Princeton, 2016), p. 133.

that is nothing else but Sense; wherein men differ so little one from another, and from brute Beasts, as it is not to be reckoned amongst Vertues.”⁶⁹ This particular form of good wit, on the contrary, is a faculty gained and refined through practice and experience, though, unlike acquired wit, “without Method, Culture, or Instruction.”⁷⁰ Although we observe differences in wit, such are manifestations of differences in passion, themselves derived from differences in bodily constitution and education: “The causes of this difference of Witts, are in the Passions: and the difference of Passions, proceedeth partly from the different Constitution of the body, and partly from different Education. For if the difference proceeded from the temper of the brain, and the organs of Sense, either exterior or interior, there would be no lesse difference of men in their Sight, Hearing, or other Senses, than in their Fancies, and Discretions. It proceeds therefore from the Passions; which are different, not onely from the difference of mens complexions; but also from their difference of customes, and education.”⁷¹ In any case, however, when we are discussing the question of equality with respect to political competency, it is not wit that is most relevant but rather that which must moderate it so as to provide the former with a stable order: judgment. Unlike in cases of wit or fancy, Hobbes maintains that we do not observe great degrees of difference with respect to individuals’ judgment. This is the foundation, furthermore, as was noted above, of general aptitude in a wide variety of activities in all human spheres, which possess not their own specific capacities or techniques, including that of government: “To govern well a family, and a kingdome, are

⁶⁹ Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, VIII, p. 104.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, XIII, p. 110.

not different degrees of Prudence; but different sorts of businesse; no more than to draw a picture in little, or as great, or greater than the life, are different degrees of Art. A plain husband-man is more Prudent in affaires of his own house, then a privy Counsellor in the affaires of another man.”⁷²

Now, it is no doubt true that all individuals, regardless of learning or intellect, are subject to err in various ways.⁷³ We already know that chronic errors of judgement on the part of the people are not manifestations of a lack of natural reason, but rather manifestations of a lack of instruction in proper method. Hobbes now goes even further in specifying the social source of such lack, identifying the latter as a manifestation of the people’s corruption by arrogant or insolent elites, or those who would position themselves as elites.⁷⁴ Hence, for example, A’s refutation in *Behemoth* of the notion that the behaviour of the people during the civil war was a result of a deficiency in reason that militated against them grasping the necessary outlines of the main principles of civil science: “Your calling the People silly things obliged me by this digression to shew you, that it is not want of wit, but want of the Science of Justice, that brought them into these troubles....They wanted not Wit, but the

⁷² Ibid., XIII, p. 108.

⁷³ Hobbes, “A Dialogue between a Philosopher and a Student of the Common Laws of England,” p. 99; Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, V, p. 66. As Hoekstra notes, all humankind is “highly prone” to error. Kinch Hoekstra, “Disarming the Prophets: Thomas Hobbes and Predictive Power,” *Rivista di storia della filosofia*, 59.1 (2004), p. 630.

⁷⁴ Hobbes, “A Dialogue between a Philosopher and a Student of the Common Laws of England,” p. 19; Hobbes, *Behemoth*, p. 108. For statements on Hobbes’s disdain for aristocratic and political elites, and the extent to which they are primarily responsible for civil discord, see Ashcraft, “Hobbes’s Natural Man,” pp. 51–52; Deborah Baumgold, “Hobbes’s Political Sensibility: The Menace of Political Ambition,” in *Thomas Hobbes and Political Theory*, ed. Mary Dietz (Lawrence, 1990), pp. 74–90; Hanson, “Science, Prudence, and Folly in Hobbes’s Political Theory,” p. 654; Fritz Levy, “The Background of Hobbes’s *Behemoth*,” in *The Historical Imagination in Early Modern Britain: History, Rhetoric, and Fiction, 1500-1800*, ed. Donald R. Kelley and David Harris Sacks (Cambridge, 1997), p. 246; Gabriella Slomp, *Thomas Hobbes and the Political Philosophy of Glory* (Basingstoke, 2000), p. 38; Ingrid Crepell, “The Democratic Element in Hobbes’s ‘Behemoth,’” in *Hobbes’s Behemoth: Religion and Democracy*, ed. Tomaž Mastnak (Exeter, 2009), pp. 241–68.

knowledge of the Causes and Grounds vpon which one person has a Right to Gouverne, and the rest an Obligation to Obey.”⁷⁵ A goes on to demonstrate, in fact, that the common people, through the very performance of their own various social roles and functions, demonstrate that they do possess a natural wit, even if in political things they were deceived by the Rump: “Persuade if you can that man that has made his fortune, or made it greater, or an Eloquent Orator, or a rauishing Poet, or a subtile Lawyer, or but a good Hunter, or a cunning Gamester, that he has not a good Wit.”⁷⁶ Once again, intellectual competencies are revealed in manifold modes.

To summarize to this point: I have suggested that various of Hobbes’s reflections on the being of the world and the being of the human can be seen as affirming the ontological conditions for the normative defence of democratic life. Firstly, the natural world lacks a transcendent structure that would delimit our capacity to institute the laws by which we live. Secondly, the motion of the objects of the world is so complex and variable so as to close off the potential for a thematization of natural movement, and in particular a thematization of individual desire. Thirdly, this desire is highly differentiated given the particularity of all human organisms, and the lack of a universal human essence that could establish a sociality rooted in a natural homogeneity. Fourthly, despite this radical human difference, human beings are fundamentally equal with respect to the potential capacity to exercise that formal reason which is the foundation for all human self-activity. Democracy would thus be that form of regime which institutionalizes debate or deliberation between always distinct people with always distinct goods, who

⁷⁵ Hobbes, *Behemoth*, pp. 323–24.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 323.

nevertheless have an equal capacity to articulate their good and the means to achieve it. Given the constantly fluctuating being of the world, however, and the constantly fluctuating orientation of human desire, it is never possible to determinately fix the structure of the society: it is not possible to organize a permanent political configuration of things based on a reconciliation of human interest. Interest is constantly being formed and reformed as a result of the flux of desire, thus ensuring a perpetual need for democratic deliberation. It is the consequences that follow from this conception of democracy, which Hobbes understands perfectly well, that so trouble him, and motivate him to attempt to delegitimize the ethical priority of democracy that seems to logically follow from the facts detailed.⁷⁷

III

As is well-known, it being one manifestation of the non-foundational character of Hobbes's political thought, there exists no external power with the authority to limit the scope of the sovereign right to legislate. Indeed, Hobbes identifies as one of the sources of the dissolution of the commonwealth the erroneous belief that the sovereign may be subject to civil law, for if such was the case these laws must have their own author and judge with the power to punish the sovereign, and who would thereby be the actual sovereign, this same logic applying to the new sovereign ad infinitum: "For to be subject to Lawes, is to be subject to the Common-wealth, that is to the Sovereign Representative, that

⁷⁷ Deborah Baumgold notes that Hobbes was well aware of the fact that it was possible to affirm democracy on nominalist grounds. Deborah Baumgold, *Hobbes's Political Theory* (Cambridge, 1988), p. 42. Hence his own effort to deploy nominalism in order to foreclose the possibility of any sort of principle of sovereign accountability. Deborah Baumgold, "When Hobbes Needed History," in *Contract Theory in Historical Context: Essays on Grotius, Hobbes, and Locke* (Leiden, 2010), p. 60.

is to himselfe; which is not subjection, but freedome from the Lawes.”⁷⁸ What Hobbes is pointing out is simply the lack of an exterior source of law that could limit the political self-activity of the instituting power. There is no such source, and hence the sovereign capacity to perpetually make and remake law: “The Sovereign of a Common-wealth, be it an Assembly, or one Man, is not Subject to the Civill Lawes. For having power to make, and repeale Lawes, he may when he pleaseth, free himself from that subjection, by repealing those Lawes that trouble him, and making of new; and consequently he was free before. For he is free, that can be free when he will: Nor is it possible for any person to be bound to himselfe; because he that can bind, can release; and therefore he that is bound to himselfe onely, is not bound.”⁷⁹

Given the lack of an extra-social source that could intervene so as to limit or orient legislative capacity, sovereign authority is necessarily absolute. Such applies to democracy as much as any other sovereign form.⁸⁰ The hatred of the language of absolutism in politics has led many individuals to fail to grasp that democratic assemblies are just as absolute an authority as any other governmental arrangement, they being just as unlimited by external powers. Hence Hobbes’s example of some such individuals who, in order to avoid absolutism, constructed a city in which citizens convene in order to deliberate on legal articles, determine punishments for the violation of laws created, appoint ministers to assume necessary offices, and yet maintain authority to redistribute magistrates as they deem fit. As Hobbes asks, “Who does not see

⁷⁸ Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, XXIX, p. 504.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, XXVI, p. 416.

⁸⁰ For a contribution that specifies that for Hobbes democracy as an absolute regime is incapable of being constrained by transcendent standards, see Francis Edward Devine, “Absolute Democracy or Indefeasible Right: Hobbes Versus Locke,” *The Journal of Politics*, 37.3 (1975), pp. 736–68.

that in a commonwealth so organized, the group which gave these instructions had *absolute power*?”⁸¹ Now, although all sovereign forms are absolute, Hobbes maintains that the social consequences that arise as a result of the specificity of the mode of configuration of the sovereign representative vary significantly. Although in a discussion of the always latent possibility of a sovereign despoiling or oppressing its subjects Hobbes concedes that the absolute form of sovereignty means that “*human affairs can never be without some inconvenience*”⁸², in general he stubbornly maintains that that there is neither example of nor reason for a sovereign monarch to violate his or her people.⁸³ A monarch, in other words, in the face of the abyssal character of the world, will and can place limits on him or herself. Such, however, is very much not the case with respect to assemblies, and in particular with respect to democratic assemblies. Although there are not distinctions to be made between forms of commonwealth on the basis of the structure of sovereign power, there are with respect to the “Convenience, or Aptitude to produce the Peace, and Security of the people.”⁸⁴ In detailing the mode of operation of deliberative procedures in large assemblies Hobbes highlights the inherently tragic form of democratic determination.

The “inconvenience” that arises naturally in any commonwealth, given the immanent source of civil law, is intensified in democracy as a result of the hubris of the individuals who collectively comprise the instituting power. Indeed, the recognition of the hubristic character of the democratic person

⁸¹ Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, VI.17, p. 87.

⁸² Hobbes, VI.13, p. 84. See also Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, XVIII, p. 282.

⁸³ Hobbes, “A Dialogue between a Philosopher and a Student of the Common Laws of England,” pp. 11, 33–34; Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, VI.13, p. 83; Hobbes, *Behemoth*, p. 174.

⁸⁴ Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, XIX, p. 288. For the basis of Hobbes’s preference for monarchy see *Ibid.*, XIX, pp. 288–94.

formed a major component of Hobbes's critique of democracy as early as his Thucydides translation. Hobbes here characterizes the Athenian people, for example, in terms of their perception of their own power and ability, they opining that they possessed "the facility of achieving whatsoever action they undertook."⁸⁵ This perception stimulated not the recognition of the need for prudential moderation in their action, but rather resulted in an increasing affirmation of risk. Those who advocated caution in their reasoning were marginalized, the people supporting citizens who proposed "the most dangerous and desperate reckonings."⁸⁶ In the end, "it came to pass amongst the Athenians, who thought they *were able to do anything*, that wicked men and flatterers drove them headlong into those actions that were to ruin them; and the good men either durst not oppose, or if they did, undid themselves."⁸⁷

Hobbes's implication of flattery in the stimulation of the hubristic imprudence of the people points toward the specific role that the mechanics of democratic deliberation plays in this process. For Hobbes the place of rhetoric in democratic decision-making renders assemblies inherently impulsive: "Impudence in Democraticall assemblies...does almost all that's done, 'tis the Goddess of Rhetorick, and carries prooffe with it."⁸⁸ In democratic assemblies decision-making is generally the productive result of a process of persuasion, in which participants deploy eloquence in an effort to win partisans to their particular opinion, the concern with achieving genuine knowledge through ratiocination being lost in this subjective dynamic: "however much reasoning

⁸⁵ Thomas Hobbes, "Of the Life and History of Thucydides," in *The History of Thucydides, The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, Volume Eight*, ed. Sir William Molesworth (London, 1839), p. xvi.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* My emphasis.

⁸⁸ Hobbes, *Behemoth*, p. 196.

they put into it, they do not begin from true principles but from ἐνδόξοις, i.e. from commonly accepted opinions, which are for the most part usually false, and they do not try to make their discourse correspond to the nature of things but to the passions of men's hearts. The result is that votes are cast not on the basis of correct reasoning but on emotional impulse.”⁸⁹ This form of eloquence is distinguished from its reputable counterpart, which “is a lucid and elegant exponent of thought and conceptions, which arises partly from observation of things and partly from an understanding of words taken in their proper meanings as defined.”⁹⁰ On the contrary, it is “an agitator of the passions,” metaphorical speech being deployed to inflame the urges of the hearers such that the opinions propagated are affirmed independently of reasoned consideration.⁹¹ Whereas the former mode is an art of logic, the latter is that of rhetoric, which stirs up the people and produces disorder and sedition.

Hobbes's association of the democratic inflammation of the passions via rhetoric with madness in these passages is particularly revealing. In *Leviathan* Hobbes defines madness as “to have stronger, and more vehement Passions for any thing, than is ordinarily seen in others.”⁹² Madness, this “too much appearing Passion,”⁹³ produces within the subject of madness “strange and unusuall behaviour,”⁹⁴ the symptoms of which most closely resemble the effects that alcohol has on the body. The lowering of inhibitions allows the passions to externalize themselves independently of moderation: “For the variety of behaviour in men that have drunk too much, is the same with that of

⁸⁹ Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, X.11, p. 123.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, XII.12, p. 139.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, VIII, p. 110.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, VIII, p. 114.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

Mad-men: some of them Raging, others Loving, others Laughing, all extravagantly, but according to their severall domineering Passions: For the effect of the wind, does but remove Dissimulation; and take from them the sight of the Deformity of their Passions.”⁹⁵ The surplus of passion that is madness thus takes a multiplicity of forms depending on the particular passion that is expelled, this surplus itself being determined by a variety of sources: “Sometimes the extraordinary and extravagant Passion, proceedeth from the evill constitution of the organs of the Body, or harme done them; and sometimes the hurt, and indisposition of the Organs, is caused by the vehemence, or long continuance of the Passion. But in both causes the Madnesse is of one and the same nature.”⁹⁶ In detailing madness as an incapacity to moderate or place limits on passion, Hobbes explicitly associates it with democratic politics. The excesses of democracy are conceptually related to the excesses of passion characteristic of madness, Hobbes suggesting that democracy is in fact the mad regime. He writes of the constitution of the democratic assembly by particular individuals in the following way: “when many of them conspire together, the Rage of the whole multitude is visible enough. For what argument of Madnesse can there be greater than to clamour, strike, and throw stones at our best friends? Yet this is somewhat lesse than such a multitude will do. For they will clamour, fight against, and destroy those, by whom all their life-time before, they have been protected, and secured from injury. And if this be Madnesse in the multitude, it is the same in every particular man.”⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid., VIII, p. 112.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

Madness is thus an interruption of reason, the actualization of the latter being blocked as a result of the expulsion of a surplus of passion. This surplus does not, however, have a biological root, for as we have seen differences in the organization of passion have their foundation in various contingent social facts, such as differing modes of education and life trajectories. Madness and rationality are intrinsic potentialities that the individual bears within him or herself simultaneously. Hence Hobbes's characterization of emotions in *De homine* as "*perturbations* of the mind" that interfere with the exercise of rational faculties, as opposed to operate without impediment as a result of the lack of the latter.⁹⁸ Mónica Brito Vieira is thus correct to point out the extent to which madmen, unlike natural fools, do not lack a capacity for reasoning, but are rather those who are overwhelmed by their passions so as to distort the material of ratiocination: "madmen appear in Hobbes's texts, not as men deprived intellectual faculties, but rather as those who, by the violence of their passions, or any other such disturbance, take their fancies for truth, and make what are often the right inferences from distorted first premises."⁹⁹ Democratic modes of political self-organization are presented by Hobbes as precisely one of those sources that tend to reconfigure the relationship between passion and reason, the amplification of the former that results from the structure of deliberation militating against the consistent and stable exercise of the latter. Specifically, if all individuals are subject to the vicissitudes of their affects and passions, in assemblies this defect manifests itself with a greater intensity than in a monarchy given 1) the multiplication of the number of inherently

⁹⁸ Hobbes, "On Man," p. 55.

⁹⁹ Mónica Brito Vieira, *The Elements of Representation in Hobbes: Aesthetics, Theatre, Law, and Theology in the Construction of Hobbes's Theory of the State* (Leiden, 2009), p. 79.

passionate individuals occupying sovereign office, and 2) the tendency of passion to be further stimulated as a result of the confrontation of individual opinions expressed through eloquence: “For the Passions of men, which asunder are moderate, as the heat of one brand; in Assembly are like many brands, that enflame one another, (especially when they blow one another with Orations) to the setting of the Common-wealth on fire, under pretence of Counselling it.”¹⁰⁰

Assemblies, to the degree that they are characterized by the intersection of innumerable particular individuals with divergent and perpetually variable motivations and interests, are unsuited to what Hobbes’s considers a key quality of government: self-limitation.¹⁰¹ Hence in his discourse on Tacitus, for example, Hobbes associates successful rule with the capacity to temper, moderate, or dissimulate one’s passions. Speaking of Agrippa he writes, “The Art that he is principally taxed to want, seems to have been the Art of conforming to times, and places, and persons, and consists much in a temperate conversation, and ability upon just cause, to contain and dissemble his passions, and purposes; and this was then thought the chief Art of government.”¹⁰² The assembly’s inability to consistently practice this self-limitation is manifested primarily through its tendency to reinstitute the legal order of the polity prior to diligent interrogation of necessity. We know that

¹⁰⁰ Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, XXV, p. 410.

¹⁰¹ In his argument that Hobbes’s political thought was largely motivated by the threats posed by Puritan radicalism, George Shulman argues that it was precisely the Puritans’s inability to comprehend the finitude of collective life and the need to place limits on human action that was what so troubled Hobbes. George Shulman, “Hobbes, Puritans, and Promethean Politics,” *Political Theory*, 16.3 (1988), p. 434. See also Rapaczynski, *Nature and Politics*, p. 25; Corey Robin, *Fear: The History of a Political Idea* (Oxford, 2004), p. 33. That is to say, Puritan excess demonstrates what democracy may become without self-limitation. On Hobbes’s concern with the human capacity for self-limitation see also Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and Government, 1572-1651* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 307.

¹⁰² Hobbes, “A Discourse on the Beginning of Tacitus,” p. 57.

law is always precarious. The fragility of law is derived from the fact that it derives its force and legitimacy from the existing sovereign, having no inherently customary foundation in past history or tradition.¹⁰³ Although the sovereign is free to make and unmake law as it sees fit, such a capacity certainly does not suggest that a sovereign thereby should. It is necessary for any body politic to possess institutional mechanisms for changing law when objective circumstances require, however the former should not be altered due to subjective variation in the passions of the mind: “it is necessary that such a power be, that the laws may be altered, according as men’s manners change, or as the conjuncture of all circumstances within and without the commonwealth shall require; the change of law being then inconvenient, when it proceedeth from the change not of the occasion, but of the minds of him or them, by whose authority the laws are made. Now it is manifest enough of itself, that the mind of one man is not so variable in that point, as are the decrees of an assembly.”¹⁰⁴

The inconstancy of law is a perpetual feature of civil life when legislation is undertaken by a democratic assembly. Hobbes maintains that such inconstancy is necessarily connected with the emergence of faction, itself a by-product of the ontological condition of human difference.¹⁰⁵ Faction is a reflection of the non-identity of the individuals that collectively constitute the sovereign representative, individuals tending to politically self-organize themselves on the basis of their particular shared normative conceptions, which will always be varied given the radical diversity that characterizes

¹⁰³ Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, XXVI, p. 420.

¹⁰⁴ Hobbes, *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic*, II.5.7, pp. 142-43.

¹⁰⁵ Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, X.13, p. 124.

human being. The risk of civil war is thus intensified through the democratic facilitation of the public expression of the multiplicity of opinion: “For where the union, or band of a commonwealth, is one man, there is no distraction; whereas in assemblies, those that are of different opinions and give different counsel, are apt to fall out amongst themselves, and to cross the designs of commonwealth for another’s sake.”¹⁰⁶ Like Machiavelli, Hobbes grasps the inherent connection between tumult and democracy, the latter taking a necessarily conflictual form given that it is characterized by the confrontation between individuals with always distinct desires, interests, understandings, and so on. Hence, for example, in his critique of what he takes to be Aristotle’s and others’s false identification of liberty and democracy, Hobbes writes: “And by reading of these Greek, and Latine Authors, men from their childhood have gotten a habit (under a false show of Liberty,) of favouring tumults, and of licentious controlling of the action of their Sovereigns; and again of controlling these controllers, with the effusion of so much blood; as I think I may truly say, there was never any thing so deeply bought, as these Western parts have bought the learning of the Greek and Latine tongues.”¹⁰⁷ What Hobbes understands is that democracy is intrinsically disputatious given the fact of human difference, a difference that is incapable of being reconciled through an appeal to external norms that would limit political potentiality. Thus in the final instance his characterization of the teaching of his own civil science in terms of the neutralization of the diversity of opinion, the democratic contestation over meaning that deliberation between particulars implies being the source of so much seditious activity: “For I see that quarrels among men

¹⁰⁶ Hobbes, *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic*, II.5.8, p. 143.

¹⁰⁷ Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, XXI, p. 354.

about opinions, and about whose intellect should prevail, cannot be taken away by force of arms. Evils of this sort must be extinguished in the same way that they arise. The minds of the citizens had been gradually infected by the writers of heathen politics and philosophy. That democratic ink must be wiped away by preaching, writing, and arguing. I do not understand how else this can be done, except by the universities.”¹⁰⁸

Conclusion

Hobbes’s critique of what he takes to be the inherent instability of the democratic sovereign form is well-known. I have suggested, however, that for Hobbes this instability is ontologically grounded in certain principles of being that provide the very philosophical basis for the possibility of genuine democracy itself. Specifically, the potential for democratic life – that is, for all members of society to autonomously contribute to the self-institution of the body politic via participation in legislative modes – depends upon both the non-foundational structure of the world, which remains always open to a human intervention that is not constrained by transcendent limits, and a specific type of equality in difference, in which always distinct people debate the trajectory of political life through the exercise of their natural reason. What Hobbes rejects is the democratic notion that this process is capable of being carried out without descending into factional conflict that short-circuits reason and the prudential deployment of judgement in order to generate limits to self-activity. For Hobbes the hubris of political actors, intensified as a result of the

¹⁰⁸ Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Three: The English and Latin Texts (ii)*, XLVII, pp. 1129–31.

mechanics of deliberation in assembly fora, exceeds all such self-limitation. Democracy is ultimately a regime of madness and antagonism.¹⁰⁹

It is perhaps Hobbes's recognition of the open being of the world and of human equality as conditions of democracy that motivated him to adjust his political philosophy so as to attempt to close off potential normative arguments affirming the ethical priority of democracy in relation to other sovereign forms. We can identify at least three such elements composing this anti-democratic Hobbesian strategy. Firstly, in the early conception of democracy as a unique form of commonwealth in *The Elements of Law*, Hobbes says complete liberty is realizable only in this regime, to the extent that democracy generalizes positive participation in government.¹¹⁰ Hobbes will of course go on to repudiate this more positive conception of liberty in his later works. Secondly, in *De cive* Hobbes identifies democracy as the originary form of all government, necessarily preceding monarchy and aristocracy temporally.¹¹¹ In *Leviathan* Hobbes reworks his theory of institution, the deployment of the language of authorization being intended to overcome the notion of originary democracy and any potential arguments regarding the latter's ethical priority.¹¹² And thirdly, Hobbes attempts to argue that even if democracy is a

¹⁰⁹ In her account of how Hobbes's conception of sovereignty is meant to ward off political disputes grounded in differing desires and epistemological claims, Raia Prokhovnik specifically notes the degree to which Hobbes would reject any conceptual distinction between productive agonistic and destructive antagonistic conflict, reducing entirely the former to the latter. Raia Prokhovnik, "Hobbes, Sovereignty, and Politics: Rethinking International Political Space," in *International Political Theory after Hobbes: Analysis, Interpretation and Orientation*, ed. Raia Prokhovnik and Gabriella Slomp (Basingstoke, 2010), p. 205.

¹¹⁰ Hobbes, *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic*, II.8.3, p. 170.

¹¹¹ Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, VII.5, p. 94.

¹¹² On the early notion of originary democracy and how the theory of authorization is meant to overcome it, see Goldsmith, *Hobbes's Science of Politics*, pp. 157–61; David P. Gauthier, *The Logic of Leviathan: The Moral and Political Theory of Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford, 1969), p. 145; Murray Forsyth, "Thomas Hobbes and the Constituent Power of the People," *Political Studies*, 29.2 (1981), pp. 191–203; Yves Charles Zarka, "Droit de resistance et droit penal chez Hobbes," in *Hobbes oggi*, ed. Andrea Napoli and Guido Canziani (Milano, 1990), pp. 177–96;

human possibility, the majority of individuals actually have no interest in the type of political participation it requires, absence from civic decision-making being not particularly grievous to them.¹¹³ And this despite the fact that in multiple other places Hobbes asserts that individuals do in fact have a desire to administer themselves through participation in government.¹¹⁴

Regardless of how seriously we take Hobbes's repudiation of democracy, his account of the anatomy of the latter reveals to us an element of it that demands to be reflected on. Democracy is the tragic regime, and this because the human world has no limits on action other than those that we construct ourselves. Whereas many classical and contemporary democratic theorists attempt to ground democracy in various types of universal principles or ideals that would ostensibly provide a transcendent level of security, Hobbes

Glenn Burgess, "Contexts for the Writing and Publication of Hobbes's *Leviathan*," *History of Political Thought*, 11.4 (1990), pp. 684–90; Alexandre Matheron, "The Theoretical Function of Democracy in Spinoza and Hobbes," in *The New Spinoza*, ed. Warren Montag and Ted Stoltz (Minneapolis, 1997), pp. 211–13; Malcolm, "Hobbes and Spinoza," p. 38; Johan P. Sommerville, "Hobbes and Independency," *Rivista di storia della filosofia*, 59.1 (2004), p. 60; Karlfriedrich Herbe, "Au-delà de la citoyenneté: Hobbes et le problème de l'autorité," *Rivista di storia della filosofia*, 59.1 (2004), pp. 220–21; Deborah Baumgold, "The Composition of Hobbes's Elements of Law," in *Contract Theory in Historical Context: Essays on Grotius, Hobbes, and Locke* (Leiden, 2010), pp. 105–28; Paul Sagar, "Of Mushrooms and Method: History and The Family in Hobbes's Science of Politics," *European Journal of Political Theory*, 14.1 (2015), pp. 106–9. For the suggestion that the typical differentiation between the early alienation model and the later authorization model is perhaps too overstated, and that there remain residues of the originary democratic foundation of sovereignty in *Leviathan*, see Janine Chanteur, "Note sur les notions de 'peuple' et de 'multitude' chez Hobbes," in *Hobbes-Forschungen*, ed. Reinhart Koselleck and Roman Schnur (Berlin, 1969), p. 233; Simone Goyard-Fabre, "Right and Anthropology in Hobbes's Philosophy," in *Thomas Hobbes: His View of Man*, ed. J.G. van der Bend (Amsterdam, 1982), p. 27; Hoekstra, "A Lion in the House," p. 212; Arash Abizadeh, "Sovereign Jurisdiction, Territorial Rights, and Membership in Hobbes," in *The Oxford Handbook of Hobbes*, ed. A.P. Martinich and Kinch Hoekstra (Oxford, 2016), pp. 414–15; Robin Douglass, "Authorization and Representation before *Leviathan*," *Hobbes Studies*, 31.1 (2018), pp. 30–47.

¹¹³ Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, X.9, p. 122.

¹¹⁴ Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Two: The English and Latin Texts (i)*, XV, p. 234; XXII, p. 358; Hobbes, *Leviathan, Volume Three: The English and Latin Texts (ii)*, XXXVI, p. 674.

recognizes the futility of this task. Democracy must always remain a regime of tragedy and risk.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ For a recent contribution that contrasts Hobbes's political theory with modern liberal theologies rooted in ostensibly universal ideals or principles, see Christopher Trigg, "Drones, Hobbes, and Liberal Enchantment," *Political Theology*, 19.7 (2018), pp. 553–71.