Hobbes, Bramhall and the Politics of Liberty and Necessity

This is the first full account of one of the most famous quarrels of the seventeenth century, that between the philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) and the Anglican archbishop of Armagh, John Bramhall (1594–1663). This analytical narrative interprets that quarrel within its own immediate and complicated historical circumstances, the Civil Wars (1638–1649) and Interregnum (1649–1660). The personal clash of Hobbes and Bramhall is connected to the broader conflict, disorder, violence, dislocation and exile that characterised those periods. This monograph offers not only the first comprehensive narrative of their hostilities over two decades, but also an illuminating analysis of aspects of their private and public quarrel that have been neglected in previous biographical, historical and philosophical accounts, with special attention devoted to their dispute over political and religious authority. This will be essential reading for scholars of early modern British history, religious history and the history of ideas.

Nicholas D. Jackson was a University Fellow at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, from 1997 to 2005.
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HOBBES, BRAMHALL
AND THE POLITICS
OF LIBERTY AND
NECESSITY
A Quarrel of the Civil Wars
and Interregnum

NICHOLAS D. JACKSON
It was... the seditious tenets of Mr Hobbes, and such like, which opened a large window to our troubles... They are T. H. his own principles... which do serve to involve nations in civil wars.


He [Bramhall] further says that ‘just laws are the ordinances of right reason’; which is an error that hath cost many thousands of men their lives.

Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury (1588–1679) (EW, v, 176)

All books of controversies should be writ in Latin, that none but the learned may read them, and that there should be no disputations but in schools, lest it breed factions amongst the vulgar, for disputations and controversies are a kind of civil war, maintained by the pen, and often draw out the sword after.

William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle (1592–1676) (Life of Cavendish, 125)
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ABBREVIATIONS


Answer to Milletière = Bramhall, An Answer to M. de la Milletière, his impertinent Dedication of his imaginary Triumph (entitled ‘The Victory of Truth’), or his Epistle to the King of Great Britain King Charles II, BW, i, 7–81.


List of abbreviations

Bodl. = Bodleian Library, Oxford University.
BL = British Library, London.


Castigations = Bramhall, Castigations of Mr Hobbes his Last Animadversions in the Case concerning Liberty and Universal Necessity; wherein all his exceptions about the controversy are fully satisfied, BW, iv, 197–506.


CJ = Journals of the House of Commons.

CJI = Journals of the House of Commons, Ireland.


CSP = Calendar of State Papers.

CSPD = Calendar of State Papers, Domestic.
List of abbreviations

CSPI = Calendar of State Papers, Ireland.


Evelyn, Diary and Correspondence = Diary and Correspondence of John Evelyn, F. R. S., to which is subjoined The Private Correspondence between King Charles I and Sir Edward Nicholas and between Sir Edward Hyde, afterwards Earl of Clarendon and Sir Richard Browne, ed. William Bray (London: George Bell & Sons, 1906; 4 vols.).


Fair Warning = Bramhall, A Fair Warning to take heed of the Scottish Discipline, as being of all others most injurious to the Civil Magistrate, most oppressive to the Subject, most pernicious to both, BW, iii, 237–87.

HJ = Historical Journal.


HMC Hastings, iv = Historical Manuscripts Commission Report (78) on the Manuscripts of the late Reginald Rawdon Hastings, Esq., of the
List of abbreviations


HPT = History of Political Thought.

JBS = Journal of British Studies.


List of abbreviations

LJI = Journals of the House of Lords, Ireland.


Nicholas Papers = The Nicholas Papers: Correspondence of Sir Edward Nicholas, Secretary of State, ed. G. F. Warner (Camden Society, 1886–1920; 4 vols.).

NYCRO = North Yorkshire County Record Office (Northallerton).


OL = Thomae Hobbes Malmesburiensis Opera Philosophica quae Latine scriptit omnia, ed. William Molesworth (London: J. Bohn, 1839–45; 5 vols.).

OLN = 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 answer to a treatise written by the Bishop of Londonderry, on the same subject, EW, iv, 229–78.


PRO = Public Record Office, London.

PRONI = Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.


Rawdon Papers = The Rawdon Papers, consisting of Letters on Various Subjects, Literary, Political, and Ecclesiastical, to and from Dr John Bramhall, Primate of Ireland, including the Correspondence of Several Most Eminent Men During the Greater Part of the Seventeenth Century, ed. Edward Berwick (London and Dublin: John Nichols and Son and R. Milliken, 1819).
List of abbreviations

Replication to the Bishop of Chalcedon = Bramhall, A Replication to the Bishop of Chalcedon’s Survey of the Vindication of the Church of England from Criminous Schism, with an appendix in answer to the exceptions of S. W., BW, ii, 1–335.

Rushworth = John Rushworth, Historical Collections (London, 1659–1701; 7 vols.).


Schism Guarded = Bramhall, Schism Guarded and Beaten Back upon the Right Owners, BW, ii, 339–646.

Serpent-Salve = Bramhall, The Serpent-Salve, or, A Remedy for the Biting of an Asp, BW, iii, 291–496.

Six Lessons = Hobbes, Six Lessons to the Professors of the Mathematics, One of Geometry, the Other of Astronomy, in the Chairs set up by the Noble and Learned Sir Henry Savile, in the University of Oxford, EW, vii, 181–356.

Taylor, ‘Funeral Sermon’ = Jeremy Taylor, A Sermon preached in Christ’s Church, Dublin, July 16, 1663; At the funeral of the Most Reverend Father in God, John Late Lord Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate of All Ireland, BW, i, xxxix–lxxvi.

Thurloe State Papers = A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe, ed. T. Birch (London, 1742; 7 vols.).


Vindication of Episcopal Clergy = Bramhall, Vindication of Himself and the Episcopal Clergy from the Presbyterian Charge of Popery, BW, iii, 499–586.


NOTE ON DATES AND STYLE

All dates are in Old Style (O.S., Julian), except that the year is taken to begin 1 January, rather than 25 March. However, in many cases I also give the date New Style (N.S., Gregorian), especially in the case of correspondence in which one or both writers were in Europe.

With rare (and obvious) exception, quotations of both seventeenth-century book-titles and texts have been silently modernised.

Derry refers either to the county or diocese of the anglican church in Ireland; Londonderry refers only to the town.