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Volume 3: Hobbes and Civil Science

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Introduction: Hobbes's life in philosophy

I

With this third and concluding volume, I turn from Renaissance theories of self-government to their leading philosophical opponent, Thomas Hobbes. As we shall see, Hobbes was nurtured in the humanist ideals with which I was chiefly concerned in volume 2. But he went on to repudiate his upbringing and, in developing his theories of freedom, obligation and the state, he sought to discredit and supersede some of the most fundamental tenets of humanist political thought. Reacting above all against the Renaissance predilection for self-governing city-republics, he constructed a theory of absolute sovereignty grounded on a covenant specifically requiring that each one of us 'give up my Right of Governing my selfe'.[1] The aim of this Introduction will be to trace the process by which Hobbes arrived at these anti-humanist commitments, to examine the resulting elements in his civil science and to consider their place in his more general scheme of the sciences.

II

To begin at the beginning. Thomas Hobbes was born on 5 April 1588 in Westport, a parish adjoining the town of Malmesbury in Wiltshire.[2] He was the second son of another Thomas Hobbes,[3] curate of the neighbouring and all too aptly named parish of Brokenborough.[4] The elder Hobbes appears to have found his life altogether too much for him. A

[1] Hobbes 1996, ch. 17, p. 120. [2] Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, pp. 323, 327.

[3] Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, pp. 323 and 324–5 notes that Edmund, brother of Hobbes *père*, was his elder by two years.

[4] Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 323 wrongly describes Hobbes's father as vicar of Westport. Malcolm 1996, pp. 14, 38 corrects the mistake. Malcolm also notes (p. 14) that Brokenborough was one of the poorest livings in the area. Malcolm's article is of exceptional value and I am greatly indebted to it.

man of little education who could barely read the church services,[5] he played cards all night, fell asleep during the sermon,[6] became notorious for drunken and quarrelsome behaviour[7] and eventually fled to London in 1604 after picking a fight with another local clergyman.[8] It is not known whether his famous son ever saw him again.

Hobbes's father was succeeded in the curacy of Brokenborough by a man in his late twenties called Robert Latimer,[9] who was destined to play a more formative role in shaping the young Hobbes's life than his own father ever seems to have done. A graduate of Magdalen Hall, Oxford,[10] Latimer had arrived at Westport directly from university in the mid-1590s to run a small private school.[11] Hobbes attended this establishment from about the age of ten,[12] and it is a fact of great importance in Hobbes's intellectual development that Robert Latimer was able to provide him with an excellent grounding in the humanistic curriculum then typical of the Elizabethan grammar schools.[13] This training mainly centred on the study of the classical languages, and the young Hobbes duly succeeded (as we shall see in chapter 2) in acquiring an extraordinarily high level of proficiency in Latin and Greek. But the study of classical rhetoric would also have formed a significant part of his education, and this too is important (as we shall see in chapter 3) in relation to explaining the evolution of his thought. Hobbes makes no mention of Latimer in either of his autobiographies,[14] but he undoubtedly owed his schoolmaster a major intellectual debt.

5 So says Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 323, who also speaks of his 'ignorance and clownery'.

6 Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 387.

7 Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 387. Cf. Malcolm 1996, p. 15.

8 See Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 387 for the incident and Malcolm 1996, p. 15 for the date.

9 Malcolm 1996, p. 16 has established this fascinating fact. I infer Latimer's age at the time from the fact that, according to Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 328, Latimer was 'a young man of about nineteen or twenty' when Hobbes began attending his school in the late 1590s. But Latimer may have been older than Aubrey supposed. Foster 1891–2, vol. 3, p. 884 records that Latimer took his BA at Magdalen Hall as early as 1591, proceeding to an MA at Magdalen College in 1595.

10 Foster 1891–2, vol. 3, p. 884. Cf. Malcolm 1996, p. 16.

11 Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 328.

12 This can be inferred from the fact that, as Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 328 informs us, after finishing his 'petty' training at the church school in Westport at the age of eight, Hobbes attended a school run by the minister in Malmesbury before moving to Latimer's establishment.

13 For this curriculum see Skinner 1996, pp. 19–65.

14 It will be best to say a word about Hobbes's autobiographies at the outset, given that they provide such important insights into his career, and will be frequently cited not merely in the present Introduction but in several later chapters. Hobbes tells us in Hobbes 1839b, p. xcix, line 375 that he wrote his verse *Vita*, much the longer of his two autobiographical sketches, at the age of eighty-four – that is, in 1672. Hobbes MSS (Chatsworth) MS A. 6 is Hobbes's corrected manuscript copy, and provides a more authoritative text than Hobbes 1839b, the version printed by Molesworth. I have therefore preferred to quote from the Chatsworth manuscript, although

As a younger son, Hobbes may have been intended for the church,[15] and this may help to explain how it came about that his father's elder brother, a childless and prosperous glover, agreed to pay for Hobbes to be sent to university.[16] No doubt as a result of Latimer's advice, Hobbes followed in his teacher's footsteps and went to Magdalen Hall Oxford, where he took his bachelor's degree in 1608.[17] But instead of seeking ecclesiastical preferment he immediately followed the no less time-honoured path of joining an aristocratic household. As soon as he graduated, he entered the service of William Cavendish, a Derbyshire landowner who became the first Earl of Devonshire in 1618. Hobbes's initial duties were those of tutor and companion to Cavendish's son, the future second earl, who also bore the name William Cavendish.[18] Subsequently, Hobbes went on to act as secretary to the younger Cavendish,[19] but reverted to his tutorial role soon after the second earl's sudden death in 1628.[20] The third earl – yet another William Cavendish – was barely eleven years old at the time,[21] and Hobbes was asked to take charge of his education, a task that occupied him for seven painstaking years (as he put it in his verse *Vita*) until Cavendish attained his majority in 1638.[22]

It is important to underline the extent to which, as this sketch already indicates, Hobbes was a product of the literary culture of humanism. As we shall see in chapter 2, the values of the *studia humanitatis* largely underpin the syllabus he worked out for the instruction of the third earl in the 1630s. Hobbes himself draws attention to the point when referring to his tutorial labours in his verse *Vita*. Although he mentions that he taught the young earl some logic, arithmetic and geography,[23] he stresses that they mainly concentrated on the three basic elements of the *studia humanitatis*: grammar, rhetoric and poetry. They began 'by learning the meaning of the speech used by the Romans, and how to join Latin words

my page references are to the Molesworth edition. Tricaud 1985, pp. 280–1 has established that Hobbes's shorter prose *Vita* was partly drafted in the 1650s and given its final form only a few months before his death in 1679.

[15] A point helpfully made in Malcolm 1996, p. 15.

[16] Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 324.

[17] Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 330. It is not known exactly when Hobbes matriculated. See Malcolm 1996, p. 39. But Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, pp. 328, 330 is probably correct in stating that Hobbes entered the university at the beginning of 1603.

[18] Malcolm 1994c, pp. 807–8.

[19] See Hobbes MSS (Chatsworth) MS 73Aa, flyleaf, where Hobbes identifies himself as 'secretary to ye Lord Cavendysh'. Hobbes also refers to himself on the title-page of Hobbes 1629 as 'Secretary to ye late Earle of Devonshire'.

[20] Malcolm 1994c, p. 815.

[21] Malcolm 1994c, p. 815 notes that the third earl was born in 1617.

[22] Hobbes 1839b, p. lxxxix, line 103. Cf. Malcolm 1994c, pp. 808–9 and 815–17.

[23] Hobbes 1839b, p. lxxxix, lines 99–101.

together in the proper way'.[24] Then they went on to consider 'how poetry is composed' and at the same time 'how orators write, and by means of what art rhetoricians are accustomed to deceive the uninitiated'.[25] As Hobbes adds in his prose *Vita*, what he provided for his pupil was thus an education *in literis*, the traditional humanistic ideal of 'good letters'.[26]

A similar preoccupation with rhetoric and poetry is apparent in Hobbes's own earliest works. One of the tasks he set himself while tutoring the third earl was to produce a Latin paraphrase of Aristotle's *Art of Rhetoric*, an English version of which was published anonymously as *A Briefe of the Art of Rhetorique* in c.1637.[27] Although Hobbes professed to despise Aristotle as a philosopher of nature, and declared him to be 'the worst teacher that ever was, the worst politician and ethick', he nevertheless acknowledged that his *Rhetoric* was 'rare'.[28] One sign of its impact on Hobbes's thinking has frequently been remarked upon. When Hobbes turns to examine the character of the 'affections' in chapters 8 and 9 of *The Elements of Law*, he enunciated a number of his definitions in the form of virtual quotations from Aristotle's analysis of the emotions in the opening chapters of Book 2 of the *Rhetoric*.[29] But a further and connected use of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* in *The Elements* has been little discussed. When Hobbes asks himself in chapter 9 – and again in chapter 6 of *Leviathan* – about the nature of the emotions expressed by the peculiar phenomenon of laughter, he proceeds to outline a theory of the ridiculous that closely resembles that of Aristotle in the *Rhetoric*. I offer a survey in chapter 5 of this Aristotelian tradition of thinking about the laughable, and ask at

[24] Hobbes 1839b, p. lxxxviii, lines 95–6:

> Hunc Romanarum sensus cognoscere vocum;
> Jungere quoque decet verba Latina modo.

[25] Hobbes 1839b, p. lxxxviii, lines 97–8:

> Fallere quaque solent indoctos rhetores arte;
> Quid facit Orator, quidque Poeta facit.

[26] Hobbes 1839a, p. xiv.

[27] For the Latin paraphrase see Hobbes MSS (Chatsworth) MS D. 1, pp. 1–143. It contains numerous corrections in Hobbes's hand and must in substance be Hobbes's work. [Hobbes (?)] 1986, an English translation of this manuscript, has always been credited to Hobbes as well. But a number of anomalies and misunderstandings in the translation have led Karl Schuhmann to the dramatic but convincing conclusion that, while the Latin paraphrase is by Hobbes, the English translation is not.

[28] Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 357.

[29] See Aristotle 1926, II. 1. 8 to II. 11. 7, pp. 172–246, and for discussions of the parallels see Strauss 1963, pp. 36–41; Zappen 1983; Skinner 1996, pp. 38–9.

the same time why that tradition appears to have mattered so much to Hobbes.

Hobbes's next work reflected an even keener interest in the other basic element in the *studia humanitatis*, the art of poetry. Around the year 1627[30] Hobbes composed a Latin poem of some five hundred hexameters, *De Mirabilibus Pecci*, *Carmen*, which he presented as a gift to the second earl and subsequently published in c.1636.[31] But by far the most important product of Hobbes's so-called 'humanist period'[32] was his translation of Thucydides's history, which he published as *Eight Bookes of the Peloponnesian Warre* in 1629.[33] Hobbes's introductory essay, *Of the Life and History of Thucydides*, is a thoroughly humanist text. As I seek to demonstrate in chapter 2, it is wholly constructed according to the precepts laid down in classical handbooks of rhetoric for the presentation of persuasive arguments, as well as being founded on the humanist assumption that 'the principal and proper work of history' is 'to instruct and enable men, by the knowledge of actions past, to bear themselves prudently in the present and providently towards the future'.[34]

III

During the 1630s Hobbes began to direct his intellectual energies along new paths. He began to turn away from – and against – his humanist allegiances, and to take an increasingly professional interest in the study of mathematics and the natural sciences. Hobbes's correspondence from this period suggests that his scientific curiosity was quickened as a result of his acquaintance with the Earl of Devonshire's cousins, the Earl of Newcastle and his younger brother Sir Charles Cavendish, both of whom were conducting experiments at the earl's principal residence, Welbeck Abbey in Nottinghamshire.[35] By 1636 we find Hobbes writing confidently to Newcastle on a variety of scientific themes. He offers an opinion about local motion and its relation to heat, about Galileo's theory of colour and light, and more generally about the nature of scientific proof.[36] He also discusses the optical experiments being carried out at

[30] Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 360 supplies the date.
[31] Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 360. Wood 1691–2, p. 479 adds that the poem was first 'printed at *Lond.* about 1636'.
[32] For this concept see Strauss 1963, p. 30; Reik 1977 and especially Schuhmann 1990.
[33] Hobbes 1629. [34] Hobbes 1975a, p. 6.
[35] See Malcolm 1994c, pp. 801–5 and pp. 812–15.
[36] Hobbes 1994, Letter 19, pp. 33–4 and Letter 21, pp. 37–8.

Welbeck by Robert Payne, who soon became a close friend.[37] Payne was employed by Newcastle nominally as his chaplain, but devoted much of his time in the mid-1630s to studying the phenomenon of refracted light, a subject that rapidly attracted Hobbes's attention as well.[38]

Hobbes's shift from the humanities to the sciences appears to have happened rather suddenly. So it seems natural to ask whether the moment of conversion can be pinpointed with any accuracy. Hobbes himself supplies a very precise date. Accused of plagiarism at one point in his bruising controversy with Descartes in 1641, he retorted that he had first articulated his theories about 'the nature and production of light, sound and all phantasms or ideas' in the presence of 'those most excellent brothers William Earl of Newcastle and Sir Charles Cavendish' as early as the year 1630.[39] It seems to have been this declaration that prompted Ferdinand Tönnies to attribute to Hobbes, and to date to the year 1630, an anonymous manuscript to which Tönnies gave the title *A Short Tract on First Principles*.[40] The authorship of the *Short Tract* has of late been a subject of intense debate,[41] but it is certainly clear that the ideas it contains are at least partly those of Hobbes.[42] Although it includes some claims that Hobbes was subsequently to repudiate,[43] it is written in his familiar demonstrative style and contributes to his long-standing ambition to outline a purely mechanistic conception of nature.

The *Short Tract* appears to have been completed in 1632–3.[44] Soon after this, Hobbes's scientific interests deepened as a result of various contacts he made on a visit to France and Italy with the third Earl of Devonshire between 1634 and 1636.[45] The most important friendship he struck up in this period was with Marin Mersenne, who acted as the convenor of regular scientific meetings at the Convent of the Annunciation in Paris, where he lived as a member of the Minim Friars.[46] Hobbes indicates in his

[37] Hobbes 1994, Letter 16, pp. 28–9.
[38] On Payne see Malcolm 1994c, pp. 872–7.
[39] Hobbes 1994, Letter 34, p. 108.
[40] Tönnies 1969a, Appendix I, p. 193.
[41] For a critical edition of the text see [Hobbes (?)] 1988. Bernhardt 1988, pp. 88–92 insists on Hobbes's authorship, while Zagorin 1993 and Schuhmann 1995 advance powerful arguments in favour of it. But Malcolm 1994c, p. 874 remains unconvinced, observing that the *Short Tract* is in Robert Payne's handwriting and inferring that the work 'can plausibly be attributed' to him. Raylor 2001 outlines the debate, concluding that the tract was indeed written by Payne, but that its ideas are at least in part those of Hobbes.
[42] Schuhmann 1995 and Raylor 2001 make this clear beyond doubt.
[43] For example, about the nature of light and its propagation. See Prins 1996, pp. 129–32 and cf. Hobbes 1998.
[44] Schuhmann 1995, p. 26.
[45] See Malcolm 1996, p. 23 for details of Hobbes's itinerary.
[46] Dear 1988, p. 14. Cf. Hobbes 1985, p. 351.

prose *Vita* that Mersenne first welcomed him into this circle in 1635, and that thereafter they 'communicated daily about my thoughts'.[47] These meetings appear to have aroused in Hobbes an almost obsessional desire to understand the laws of physics, and above all the phenomenon of motion. In his verse *Vita* he recalls that, after setting out for Italy with the young earl in the autumn of 1635,[48] 'I began to think about the nature of things all the time, whether I was on a ship, in a coach, or travelling on horseback.'[49] He makes it clear that his thinking was based on a rejection of the Aristotelian assumption that the truth about the world must be closely connected with its appearance. On the contrary, Hobbes tells us, 'it seemed to me that there is only one thing in the whole world that is real, although it is falsified in a number of ways'.[50] This single reality is motion, 'which is why anyone who wishes to understand physics must first of all devote themselves wholeheartedly to studying what makes motion possible'.[51]

Back in England at the end of 1636, Hobbes began to elaborate this basic insight as a claim about three types of bodies. 'The whole *genus* of philosophy', he came to believe, 'contains just three parts: *Corpus*, *Homo, Civis*, body, man and citizen.'[52] Armed with these fundamental categories, he found himself able, he reports, 'to move from the various types of motion to the variety of things, that is, to different species and elements of matter,

[47] Hobbes 1839a, p. xiv: 'cogitatis suis cum Reverendo Patre Marino Mersenno . . . quotidie communicatis'. This is confirmed in Blackbourne 1839, p. xxviii. See also Hobbes 1839b, p. xc, line 127, which speaks of communicating with Mersenne 'anew' on returning to Paris in 1636 after wintering in Italy. Hobbes 1994, Letters 12 to 16, pp. 22–30 make it clear that Hobbes was in Paris for at least a year between autumn 1634 and 1635. See Jacoby 1974, pp. 62–3 and for a classic discussion of the importance of this visit see Brandt 1928, pp. 149–60.

[48] Hobbes 1994, Letter 16 (25 August 1635) pp. 28–9, shows Hobbes still in Paris. Hobbes 1994, Letter 17 (16 April 1636) pp. 30–1, sent from Florence, speaks of having arrived there after a stay in Rome.

[49] Hobbes 1839b, p. lxxxix, lines 109–10:

> Ast ergo perpetuo natura cogito rerum,
> Seu rate, seu curru, sive ferebar equo.

[50] Hobbes 1839b, p. lxxxix, lines 111–12:

> Et mihi visa quidem est toto res unica mundo
> Vera, licet multis falsificata modis:

[51] Hobbes 1839b, p. lxxxix, lines 119–20:

> Hinc est quod, physicam quisquis vult discere, motus
> Quid possit, debet perdidicisse prius.

[52] Hobbes 1839b, p. xc, lines 137–8:

> Nam philosophandi
> Corpus, Homo, Civis continet omne genus.

and from there to the internal motions of men and the secrets of the heart, and from there, finally, to the blessings of Sovereignty and Justice'.[53] With this outline firmly in mind, he goes on, 'I decided to write three books on these issues, and started to collect my materials every day.'[54]

By the end of the 1630s Hobbes had made considerable progress with this tripartite scheme. Admittedly there is little evidence that he had made much headway with the first of his projected volumes, *De Corpore*, which he finally managed to publish only in 1655. But by 1640 he had finished a major Latin manuscript treatise on optics,[55] the subject of the opening half of his second projected volume, *De Homine*, which eventually appeared in 1658.[56] And in May 1640 he completed the manuscript of *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic*, the latter part of which consists of a polished sketch of his promised third volume on the blessings of sovereignty and justice.[57]

Soon after circulating this manuscript Hobbes begin to fear for his safety in consequence of the worsening political crisis in England. Forced to reconvene Parliament in 1640 after a gap of eleven years, King Charles I found himself obliged to stand by while his advisers were arrested and his regime denounced. Among those sent to the Tower by parliamentary order was Roger Maynwaring, who had preached as royal chaplain in favour of the absolute power of kings.[58] Hobbes told John Aubrey that he

[53] Hobbes 1839b, p. xc, lines 133–6:

> Motibus a variis feror ad rerum variarum
> Dissimiles species, materiaeque dolos;
> Motusque internos hominum, cordisque latebras:
> Denique ad Imperii Justitiaeque bona.

[54] Hobbes 1839b, p. xc, lines 139–40:

> Tres super his rebus statuo conscribere libros;
> Materiemque mihi congero quoque die.

[55] BL Harl. MS 6796, fos. 193–266. The date of this manuscript has been established in Malcolm 1994b, pp. liii–lv, where it is shown that it was transcribed in 1640 for Sir Charles Cavendish. As Hobbes's correspondence indicates, he was spurred to write by the appearance of Descartes's *Dioptrique*, the essay on optics published as an appendix to the *Discours de la méthode* in 1637. Hobbes must have been one of Descartes's earliest English readers. Hobbes 1994, Letter 27, p. 51 shows that he received a copy of the *Discours* as early as 4 October 1637.

[56] Hobbes 1839d, chs. 2 to 9, pp. 7–87. As Robertson 1886, p. 59n. first noticed, these chapters are virtually identical with those on vision in BL Harl. MS 3360 fos. 73^{r}–173^{r}, the English manuscript treatise on optics which Hobbes completed early in 1646.

[57] As Tönnies 1969a, pp. v–viii first recognised, *The Elements* is the work described in Hobbes 1840d, p. 414 as the 'little treatise in English', of which 'though not printed, many gentlemen had copies'. The standard edition is Hobbes 1969a, but it contains so many transcription errors that I have preferred – in this and in subsequent chapters – to quote instead from BL Harl. MS 4235, arguably the best surviving manuscript, although my page references are to the 1969 edition.

[58] Sommerville 1992, pp. 18–19.

regarded Maynwaring's doctrines as essentially the same as his own,[59] and feared that he might suffer a similar fate.[60] The upshot, Aubrey reports, was that 'then thought Mr. Hobbes, 'tis time now for me to shift for my selfe, and so withdrew into France and resided at Paris'.[61]

IV

Hobbes lived in France for the next eleven years, continuing to work on his physics and on the application of his scientific principles to civic life. He made his first task that of completing the sketch of his political theory he had already circulated. The outcome was the appearance of *Elementorum Philosophiae Sectio Tertia De Cive* at Paris in 1642.[62] The full title signals the intended place of the work in Hobbes's tripartite division of philosophy, but the delays attending the completion of his trilogy proved so protracted that, when this final section was reissued in two further editions at Amsterdam in 1647, it appeared instead under its shorter and more familiar title as *De Cive*.[63]

One striking feature not merely of *De Cive* but of Hobbes's earlier sketch in *The Elements of Law* is the vehemence with which he repudiates the values of the rhetorical culture in which he had originally been nurtured. One of his principal purposes in both these works is to challenge and overturn the central tenets of Renaissance civil science and replace them with a new conception of *scientia civilis* founded on authentically scientific premisses. In chapters 3 and 4 I seek to illustrate these claims at greater length. In chapter 3 I begin by laying out the classical assumption that a civil science must be founded on a union of reason and rhetoric, and hence of science and eloquence. I then show how Hobbes sought to discredit and replace this approach by disjoining the science of politics from any connection with the rhetorical arts. In chapter 4 I turn to consider the fundamental rhetorical assumption that all moral questions are susceptible of being debated *in utramque partem*, on either side of the case. I seek to establish that one of Hobbes's leading aims as a moral philosopher was to undermine and supersede this style of argument by fixing the definitions and implications of moral terms in a purportedly scientific way.

After the publication of *De Cive* in 1642, Hobbes reverted to working on his philosophical system in the order in which he had originally conceived

[59] Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 334.
[60] This is especially clear from Hobbes 1994, Letter 35, pp. 114–15.
[61] Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 334.
[62] See Hobbes 1642 and cf. Hobbes 1983a.
[63] For these two further editions see Warrender 1983a, pp. 8–13.

it. The first important piece of writing to which this gave rise was a lengthy critical examination of Thomas White's treatise *De Mundo*.[64] 'The most learned Mr White', as Hobbes called him,[65] was an English Catholic priest and a fellow exile well known to Hobbes,[66] whose *De Mundo* had been published in September 1642.[67] Hobbes drafted his reply during the winter of 1642 and spring of 1643,[68] producing a massive if somewhat diffuse manuscript in which he discussed, among many other things, several of the questions eventually handled in *De Corpore*, including such topics as place, cause, motion, circular motion and the behaviour of heavenly bodies.[69]

After sketching this outline of his natural philosophy, Hobbes turned to the business of working it out in detail. An early outcome was *Of Liberty and Necessity*, which he composed in the form of a letter to the marquis (as he had become) of Newcastle in the summer of 1645, having conducted a debate on the subject with John Bramhall in Newcastle's presence in Paris earlier in the same year.[70] Pursuing an argument already implicit in the *Short Tract*,[71] and further developed in the analysis of deliberation in his *Critique* of White,[72] Hobbes provides an elegant solution to the problem of how to render metaphysical determinism compatible with the idea of free action. I examine his solution – which he subsequently incorporated into his civil philosophy – in the course of chapter 7.[73]

The main project to which Hobbes devoted himself after finishing his critique of *De Mundo* was the completion of the opening volume in his projected trilogy.[74] Recalling this period in his verse *Vita*, he remembered it as a time when 'I thought night and day for four years about the form of my book *De Corpore* and how it should be written'.[75] It soon became clear, however, that the task he had set himself was even harder than he

[64] For the manuscript see Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds Latin MS 6566A. For the dating see Jacquot and Jones 1973, pp. 12–13, 43–5.
[65] Hobbes 1840a, p. 236.
[66] On White and Hobbes see Southgate 1993, pp. 7–8, 28–9.
[67] Southgate 1993, p. 7. [68] Jacquot and Jones 1973, pp. 43–5.
[69] Hobbes 1839c, chs. 7, 9, 15–16, 21–2, 25–6. Cf. Hobbes 1973, chs. 4, 7, 14, 22, 30.
[70] These facts are established in Lessay 1993b, pp. 31–8. On Newcastle's circle in Paris see Jacob and Raylor 1991, pp. 215–22.
[71] [Hobbes (?) 1988], Section 1, Conclusions 11–13, pp. 20–2.
[72] BN Fonds Latin MS 6566A, fos. 349^{v}–351^{v}. Cf. Hobbes 1973, chapter 30, sections 26 to 30, pp. 360–2.
[73] For further discussion of the debate with Bramhall see Overhoff 2000, pp. 134–41.
[74] This is made clear in Hobbes 1839b, p. xci, lines 159–60.
[75] Hobbes 1839b, p. xci, lines 159–60:

> Inde annis quatuor libri *De Corpore* formam,
> Qua sit scribendus, nocte dieque puto.

had initially supposed. As he explained to friends who expressed anxiety about the lengthening delays, his main difficulty stemmed from his belief that in *De Cive* he had demonstrated all the leading propositions he had put forward. He was now trying, as he put it in a letter to Samuel Sorbière in June 1646, 'to achieve in metaphysics and physics what I hope I have achieved in moral theory, so that there may be no room left for any critic to write against me'.[76] As he lamented in a subsequent letter, however, this was exactly the outcome that continued to elude him. 'It is not the effort of finding out the truth but that of explaining and demonstrating it which is holding up publication.'[77]

One of Hobbes's stumbling blocks was that, as his *Critique* of White's *De Mundo* had already made painfully clear, he was unable to make up his mind about the character of a demonstrative science.[78] He opens his *Critique* by arguing that the process of acquiring demonstrative knowledge is a matter of identifying causes and their necessary consequences.[79] But he attempts at the same time to hold fast to the contrasting belief (already enunciated in *The Elements of Law*) that the 'steps of science' instead consist of tracing the implications of the meanings and definitions of terms.[80] A still more intractable problem was that, even when Hobbes felt confident about the kinds of demonstrations he needed, he found it almost impossible to supply them to his own satisfaction, to say nothing of the satisfaction of his mathematical colleagues. He appears to have encountered this difficulty above all in Part 3 of *De Corpore*, and especially in chapter 18, which presents two alleged equations between straight and parabolic lines.[81] As late as 1649 he was still vainly wrestling with the proofs he had rashly committed himself to supplying in order to make good this part of his argument.[82]

At some stage Hobbes decided to stop banging his head against this particular wall and returned to the study of civil science. The outcome – the magnificent yet ironic outcome – was that his stay in Paris failed to culminate in the long-promised completion of the opening section of his tripartite scheme of philosophy. Instead it culminated in the publication of *Leviathan*, a new version of the section he had already published as *De Cive*. Hobbes finished *Leviathan* in the opening months of 1651, and it

[76] Hobbes 1994, Letter 42, p. 133. [77] Hobbes 1994, Letter 61, p. 177.
[78] See Malcolm 1990, esp. pp. 154–7 and cf. Malcolm 1996, p. 29.
[79] BN Fonds Latin MS 6566A, fo. 6^{v}, esp. para. 3. Cf. Hobbes 1973, I. 3, p. 107.
[80] Hobbes 1969a, pp. 24–6. [81] Hobbes 1839c, pp. 227–30.
[82] Cavendish to Pell, 5 October 1649, BL Add. MS 4278, fo. 291^{v}: Hobbes is still hoping 'to finde a right line aequall to a parabolick line'. He never found it to anyone's satisfaction – not even his own, as John Wallis ruthlessly pointed out in Wallis 1662, pp. 125–8.

was published in London by the firm of William Crooke. It appeared in late April or early May,[83] and within a matter of weeks it seems to have been widely available. Writing to Samuel Hartlib from Amsterdam on 18 July, William Rand was able to report that 'I have a booke entitled Liviathan or of a Commonwealth, made by one Hobbs'. The book, Rand adds, is full 'of fine cleare notions, though some things too paradoxicall & savouring of a man passionately addicted to the royall interest'.[84]

Hobbes's *Leviathan* is often viewed as a continuation – even a vulgarisation – of a number of themes already present in *De Cive* and *The Elements of Law*. If we focus, however, on the central concept in each of these works – that of civil science itself – we come upon a sharp discontinuity. The earlier recensions of Hobbes's political theory had been grounded on the assumption that reason possesses an inherent power to persuade us of the truths it finds out, and thus that the arts of eloquence have no necessary place in civil science. In *Leviathan*, by contrast, we are told that 'the Sciences are small Power', and that they cannot hope to persuade us of the findings they enunciate.[85] Hobbes now accepts in consequence that, if reason is to prevail, we shall need to supplement and enforce its findings by means of the rhetorical arts.[86] This represents one of the most abrupt shifts of perspective in the evolution of his civil philosophy, and it forms the subject of chapter 3.

To say all this, however, is by no means to say (as some commentators have done) that *Leviathan* must be accounted a work of rhetoric as opposed to a work of science.[87] Although Hobbes undoubtedly came to believe that the findings of civil science have little hope of being implemented or even credited without the aid of the rhetorical arts, he never abandoned his aspiration to construct what he describes in *Leviathan* as 'the science of Vertue and Vice'.[88] His later statements of his political theory in consequence retain several elements of his earlier hostility to the basic tenets of classical and humanist *scientia civilis*. As I stress in chapter 4, he continues to speak out against the predilection of rhetoricians for generating moral ambiguity, and he responds with the same 'scientific' solution to the problem he had originally put forward in *De Cive*. He likewise continues to repudiate what he had initially identified

[83] Hobbes 1996, Epistle, p. 4 is signed 'Paris. *Aprill* 15/25. 1651'. See 'Illustrations' 1848, p. 223 for a letter of 6 May 1651 from Payne to Sheldon reporting that 'I am advertised from Oxf[ord] that Mr Hobbes' book is printed and come thither: he calls it Leviathan.'

[84] Rand to Hartlib, 18 July 1651, Hartlib Papers (Sheffield) 62/30/3B.

[85] Hobbes 1996, ch. 10, p. 63. [86] Hobbes 1996, Conclusion, pp. 483–4.

[87] See for example Taylor 1965, p. 35. [88] Hobbes 1996, ch. 15, p. 111.

in *The Elements of Law* as the confusions inherent in the humanist vision of history as a teacher of wisdom.[89] As I point out in chapter 8, his later political writings not only embody a number of heterodox arguments about English constitutional history, but are grounded on the still more heterodox assumption that historical arguments have no legitimate place in a science of politics at all. Hobbes summarises this commitment in *Behemoth*, his dialogues on the civil wars,[90] when he insists that, even if we study the forms of ancient commonwealths in detail, we can never hope 'to derive from them any argument of Right, but onely examples of fact'.[91]

To these considerations we need to add that, at some moments in *Leviathan*, Hobbes repudiates the ideals of classical and Renaissance political theory with even greater ferocity than in his earlier works. Perhaps the most important of these attacks is directed against the republican ideal of 'free states' and a number of associated arguments of a constitutionalist character. As we saw in volume 2 chapter 14, Renaissance political writers had begun to describe self-governing communities as *states*, *stati* or *états*, and more specifically as *stati liberi* or free states. They tended as a result to equate the powers of the state with the powers of its citizens when viewed as an *universitas* or corporate body of people. As we shall see in chapter 6, Hobbes dramatically reverses this understanding, arguing that it is only when we perform the act of instituting a sovereign to represent us that we transform ourselves from a multitude of individuals into a unified body of people. He accordingly reserves the term *civitas* or state for the name of the artificial person we bring into existence when we authorise a sovereign both to represent us and to impersonate (or 'bear the Person of') the state or commonwealth.[92]

Hobbes had already spoken in *The Elements of Law* and *De Cive* of the *civitas* as an artificial person.[93] As I shall argue in chapter 6, however, it is only in *Leviathan* that he formulates his theory of authorisation and makes the concept of 'bearing a person' the fulcrum of his theory of

[89] For Hobbes's account of these alleged confusions see Skinner 1996, pp. 260–2.

[90] Hobbes 1969b remains the standard edition. The editor, Ferdinand Tonnies, used as his copy-text a manuscript fair-copied by Hobbes's amanuensis, James Wheldon. (See St John's College MS 13 and cf. Tonnies 1969b, pp. ix–x.) But Tonnies (or his amanuensis) altered Hobbes's spelling and punctuation and made numerous transcription mistakes. When citing from *Behemoth* I have therefore preferred to quote from the St John's MS, although my page references are to Tonnies's edition.

[91] Hobbes 1969b, p. 76. [92] Hobbes 1996, Introduction, p. 9.

[93] Hobbes 1969a, pp. 108, 173–4 and Hobbes 1983a, VII. XIV, p. 155; XII. VIII, p. 190; XIII. III, pp. 195–6.

sovereignty.[94] Part 1 of *Leviathan*, 'Of Man', analyses the natural powers of persons, and culminates in the chapter entitled 'Of Persons, Authors, and things Personated'. This pivotal section examines the various ways in which we can represent ourselves under different guises – thereby adopting different *personae* – as well as permitting ourselves to be represented by other persons whose actions we authorise. This analysis leads directly into Part 2, 'Of Commonwealth', in which Hobbes goes on to explain the sovereign rights of the artificial person we bring into existence when we covenant as a multitude to choose a representative to act on our behalf, thereby instituting 'that great LEVIATHAN called a COMMON-WEALTH, or STATE'.[95] As we saw in volume 2 chapter 14, it would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that, by placing the concept of artificial personality at the heart of his civil science, Hobbes closes one chapter in the history of the modern theory of the state and opens another and more familiar one. Arguably he is the earliest political writer to maintain with complete self-consciousness that the legal person lying at the heart of politics is neither the person of the sovereign nor the person constituted by the *universitas* of the people, but is rather the artificial person of the state.

Underlying Hobbes's attack on the ideal of free states is an idiosyncratic analysis of freedom itself. As we have seen, Hobbes had already presented his views on the metaphysics of freedom in his tract *Of Liberty and Necessity* in 1645. It is only in the pages of *Leviathan*, however, that he fully pursues the political implications of his account. As we saw in volume 2 chapter 12, Roman and Renaissance theorists of the *civitas* had argued that one insidious way of producing unfreedom is by encouraging conditions of social and political dependence. The only way to avoid this predicament, they had argued, is to ensure that each and every citizen is given an equal voice in government. As Hobbes himself observes in *The Elements of Law*, one crucial implication of the argument is thus that individual liberty is possible only under conditions of self-rule: 'noe man can partake of Liberty, but onely in a Popular Commonwealth'.[96]

I argue in chapter 7 that one of Hobbes's aspirations in *Leviathan* is to demolish this entire structure of thought, and with it the theory of equality and citizenship on which humanist civil science had been raised. Hobbes's response is rooted in his basic principle to the effect that nothing is real except matter in motion. The only sense we can assign to the idea

[94] Zarka 1985 excellently emphasises these developments.
[95] Hobbes 1996, p. 9. [96] Hobbes 1969a, p. 170.

of being unfree is therefore that it names the condition of a body whose movements have been obstructed or compelled. In the natural condition of mankind the ties capable of acting as such impediments are bonds or chains that literally prevent us from doing or forbearing at will. In the artificial condition of life within a Commonwealth we are further tied or bound by the artificial chains of the law, which prevent us by fear of evil consequences from acting anti-socially. For Hobbes, accordingly, the limits on our personal liberty are nothing to do with living in conditions of domination and dependence. They are simply the products of coercion: physical coercion by actual bonds in our natural state, moral coercion by the bonds of law in Commonwealths. For Hobbes there is nothing more to be said about the concept of individual liberty.

V

Throughout his period of exile from 1640 to 1652, Hobbes moved between his speculations about natural bodies and the reconsideration of his civil philosophy. It remains to ask how he apportioned his time between these two pursuits. Hobbes himself furnishes an unambiguous answer in the two autobiographies he composed in the 1670s. As we have seen, his verse *Vita* informs us that he began by thinking for four years about the details of *De Corpore*. He goes on to add, however, that in the summer of 1646 a number of events conspired to interrupt his train of thought. The young Prince of Wales and his retinue arrived at Paris in July, and soon afterwards Hobbes found himself called upon to act as tutor in mathematics to the prince.[97] Hobbes recalls that the exiled courtiers brought shocking news about the victories of Parliament in England and the growing disposition of the roundheads to regard their successes as a sign of God's providence. 'I could not bear', Hobbes declares 'to hear so many crimes attributed to the commands of God', and decided that 'although I had intended to write my book *De Corpore*, for which all the materials were ready, I would have to put it off'.[98] The highest priority, he now felt, was 'to write something that would absolve

[97] Cavendish to Pell, 7 December 1646, BL Add MS 4278 fo. 265^{v}: Hobbes's intended departure from Paris has been 'staied' because he is now 'imploied to reade Mathematickes to oure Prince'.

[98] Hobbes 1839b, p. xcii, lines 187–90:

> Tunc ego decreram *De Corpore* scribere librum,
> Cuius materies tota parata fuit.
> Sed cogor differre; *pati tot tantaque foeda*
> *Apponi iussis crimina, nolo, Dei.*

the divine laws'.[99] He accordingly began to compose the treatise which, 'under the name of *Leviathan*, now fights on behalf of all kings and all those who under whatever name bear the rights of kings'.[100] His prose *Vita* reiterates that, apart from the hours he spent tutoring his future king, this was the moment at which he began to devote himself full-time to the composition of *Leviathan*.[101]

There is certainly some truth in Hobbes's later recollection that he shifted from natural to civil science in the course of 1646. During the previous winter he had still been fully occupied with his physical speculations, and specifically with completing his English treatise on optics.[102] Of the two sections into which this manuscript is divided,[103] the first was finished and fair-copied by the beginning of November 1645,[104] but the second was only completed in the spring of 1646.[105] With this task out of the way, Hobbes undoubtedly turned his attention once more to political philosophy. The move was prompted by Samuel Sorbière, who came forward with the idea of a second edition of *De Cive*, offering to see a revised version through the press with the Amsterdam firm of Elzevir.[106] Hobbes responded to Sorbière's invitation in two ways.[107] He composed a new *Praefatio*, publicising for the first time his proposed philosophical trilogy;[108] and he inserted a large number of annotations into his text with the intention – as the *Praefatio* puts it – 'of amending, softening and explaining anything that may have seemed erroneous, hard or obscure'.[109] Hobbes had already entered some of these corrections in his working copy of the 1642 edition,[110] and it seems to have taken very little time to

[99] Hobbes 1839b, p. xcii, line 191:

> Divinas statuo quam primum absolvere leges.

[100] Hobbes 1839b, p. xcii, line 200–2: Hobbes speaks of the book which, 'nomine *Leviathan*',

> Militat ille Liber nunc Regibus omnibus, et qui
> Nomine sub quovis regia iura tenent.

[101] Hobbes 1839a, p. xv.

[102] See Prins 1996, pp. 145–6 for a discussion of this manuscript.

[103] BL Harl. MS 3360, fos. 1–193.

[104] Cavendish to Pell, 11 November 1645, BL Add. MS 4278, fo. 223^{r} includes a postscript saying of Hobbes's English treatise on optics that 'he hath done half of it, & M^{r}: Petit hath writ it faire; it is in english at my brothers request'. 'Mr Petit' must be William Petty, who according to Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 368 'assisted Mr. Hobbes in draweing his schemes for his booke of optiques'.

[105] This can be inferred from the fact that BL Harl. MS 3360 is signed (fo. 1^{r}) 'Thomas Hobbes at Paris 1646' and from the fact that, when Hobbes refers to the work in a letter of 1 June 1646, he implies that it has been completed for some time. See Hobbes 1994, Letter 42, p. 133.

[106] Hobbes 1994, Letters 40 and 41, pp. 125–30.

[107] Warrender 1983a, pp. 40–3.

[108] Hobbes 1983a, *Praefatio ad Lectores*, pp. 77–84.

[109] Hobbes 1983a, *Praefatio ad Lectores*, p. 84: 'si quae erronea, dura, obscurave esse viderentur, ea emendarem, mollirem atque explicarem'.

[110] So says Gassendi in a letter to Sorbière of April 1646 in Gassendi 1658, vol. 6, p. 249, col. 2.

finish and copy them out. Writing to Sorbière on 16 May, he was already able to thank him for a letter praising the completed work.[111] Although it took longer than expected for the second edition of *De Cive* to see the light,[112] Hobbes's active role in the project appears to have come to an end at this point.

Beyond this moment, however, such evidence as survives from the 1640s tends to contradict Hobbes's own later account of the gestation of *Leviathan*, and to do so in a rather astonishing way.[113] Having finished the revisions of *De Cive*, Hobbes seems to have returned at once to his interrupted labours on the opening section of his intended trilogy. His letter to Sorbière of 16 May 1646 announces his imminent withdrawal from the distractions of Paris in the hope, he says, of devoting himself with greater freedom 'to finishing off the first part of my Elements'.[114] By October he was giving his friends the impression that the treatise was well advanced. Charles Cavendish felt able to assure John Pell that, although Hobbes 'reades mathematickes sometimes to our Prince', he nevertheless 'hath spare time enough besides to goe on with his philosophie'.[115] Sorbière wrote to Gui Patin[116] around the same time to say that 'I am avidly expecting the Elements of his entire philosophy and I am urging him to send me the whole work.'[117]

Sorbière's expectations were destined to be disappointed, for in the course of the next twelve months Hobbes's life fell into one of its deepest troughs. He must already have been in difficulties in December 1646, for we find Cavendish announcing in a further letter to Pell that he now expected Hobbes to take at least another year even to finish his physics.[118] By the summer of 1647 things had gone from bad to worse, and Hobbes was forced by illness to stop work altogether. Mersenne wrote to Sorbière in early November to say that Hobbes had been contending with death for two or three months,[119] while Hobbes later recalled in his verse *Vita* that 'I was prostrated by illness for six months, and prepared myself for

[111] Hobbes 1994, Letter 40, p. 126. [112] Hobbes 1994, Letter 50, p. 153.

[113] I have been much helped in arriving at this interpretation by the chronology in Schuhmann 1998.

[114] Hobbes 1994, Letter 40, p. 127. See also Cavendish to Pell, 19 July 1646, BL Add. MS 4278, fo. 259^{r}: 'M^{r}: Hobbes is goeing out of towne to a more retired place for his s[t]udies.'

[115] Cavendish to Pell, 12 October 1646, BL Add. MS 4278, fos. 263^{r-v}.

[116] Patin became well acquainted with Hobbes in Paris. See, for example, the letter from Patin to Sorbière (1 December 1646) in Mersenne 1980, p. 660.

[117] Tönnies 1975, p. 57: 'Elementa totius philosophiae avide expecto et ut ad me transmittat urgeo.' For the date of this letter (October 1646) see Tönnies 1975, p. 367.

[118] Cavendish to Pell, 7 December 1646, BL Add. MS 4278, fo. 265^{v}: 'I doute M^{r}: Hobbes will not finish & publish his phisickes this twelvmonth.'

[119] Mersenne to Sorbière, 5 November 1647 in Mersenne 1983, pp. 522–5, at p. 524: 'Hobbius per duos aut tres menses . . . cum morte contendit.' Cf. Hobbes 1983a, Letter 26, p. 314.

the approach of death'.[120] Although he began to recover at the end of 1647,[121] he never seems to have been the same man again. It was around this time, according to Aubrey, that he first began to suffer from 'the shaking palsey in his handes', a condition that left him virtually unable to write for the last two decades of his life.[122]

As soon as Hobbes started to recover, he returned to working on *De Corpore*, the completion of which he soon began to talk about with renewed confidence. 'If the disease had not intervened', he told Sorbière in November 1647, 'I should, I think, have completed the first part of my philosophy', but 'as things now are, you can expect to receive that part about Whitsun'.[123] In August 1648 a further bulletin from Cavendish to Pell included a similar note of assurance. 'M^{r}: Hobbes hath nowe leasure to studie & I hope wee shall have his [philosophy] within a twelve-month.'[124] By 14 June 1649 we find Hobbes writing to Sorbière that 'I think I am close enough to the end of the first part (which is both the largest part and the part which contains the deepest speculations) that I shall be able, God willing, to finish it before the end of this summer'.[125] He now felt so sure of attaining his goal that he started to have engravings made of the geometrical figures he needed for some of his proofs.[126] A further letter from Cavendish to Pell in October 1649 implied that Hobbes's book was virtually done, and would actually be in print by the spring of the coming year.[127]

It may be that these references amount to nothing more than a smoke-screen, and that Hobbes decided to keep the generation of his great

[120] Hobbes 1839b, p. xcii, lines 195–6:

> Dein per sex menses morbo decumbo, propinquae
> Accinctus morti.

[121] Hobbes 1994, Letter 56, p. 164. Cf. Hobbes 1839b, p. xcii, line 195.

[122] Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 352. Hobbes 1994, Letter 94, p. 324 makes it clear that Hobbes was using an amanuensis as early as 1656. Aubrey 1898, vol. 1, p. 352 remarks that Hobbes's letters after the mid-166os were barely legible.

[123] Hobbes 1994, Letter 56, p. 164.

[124] Cavendish to Pell, 2 August 1648, BL Add. MS 4278, fo. 273^{r}.

[125] Hobbes 1994, Letter 61, p. 177.

[126] See Pell to Cavendish, 26 May 1649, BL Add. MS 4280, fo. 136^{r}: Sorbière has just told him 'that the most of the figures and diagrams, belonging to M^{r} Hobbes his Philosophy, are already graven in Copper at Paris'. It would seem that Hobbes did in fact have some of the plates engraved in advance of publication. As Beal 1987, p. 578 observes, Hobbes MSS (Chatsworth) MS A. 5 contains, in a scribal hand, some material eventually published in chapters 2 and 3 of *De Homine*, including six engraved geometrical diagrams.

[127] Cavendish to Pell, 5 October 1649, BL Add. MS 4278, fo. 291^{v}: 'I received a letter latelie from M^{r}: Hobbes which puts me in hope wee shall have his philosophie printed the next springe.' For a discussion see Hervey 1952, pp. 85–6.

Leviathan a secret even from his closest friends.[128] But most of the evidence suggests that, between 1646 and 1649, Hobbes continued to labour on *De Corpore*, and that he made a sudden decision in the autumn of 1649 to return as a matter of urgency to his work on civil science. The astonishing implication is that *Leviathan* must have been completed in less than eighteen months.

If this is the correct reading of the evidence, there must have been some extraordinary development towards the end of 1649 to spark off such a correspondingly extraordinary outburst of creative energy on Hobbes's part. Hobbes informs us in *Leviathan* that he intended his work for a specifically English audience,[129] to which he adds in his verse *Vita* that his reason for writing it in his mother tongue was to make its relevance to his fellow-citizens as clear as possible.[130] What could have given him such a sense of urgency about the need to address himself to the immediate political predicament of his native land?

The answer, I believe, is that after the execution of Charles I in January 1649, and the subsequent abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords, surviving royalists found themselves faced with two acute and closely related cases of conscience. They naturally viewed the regicide government as little better than a conquering power. One question that accordingly arose was whether they could legitimately enter into negotiations with the Council of State for the recovery of their estates (as Sir Charles Cavendish decided to do in 1649) or whether such a decision would commit them to acknowledging the legitimacy of the new regime when they ought to be questioning it at all costs.[131] The other and still more pressing difficulty arose in October 1649, and it must I think have been this development that prompted Hobbes to reach for his pen. On 11 October Parliament called on virtually the entire literate population to swear the so-called Oath of Engagement, requiring them to be 'true and faithful to the Commonwealth of England, as it is now established, without a King or House of Lords'.[132] To take such an oath was obviously to concede that, although the regicide government may originally have lacked a just title to rule, it ought nevertheless to be obeyed on the grounds

[128] This is the argument put forward in Skinner 1996. For prompting me to reconsider the evidence I am indebted to Malcolm 1996, p. 31 and Schuhmann 1998.

[129] Hobbes 1996, Epistle, p. 3 and Conclusion, pp. 482, 490.

[130] Hobbes 1839b, p. xcii, lines 197–8.

[131] Malcolm 1994c, pp. 804–5.

[132] *An Act for Subscribing the Engagement* 1986, p. 357. On the oath see Wallace 1964, p. 386 and for its extension see *Constitutional Documents 1625–1660*, p. 391. As Wallace 1964, p. 387 notes, it was repealed in January 1654.

that it had succeeded in bringing about a peaceful settlement. The grand case of conscience raised by the events of 1649 was accordingly whether the capacity of the new regime to offer peace and protection should be taken to constitute a sufficient reason for swearing allegiance to it.[133]

Hobbes believed that in *Leviathan* he had articulated a theory of political obligation capable of offering comfort to surviving royalists and all other waverers on these very points. As I argue in chapter 9, the essence of his theory is that 'the Obligation of Subjects to the Soveraign, is understood to last as long, and no longer, than the power lasteth, by which he is able to protect them'.[134] The application of this principle, Hobbes maintains, will serve in the first place to resolve the question of whether it is lawful to compound for one's estates. If a subject is 'protected by the adverse party for his Contribution', he should recognise that, since 'such contribution is every where, as a thing inevitable, (not withstanding it be an assistance to the Enemy,) esteemed lawfull; a totall Submission, which is but an assistance to the Enemy, cannot be esteemed unlawful'. To which he adds the ingenious claim that those who refuse to compound, and consequently forfeit their estates, do more harm to the loyalist cause than those who submit. This is because 'if a man consider that they who submit, assist the enemy with but part of their estates, whereas they that refuse, assist him with the whole, there is no reason to call their Submission, or Composition an Assistance; but rather a Detriment to the Enemy'.[135]

Of more importance, Hobbes goes on, is the fact that his basic argument serves to settle the question of whether it is lawful to 'engage'. As I emphasise in chapter 9, Hobbes informs us in his Review and Conclusion that the writing of *Leviathan* was 'occasioned by the disorders of the present time' and undertaken 'without other designe, than to set before mens eyes the mutuall Relation between Protection and Obedience'.[136] One aspect of this reciprocity is that, if you are no longer protected by your lawful sovereign, then your obligations are at an end. The corollary is that, if you are offered peace and protection – even by mere conquerors – you have a sufficient reason for paying allegiance as a true subject. Hobbes's fundamental principle, as he states it in chapter 21, is that 'The end of Obedience is Protection; which, wheresoever a man

[133] For an excellent discussion of the relevance of these events see Sommerville 1996, pp. 263–4.
[134] Hobbes 1996, ch. 21, p. 153 and Conclusion, p. 491.
[135] Hobbes 1996, Conclusion, pp. 484–5. [136] Hobbes 1996, Conclusion, p. 491.