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Introduction

S. A. Lloyd

The spectacular advance in Hobbes scholarship over the last half-century has resulted in both new schools of interpretation of Hobbes's political theory, and increasingly sophisticated interpretations of specific elements of that theory. Currently contested elements include the understanding and role of Hobbes's method, intended project, and materialism, his views on psychology, morality, civil liberties, rights of resistance, authorization, the state of nature, his reply to the Foole, and his views on the status of women. Hobbes debates have fragmented as commentators mix and match these different new elementary accounts in attempts to modify or to defend the interpretation of Hobbes's larger political theory each finds most compelling. This fragmentation has made for surprising alliances on diverse interpretive fronts that traverse scholastic borders, sometimes fruitfully, other times at cross-purposes. The original essays collected in this volume on the "state of the debate" in each of the essential elemental topics provide an overview and meta-analysis of the most important local debates in contemporary Hobbes studies bearing on Hobbes's political philosophy, providing welcome clarification of the scholarly debate, and enabling readers to orient their own questions within current Hobbes scholarship. Further, these authors present original research in support of their arguments for what are in many cases groundbreaking new interpretations of Hobbes's ideas.

Adrian Blau addresses the debate over which interpretive approach to Hobbes's theory is most fruitful. He argues that in order to recover Hobbes's intended arguments it is necessary to engage in philosophical analysis, and not just in (sometimes useful) contextual analysis and (indispensable) textual analysis. He models his proposed principle that we learn more from studying various exemplars of interpretation than we do from reading works about interpretive methodology, or by thinking in terms of methodological schools such as contextualist, Marxist, and philosophical, by assessing two quite different specific substantive interpretations, those

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of Skinner and of Hampton. He distinguishes what he calls philosophical thinking in the service of the "empirical" end of recovering the author's meaning/project/belief/argument – which he approves – from philosophical analysis of the author's work to serve some independent purpose. His introduction to Hampton and discussion of her as a contractarian contextualize her writings on Hobbes as philosophical thinking undertaken in the service of developing a defensible contractarian theory of justice applicable to all subject matters. She does not, in his judgment, engage in the sort of philosophical analysis of Hobbes's arguments needed to uncover his intended meaning. Blau finds that although Skinner aims to recover the arguments of the historical Hobbes, his efforts at the requisite sort of philosophical thinking sometimes fall short.

A. P. Martinich offers a more finely-grained discussion of interpretive challenges in identifying Hobbes's communicative intentions and distinguishing between his illocutionary acts and (possibly unintended) perlocutionary acts. He notes that contextualism cannot settle disagreements about Hobbes's view of the relation between politics and religion because it cannot settle what Hobbes believed about religion. He offers a forceful, multipronged argument that those interpreters who take Hobbes to have been an atheist out to subvert religious belief by his treatment of it have proffered evidence that does not in fact support their contention. "Non-theist" interpreters put more stock in the opinions of Hobbes's critics than of his friends, and in the opinions of lesser thinkers over more formidable ones. They take as evidence of Hobbes's unbelief his stances on a series of religious positions that were also held by thinkers who were unquestionably believers. They take his inconsistencies about religious matters as evidence of a design to subvert (even though Christian doctrine itself contains numerous contradictions) while refusing to give similar significance to his inconsistencies about other matters. They insist that Hobbes was using irony, avowal by disavowal, insinuation, and other modes of dissembling which are at odds with his goal of establishing political stability through the development of politics as a science, which, on his own explicit account, demands clarity and precision. They attribute to him a willingness to declare obvious falsehoods and to advance obviously fallacious arguments that is contrary to the documented evidence of his intellectual pride and concern for his reputation. And, of course, they discount both his testimony as to his religious beliefs and his religious practice in worshiping and in taking deathbed rites. Complementary to his argument that non-theistic interpreters' (alleged) evidence of Hobbes's

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atheism is no such thing, Martinich marshals formidable evidence in support of his own contention that Hobbes wanted "not a brave new world, but a safe old world, reinforced by an accurate understanding of the Bible and compatible with the new science."

Gianni Paganini traces interpretive disagreement over whether Hobbes offers a philosophical system with a unified method. Developing an original analysis of "passionate thought" in the Hobbesian passion of curiosity, Paganini argues that the main reason interpreters have offered for thinking that Hobbes's system is *not* unified, namely that his mechanical materialism does not have the resources to account for central aspects of human agency, such as intentionality, goal-oriented behavior, and the normative nature of both science and morals, does not stand up to scrutiny. Indeed, many of the objections addressed to Hobbes's general philosophy relate more or less directly to its materialism and in particular to the mechanical form it assumed in accordance with the science of his time, and stem, on Paganini's diagnosis, from not incorporating into Hobbes's theory of mind the key passion of curiosity. On his analysis, curiosity requires memory and develops into the procedure by which men dissect and compose their sensations, giving rise to analysis and synthesis (the bases of method), processes that become both easier and increasingly complex thanks to the use of language. This kind of passionate thought allows Hobbes to account for the complex thoughts and goal-oriented behaviors assumed in his moral and political philosophy.

Samantha Frost tackles the problem of how Hobbesian persons could have the sociable orientation necessary for the success of Hobbes's political system at the deeper, more foundational level of his materialism. She develops a revolutionary account of the structure of subjectivity of Hobbesian humans that explains why their impetus to "persist in living" does not necessitate a narrowly self-interested preoccupation with conditions of their own bodies, but instead compels an outward orientation toward our interdependent social world. The living body's impetus to persist in living stretches toward the conditions for future persistence, which, for humans, include acquiring such powers as draw others into its orbit to aid in realizing its desires. Interdependence is a primary condition and constraint for action, but uncertainty about the future conditions for action undermines the forward-looking, power-gathering endeavor to persist. A commonwealth removes that uncertainty, creating a hospitable environment for future persistence. Frost's groundbreaking account of the outward orientation of the impulse to persist in living allows Hobbes the

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rich and realistic psychology he actually uses in his moral and political theory. That psychology need not be rooted solely in introspection, but may now be understood as continuous with his scientific conception of humans as living matter. Frost thus converges with Paganini in the judgment that Hobbes's practical philosophy receives support from and forms a coherent system with his speculative philosophy. She argues further that her interpretation reinforces Lloyd's account of Hobbes's moral philosophy as rooted in the individual's concern to make its agency effective.

Michael J. Green addresses four pressing questions about Hobbes's conception of human nature: Which faculties of the mind are unique to human beings? Which faculties of the mind develop naturally rather than through artificial methods? What explains the variation in human thought and action? Are people naturally sociable? He argues that what is most interesting about Hobbes's account of the state of nature is that an egoistic theory of motivation plays little role in this part of Hobbes's argument. He finds that Hobbes's treatment of human nature shows that the problems of securing political order are overstated because even people who pursue their own interests are likely to opt for peaceful pursuits and so repressive measures are not needed to keep them in line. Yet they are also understated because religious belief, which is a consequence of the use of our natural faculties and thus ineliminable, promises rewards and punishments greater than any state can match, and so the state cannot rely on its threat of punishment alone to keep order. Green explores whether Hobbes should be considered a pessimist about human nature, and concludes that Hobbes *celebrates* the fact that human beings have escaped their natural condition through the artificial creations of language and the state.

Gabriella Slomp provides a more targeted engagement with interpretations attributing a narrowly egoistic psychology to Hobbesian persons with her original investigation into the role of benevolence and the love of others in Hobbes's political theory. She lays out the textual bases for interpretations finding Hobbes to espouse psychological egoism or tautological egoism and shows how various important interpretations have sought to draw on these to establish either the impossibility or the rarity of disinterested benevolence. Slomp compellingly argues that Hobbes had little interest in either establishing the possibility of benevolence or in encouraging it, because benevolence may operate to damage the commonwealth. On Slomp's analysis, benevolence is partial, exclusionary, and potentially divisive, and may motivate would-be benefactors to act in ways that undermine civil peace. Subjects' ignorance about what is truly good for

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themselves and their society is the real problem; it makes no difference whether ignorant subjects do the wrong thing out of self-interested motives or out of altruistic ones. The jolting conclusion of her investigation is that much less hangs on the question whether Hobbes regards people as egoists than scholarly debate has supposed.

S. A. Lloyd addresses the wide range of interpretive disagreement over what Hobbes's moral theory is, or even whether he has one. She investigates Hobbes's positions on the various components of a moral theory – conceptions of right, good, virtue, moral responsibility, and moral motivation – concluding that Hobbes's moral theory is unified by his complex conception of reason. Reason imposes consistency norms of both rationality and reasonableness, with the latter yielding a conception of rightness as reciprocity. She argues that his conception of moral goodness – goodness as sociability – also essentially depends on conformity with reason, participating in constituting a distinctive sort of moral theory that is neither teleological, as is usually supposed, nor classically deontological. Lloyd finds in Hobbes a novel and attractive moral theory that is not intuitionist, subjectivist, projectivist, or contractarian, not egoist or rule-egoist, not a virtue-ethic, and not a divine command theory.

In her chapter on civil liberties and the right of resistance, **Susanne Sreedhar** untangles the strands of interpretation of Hobbes's notoriously puzzling "true liberties of subjects." These immunities from moral fault for subjects' disobedience to certain sorts of sovereign command raise a host of interpretive questions extending to the core of Hobbes's political philosophy. Sreedhar presents and evaluates interpretive controversies as to what unifies a diverse collection of moral immunities; whether they depend on rights that are inalienable or merely not alienated; who decides whether they have been triggered; whether the admission of the true liberties into Hobbes's theory constitutes an accidental or an intentional conferral on subjects of a right to rebel, and whether they form the centerpiece of a theory actually intended to advocate limited sovereignty. Sreedhar shows that the issues emanating from efforts to interpret Hobbes's true liberties extend to such basic questions as who counts as a subject, and whether Hobbes's argument targets all rebellion on any grounds whatsoever, or, as per her own original argument, only the more limited class of rebellions grounded on ideology rather than on necessity.

Johann Sommerville addresses scholarly debate over whether Hobbes held Christian beliefs, whether his interpretation of the Bible shifted over

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time, and whether his beliefs concerning Christian religion even matter to his theory of politics. He discusses Hobbes's views of God, faith, the epistemological status of prophesy, miracles, the authority of the Bible, the alleged infallibility of the church, and salvation. He argues, against Tuck, that Hobbes affords no religious exemption from civil obedience to Jews and Christians, but finds that Hobbes addresses their fear of divine punishment by attributing responsibility for wrongful worship, or the profession of incorrect religious beliefs done at the sovereign's command to the sovereign and not to the subject, a conclusion reinforced by the more general account of responsibility documented in Lloyd's chapter. Sommerville considers the contention of some of Hobbes's contemporaries that the effect of Hobbes's treatment of religion was to place Christianity under suspicion, and the current nontheistic (to borrow Martinich's term) interpretations by Curley and Skinner that urge that Hobbes's intention in so treating religion was precisely to have that effect. Although he finds discerning Hobbes's personal religious views difficult, and notes that according to Hobbes's theory, external action is all that should matter to civil authorities, he argues that Hobbes's distinction between beliefs that are necessary for salvation (fundamental) and those that are not may deprive the question of the orthodoxy of Hobbes's views of much of its significance. Because the contentious views Hobbes propounded were only about non-fundamental matters, even had he been a sincere believer, he could have propounded them without fearing the loss of eternal life. Sommerville finds plausible Wright's contention that whether Hobbes was or was not a Christian hardly matters to the interpretation of his political theory.

Paul Weithman's meticulous textual survey and careful philosophical analysis clears a path through the thicket of thorns Hobbes creates in his discussion of persons natural and artificial, authors, ownership, authorization, and representation truly or by fiction. Engaging the debate among Runciman, Skinner, and Martinich, Weithman considers the ontological status of the state and the question of how it is possible for such an entity to act. He argues that we have what he terms "maker's knowledge" based on our own definitions of terms and knowledge of our own actions that a commonwealth is a person "by fiction" and that it is able to act in virtue of its sovereign's acting. A novelty of his reading is that it suggests Hobbes's treatment of the commonwealth was influenced, in ways hitherto unnoticed, by the corporation theory of the great English jurist Sir Edward Coke. He further suggests that new research on how to understand the existence of corporations may eventually help us to attain maker's knowledge of the way Hobbes thinks the state can exist and act. Turning to

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Hobbes's murky notion of authorization, Weithman addresses the debate over whether authorization does any work for Hobbes that a mere granting of rights could not do, siding with Green against Gauthier and Kavka in his contention that it does. He argues that Hobbes erred in asserting that one can authorize another to do only what one has the right to do oneself, perhaps misled by his analogy between authorship and ownership, which, as Weithman demonstrates, trades on an equivocation on "ownership" that forced an equivocation on "authorship." He concurs with Green's conclusion that authorization's real contribution is to immunize the sovereign and its functionaries from liability for any wrongs they may commit. Weithman, like Green and many others, assumes that liability entails moral responsibility, and so perceives an apparent contradiction in Hobbes's insistence that although subjects authorize all their sovereign's actions, iniquitous actions done at the sovereign's command are the moral responsibility of the sovereign alone.

The so-called state of nature is a centerpiece of Hobbes's political theory, but what exactly is it, and how exactly does it function in his argument? **Peter Vanderschraaf**, in his chapter on the character and significance of the state of nature, assesses competing conceptions of the state of nature, including as a condition of liberty unbounded by any moral constraints, as a condition lacking enforcement of norms, and as a condition of universal private judgment. He considers Hobbes's varying pronouncements on whether the "condition of mere nature" ever actually exists, and offers a novel analysis of Hobbes's argument that such a condition issues in a war of all against all. Vanderschraaf produces reasons for thinking that the outcome of universal war depends not on any assumption that humans are intellectually or morally flawed, but instead on the absence of a necessary sort of public information. His argument can be seen either to support or to challenge Green's conclusion that people in a state of nature are likely to opt for peaceful pursuit of their interests over going to war. Although Hobbes contends that only the erection of a sovereign will enable people to avoid a war of all against all, Vanderschraaf's analysis suggests that there may be mechanisms short of sovereignty that could provide the requisite public information. His interpretation thus belongs to what Blau classifies as philosophical interpretation in the service of a philosophical end.

In his chapter, "Hobbes's Confounding Foole," **Michael Byron** explains the challenge posed by Hobbes's Foole and critically examines several of the most promising interpretations of Hobbes's reply to that challenge. He proposes to remedy what he sees as a deficiency common to all previous interpretations:

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they do not explain what he takes to be Hobbes's position, that the unjust Foole is the selfsame atheistic Foole of Psalms (rather than that there are distinct types of people – God deniers and rationality of justice deniers – who are foolish in different ways). Byron argues that we can establish that the unjust Foole and the atheistic Foole must be identical by distinguishing between what he calls, following Martinich, a "primary" state of nature in which injustice is impossible because the common power needed for valid covenanting does not exist, and a "secondary" state of nature in which injustice can exist because people acknowledge God as a common power to validate covenants. By denying the existence of God, an atheist locates himself in a primary state of nature; in that state, the unjust Foole's contention that there is "no such thing as justice" is in fact correct, and just behavior is not rational. Byron concludes that in the primary/secondary state of nature distinction we find a conceptual connection between God and justice that explains why a person denies the existence of God if and only if she denies the rationality of justice. He sees as a virtue of his account, according to which "the inverse of the unjust and atheistic Foole is God," that it fits with Hobbes's Christian commitments.

Eva Odzuck investigates the contribution feminist interpretations of Hobbes, and feminist efforts to address questions to Hobbes, have made to advancing understanding of his political philosophy. These interpretations, she argues, were often developed as critiques of liberalism's presuppositions, and employed neo-Marxist and psychoanalytic methodologies. Although Odzuck expresses doubts as to the value of these interpretive methodologies, she credits feminist interpreters with calling attention to crucial questions for Hobbes research, including the importance of power relations, of his commonwealth by acquisition story, and the meaning of his assumption of natural equality. She discusses the feminist treatments of Hobbes in Schochet, Pateman, Hirschmann, and Di Stephano which pose what she terms "the feminist challenge" to Hobbes, namely, that despite his apparent neutrality in assuming natural equality between the sexes, Hobbes's theory is deeply and systematically biased against women. Odzuck critically evaluates responses to the feminist challenge from several of the Hobbes scholars who have risen to it, including Newey, Sreedhar, and Lloyd. She argues against those efforts to acquit Hobbes of a systematically sexist, misogynistic theory that Hobbes did view women as inferior to men in ways that would, according to his views on power acquisition, quite naturally and predictably both lead to and justify the subordination of women.

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Luc Foisneau returns to both general questions of interpretation and interpretation of Hobbes's reply to the Foole specifically, building a case that *mis*interpretation, far from being a waste of effort, can be, sometimes, unexpectedly productive. He argues that Gauthier's adoption of Wolff's misreading of Rawls's project as an attempt to derive morality from rationality leads Gauthier to attempt a Hobbesian contractarianism. Gauthier's own misreading of some elements of Hobbes's reply to the Foole results in Gauthier's distinctive, "emergentist" theory of morality as the constrained maximization of rational self-interest. Foisneau sees some value even for Hobbes interpretation in this narrative of successive misreadings: it may bring us to the conclusion that Hobbes's rational person is not narrowly self-focused, but attentive and responsive to others' perceptions of her reliability as a cooperative partner. The outward focus or social orientation Foisneau discovers receives foundational support from the interpretation of materialism in Frost's chapter, and comports with the account of moral motivation in Lloyd's chapter.

So that every reader can find them in any edition, references to *Leviathan*, to the Latin *Leviathan* (OL), to *De Cive,* and to *Philosophical Rudiments Concerning Government and Society* are by chapter and paragraph number, and references to *The Elements of Law* are by part, chapter, and paragraph number. In some cases authors referring to these works have included supplementary page numbers of the specific editions they prefer, which editions they identify.

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