

## **AUTHORITY AND EDUCATION – POLITICAL STABILITY IN A DETERMINED WORLD**

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**ABSTRACT:** The stability of political systems permeates not only Hobbes' political theory, but also his ethical, legal, and historical thought. One specific problem in this context, and one his contemporaries took more seriously than current Hobbes scholarship, is the consequences Hobbes' mechanistic natural philosophy has for his practical philosophy. As human beings are as strictly determined as any other animate or inanimate object, the very notion of responsibility which lies at the heart of moral and political theory, seems to be defeated. The orthodox interpretation long held the view that Hobbes's solution to the problem was simply to argue that to counter a strong antisocial impulse all you need (and can) do is to produce an even stronger impulse to be social. Thus it has been argued that the threat of punishment is the glue that holds Hobbesian societies together. In *Behemoth*, however, Hobbes argues strongly not for violent passions, but for false opinions as the cause of the English civil war. Already from the *Elements* onwards, Hobbes puts an immense weight on opinions. The remedy of epistemic defects is at the center of the duties of a sovereign. Making people understand the notions of law and punishment, of authority and society via education is more important than the direct interference with people's desires via the threat of punishment. Accordingly, I will argue that while threat of punishment is an important aspect of Hobbes' solution to creating political stability, political education plays an equally central, if often underestimated role.

**KEYWORDS:** Authority, Education, Free Will

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## I. Determinism and political stability

The stability of political systems is at the center of Thomas Hobbes' philosophy. The issue permeates not only his political theory, but also his ethical, legal, and historical thought. One specific problem in this context – and one his contemporaries took more seriously than current Hobbes scholarship – are the consequences Hobbes' mechanistic natural philosophy has for his practical philosophy.

Hobbes' political theory never overtly leaves the context of his philosophical system at large. Accordingly, Hobbes consistently emphasizes the deterministic implications of his mechanistic natural philosophy. Already in *De Cive*, Hobbes introduces the striving for self-preservation couched in the language of determinism as “necessitate naturae”<sup>2</sup> and compares it to the motions of a stone following the demands of gravity. At the same time he points out that acting this way satisfies the criteria that need to be fulfilled for an act to be free.<sup>3</sup> Also in *De Cive*, he introduces his famous description of liberty as an “absentia impedimentorum motus”, an absence of obstacles to motion.<sup>4</sup>

Indeed, human behaviour is conceived as a complex but strictly material series of motions. External objects work on the matter of the sense organs of a person. These sense organs relay this motion to the brain where it registers as imaginations or thoughts. The motion is also propagated to the heart where it hinders or furthers the vital motion. This effect on vital motion is connected with the imagination of the object, and the object is judged as good or bad, depending on its effect on vital motion.<sup>5</sup> The experience of objects is being stored in the memory, meaning that the brain retains the motions made both by reactions to the sensual impression of an object by the sense organs and by the reaction to it proceeding from the heart.<sup>6</sup> Memory then provides motivations for pursuing or evading particular objects based on the effects they had or are expected to have on a person.<sup>7</sup> The process of weighing experiences with respect to a possible object of action, the deliberation process, is just that: an

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<sup>2</sup>*De Cive* I.7, OL II, 163.

<sup>3</sup>It is interesting to see that this is not yet the case in the *Elements*, where “necessity of nature” refers to consequences of actions that do not proceed from “appetite or fear”: *Elements* I.12.3, 62.

<sup>4</sup>*De Cive* IX.9, OL II, 259. This definition is narrowed to an absence of *external* obstacles of motion already in *Of Liberty and Necessity*: EW IV, 273. On the development of Hobbes' theory of liberty and the significance of the alteration mentioned, cf. Skinner 2008, esp. 130 ff.

<sup>5</sup>*Elements* I.7.1, 28. Cf. also *Leviathan* VI, 118, *De Homine* XI.1, OL II, 94 f. and XI.4, OL II, 96. on sense cf. *De Corpore* IV.1.2 f., EW I, 389 ff.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. especially *De Corpore* IV.1.1, EW I, 389. Much more could and should be said about the role of memory as a distinguishing factor between animated and inanimated bodies. Cf. Frost 2008, ch.1 for more on this subject.

<sup>7</sup>E.g. *Leviathan* VI, 129.

automatism that is caused by the prospect or the memory of a particular object and the circumstances of the person while deliberating. The process itself consists merely in a succession of alternating inclinations, and it ends with a decision to pursue, evade or let go of the object.<sup>8</sup> This act of deciding, which is nothing but “the last appetite in deliberation”, i.e. another internal motion that simply happens to move the body at large, is all that is the will.<sup>9</sup>

With human beings viewed as strictly determined, and thus considered to be as little free as any other animate or inanimate object, the very notion of responsibility, which lies at the heart of moral and political theory, seems to be defeated. If people act on external impulses, and if the will is nothing but the strongest of these impulses, it seems that people cannot be held responsible for their immoral acts – breach of contract – or their politically undesirable ones – breach of civil laws.

This problem was already noted by Hobbes’ contemporaries, and discussed most thoroughly by Bishop John Bramhall. He argues that “this very persuasion that there is no true liberty, is able to overthrow all societies and commonwealths in the world.” Specifically, “[t]he laws are unjust, which prohibit that which a man cannot possibly shun.”<sup>10</sup> Bramhall fears to be faced with a universal fatalism on the broadest possible scale, including the irrelevance of study and instruction, reward and punishment, counsel and command. He understands the very belief in determinism to be the end of all possible human motivation.<sup>11</sup>

The question of the possibility of obedience to the laws in a determined world is indeed a pressing one. The orthodox interpretation long held the view that Hobbes’ solution to the problem was simply to argue that to counter a strong antisocial impulse all you need to (and can) do is produce an even stronger impulse to be social.<sup>12</sup> Thus it has been argued that the threat of punishment is the glue that holds Hobbesian societies together.<sup>13</sup>

And it seems that Hobbes himself supports this reading. This line of argument starts already with the controversial but necessary claim that covenants entered into from fear are

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid. VI, 127.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.; cf. *De Homine* XI.2, OL II, 95 f.

<sup>10</sup> *Questions*, EW V, 150 f. As the *Questions* contain the complete argument made by Bramhall in *A Defence of True Liberty*, and as they are the most extant version of the text, Bramhall’s arguments are quoted after Hobbes’ book. Cf. Chappell 1999, xxxi on the state of the text.

<sup>11</sup> *Questions*, EW V, 150 f.

<sup>12</sup> See Strauss 1936, 129 ff. for a particularly sophisticated example of this.

<sup>13</sup> E.g. Spragens 1973, 196 f.

valid.<sup>14</sup> The claim is necessary because mutual fear is argued to be the motivational force behind entering into society<sup>15</sup>, and because “feare of punishment” by the “common power” is the source of political stability.<sup>16</sup>In the first case, we find mutual fear of people to be a motivating factor in the state of nature, while in society, and in the second case, this mutual fear is redirected to become the people’s common fear of the sovereign power. As a result, fear, when connected with right reasoning, is argued by Hobbes to be a strong motive for social behavior in human beings. The most unequivocal defense along this line, however, can be found in the *Questions*, where Hobbes, responding to Bramhall’s above-quoted charges, introduces the following example:

suppose the law on pain of death prohibit stealing, and there be a man who by the strength of temptation is necessitated to steal, and is thereupon put to death: does not this punishment deter others from theft? Is it not a cause that others steal not? Doth it not frame and make their will to justice?<sup>17</sup>

So we seem to be faced with three different reasons for believing that Hobbes wedded his political theory to his determinism by following the orthodox reading. First, mutual fear is the reason for entering into society. Secondly, fear of the sovereign is the reason for obedience of the law. Thirdly, fear of punishment, even if it does not ‘frame the will’ of the perpetrator, can do the same to bystanders. In all three cases we are faced with a political technique akin to the one Spinoza developed in the *Tractatus theologico-politicus*, one that works with institutions that overcome the passionate make-up of a person by opposing it with a stronger passion: fear.<sup>18</sup>

## II. Authority and education

While the political use of fear is certainly an important (and sobering) aspect of Hobbes’ political theory, it is neither the only nor the most fundamental source of his political program.<sup>19</sup>Crucially, political stability and punishment both are complex phenomena that partake of the natural as well as the normative world. Political stability is based not on brute force, but on authorized, and thus legitimate, power. Analogously, punishment is authorized harm. To distinguish these phenomena from other forms of power and harm, there needs to be

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<sup>14</sup>*Leviathan*XIV, 198.

<sup>15</sup>*De Cive*I.2, OL II, 161.

<sup>16</sup>*Leviathan*XVII, 223. Cf. also *ibid.*XX, 252.

<sup>17</sup>*Questions*, EW V, 152.

<sup>18</sup> Spinoza, *Tractatus theologico-politicus*, ch. 17, III 202. It should be noted, however, that Spinoza argues that a wise political actor tries to operate on people’s hopes and also their greed, not their fears primarily: Spinoza, *Tractatus politicus* X.6 and X.8, III 355 ff.

<sup>19</sup>Even in the *Questions*, the purpose of punishment is „the framing and necessitating of the will to virtue“: *Questions*, EW V 177.

an understanding of the normative notion of authority, unless punishment should be taken for a mere act of hostility. Equally, the difference between the threat of a sovereign and that of a random fellow human being is all the difference between civilized society and the state of nature.

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes makes this argument in the context of his treatment of the sovereign's duties:

And the grounds of these Rights [of sovereignty], have the rather need to be diligently, and truly taught; because they cannot be maintained by any Civill Law, or terrour of legal punishment. For a Civill Law, that shall forbid Rebellion, (and such is all resistance to the essentiall Rights of Sovereignty,) is not (as a Civill Law) any obligation, but by vertue onely of the Law of Nature, that forbiddeth the violation of Faith; which naturall obligation if men know not, they cannot know the Right of any Law the Sovereign maketh. And for the Punishment, they take it but for an act of Hostility; which when they think they have strength enough, they will endeavour by acts of Hostility, to avoyd.<sup>20</sup>

This normative dimension of punishment and political rule doesn't touch on the issue of political stability so much because it keeps the "needy men, and hardy"<sup>21</sup> that strive for leadership in rebellion at bay. The more important element is their potential followers.

If *Leviathan* is Hobbes' treatise on political stability, explaining "the mutuall Relation of Protection and Obedience"<sup>22</sup>, then *Behemoth* is his investigation into the sources of political instability as much as his attempt to understand the unraveling of the political order he grew up in. Interestingly, instead of a lack of fear, Hobbes highlights as the crucial reason for political instability a combination of ignorance and opinion on behalf of the followers of the revolutionary leaders. After introducing a total of six classes of 'leaders' in rebellion<sup>23</sup>, Hobbes goes to mention that "the people in general were so ignorant of their duty, as that not one perhaps of ten thousand knew what right any man had to command him."<sup>24</sup> While the seducers in rebellion are either using false education themselves (such as the Catholics and Presbyterians who preach a church- or self-made interpretation of the scripture) or are miseducated (such as the offspring of noble families who get a false notion both of heroism

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<sup>20</sup> *Leviathan* XXX, 377.

<sup>21</sup> The men disposed to war because they are "not contented with their present condition" that Hobbes mentions in *ibid.* XI, 162.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, Review & Conclusion, 728.

<sup>23</sup> To wit, (1) preachers in general, (2) Catholics, (3) Protestants, (4) young Gentlemen educated in the Greek and Roman histories, (5) the City and (6) the "needy men, and hardy" already referred to in *Leviathan: Behemoth* I, 2 ff.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* I, 4.

and of civil liberty from the reading of Roman and Greek historians), the followers without whom every rebellion would be doomed are at fault only but disastrously by being ignorant of their duties or the necessities and normative foundations of common-wealths.<sup>25</sup> This ignorance leads to false opinions concerning these normative foundations, a fact which has catastrophic consequences for political stability because, as Hobbes argues almost apodictically: “the power of the mighty hath no foundation but in the opinion and belief of the people.”<sup>26</sup>

It is in this context that fear enters the picture. Fear, as an instrument within the political technology available to kings and rebels alike, can be directed towards punishment in this life or in the next. If it were reasonable to believe in the truth of the Catholic and Protestant threats of hell-fire then it would be unreasonable to follow the sovereign who can threaten only with worldly punishment<sup>27</sup>; analogously, if it were reasonable to believe that a republican liberty were all that prevents us from being subjected to horrific slavery then fear of the latter may reasonably be larger than fear of civil punishment.<sup>28</sup> However, both of these claims are false.

If a citizen’s opinions are based on irrational fears, he will be prone to irrational actions. These fears are based on categorical misunderstandings; it would be right to act on them if they were correct but they are wrong. Consequently, and equally categorically, no greater fear can be extorted e.g. by a threat of worldly punishment by the sovereign. These fears can only be allayed (and the opinions based on them altered) by forming the opinions of the subjects, by “framing their will to virtue”, as Hobbes had it in the *Questions*<sup>29</sup>, this time, however, not by threats of punishment.

As a consequence, Hobbes’ solution to the problem in *Behemoth* is clear: “the fault [...] may be easily mended, by mending the Universities”.<sup>30</sup> Why are the universities the place to start? Because they are the source of all education, as they produce the preachers and

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<sup>25</sup> They miscalculate the status both of authority and of property: *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* I, 16.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. *De Cive* XVIII.14, OL II, 431.

<sup>28</sup> This would be Locke’s famous argument in the *Second Treatise* that “[h]e that in the State of Nature, would take away that Freedom, that belongs to any one in that State, must necessarily be supposed to have a design to take away every thing else”: Locke 1689, II.3, § 17.

<sup>29</sup> *Questions*, EW V, 177.

<sup>30</sup> *Behemoth* II, 71. Interestingly, censorship is *not* the solution: „A state can constrain obedience, but convince no error, nor alter the mind of them that believe they have the better reason. Suppression of doctrines does but unite and exasperate, that is, increase both the malice and power of them that have already believed them“: *ibid.* II, 62.

teachers that instruct the lower strata of society from the pulpit and the higher ones as tutors and private teachers.<sup>31</sup> With this, *Behemoth* doesn't place a new emphasis on education, but repeats tenets that Hobbes introduced in the first version of his treatment of the duties of the sovereign in the *Elements*, and that he maintained both in *De Cive* and in *Leviathan*, where, as we saw, he argued for the "rather diligently and thoroughly" teaching of the foundations of peace as a necessary requisite for political stability: sufficient power to uphold peace and the instruction of subjects in the foundations of this power are both necessary conditions for peace while none of them are by themselves sufficient.<sup>32</sup>

### III. Education and determinism

Once we accept that education plays a central role in enabling political stability in Hobbes, two pressing issues remain. The first one is to understand how education is possible in a determined world. The second issue refers to the content of political education: If education is both possible and necessary to political stability, is the truth more conducive to its end than propaganda, and reason more so than rhetoric?

The first issue refers back to the fact that Hobbes emphasizes the connections between his psychology and his physics, i.e. that he constructs a deterministic psychology that makes it unclear how education could work in this framework. Luckily, it seems that determinism works in favor of education.

To see this, we have to take a look at the structure of the passions that make up the will. With the exception of the simplest forms of appetite and aversion, all passions contain a cognitive component. This is so, because they are all about assessing objects (things, actions etc.). Thus, fear is an "*Aversion*, with an opinion of *Hurt* from the object".<sup>33</sup> Other passions are differently structured but what they all have in common is that they describe relations between objects, their impact on our vital motion (they are desirable or to be avoided), and an assessment of their probability (their attaining or avoiding can be achieved or not).

We can see, then, how the opinions of people become the foundation of the power of the mighty and how they work on the motivation of people. For ultimately, while we desire or flee different objects depending on our tastes or knowledge about them, there is what Hobbes,

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. *Leviathan* XXX, 384 f.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* XXX, 376.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* VI, 123.

in the Foreword to *Leviathan*, calls the “similitude of *Passions*”<sup>34</sup>: While different passions are differently structured, the same passion, say fear, in general always has the same structure in different persons. People fear different things not because they somehow ‘fear differently’, but because they assess objects differently. Their assessment of the object can be altered, of course, through fact of fiction, and by altering it, the behavior of the person necessarily changes in that if, e.g. I am of the opinion that there is no such thing as hell-fire, my fear of it will be reduced to nothing because I believe that the object doesn’t exist any more than ghosts and fairies. (More complex passions entail more complex assessments of objects.)

With this relationship of passions, opinions, and the will in place, I now turn to education. Education itself consists in the forming of manners (the ‘framing of the will’) through reason, authority, custom and, generally, habituation.<sup>35</sup> Hobbes has a very high opinion of the powers of education, often comparing the mind of a person to a clean sheet that can be written on by the sovereign and his authorized teachers and preachers.<sup>36</sup> However, the mind can also be “paper already scribbled over”<sup>37</sup>, and then education will have a hard time altering opinions. The problem, however, is that, because education is itself merely a technology, its results will be manners, but, depending on the qualities of the education, good or bad manners, manners conducive to peace or to war.

Presenting people with different assessments of objects can alter their passions, then, and as the will is nothing but the effective passion in deliberating about any object, people can be said to be educated by giving them reasons for assessing objects this way or another.

However, if peaceful citizens are the goal of education and if one of the prerequisites of peace is not the truth but the singularity of opinions<sup>38</sup>, the second issue arises: Is proper education one that teaches the truth or is it merely a form of propaganda? I can alter someone’s judgment of an object or action by giving specious and rhetoric reasons, or by conspicuous and logical ones.

In what little has been written on Hobbesian education, the majority of commentators opt for the latter. Geoffrey Vaughan argues that Hobbes wanted the nexus between education and fear to be maintained by propaganda that would even include the university curriculum,

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., Foreword, 82.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. *De Homine* XIII, OL II, 111 ff.

<sup>36</sup>*Leviathan* XXX, 379.

<sup>37</sup>*Elements* I.10.8, 51.

<sup>38</sup>Cf. *Leviathan* XXIX, 365.



brainwashing more than educating even the preachers and teachers to be<sup>39</sup>, while Teresa Bejan would reduce the propaganda part of education to the receivers of the preachings and teachings.<sup>40</sup> Kinch Hoekstra finally refers to the *Leviathan* passage about the punishability of true philosophy, arguing that if “disobedience may lawfully be punished in them, that against the Laws teach even true Philosophy”<sup>41</sup> then the truth of a doctrine is not the ultimate goal of teaching.<sup>42</sup>

Looking for Hobbes’ own words on the subject, one best starts with the *Elements*. There, as in all three versions of his political philosophy while talking about the duties of the sovereign, he argues that “[a]nother thing necessary, is the rooting out from the consciences of men all those opinions which seem to justify, and give pretence of right to rebellious actions” and that these opinions “cannot be taken away by force, and upon the sudden: they must therefore be taken away also, by time and education.”<sup>43</sup> And while Hobbes adds only a short paragraph to this, it contains his theory of political education in a nutshell:

And seeing the said opinions have proceeded from private and public teaching, and those teachers have received them from grounds and principles, which they have learned in the Universities, from the doctrine of Aristotle, and others [...]: there is no doubt, if the true doctrine concerning the law of nature, and the properties of a body politic, and the nature of law in general, were perspicuously set down, and taught in the universities, but that young men, who come thither void of prejudice, and whose minds are yet as white paper, capable of any instruction, would more easily receive the same, and afterward teach it to the people, both in books and otherwise, than now they do the contrary.<sup>44</sup>

Here, we have basically all ingredients of Hobbesian political education in one paragraph. There is, first, a bipartite structure: the people who instigate rebellion are as misguided and ignorant as their teachers, indeed they reproduce what they have learned from them. And, as we have seen, taking education from authorities, while necessary for teaching<sup>45</sup>, is also potentially problematic (depending, as it is, on the quality of the teachers), so that the primary fault lies with the teachers who have learned their doctrine at the universities. What they would have needed to be taught, secondly, is a ‘true doctrine’, so that the students who go on to become preachers, teachers, and tutors are actually learning the truth about civil

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<sup>39</sup>Vaughan 2002, 43.

<sup>40</sup>Bejan 2010, 617.

<sup>41</sup>*Leviathan* XLVI, 703.

<sup>42</sup>Hoekstra 2006, 35 f.

<sup>43</sup>*Elements* II.9.8, 183.

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*, 183 f.

<sup>45</sup>*De Homine* XIII.7, OL II, 115 f.

society. And, thirdly, the students are void of prejudice, but this certainly cannot mean that they enter the university unaware of moral or civic duties or without a notion of justice, gratitude, equality, equity and the like. They have simply no fixed opinions yet, none they are “vehemently in love with”<sup>46</sup>, and it is in this sense that they are ‘clean paper’, ‘not yet scribbled over’.

Chapter 13 of *De Cive* presents the same argument. Hobbes starts out by arguing that, as all actions of man proceed from his opinion of the good and bad to follow them, i.e. in the civil realm “praemii et poenae”, reward and punishment, it is part of the right of the sovereign to govern the opinions of the citizens.<sup>47</sup> Hethen goes on to insist that these doctrines need to be rooted out, “non imperando, sed docendo”, not “terrore poenarum, sed perspicuitate rationum”.<sup>48</sup> The respective doctrines crept “in animos rudium” through sermons and daily discourse, and they originally crept into the not so rude minds of the preachers and teachers “a doctoribus adolescentiae suae in academicis publicis”.<sup>49</sup> Accordingly, if the sovereign wants to introduce “sanam doctrinam”, he has to start with the universities. What happens there is also expressed clearly. The universities are supposed to lay “fundamenta doctrinae civilis vera et vere demonstrata”, true and truly demonstrated civil doctrines, to instruct the *plebs* “privatim et publice” after their graduation. Thus it is the explicit duty of the sovereign to teach true doctrines concerning civil society.<sup>50</sup>

But is Hobbes being consistent in his theory? What about the claim that authority may ban even true philosophy?<sup>51</sup> I would argue that the claim Hoekstra mentions refers to the legal power of the sovereign, while Hobbes’ doctrine of education refers to the prudential basis of political stability. As both these aspects of Hobbes’ theory concern means to peace, they both ultimately refer to the realm of morality. So the sovereign acts immorally in imprudently banning true philosophy if (and only if) he could allow it as a part of the citizens’ harmless liberty.<sup>52</sup> Legally, he is always entitled to act imprudently, as he is not bound by laws. Endangering the purpose of politics by being imprudent is immoral, however, in that

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<sup>46</sup> *Leviathan* VII, 132.

<sup>47</sup> *De Cive* VI.11, OL II, 222.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* XIII.9, OL II, 302.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, OL II, 303.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> *Leviathan* XLVI, 703.

<sup>52</sup> Hobbes says, the citizens should be able “ut libertate innoxia perfruantur”: *De Cive*, XIII.6, OL II,

frustrating the aims of sovereignty is a sin in the sovereign.<sup>53</sup> And what is more, even being entitled (morally and legally) to ban true philosophy doesn't imply any statement as to the promotion of false philosophy.

But when can it be prudent (and hence moral) in the sovereign to ban true philosophy? According to Hobbes, this case seems to be almost impossible. He numbers three possible circumstances under which true philosophy may be suppressed. It may, first, be against true religion, a case Hobbes discounts because the truth in science cannot be against true religion. As they both refer to an understanding of the world, they necessarily refer to the same thing. It may, second, be contrary to the established religion. This may be the case, but then the established religion must be false religion for else case one would apply. Finally, it may "tend to disorder in Government, as countenancing Rebellion, or Sedition". But this third case, again, is prevented by the fact that the true teachings Hobbes advocates are those which by (his) definition produce peace and stability and argue as strongly as possible against rebellion and sedition. The only case possible, then, would be a version of the second. And this could apply only either when the sovereign legally acts imprudently (as supporting false religion) and hence immorally against God but not against the citizens – hardly the case Hobbes had in mind.<sup>54</sup> Or it could apply when he prudently suppresses the truth in case, say, that the majority of people would be outraged by it because it goes against their deep-rooted irrational and false persuasions.

However, even this case of widespread moral and political irrationalism is mitigated by the fact that political theories apply to the natural world we all have access to via our senses and experience. As a consequence, e.g. Catholic priests lost their credibility according to Hobbes because of the absurdity of their doctrines and the hypocrisy of their lifestyle.<sup>55</sup> Propaganda, unlike the truth, always runs the risk of being found out as such, something which if it happens, will reduce the credibility and finally the power of the mighty.

In sum, political education in Hobbes ideally implies not fear of punishment but a well-founded fear of actions that carry with them their own punishment: the dissolution of commonwealth and a fall back into the state of nature. As a consequence, the deeper a

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<sup>53</sup> E.g. *ibid.*, XIII.4, OL II, 299.

<sup>54</sup> There are, of course, a number of (differing) claims by Hobbes regarding how citizens should behave when living under a non-Christian ruler, but this is by no means a standard case for Hobbes: *Elements* II.6.14, 158 f. and *De Cive* XVIII.13, OL II, 429 f.

<sup>55</sup> *Leviathan* XII, 179 f.

person's understanding of the workings and necessity of political authority is, the more will she contribute to the stability of a political system. This is why political education is crucial to political stability, and it also explains why Hobbes cannot conceive political education to consist in propaganda: political education, to Hobbes, refers to the knowledge of the actual causal "Relation between protection and obedience".<sup>56</sup> Without referring to the truth, the very teaching itself would be contradicting its purpose of fostering political stability.

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., Review and Conclusion, 728.

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