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The other 'Hobbes' people': An alternative reading of Hobbes

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Abstract

This paper argues that while Hobbes has been very influential in sociological thinking, in particular through the influence of Ferdinand Tönnies and Talcott Parsons, there is an important alternative reading of Hobbes that one might call the 'real' Hobbes, which has remained unknown to social theory. Because these classical readings of Hobbes still inform most social theory, sociologists are in effect trapped within them. Through a careful analysis of classic interpretations of Hobbes by Tönnies and Parsons, coupled with a close reading of Hobbes' actual texts, and his criticisms of Aristotle, this paper will suggest that a different understanding of the 'people' who populate Hobbes' social universe is possible. It will be suggested that this new understanding of Hobbes also makes the contemporary understanding of the history of political philosophy more fruitful for theoretical sociology.

> … wie die Menschen von Hobbes und die von ihnen abstammenden Individuen meiner Gesellschaft – von Natur Feinde sind, einander ausschließen und verneinen.
>
> Ferdinand Tönnies[1]

> … the problems of social order stated in classical form by Hobbes as a result of his exploration of the consequences of the unlimited struggle for power.
>
> Talcott Parsons[2]

While the history of the reception of Hobbes' political philosophy in sociology can be traced through many sources, few can be compared in their long-lasting impact with the writings of Tönnies and Parsons. Both emphasized the importance of Hobbes to sociology.

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Ironically, however, their interpretations tend to preclude any fruitful elaboration of what is sociologically relevant in Hobbes' work. Ferdinand Tönnies, one of the founding fathers of the discipline, coined the dichotomy of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, the latter being inhabited by the descendants of Hobbes' people: that is, according to Tönnies, people conceived as *natural enemies.* Talcott Parsons described the *Hobbesian problem of order* as resulting from the *unlimited struggle for power* between those *natural enemies.* No matter how influential this construction might have been in the history of sociology, however, it was an erroneous interpretation of Hobbes. This is evident now for most readers of the philosopher's works. The early attempts to read Hobbes sociologically, undertaken by classical sociological thinkers, fall far short of the modern state of Hobbes studies. However, as long as we continue to grant significance, and even *centrality*, to such classical readings, we, as sociologists, become entrapped and misled by their interpretations of Hobbes.

In this paper I shall try, in the first two sections, to present concisely the main points of these two most influential classical interpretations (of Tönnies and Parsons), and then, in the third section, attempt to elucidate what Hobbes actually said about people and their relations (mainly in *Leviathan*, but also in other works), before, finally, formulating a few tentative proposals for thinking about Hobbes that could make advances in contemporary history of political philosophy more fruitful for theoretical sociology.

Tönnies' reading of Hobbes

Ferdinand Tönnies was a prominent specialist in Hobbes. He uncovered the manuscripts of an early but very important work of Hobbes' entitled Elements of *Law*[3] and edited a theoretically less important *Behemoth,*[4] and he also wrote a biography of Hobbes and a number of articles considering his philosophy in relation to the broader context of his time (Tönnies, 1975). In the beginning of his career, Tönnies was making his name in philosophical circles as a specialist in Hobbes and even in the last decade of his life, in 1929, he was elected President of the *Societas Hobbesiana.*

Tönnies, in his writings on the history of philosophy, was able to deliver complicated and subtly differentiated interpretations of many aspects of the philosophy of Hobbes. In sociology, Tönnies is mostly known as the author of *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*. The influence of this book on the further development of sociological theories far outweighs that of his other sociological writings.[5] His works on the history of philosophy, in turn, have been largely ignored by sociologists, even by those interested in general theoretical questions. Therefore, it was unfortunately the clear, but oversimplified position of Tönnies in *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* concerning *Hobbes's people*, not his more considered philosophical interpretations of Hobbes, that had such far-reaching influence on sociologists.

In her most concise summary of Tönnies' use of Hobbes, Jose Harris says:

> Although his conclusions were in certain respects very different from those of Hobbes, his
> central concern, no less than that of the author of *Leviathan*, was to discover how solipsistic

human beings could create a viable social order, and even live together in some degree of amity and mutual satisfaction.

(Harris, 2001: x)

While this is essentially right, we can, however, immediately see the problem lurking in this formulation. Order can be based on mutual satisfaction *and* on amity, but amity is not presupposed by satisfaction. In *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* we find no *amity*, but only *friendship. Friendship* in Tönnies' thought is, so to say, an heir of the old European vocabulary stemming from Aristotle. The criticism of Aristotle is one of the explicit aims of Hobbes, so that, for him, *natural enemies* can make contracts with each other but they would hardly become friends even under the condition of peaceful order. Friendship for Tönnies is a category of *Gemeinschaft*. He speaks of 'ties of kinship and friendship quite apart from the business of exchanging goods' (Tönnies, 2001: 42).

According to Harris, however, there are many deviations of Tönnies from Hobbes 'in terms of social and political thought', where there are 'certain oblique echoes, if not of Aristotle himself, then of an older tradition of political thought of which Aristotle was the exemplar' (Harris, 2001: xxvi). The main differences of this kind noted by Harris are: (1) 'the very striking contrast between Tönnies' vision of the *concordia* that naturally evolved in a properly functioning *Gemeinschaft*, and the negative portrayal of pre-contractarian social relations in chapter XVII of *Leviathan*' (2001: xxvi); and (2) the fact that 'the impact of State and Society upon the inhabitants of Tönnies's *Gesellschaft* was in many respects the exact opposite of what was envisaged in *De Cive* and *Leviathan*. Whereas in Hobbes's system, artificial social and political institutions tamed and civilized naked human aggression, in Tönnies' system they fostered and unleashed it' (2001: xxvii). Harris indicates a number of subtler differences of the same kind and she concludes:

In all of this there was an underlying assumption that 'natural' social relations were beneficent and normal, while artificial ones were predatory and pathological: a distinction that bore all the hallmarks, not of the 'mechanistic' outlook of the scientific enlightenment, but of Aristotelian and mediaeval scholastic roots.

(2001: xxvii)

Given this analysis, the story seems more confused now than it did at first glance. Tönnies, according to Harris, was following Hobbes. However, he readily discovered in the natural state (which is said to be more akin to *Gemeinschaft*) exactly what the European (that is, in this case Aristotelian) tradition saw in human social life, whereas Hobbes constructed his natural state in such a way that it resembled more the state of artificiality (*Gesellschaft* in Tönnies' scheme). However, Hobbes' state (the proper Artificial, the state as a political unit) would tame and civilize *natural enemies* so that they, at least partially, acquire those habits which, according to Tönnies (as Harris interprets him), they would normally have in their natural standing. What, then, makes Tönnies a *disciple* of Hobbes? Let us quote from Tönnies again:

Instead, we are talking about a kind of social life and situation where individuals live in such isolation and concealed mutual enmity that they refrain from attacking each other only out of fear or prudent calculation. As a result, even relations that in practice are peaceful and friendly must be regarded as resting on a war footing. This is the state of *Gesellschaft*-based *civilization*, as defined in our terms. Peace and social intercourse are maintained by convention, and by the mutual fear which it expresses. This situation is under the protection of the state and reinforced by legislation and politics.

(2001: 249)

The argument of Tönnies seems more coherent than that of his modern commentator, Harris. Tönnies does not oppose the natural and the artificial as a previous and posterior stance. *Gemeinschaft* is not purely natural because neither neighbourhood nor friendship is natural even in the sense that kinship is. *Gesellschaft* is not based on an original contract, and the state protects the people in *Gesellschaft*; it neither *fosters* nor *unleashes* human aggression. Both *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* have their prototypes in the history of ideas: the family (kinship)–neighbourhood (village)–friendship (town) triad stems from the famous tripartite division of human social life in Aristotle's *Politics*. And we have already seen what is proper to *Gesellschaft*: the people live in mutual fear and in mutual convention, and the state protects them and obliges them to stay in peace and to keep their treaties. It presents a simplified picture of what happens between people that is not a description of social reality, but rather an ideal type of it. That is why Tönnies felt he didn't need here any detailed quotation from what Hobbes really said. He explained it at some length in his Hobbes monograph. According to Tönnies, Hobbes, while constructing his *society* (without using the actual term) and his *state*, refrained from all the natural and original bonds which tie people together in families and friendships, from all the instincts of sociality (*soziale Instinkten*). They were of no importance for his theory, being too weak to hold great societies together against individuals who are isolated, egocentric and virtually hostile to each other.[6] This is the main point of the argument.

Let us reconstruct it once again:

1. Tönnies constructs a pure concept of *Gesellschaft*. It is free from natural and original bonds between people.
2. All that is natural and original is placed into *Gemeinschaft*, thus representing another pure type of sociality.
3. Modern sociology follows Hobbes in building pure concepts and in uncovering the phenomenon of *Gesellschaft*.
4. *Gesellschaft* is also both a pure concept and a modern phenomenon.
5. Hobbes saw natural and original bonds between people.
6. Hobbes paid no attention to the phenomena of family and friendship, because they played an insignificant role in modern society.[7]
7. So the pure concept of *Gesellschaft* is constructed as a Hobbesian concept of society; however, the natural and original are not set apart but placed within *Gemeinschaft*.

Lars Udehn summarizes Tönnies' approach as follows:

> What is missing from Hobbes' analysis is, of course, an account of community. The reason it is missing is Hobbes' rejection of Aristotle's notion of man as a *zoon politikon*, his individualism. Instead of dismissing Hobbes as a bad historian and an equally bad sociologist, however, Toennies emphasizes the ideal typical character, and prophetic quality, of Hobbes' theory of the social contract. The individualist theory of society is an ideal type that is increasingly realized in modern society.
>
> (Udehn, 1996: 351)

However, Udehn overestimates the unified character of this approach. Hobbes saw the role of communities and Tönnies had demonstrated it in his special writings on Hobbes. What Hobbes could not recognize was the character of the state as an ethical unity. That is why Tönnies, in elaborating his theory, has gone beyond Hobbes. His latter idea of the state as *Gemeinwesen* (an ethical organism; Tönnies, 1965 [1931]) has no correspondence in Hobbes.

Parsons' treatment of Hobbes

Talcott Parsons has contributed to the reception of Hobbes in sociology, formulating the 'Hobbesian problem of order'. Parsons was not interested in the subtleties of Hobbes' philosophy as a whole. In *The Structure of Social Action* he pays no special attention to the interpretation of Hobbes by Tönnies.[8] In his famous 'Note on *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*' Parsons does not mention Hobbes at all, though his name appears in other parts of the book many times (Parsons, 1937: 686–694). In his approach to Hobbes and, subsequently, in formulating what the 'Hobbesian problem' is, Parsons is said to have relied upon Elie Halévy. It was Halévy who combined Hobbes with the utilitarian tradition,[9] and 'forty years after the publication of Halévy's work Parsons reformulated his basic insight by focusing more directly on the presuppositional issue of order' (Alexander, 1982: 101). So, according to Parsons, 'sociology is about the problem of order'. What Parsons called the Hobbesian problem can be understood in the following way: 'What holds society together?' and 'Insofar as values are internalized, they solve the problem of order in an anti-Hobbesian way' (Alexander, 1988: 97). To some extent Harold Garfinkel may be understood as confirming this when he states in his evaluation of Parsons' early masterpiece: 'Endlessly seminal was sociology's stunning vision of society as a practical achievement. Affiliated to this vision were several technical specifics. The first one was the problem of social order formulated by Hobbes' (1988: 104).[10]

The attention given to the problem of order is justified, though it is not enough to say that Parsons uncovered the problem of order formulated for modernity by Hobbes. Parsons, unlike Tönnies, had no other place to demonstrate his understanding of Hobbes except in his own theoretical work. *The Structure of Social Action* is organized as a combination of historical reconstructions and purely theoretical studies. 'Hobbes and the Problem of Social Order' is a study undertaken to illustrate the development of what Parsons called *individualistic positivism.* There was a tendency in the seventeenth century,

Parsons said, to think deterministically, in accordance with contemporary physics. Action was conceived in terms of its *conditions*. Hobbes would be the best example of such thinking.

> For present purposes the basis of Hobbes' social thinking lies in his famous concept of the state of nature as the war of all against all. Hobbes is almost entirely devoid of normative thinking. He sets up no ideal of what conduct should be, but merely investigates the ultimate conditions of social life. Man, he says, is guided by a plurality of passions. The good is simply that which any man desires. … Man is not devoid of reason. But reason is essentially a servant of the passions – it is the faculty of devising ways and means to secure what one desires.
>
> (Parsons, 1937: 89)

The people need power, conceived as the most effective means to obtain some apparent future good. However, they are created by nature almost entirely equal – in physical abilities, in quickness of mind and in their hopes to attain their ends (Parsons, 1937: 90).[11] In the absence of control they would strive to attain these ends by force and fraud, but this would lead them to the state of war, and this would be in no comfort with human desires. From this they would find a solution, because of their fear, in social contract. 'By its terms men agreed to give up their natural liberty to a sovereign authority which in turn guarantees them security; that is, immunity from aggression by the force or fraud of others' (Parsons, 1937: 90).

Thus, for Parsons, 'Hobbes' system of social theory is almost a pure case of utilitarianism' (1937: 90). The most important for human action are 'passions'; the end of actions have no good in themselves and are random. However, according to Parsons, Hobbes does not stop here. Hobbes, says Parsons, 'went on to deduce the character of the concrete system, which would result if its units were in fact as defined' (1937: 91). To explain what Hobbes really has uncovered as an empirical problem, Parsons introduces the distinction between factual and normative order. Any factual order is an antithesis of randomness; any normative order is relative to a given system of norms, rules, and so on. If a normative order breaks down, it may result in a normative chaos that would be, nevertheless, a factual order. What is then, for Parsons, the problem posed by Hobbes?

Parsons is convinced that both ends and rationality are *normative features* that play an essential role in the utilitarian scheme. It means that all people would try to attain their ends according to their passions in the most effective way:

> Among their ends is empirically found to be the attainment of the recognition of others. And to them under social conditions the services of others are always and necessarily to be found among the potential means to their ends. In securing both these, recognition and service, whether as ultimate or as proximate ends, the most immediately efficient means, in the last analysis, are force and fraud. In the utilitarian postulate of rationality there is nothing whatsoever to exclude the employment of these means.
>
> (Parsons, 1937: 92)

What do 'recognition and service' mean here? Both can be interpreted as providing means for pursuing one's own ends. *To serve* means, broadly speaking, that by actual or potential means somebody is recognized as ready to serve one's ends. The means to secure recognition and service are thus means to secure means. Force and fraud, it is said, are the most effective means of this latter kind. However, being applied from all sides, these most effective means lead to the state of war of all against all: that is, 'not an order at all but chaos' (1937: 93). Where people seek more power and more recognition, they will find no security for their existence. A society built on a strict utilitarian basis would be unstable because of the permanent struggle for power.

Parsons does not analyse further the Hobbesian solution to this problem; he is not so much interested in the problem of sovereignty, though he mentions it in his concluding remarks of this fragment of the study and another time elsewhere (1937: 238).[12] However, he repeatedly comes back to Hobbes in his book. He reiterates that the struggle for power and difference of power is central to Hobbes (1937: 109); that force and fraud play important roles in social life, according to Pareto, Machiavelli and Hobbes (1937: 179); and that potential use of coercion would result in the war of all against all (1937: 236). Parsons also adds something very important to these general statements. He distinguishes between what he says is theoretically right and empirically wrong and what is theoretically wrong and empirically right.[13] Being *theoretically right* is nothing significant; in fact, it is nearly the same as 'pure', 'logically consistent', 'without faults and gaps'. True scientific achievements, according to Parsons, could be obtained only through combination of both theoretical consistency and empirical observation (1937: 97). For Parsons, what Hobbes could not and what Locke really managed to observe, notwithstanding his 'wrong reasons', was that 'the actual situation was not a state of war held in check only by a coercive sovereign, but a state of a relatively spontaneous order' (1937: 362).

Now we can see that both Tönnies and Parsons share essentially the same view on Hobbes. It is of no importance here whether Parsons did elaborate his approach under direct influence of Tönnies or Halévy, or independently. What matters is the following:

1. Parsons, like Tönnies, sees in Hobbes not only a moral and social philosopher. He takes into consideration the general progress of science in the seventeenth century as the context of Hobbes' political thought; however, he gives no attention to Hobbes' own theoretical philosophy.
2. Parsons also is more interested in Hobbes' construction of society than in his observations concerning other forms of human association and his complicated argument concerning human moral life.
3. Human beings in Hobbes's view are seen by Parsons exclusively as egocentric. Despite true assertions concerning the manifold character of human passions, the end result of Parsons' analysis is very simple: people are mainly interested in self-preservation and need power as a means to secure it.
4. The problem of order then is outlined as the problem of establishing peaceful coordination among such individuals, and Hobbes' solution to it is seen as logically consistent but unsatisfactory because fear of the state of war and fear of the state of commonwealth are both fears. They cannot ensure any coordination.

There is no way to move from fear of the state of war to this hypothetical momentary coordination that is called social contract, and there is no guarantee that egocentric people in the commonwealth will be ready for peaceful order as they will fear their almighty sovereign.

5. So, for Tönnies, a utilitarian *Gesellschaft* is logically possible, but empirically it can only be prevalent in social life. It can never be an exhaustive trait of social life. For Parsons, utilitarian order is possible only as a logical construction. It could not only never be empirically true, it also cannot be thought of as a kind of order that came into being from the state of war of all against all and is held by a secular sovereign power transcending the momentary configuration of individual wills called social contract.

This is the view of Hobbes that shaped sociology in the twentieth century. Inasmuch as we accept the centrality of the classics, we cannot ignore it. But there is one difficulty with it: it has very little, if anything, to do with what Hobbes really said or with a theory of social life that he might formulate.

Reconsidering the Hobbesian problem

It would be unfair simply to criticize Tönnies and Parsons. Tönnies was a pioneer of Hobbesian studies, with all the merits and faults of those who do pioneering work.[14] *The Structure of Social Action* appeared nearly at the same time (1937) as new studies began to change the intellectual landscape of Hobbes reception (see, for example, Schmitt, 1996 [1938]; Strauss, 1936; Taylor, 1938). It would consequently also be unfair simply to compare these early writings of Parsons with the studies of Hobbes that were at the centre of discussions when Parsons was at the peak of his intellectual activity and scientific influence.[15] We can say that Parsons' understanding of Hobbes is outdated, and that his own theories, whether they are related to Hobbes or not, are also outdated. But this does not mean that all was wrong in his attempts to re-conceptualize Hobbes for sociology.[16] Parsons was right to emphasize the importance of Hobbes for sociology. His phrase the *Hobbesian problem* persists until now.

What is remarkable is that nobody seems to blame Parsons for his misinterpretations.[17] Political philosophers are inclined to see in theoretical sociology another kind (and a rather failed one) of practical philosophy; sociologists, as a rule, do not care about progress in special fields of political philosophy.[18] This situation in sociology should be changed.

From the sociological point of view, the *Hobbesian problem* is another name for the *problem of social order* (see Schwannenberg, 1971). This is the result of Parsons' studies, repeated but not overcome in a number of sociological theoretical works. It is more important for sociology than all that is obsolete in his interpretation of Hobbes. In other words: the Hobbesian problem is *the* problem of sociology. Was it the problem for Hobbes himself? In a sense it was not. *A* sense means *Kantian sense* here. The Hobbesian problem of order can be reformulated, to paraphrase Niklas Luhmann, as an always already solved but, paradoxically, unsolvable problem.[19] These combinations of already solved and unsolvable we call *Kantian*, not

only because it was Kant who coined the form of question itself. Kant described as a permanent problem the possibility of scientific knowledge, synthetic *a priori* judgements. 'How are they possible?' he asked. In the same form, the question can be applied to social order. The formulation 'How is society possible?' was coined by one of the most Kantian-minded sociologists (at least in the decade 1898–1908), Georg Simmel (see Simmel, 1992). Simmel saw the difference between the Kantian view and his own questions. For Kant, there is no unity in the nature out there; it would be added by the subject of cognition, whereas in society the unifying element is the 'souls' of people themselves who are the members of it. However, Simmel also agreed with Kant: there is society just as there is science (or nature as seen by science); they are possible, because they are there, and we only want to know the conditions of possibility of what is already there. Is it allowed, then, to understand Hobbes just in the same sense? Is the Hobbesian problem a Kantian one?

This question can be reformulated. Hobbes distinguished between the 'condition of warre' and 'common-wealth' (*civitas*). The question 'How is social order possible?', stated in Kantian form, would read as follows: 'We know that society (*civitas*) exists. We know that there is no war of all against all. Now, we have only to find out, how it is possible for people, who are inclined rather to war than to peace, to live in society that is always there.'[20] This kind of reading of Hobbes would follow from a certain kind of sociology where the question about the transcendental conditions of possibility of knowledge is substituted by the question about the constitution of society. Both questions presuppose something as existent: scientific knowledge and/or society. However, these are not one and the same. Scientific knowledge, for Kant, cannot disappear. It is based on (the possibility of) experience: that is, on the *a priori* synthesis that makes any experience possible. It is there so long the knowing people are there.

Commonwealth can disappear because of war: it can be destroyed by a civil war or conquered by another state. So, in investigating the conditions of the possibility of society, we know that *a* society already exists; it can disappear, though. How then do we read Hobbes? Do we look for conditions of society: that is, for conditions of preservation of what exists but can cease to exist? Or do we see ourselves amidst a state of war, looking for opportunities to establish peace?

Sociologically, we would rather choose the first alternative. A society is for us always there; we can only see it as something precarious, fragile,[21] being about to dissolve, and so on. This may justify our interest in Hobbes, especially in hard times of civil war, revolution and other disturbances. Do we really need Hobbes, then? Are we still there, on admittedly one of the highest levels of theoretical thought? I would rather say that this kind of questioning is a consequence of a very naïve reading of Hobbes.

This naïve reading of Hobbes would result in a simple observation: there is evidence of uncivilized, warlike behaviour of those outside the commonwealth; there is also evidence of fear that even reigns in societies, so, whereas the sovereign power in the latter establishes peace, there is nothing that can pacify people in their extra-societal – that is, natural – condition. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes is far from arguing historically: that is, from evoking history as his main argument.[22] In a frequently quoted paragraph from Chapter 13 he wrote:

It may peradventure be thought, there was never such a time, nor condition of warre as this; and I believe it was never generally so, over all the world: but there are many places, where they live so now. For the savage people in many places of *America*, except the government of small families, the concord whereof dependeth on naturall lust, have no government at all; and live at this day in that brutish manner, as I said before. Howsoever, it may be perceived what manner of life there would be, where there were no common Power to fear; by the manner of life, which men that have formerly lived under a peaceful government, use to degenerate into, in a civil Warre.

(Hobbes, 1996: 89–90)

The argument may seem deliberatively superficial; however, there are some difficulties that prevent us from taking it flippantly. Hobbes says quite clearly that he would never imagine the general natural condition of mankind as an absolute origin of human history. There is war as something quite opposite to peaceful life. By comparison of *savage* people with civilized, the manner of life of the first would be called *brutish*: that is, nearly the same as the life of those who used to live under *peaceful government* and then degenerated into *civil Warre*: '… in all times, Kings and Persons of Soveraigne authority, because of their independency, are in continuall jealousies, and in the state and posture of Gladiators … which is a posture of War' (Hobbes, 1996: 89–90). Every common-wealth was established once; there was a time before its foundation, without this one political state. During a span or, in Hobbes' own words, *tract* of time, the 'without state' precedes the establishment of a state.

However, we can also turn over this sequence, following the argument of Hobbes himself: there has also been time *before this* war, there has been time *under peaceful government* that preceded this war! The internal peace is not all. There is always a kind of war between states, and the sovereigns are *in the posture of War*. In a sense, there is always war between states, because, according to Hobbes, war is not only actual battle, but exactly this readiness to fight, 'the Will to contend by Battell' that is 'sufficiently known' (1996: 88). Although wars between states can hardly be called natural (at least insofar as states themselves are *artificial*[23]), they are described in the same way as a *natural condition*, with the only difference being that they are waged by sovereigns who create peace for their citizens. Now, we see that the natural condition has never been general. It is either the condition of degeneration of a definite state for citizens or the condition of external war between states for the sovereigns. In a sense, a governmental state is always preceded by another governmental state, although their sequence is interrupted by war, either by a civil war or by an external war that can be lost by a conquered state. The *natural condition* would be then almost nothing natural. War and peaceful government are either only two sections of a long sequential chain, or an external condition for an existing commonwealth, or an internal condition of a commonwealth that degenerates into civil war, or, finally, a very precarious situation of a state being conquered by another state.

More important is another distinction made by Hobbes in Chapter 17 between states based on conquest and those based on a hypothetical act of *covenant*: that is, *Commonwealth by Acquisition* and *Commonwealth by Institution* (1996: 121). Although Hobbes starts the detailed discussion of this theme in the next chapter, investigating the

construction of agreement made in the *multitude by every man with every man*, it is reasonable first to take a look at the 'Commonwealth by Acquisition'. The only difference between this and the 'Soveraignty by Institution', says Hobbes, is this: in both cases fear plays the main part; however, 'men who chose their Soveraign do it for fear of one another'; but 'where the Sovereign Power is acquired by force', 'they subject themselves, to him they are afraid of'. (1996: 138). Now, if 'there had never been any time, wherein particular men were in a condition of warre one against another' (1996: 90), there never had been any time wherein particular men instituted *Sovereignty* for fear of one another and by agreement of everyman with everyman. The historical reality Hobbes deals with is the reality of either subjection of citizens of a conquered state by the sovereign of another, victorious one, or the degeneration of a state into civil war (see Skinner, 2002).[24]

This means that whereas the naïve interpretation of the *natural condition* as a really existing war of everyman against everyman is obviously false, it would also be false to see in this construction nothing more than an ideal model (see, for example, Macpherson, 1962: 20ff.).[25] There are no observable traces of a general war and a general agreement of a set of combating individuals in the past, no evidence of the true origin of this or that state.[26] The role played by *bellum omnium contra omnes* in Hobbes's argument may be rhetorically overemphasized, the very idea of this war is rather the consequence than the premise of it. What is, then, his argument?

The majority of those, says Hobbes in *De Cive*[27] (I, 2), who have written *de Rebus publicis*, 'either assume or seek to prove or simply assert that Man is an animal born fit for Society – in the Greek phrase, ζῷον πολιτικόν' (Hobbes, 1998: 21f.). This is the ground for their 'civil doctrines' 'as if no more were necessary for the preservation of peace and the governance of the whole human race than for men to give their consent to certain agreements and conditions which, without further thought, these writers call laws' (Hobbes, 1998: 22). This 'axiom' Hobbes believes to be false. One of the main targets of his criticism is Aristotle, who in a very remarkable way combined ethics and politics.[28] Hobbes mentions Aristotle not only here, where he evokes the famous formula ζῷον πολιτικόν, but also elsewhere in *De Cive.* So, for example, in Chapter 5.5 Hobbes analyses Aristotle's concept of *political animal* as applied not only to humans but also to bees, ants, and so on. In Chapter 3.13 he challenges the assertion of Aristotle 'that some men have been made by nature worthy to rule, others to serve, as if Master and slave were distinguished not by agreement among men but by natural aptitude, i.e. by their knowledge or ignorance' (1998: 49). In Chapter 14.2 he counts Aristotle among those who confuse law with agreement (1998: 154f.). This thorough and strong criticism of Aristotle has many grounds; however, we can see among them a sociological systematic view.

What does Hobbes criticize in Aristotle's works first of all? He criticizes the idea of friendship as the very core of his ethical-political doctrine. The citizens of *polis* should be friends, says Aristotle in *Politics* (1280b38), although they are not always perfectly virtuous. Friendship can be of many kinds; the political friendship does not exhaust all of them.[29] Other types of friendship include, for example, those based on pleasure and interest, Aristotle says in the most concise form in *Magna Moralia* (1208b–1209a) and later in more detail (*MM* 1236a–b).[30] Only the friendship of the best is based on virtue;

most people seek some usefulness in it and 'the brutes' are interested in pleasure. It is not possible, according to Aristotle, to cover by one and the same concept 'friendship' all kinds of it, although the pure friendship of the virtuous men is the primary type, and so on. This means that Hobbes is not fair in his synopsis of Aristotle. He attributes to him the idea of a natural pure friendship that is the fundament of human sociality and then criticizes it, with the result that it looks as if Aristotle did not anticipate a part of his own argument. This distorted idea of Aristotle Hobbes then refutes, indicating that friendship is always a selection;[31] nobody can have all people as his friends, so why does one prefer his friends and not other people? If one loves another man simply as a man,[32] – that is, because humans are naturally inclined to be together – the only reason to be together for certain men would be their being humans, so every definite choice would be pure occasion.

However, the true reason for their interconnection is that in a certain circle of men one could find more 'honor et utilitas', and this means that everybody seeks not friends but something that is primary to friendship itself. If you want to know their reasons for coming together, look at what they do after they have met, says Hobbes:

> If they meet to do business, everyone is looking for profit not for friendship. If the reason is public affairs, a kind of political relationship develops, which holds more mutual fear than love. … If they meet for entertainment and fun, everyone usually takes most pleasure in the kind of amusing incident from which … he may come away with a better idea of himself in comparison with someone else's embarrassment or weakness.
>
> (1998: 22)[33]

In the same vein, Hobbes criticizes Aristotle's concept of other political animals. Neither ants nor bees are political, says Hobbes, because their wills can be in accord with each other but this is not *one will*. The accord of wills of the animals can last long enough to guarantee peace among them, but people compete 'for honour and dignity'; for them, good is only what gives the possessor of it the feeling of superiority. Animals do not see 'any defects in the conduct of their common affairs', but in any group of men we find those who believe they are cleverer than others; they also criticize other men and make attempts at changing affairs, thus starting dissension and civil war. Animals also have no language, 'but man's tongue is a trumpet to war and sedition' (1998: 71).

The arguments of Hobbes against Aristotle are not relevant in respect to Aristotle, but they uncover something very important in Hobbes. What does it mean, indeed, to mention only one concept of friendship in Aristotle's work? What does Hobbes really say? He says: I am ready to recognize as friendship only the relationship of virtuous men. Unfortunately, however, this friendship is impossible. It is impossible, first of all, because real men are not so virtuous as Aristotle and others depict them. But worse, that friendship is also theoretically impossible, because men have to make a choice: they have to compare other qualities of men; because virtue alone is insufficient, they have to pay attention to what is not virtuous.[34] Hobbes makes another argument of the same kind when he discusses the differences between humans and other political animals. The uniformity of wills and peaceful uniform conduct are not enough, he says. It is properly

human to criticize one another, to make attempts at improving common affairs, to use words that can have different meanings for different people. But why is it properly human?

One interesting point is made in Chapter 6 of *Leviathan.* Here Hobbes distinguishes between two kinds of motion, which he calls 'vitall', and 'animall' *and* also *voluntary motions*, which in more conventional terms are known as *passions*. What passion does he call specifically human? Hobbes lists a number of *voluntary motions*, a few of them being evidently human, for example *desire of riches, desire of office, laughter, shame*, and so on (see Hobbes, 1996: 41, 43). However, there is only one passion that Hobbes *calls* the unique possession of man:

> *Desire* to know why, and how, Curiosity; such as is in no living creature but *Man*: so that man is distinguished, not only by his reason; but also by this singular passion from other *Animals*; in whom the appetite of food, and other pleasures of Sense, by predominance, take away the care of knowing causes; which is a Lust of the mind, that by a perseverance of delight in the continuall and indefatigable generation of Knowledge, exceedeth the short vehemence of any carnall Pleasure.
>
> (1996: 42)

This point is nothing new in the history of philosophy. Its origins can be traced back to ancient classics. The interest for *theoria* is combined with the status of free citizens who prefer intellectual delights. So what to do, then, with those humans who prefer *carnall Pleasure*? Can they be called human beings according to this view? It is in a sense the same question that we could ask concerning friendship: is it possible to simply exclude other types of friendship, namely those that do not need perfect virtue on both sides?

Is it possible to treat as humans those who prefer *carnall Pleasure*? However, unlike perfect friendship, the *desire to know why, and how* allows Hobbes to commence an important line of his argument. He proceeds from here to *discourse*, be it mental (chains of thought) or manifested in speech, and, then, to what he calls *intellectual vertues.* In Chapter 8 he distinguishes between 'Naturall' and 'Acquired' virtues, the second being of lesser interest here, because intellectual virtues are identified as *wit*, and the wit acquired by 'method and instruction' is nothing else but reason, which is grounded on the right use of speech and *produceth the Sciences* (Hobbes, 1996: 53). Of much more interest here is *prudence*, a kind of wit that

> … dependeth on much Experience, and Memory of the like things and their consequences heretofore. In which there is not so much difference of Men, as there is in their Fancies and Judgements; Because the Experience of men equall in age, is not much inequall, as to the quantity; but lies in different occasions; every one having his private designes.
>
> (1996: 52–3)

There is nothing in this description that could be said to be especially human.

In the first of his major political works, *Elements of Law* (it appeared only partially and under another title a year before *Leviathan*), Hobbes makes very clear statements

about prudence, which, he says, 'is nothing else but conjecture from experience, or tak-ing signs of experience warily, that is, that the experiments from which one taketh such signs be all remembered; for else the cases are not alike, that seem so' (Hobbes, 1994: 33; compare 170). *Experiments* here are hardly to be seen as rationally planned scientific experiments, so the observation of Howard Warrender may be true: 'As an empirical knowledge of causes, prudence is a more or less reliable expectation of appropriate effects and a faculty common both to man and to other creatures' (1957: 245). Properly human must be then *reason* and *scientific knowledge*, both as ability and as passion.

Reason itself is only a necessary but not a sufficient condition of human social life. We need it, says Hobbes, for building houses and moving weights, constructing machines and exploring the earth, investigating the nature of things and natural and civil laws, doing philosophy and so on – '… all these are necessary for living and for living well'(*On the Citizen*, Ch. XVII, 12; 1998: 215). He thus repeats the famous sentence of Aristotle;[35] however, reason as such does not determine *living well*, and so the commonwealth can-not be understood as the union of those who are rational animals. Hobbes demonstrates that it is impossible to combine reason, science and the good life in an Aristotelian man-ner. Suppose, he says, constructing a stunningly modern-looking example,

> … a woman gives birth to a deformed child, and the law forbids killing a human being, the question arises whether the new-born is a human being. The question then is, what is a human being? No one doubts that the commonwealth will decide – and without taking account of the Aristotelian definition, that a Man is a rational Animal.
>
> (1998: 215)

The commonwealth will decide in such a case because it has the authority to decide. However, the same can be said about every case where reason is seen as reasoning: that is, a process that has an end. The results of reasoning can be different. There is no absolute truth and no perfect ability to find this truth. Reason is grounded on the right use of speech. But this means that it depends both on a kind of discipline that avoids everything that can lead to absurd inferences (see Hobbes, 1996: Ch. 5, 34f.) *and* on convention in definitions and *authority* that can resolve the discourse. 'No Discourse whatsoever, can End in abso-lute knowledge of Fact, past, or to come' (1996: Ch. 7, 47). What is possible is not the knowledge of fact, but a conditional knowledge ('if This be, That is; if This has been, That has been', and so on), 'and that not the consequence of one thing to another; but of one name of a thing, to another name of the same thing' (1996: Ch. 7, 47). The people should use the same names to signify the same things, although we would never be sure they really understand the same when they speak the same. They simply act as if they have agreed; if it is not so, a discourse can last till its end, but the end depends on the power of those who have authority to stop the discourse with their decision. So, going along this line of argu-ment we get to power, and power has something to do with human passions.

For Hobbes, passion is the *interior beginning of voluntary motions*; they can be either motions toward something – that is, appetites or desires – or away from (*fromward*) something – that is, aversions or hate. Humans have different passions, sometimes con-trary to one another. But different sides of human nature are not always incompatible with one another, although Hobbes can only exemplify his assertion either demonstrating

the combinations of two different qualities of men, such as *clearness of Judgment and largeness of Fancy*, and so on, or illustrating the presence of many of them in his late friend Sidney Godolfin. 'There is therefore no such inconsistence of Human Nature, with Civil Duties, as some think', says Hobbes at the end of *Leviathan* ('A Review, and Conclusion': 1996: 484). However, we see that he wants but fails to create not only a consequent conception of human eminence but also a conception of harmonized human nature. So much he has said about other passions, one passion, one desire has predominance in human nature, if not always and in all people then at least in those who are to be considered so to say as eminently human. This is the desire of power.

> The Passions that most of all cause the difference of Wit, are principally, the more or less Desire of Power, of Riches, of Knowledge, and of Honour. All which may be reduced to the first, that is, desire of power. For Riches, Knowledge and Honour are but severall sorts of Power.
>
> (1996: Ch. 8, 53)

So, now we see a possibility to proceed in the opposite direction. People have different wants and desires but the general notion for them is power because it is power what they really want in the first line. The differences of power or differences of the desires of power are the cause of the differences in *wit*, whereas *wit* is an intellectual virtue that can be acquired by method and instruction and is, then, reason. Reason, in turn, depends on the right use of speech, and the right use of speech is a matter either of convention or of the power of those who can put the end to the discourse because of their authority to do so: that is, of a kind of power that is most desired by all people.

The argument in this form seems to be circular. Indeed, the breakthrough is possible only if we dare to introduce something that is not approved by convention of discourse or authority and is independent from anything social, be it consensual approval of the multitude or a decision of the sovereign as the eminent authority. There are two points in Hobbes' work that could be considered, as such, independent instances. One of them is *recta ratio*, right reason, which, according to Hobbes in *De Cive*, II, 1, '(since it is no less part of human nature than any other faculty or passion of the mind) is also said to be natural' (1998: 33). However, this option would hardly be a good choice. Right reason is interpreted by Hobbes not as an infallible faculty but as an individual's act of true reasoning ('man's own true Reasoning about actions of his which may conduce to his advantage or other men's loss. … by true reasoning I mean reasoning that draws conclusions from true principles correctly stated'; 1998: 33); but 'in a Commonwealth the reason of the Commonwealth itself (which is the civil Law) must be regarded as right by individual citizens' (1998: 33). However vague the idea of true reasoning in a natural condition may be, the idea of the *reason of the Commonwealth* kills. The *true principles correctly stated* are stated correctly by the procedure as described earlier, so the right reason is mainly the reason *recognized as the right reason*. It does not help us. Remarkably, this notion plays no role in *Leviathan.* More important is another notion, *power.*

The power of a man, says Hobbes in Chapter 10 of *Leviathan*, is 'his present means, to obtain some future apparent Good' (1996: 62). There are many sorts of power: riches, reputation and even the sciences are a form of power. However, Hobbes is not very eloquent in describing *apparent Good*. It is worth noting that Good is in the future, whereas

the means are in the present; Good is desired whereas, being obtained, it cannot be desired. Something is desired in the present, means to obtain the desired are in the present, so power and desire are connected with one another. Power is a kind of secure expectation that something will happen according to the desire.[36] Although, in a mechanical world, causes are firmly connected to their effects, action is possible by those with no absolute knowledge of the effects of their actions. Those who believe they have power cannot have but a chance understanding of causation (strikingly similar to the understanding of power by Max Weber and, with modifications, also of Georg Simmel). Everybody has *a* power because everybody acts according to his or her own desire. For Hobbes, the most powerful is an authorized person, somebody who combines a number of individual powers; however, even a sovereign cannot expect with full certainty that every subject will act according to his will. So far as people are living bodies, a number of individual desires cannot be alienated.

No doubt, people would compete, according to Hobbes' view, in their desire for power, this being *the* main cause of war,[37] and in a sense, no interpretation can transform the people of Hobbes into benevolent altruists. Although they know gratitude, facility to pardon, affability (*complaisance*), and so on, all these being laws of nature, the meaning of the *laws of nature* is the peace that can be preserved by following them. Their role in social life as described by Hobbes is very important. Hobbes demonstrates that it is impossible to count only on the strength of the sovereign, that social life is very complicated: it needs magnanimity and tact, rational choice and temperance even in matters of revenge, and so on. However, it is only a wishful means to make people accountable to one another. We know that, for Hobbes, this is not a reliable solution to the *Hobbesian problem.*

Conclusion

But now we can ask the great question once again: what is the *Hobbesian problem*? Let us quote from Hobbes *in extenso*. In *The Elements of Law* he says:

> Seeing all delight is appetite, and appetite presupposeth a farther end, there can be no contentment but in proceeding: and therefore we are not to marvel, when we see, that as men attain to more riches, honours, or other power; so their appetite continually groweth more and more; and when they are come to the utmost degree of one kind of power, they pursue some other, as long as in any kind they think themselves behind any other. Of those therefore that have attained to the highest degree of honour and riches, some have affected mastery in some art; as Nero in music and poetry, Commodus in the art of a gladiator. And such as affect not some such thing, must find diversion and recreation of their thoughts in the contention either of play, or business. And men justly complain as of a great grief, that they know not what to do. FELICITY, therefore (by which we mean continual delight), consisteth not in having prospered, but in prospering.
>
> (1994: 45)

One can draw a number of consequences from this statement. For our purposes, it would be enough to say that Hobbes' people are indeed egocentric, but they can hardly be

identified as *possessive individualists* who consider self-preservation as the *summum bonum*; property – as the visible continuation of their bodies; and glory and reputation as the best means to secure their wishes to preserve their bodies and properties.[38] We dare to see here rather a play of forces and abilities of men where the eminence of faculties is always at stake.

The people of Hobbes sometimes look like the typical people of the Renaissance, with its humanistic individualism and a conception of virtue where eminence is the most apt word. It is the Renaissance man who is depicted in the natural condition where he is always in a titanic struggle with other titans, whereas the multitude is seeking only self-preservation and *carnall Pleasures*. It is the natural condition that makes so ambiguous all the criticism of ancient authors by Hobbes. The renaissance of the ancient world in modern times is the potential *bellum omnium contra omnes* – not (only) for the sake of one's property but also for the sake of one's honour and glory. Reason, that is science, is the *sapientia* of philosophers, who are at their most apt place near the sovereign, the only bearer of reason in the commonwealth.

Now, we can return to Tönnies. We can say that Tönnies, unlike Parsons, was right when he stated that the people of his *Gesellschaft* are those of Hobbes, but that he interpreted his own insight quite incorrectly. Another line of interpretation could also be proposed. For Tönnies, the origin of modernity is the Renaissance, the individualism of this time when powerful individuals began to neglect the habits of community. We know that it was not the only beginning and that the play of individual(s) faculties and desires can hardly be said to be what makes modernity modern. This point is also present at the beginning of classical sociology. But if we follow this line, we shall again meet Hobbes as one of the most outstanding proto-founders of our science.

However, to some extent, the more traditional understanding of Hobbes was also more comfortable. As an author who, in line with the emerging science of his time, built conceptual schemes to explain the world in its pure facticity, criticized scholasticism and Aristotelians, was liberal in treating private affairs, and so on, he could be proudly proclaimed as a proto-founder of sociology. But what if the layer of his thought uncovered here can be another and different source of sociological theory? If we take it in sum – his discussion of what is eminently human, his use of the concepts of moral philosophy to better describe all the slightest differences in man's actions and ambitions, his idea of power, and so on – we shall hardly find anything that can be called the direct origin of what is theoretically acceptable for sociology today. Nevertheless, it is not absolutely alien to us. It is another layer of thought, another side of the same old Hobbes, our predecessor. There is no help for us in these spheres. It is a challenge.

Notes

1. Tönnies (1979 [1935]: 105). In a contemporary English translation: '… they are – like Hobbes's people and their descendants in my *Gesellschaft* – natural enemies, mutually exclusive and contradictory' (Tönnies, 2001: 131).
2. Parsons (1937: 768).
3. See Hobbes (1928 [1888]), edited, with a preface and critical notes, by Ferdinand Tönnies, Ph.D., to which are subjoined selected extracts from unprinted mss of Thomas Hobbes.

4. See Hobbes (1889), edited for the first time from the original manuscript by Ferdinand Tönnies. London: Simpkin, Marshall 1889.

5. In Germany, Tönnies made his name as a sociologist, not by this early book. Even the explosive growth of its popularity in the 1920s could not overshadow his other achievements. However, retrospectively, we can say that *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* is what really works till now at least as a common basis for sociological education. On the contrary, all the attempts to revive interest in other theoretical works of Tönnies written in a more conventional for our times sociological language than *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* remain, with few exceptions, rather local enterprises of historians and enthusiasts. Even the recent publication of the excellent *Ferdinand Tönnies Gesamtausgabe* is another evidence for the growing gap between theory and history of sociology. See also an earlier review by Werner J. Cahnmann (1977). Cahnmann, without emphasizing it, testifies in fact to the prevailing use of *Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft* as the book and as a concept pair in American sociology. Sometimes other sociological works of Tönnies could be of more importance for, say, Robert Park and his followers, but even the name of Hobbes did not appear in this context.

6. See Tönnies (1896: 210–211):

    Dabei wird im Begriffe der Menschen von allem abgesehen, was sie auf natürliche und ursprüngliche Weise verbinden mag, also von Bänden der Familie, der Freundschaft u.s.w., von allen sozialen Instinkten. Wenn Hobbes gelegentlich so redet, als gebe es dergleichen gar nicht, so meint er doch im Grunde nur, dass sie für seine Theorie nicht in Betracht kommen, weil sie jedenfalls den Leidenschaften und Interessen gegenüber nicht stark genug seien, um grosse Gesellschaften, geschweige denn um Staaten zu begründen. Subjekt beider ist das isolierte, ganz und gar egoistische, also jedem Mitmenschen virtuell feindliche Individuum.

7. And, as far as they *are* given some attention, we can agree with Robert Nisbet: 'The family was generally accepted, of course, though we find Hobbes using the idea of a tacit contract to justify the parent–child relationship' (2009: 48–9). This being true, we should add nevertheless that family was interpreted by Hobbes both as a natural bond and as a result of tacit contract. There are pre-contractual families somewhere even today, says Hobbes; however, they cannot, as they *could not* in the past, bring forth a large commonwealth. And, for Tönnies, natural bonds of families are being dissolved in *Gesellschaft*.

8. However, he paid tribute to Tönnies:

    Gesellschaft for Toennies is the type of social relationship which has been formulated in the utilitarian school of social thought. It is significant in that the personal history that led to his theory Toennies was much preoccupied with the thought of Hobbes and deserves much credit for helping to revive interest in Hobbes.

    (Parsons, 1937: 687)

9. See Alexander (1982: 98–99). This statement is repeated in Volume IV of *Theoretical Logic* (Alexander, 1984: 22). See Halévy (1955: 78): Hobbes's 'doctrine of utility' as the basis for a 'complete system of social despotism' and the 'principle of the artificial identity of interests', the latter being what Alexander identifies as the idea of the factual order in *The Structure of Social Action*.

10. Garfinkel does not agree with Parsons' solution to the problem of order. His early unpublished lectures and the lecture notes titled Parsons' Primer testify to his very accurate and more profound understanding of Hobbes.

11. He quotes extensively from *Leviathan*, Ch. XIII ('On the natural condition of mankind as concerning their felicity and misery').

12. The controlling agency, to prevent war of all against all, must stand outside the system in question. However, Hobbes himself violated this postulate by positing 'a momentary identity of interest – in security – from which the social contract is derived'.

13. First of all, comparing Hobbes, who was theoretically right with his *iron consistency* but overemphasized the problem of security, and Locke, who was theoretically less penetrating but was factually right in his empirical views (Parsons, 1937: 97). The same is said about the earlier writings of Durkheim: his critics were theoretically right, but Durkheim was factually right while insisting that 'the theories of individualistic positivism do not account for the facts' (Parsons, 1937: 362).

14. See the evaluation of his contribution made by Richard Tuck:

    The sense that Hobbes was the genius of modernity, who invented the attitudes of what is called in German the *Gesellschaft*, the world of contract, and repudiated those of the *Gemeinschaft*, the world of community, has remained pervasive since Toennies – though Toennies also recognized that Grotius might equally qualify for this role.

    (1989: 99)

15. An explosive growth of these publications began nearly half a century ago (see, for example, Macpherson, 1962; Warrender, 1957). Richard Tuck makes another periodization. For him, the time between 1930 and 1965 was the period when 'Hobbes's allegedly special role in the creation of modernity, and what that might tell us about modern thought in general, was at the heart of all these more recent discussions', for example Strauss and Macpherson (see Tuck, 1989: 100).

16. Robert van Krieken seems to be principally right but too censorious in his statement:

    The trouble with this 'standard interpretation' of Hobbes is that it is wrong, for two reasons, concerning both the problem of order itself and its solutions. First, this is not how Hobbes understood the 'state of nature' and it is not his 'problem of order'. … Second, the 'normative' solution to the problem of order, which almost everyone from Parsons onwards has suggested is specific to sociology, having eluded Hobbes …, is actually present in Hobbes himself.

    (2002: 258)

    The interpretation Parsons has delivered was too narrow, rather erroneous, but it was nevertheless an interpretation, not a simple mistake.

17. We only mention here a very interesting interpretation of Hobbes by anthropologist Marshall Sahlins. Sahlins compared Hobbes and Marcel Mauss or, more exactly, *Leviathan* and *Essai sur le don*, uncovering in Hobbes a rudimentary theory of gift (see Sahlins, 1972: Ch. 4, esp. 168–183; see also Terpstra, 2000). Sahlins justly pointed that 'in the perspective of Mauss, as it was for Hobbes, the understructure of society is war. This in a special sense which is sociological. … The state of nature described by Hobbes was also a political order' (1972: 171). He sketched a picture of Hobbes' sociology. However, he also paid almost no attention to the bulk of works of philosophers and historians who studied Hobbes. He read Hobbes, with a few exemptions, only by power of his individual scientific insight.

18. See nevertheless the important paper by Robert van Kierken, quoted in the note above.

19. See Luhmann (1981: 203):

    Die Frage formuliert ein *immer schon gelöstes Problem*. Sie formuliert zugleich, und das mag zunächst paradox erscheinen, ein unlösbares Problem. Denn sie formuliert für die wissenschaftliche Thoriebildung und Forschung keine methodologisch und praktisch zu lösende Aufgabe, sondern ein Problem, das auch in seinen Lösungen noch Problem bleibt,

das heißt Problematik und Reproblematisierbarkeit auf alle geronnenen Antwortmuster überträgt.

20. In the most concise and precise formulation of George Caspar Homans, who was of course neither a Kantian nor a Parsonian: 'Hobbes' problem is, of course, why there is not a war of all against all' (Homans, 1964: 813).

21. 'What has struck all readers in Hobbes's sketch of his Leviathan is how fragile "this mortal god" was and how quickly it could dissolve' (Latour, 2007: 162).

22. Leo Strauss demonstrated the changing character of Hobbes' evaluation of history. Hobbes started as translator of Thucydides; his own and his elder contemporaries' interest in history was also their interest in human nature. However, the more he elaborated his political philosophy, the more insignificant history became for him (see Strauss, 2008: 113ff.).

23. Artificial animal, artificial man, says Hobbes in the Introduction to *Leviathan* (1996: 9).

24. Skinner (2002: 305) emphasizes the role of obeying the conqueror stressed by Hobbes in the Conclusion to *Leviathan*.

25. Macpherson repeatedly says that it is *generally understood and recognized* that the natural state is a logical, not a historical, hypothesis. However, he makes also an important reservation: Hobbes, he says, makes inferences about the state of nature from his axioms about human nature; however, his characteristics of men were not purely logical – they were about civilized, not primitive men.

26. It can seem philosophically more fruitful to uncover in Hobbes the problem of paradox in the foundation of the social. The edifice of the social must be built on something that presupposes the social, so, in the origin of Leviathan one can see the deepest paradox of sociality.

La fondation du politique est une protofondation en deux sens: d'une part, comme condition originaire d'une communauté civile où les comportement juridique et moraux des hommes trouvent une effectivité, et d'autre part, comme oeuvre première produite par l'homme, condition de toutes les autres oeuvre humaines. ...Car comment peut-on considérer l'État comme la condition originaire d'une communauté civile, alors qu'ils est lui-même le produit d'un acte collectif?

(Zarka, 1999: 253)

However, it is possible to ask more promising questions, if not in philosophy, then in sociological theory, if we suppose that the most entangled ideas of Hobbes are transparent enough to see a definite historical reality in *and* behind them.

27. All quotations from *De Cive* in English are given according to the translation made by Michael Silverthorne (Hobbes, 1998). I cite the Latin text according to Hobbes (1983).

28. See on Hobbes' criticism of Aristotle's and scholastic natural philosophy Leijenhorst (2007). Leijenhorst demonstrates why the question of sense perception was so important for political philosophy and not only to natural philosophy and epistemology. He does not investigate, however, how it is connected to the main points of both Aristotelian and Hobbesian ethics.

29. For Tönnies, friendship is *Gemeinschaft des Geistes*, the spiritual community of those inhabiting a town or a burg. The concept *friendship* still may be seen by philosophers as successfully competing with the more sociological concept of solidarity, whereas sociologists prefer *solidarity*, which would correspond to the modern stage of social evolution (see Brunhorst, 2005: 5ff.; Rawls, 1999: esp. 90, 414).

30. See Aristotle (1915). See also the most detailed discussion of the subject in *Nicomachean Ethics*, Books VIII–IX. 'Friendship seems too to hold states together', says Aristotle

(1155a25), and he divides also here three kinds of friendship according to three kinds of *love-able* (1155b18) (Aristotle, 2009: 142f., 142ff.)

31. This argument is also, so to say, turned inside out when Hobbes writes in Chapter 15 of *Leviathan*: 'The question who is the better man has no place in the condition of meer Nature; where (as has been shewn before,) all men are equall. The inequallity that now is, has been introduced by the Lawes civill' (1996: 107). This argument is also directed against Aristotle.

32. 'Nam si homo hominem amaret naturaliter, id est, vt hominem …' (*De Cive* 1, II; Hobbes, 1983: 90).

33. Compare, however, the original text (*De Cive* 1, II; Hobbes, 1983: 90):

    Si coëant enim commercij causâ, vnusquisque non socium, sed rem suam colit; si officij causâ, *nascitur forensis quaædam amicitia*, plus habens mutui metûs quam amoris; vnde factio aliquando nascitur, sed beneuolentia nunquam; si animi & hilaritatis causâ, solet maximè perplacere sibi vnusquisque iis rebus… [italics added]

    Hobbes does not speak about *political relationship*, but only mentions that something is done in public, although *forensic amititia* hardly should be translated as 'public friendship'.

34. See in Chapter 8 of *Leviathan*: 'Vertue generally, in all sorts of subjects, is somewhat that is valued for eminence and consisteth in comparison. For if all things would be equally in all men, nothing would be prized' (Hobbes, 1996: 50). In the Latin version of *Leviathan* Hobbes says *propter eminentiam spectabile*: that is, because something is *evident as eminent*.

35. See Aristotle, *Politics*, Book III, 1280b33–1281a3. 'Living well' is the aim of families and clans united in the city.

36. 'La puissance comme moyen est la puissance pour soi, c'est-à-dire telle que l'être désirant se la représente' (Zarka, 1999: 295–296).

37. Compare the famous statement in Chapter 13 of *Leviathan*: 'So, that in the nature of man. We find three principall causes of quarrel. First, Competition; Secondly, Diffidence; Thirdly, Glory' (1996: 88). Glory and competition are both connected to power.

38. Compare the relevant analysis of this argument in Weber (2007 : 60–77).

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