

Plato and Hobbes: On the Foundations of Political Philosophy

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There is a certain philosophia prima on which
all other philosophy ought to depend...

--Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*

Jan Dejnoška, *Plato and Hobbes: On the Foundations of Political Philosophy* (1992). A theory of the state based on theory of human nature and theory of value, with Hume's is-ought inference problem solved. Philosophers and others discussed include Aristotle, Epicurus, G. W. F. Hegel, Immanuel Kant, Frances Hutcheson, Abraham Maslow, John Paul Scott, Richard E. Leakey, Raymond Dart, Robert Ardrey, Leo Strauss, Panayot Butchvarov, H. P. Grice, P. F. Strawson, C. D. Broad, W. T. Stace, Ernest Barker, Robert Lodge, Henry Teloh, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, C. B. MacPherson, Herbert W. Schneider, Richard, S. Peters, Mortimer Adler, Irving R. Copi, Alan Gewirth, Charles Hampden-Turner, Wilhelm Windelband, Stewart Umphrey, Miriam M. Reik, Martin A. Bertman, Ernest Nagel, Richard Taylor, A. E. Taylor, John Searle, John H. Hick, Joseph Raz, C. S. Lewis, Robert Nisbet, Russell Kirk, and James Bond Stockdale.

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Preface

Hobbes began the study of geometry at the age of forty; I begin the study of Hobbes and political philosophy at forty. Rather than study a narrow topic, I have chosen to draw a big picture, a basis for further systematic thinking. But I have worked to deepen my view of the relationship of my fields of specialization, ontology and metaphysics, to the human things.

Introduction

I shall discuss the ontological and metaphysical foundations of political philosophy. This seems Quixotic, since political philosophy seems largely to rely on a common sense picture of the world. It seems especially foolish to ask whether things concerning politics exist or “really” exist. [As Nietzsche says, “What does a drowning sailor care for the chemical composition of the sea?”] Nonetheless, Plato is a star example of the opposite view, and the Hobbist alternative to Plato seems important to the extent that Hobbes’ metaphysic differs from Plato’s.

What is there to be good or valuable except what you admit as having being? And does not what is good for us depend on our nature and on the nature of the world around us? For

instance, water is physically necessary to human life. Yet for obvious reasons, theft of water is reasonably punishable by death in desert cultures, while in our own culture it is not. Thus water seems both an absolute human good as fixed by human nature and a relative good shifting as human culture (or water scarcity) shifts.¹ This interpenetration of real and relative values is no surprise. In general, real things must exist for there to be relativity to anything, just as real things must exist for there to be any distinctions in reason. Real distinctions and distinctions in reason (between aspects or collections of things) interpenetrate on every level of the world's structure. Similarly, the real and relative values of water are distinct only in reason. The relative cultural value of water is a function of its absolute natural value to us.

I omit the value of certain nonbeings: the utility of doughnut holes, the beauty of some musical pauses, the adventure of Conan the Barbarian, and the intellectual illumination of logical constructs or ideal cases. Even doughnut holes, musical pauses, and fictional heroes seem in some sense(s) both in the world around us and good for us. But then, in some sense, such items seem not absolutely nothing. This is much more important to political philosophy than one might think. Both Plato and Hobbes arguably assign the state a very low ontological status indeed. For Hobbes, the social contract is arguably like a doughnut hole: both seem mere logical constructs. For Plato, the state seems largely an imitative and illusory kingly art, having almost the lowest possible ontological status on the Divided Line-- almost as low as Conan the Barbarian. Yet despite the virtual nonbeing of the state, states are, in some sense, in the world around us, and they seem in many ways good for us.

If we knew the ultimate nature of reality, then presumably we would know the answer to every fundamental question, including how to live. If God were the ultimate reality, surely our

lives would be very different from what they would be if physical mass-energy were the ultimate reality. Yet there are at least three objections to this claim. First, many data of ethics seem so clear and specific (murder is bad, justice is good) that our theories of reality seem best judged adequate in part by their ability to conform to and elucidate the ethical data. To that extent it seems not to matter what our theory of reality is; we might all still remain in largely the same state under largely the same scheme of values. Indeed, each of the two theories of ultimate reality just mentioned is professed by many Americans, so the United States seems an actual case in point. Second, ultimate reality might be unknowable or theories about it might prove cognitively meaningless, yet ethics and political philosophy be feasible. Even the two “Bibles of logical positivism,” Ayer’s *Language, Truth, and Logic* and Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus*, perhaps self-defeatingly, professed some ethical views. Third, there is Hume’s problem of inferring values from matters of fact, or “ought” from “is”. As to the first two objections, my replies are these. First, our theory of reality should not be influenced by preconceptions of what reality “ought” to be like. That is question-begging. Ethical data are data like any others, and can be overruled. Second, if we do have a theory of reality, then the second objection becomes irrelevant. I shall resolve Hume’s problem in Part 4, sections D and G.

Perhaps because they lived in philosophically simpler times, Plato and Hobbes based their ethics and politics on their theories of ultimate reality. Plato is not far from the “God” theory, and Hobbes is not far from the mass-energy theory.

The differences between Plato and Hobbes must not obscure their striking similarities. Both are philosophers committed to the use of reason. Both are influenced by geometry as a model of reason, and both seek a justification of the state independent of religion. Both consider

ontology and metaphysics the basis of their political philosophies. Within metaphysics, both make theory of man basic to political philosophy. Both consider men as profitlessly going about in every individual direction if without suitable guidance. Also within metaphysics, both consider the problem of universals as especially important to political philosophy. Both have similar lists of virtues, such as courage and justice; both subscribe to the Golden Rule; and both find some ‘timeless or eternal’ aspect to their values. Both have naturalistic theories of values. Both value an anti-democratic strong ruler; both were influenced in this by war in their own time and by the Peloponnesian War (for Plato, these coincided). Finally, both make the state in some sense an “artificial man” which is a means to certain ends.

The main differences are perhaps no less striking. Plato’s conception of reason as dialectical transcends Hobbes’ merely geometrical model. (I speak of explicit views; Hobbes does not fail to engage rival views dialectically.) Plato is a realist; Hobbes is a modified nominalist. For Plato, men are souls; for Hobbes men are machines. For Plato, men’s going about in every direction if without guidance is mainly due to their ignorance of the good. For Hobbes, it is mainly due to their self-interest and fear of domination by each other. For Plato, values are eternal natures to be grasped by the intellect. For Hobbes, it is the natural laws concerning sentiments which are eternal. For Plato, the ideal ruler is one who knows what goodness is. For Hobbes, the ideal ruler is one who has absolute power. For Plato, the end of the state is to promote the Good. For Hobbes, the ends of the state are prudential.

The paper concerns four issues. (1) What is the state? (2) What are values? (3) What are human beings? (4) In light of (1)-(3), can we justify obeying the state? I discuss these four issues in the four sections to follow. In each section, I include my own views for perspective.

1. The State

A. A Pros Hen Theory of Politics

Like the word “being,” the word “political” is said in many ways. Whether or not the following are irreducibly political, we often speak of political:

- entities, processes, events, structures
- identities or essences
- realities, appearances, constructions, or fictions
- problems, puzzles, paradoxes, solutions
- descriptions, causes, effects, theories, or explanations
- properties or relationships
- aspects, dimensions, modes, perspectives, frameworks, viewpoints
- words, definitions
- meaning or significance
- propositions (“Political courage is good” seems synthetic a priori.²)
- truth or falsehood, belief, knowledge, certainty, error
- data, perception, cognition, intuition, judgment, or experience
- soundness, sobriety, rashness
- logic, reasoning, or justification
- rhetoric, oratory, showmanship, demagoguery
- naturalness, likelihood, foreseeability, probability
- time, timing, space (room to maneuver)

- persons, agents, acts, activities
- tactics, strategies, plans, policies, considerations
- forces, attack, surprise, ambush, defense, retaliation
- victory, defeat, consequences, dark side, karma
- character or personality, charisma
- conception, imagination, creativity
- wishes, hopes, fears, dreams, loves, hates, fears, envies
- jokes, insults, compliments, stories, promises
- necessity (coercion, obligation) or possibility (permissibility)
- virtues or vices (temperance or profligacy, courage or cowardice)
- values-- good or evil, elegance, flair

Evidently “political” is a transcategorical term, much like “being” or “good” on Aristotle’s view. It seems natural to follow Aristotle on “being” and hold that “political” is also *pros hen*, i.e., said literally only of certain politically primary entities, and said of other items nonliterally and only insofar as they are related to primary political entities.

Aristotle’s paradigm of a *pros hen* term is “health”. Organisms are literally healthy. Food or climate is said to be healthy if it promotes health in organisms; urine is said to be healthy if it is the sort normally produced by healthy organisms. Food, climate, and urine do not enjoy good health in a literal sense; we do not treat them for illness.

States are, in my view, what is literally political. But states need not be, and are not, Aristotelian substances. A state, or central political power for a group of people, is scarcely a

traditional substance. When I say that among items said to be political, states are literally political, and the rest are political only insofar as they are related to states, I am speaking about the political order of things, not the metaphysical order of things. Of course, those two orders may happen to coincide. They largely coincide for Hegel. For Hegel, a nation-state is more substantial than its individual persons or their speeches or campaigns, since for him wholes are prior to and more real than their parts. But we need not subscribe to Hegel's theory of metaphysical holism, or even to Aristotle's *pros hen* theory of being, to hold a *pros hen* theory of politics.

The Wittgensteinian view that the uses of "political" merely share family resemblances, that they resemble the overlapping strands in a rope, none of which runs the whole length of the rope, emerges as superficial and haphazard in comparison. The distinction between primary (incorrigible, criterial) games and secondary games is not the *pros hen* distinction. A speech or campaign may be incorrigibly and criterially political-- correctly said to be political if anything is-- yet not primary in the *pros hen* sense, since a speech or campaign is political only insofar as it relates to a state.

Also, our *pros hen* theory eliminates any Grice-Strawson "family circle" problem that the many terms of politics are interdefinable.³ On our theory, we clearly should take the use of "political" to describe the state as primitive, within the family circle of uses of "political".

B. Defining the State

As to 'no entity without identity', it seems natural to say that we can identify states more or less as easily as we can identify professions, legal systems, organized sports, businesses, religions, and cultures, if not smiles, climates, mountains, or personalities. This makes it possible

that states have an essence, though they might also merely have a Wittgensteinian criterion.

It seems natural that states should have an essence. The traditional test of having a categorial essence or nature is that things which can change into each other belong to the same category. A political government or a political right cannot change into a number or a tree or a moment or a region of space. However, a political organization could slowly evolve into a chess club or a college fraternity. The Order of Teutonic Knights ruled vast lands in the twelfth century, but by 1825 the Knights had evolved into a landless charitable organization. Thus the traditional test seems met; states belong to a definite category.

It seems natural to find states definable, remembering that “it is a mark of lack of education to expect more precision than a subject-matter allows.” Though the very word “state” connotes something static, so to speak, I find it natural to assay a state as an ongoing structured group activity that concerns power over members of the group. There are two reasons for this. First, the other major candidate, a ruler or a small number of leaders, can change while the state remains the same. Rulers are better said to be current heads of state (recall the pros hen theory). Of course, a state sometimes perishes with its ruler. Once again, substantiality in the political order need not be literal substantiality in the metaphysical order. Rulers can be substantial in the metaphysical order while states are substantial in the political order. The word “substance” is itself pros hen; its metaphysical use is primary and its political use is secondary. Thus in the metaphysical order, states might well be among the last items defined; in the political order, states should be taken as primitive, if our pros hen theory is right.

The second reason for making the state a certain kind of activity is that from the metaphysical viewpoint, a state should be an accidental feature of groups. Since a state has or is a

kind of power over a group, this naturally connotes action, agency, activity. Now an activity is just the sort of thing that, speaking logico-metaphysically, is an accidental feature of groups. That is quite compatible with a state's being eventually necessary to human groups speaking socially or biogenetically. A state should be an accidental feature of groups because not every group of people lives in a state. The multinational passengers of a shipwrecked cruise ship, stranded on a tropical isle, do not live in a state of their own, and logically need never develop one. The group of people belonging to a chess club do not and need not live in a state of their own. More to the point, anarchy, the absence of a state, is a logical possibility for any group. Any political state logically can disintegrate. And when a state disintegrates, the group remains; it simply becomes disorganized.

Accordingly, I propose this theoretical definition of a state:

x is a state (or, x is political in the literal sense)

=Df

- (1) x is an activity concerning a group of living beings;
- (2) x provides the structure or organization of that group;
- (3) x is the authoritative or ruling power over the group; [and]
- (4) x can govern a sufficient degree of group life

(1) is the genus; (2)-(4) comprise the differentia. One might object that (2) is suspect in that a king might rule by giving direct orders to his subjects in no discernible pattern. But even this is a kind of primitive hub-and-spoke structure. One might object that (4) may be too broad in that it

fails to rule out following a religion. But a religious activity that satisfies (1)-(4) is a theocratic state. One might object that what constitutes a sufficient degree of governance in (4) can only be specified by paradigms, making our definition a Wittgensteinian criterion in disguise. But the distinction between definition and criterion is itself a matter of degree. Here we sufficiently remove the hallmark of mere criteria: features coming into play or dropping out much like facial features across a human family. For features (1)-(4) apply literally to all states; they are not “family resemblances”. While the degree may have to be fixed by paradigms, once it is fixed, it is subject not to fluctuation, but to refinement. One might object that the definition does not make it clear whether all states involve human beings. But this may be resolved in terms of degree of governance. See also Part 3, section B on broad and narrow senses of “state”.

My definition conforms well to how states meet the traditional test of having an essence. States can change only into other members of their genus-- symphony orchestras, chess clubs, and other structured activities. One might object that a group activity can slowly change into an individual activity; a game of poker might evolve into solitaire. Or again, a state might change into anarchy, which is not a group activity. But such objections confuse change into another kind of thing with passing away from being altogether. The card game example is ambiguous. One card game changes into another, but group activity ceases altogether when the change is completed. When a king says “I am the state,” this is close to the truth. His actions are more properly said to constitute the state. A king who never acts, though having every opportunity to do so, is a state in name only, just as a man who never does anything good, though having every opportunity to do so, is not a good man. In both cases, it is the actions that count. Perhaps a king could be always poised to act if needed, where it just happens that he never needs to act, perhaps because the last

king set things up so well. Even so, it is being poised to act that makes him kingly; perhaps also his kingliness is parasitic on the acts of the previous king. It is only qua agent that a king is a state. In my definition of “state,” I would be willing to substitute agents for acts or activity; it would be kings who are not agents who are not states. Here I side with Wittgenstein; the language-game of “state” is not played if the so-called ruler never acts appropriately, much as a piece of wood which is never used appropriately is not a king in the game of chess. (But a piece of wood is not poised to act; nor are we poised to use it.) Note that this favors de facto states over de jure states. In fact my definition is of de facto states. I suggest that de facto states are literally states and that de jure states are states only in a manner of speaking. De jure states are said to be states only in virtue of having the nominal legal structure de facto states typically have. As Hobbes says, states without the sword are not genuine states. The old question whether will (Scotus) or intellect (Aquinas) is the more basic faculty arises on the level of the state as follows. We could add this property to my definition of a state, or use it to replace (3):

(5) x is based on judgment or reason

Common-sensically, (the activity of) a mad king would still be the state, and would be a mad state as opposed to a nonstate, just as the king himself is mad as opposed to nonhuman. Therefore, for states, I hold that will is essential and partly definitive, and intellect is accidental. That is why I include (3) but not (5) in the definition of a state. That disposes of the question, Is politics an art or a science? Politics need be neither; a mad king pursues politics neither as a practical craft nor as a body of systematic theory. And we have an initial answer to the question, Why obey the

state? For there seems to be no reason to obey a mad state; and insofar as (5) happens to apply, the judgment or reason on which the state-activity is based should also be what justifies obedience. Such a judgment or reason should endorse not only the goal or end of the activity but also the state-activity as a proper means. Our affirmation of state will as more basic than state reason strongly supports our earlier neoWittgensteinian preference for de facto states over de jure. States are understood in terms of agency and will, but good states are understood at least in part in terms of good judgment or reason. (It may be better to live in a state with moderately good judgment and strong will than in one with superb judgment but very weak will.)

One might object that politics has no nature because politics is always changing; it is not fixed or static in character. But this is to misunderstand the essence of essence. Essences need not be literally rigid. Some things are essentially flexible, such as rubber. Others are essentially malleable, such as gold. Others are essentially fluid, such as mercury or water. Still others are essentially vague, such as mists or clouds. But their essences, as essences, are for all that fixed and static in their way. A rubber band cannot become a number, a thought, or a spatial point no matter how much you twist it. Group activities are flexible in nature; they are more like rubber, gold, or mercury than like a stone, a number, or a spatial point. Group activities have levels of flexibility; a group can find it more or less easy to decide to become more or less flexible. The relevant factors of administrative, psychological, and economic flexibility are quite natural to human groups.

One might still object that politics is more open-ended than mists or water, that politics is a rich mixture of indefinitely many variables which operates by no certain law or set of laws. Like minds and mental life on C.D. Broad's view, it may even be a matter of degree what is a central authority or a political right. A grasshopper's mental life is not organized enough to be a mind

properly speaking;⁴ a hunter-gatherer group's decision-making process may not be organized enough to be a state. My reply is that physics itself is now a science of process laws involving multitudes of variables and often concerns causally "open" systems; does this mean that physical things have no nature? Surely each primitive variable in a process law instantiates to some physical constant with a determinate nature whenever that law is applied. Politics may thus have process laws. We must not confuse our abysmal ignorance of such laws with their nonexistence. Also, following Grice and Strawson, the existence of a "gray area" between states and nonstates does not mean that the distinction is not objective or well taken. That it is unclear whether grasshoppers have minds scarcely entails it is unclear that stones lack minds and humans have minds.⁵

How is our definition related to ontological reduction? On the face of it, both explicit definition per genus et differentiam and "pie-slicing" contextual definition establish the existence of what is defined. In contrast, speech-act and ordinary-use "definition" eliminate what is defined as merely grammatical fictions. Our definition is traditional. But even if states cannot be nothing on our definition, they may have a very low grade of constructive metaphysical reality. I shall not attempt to fix the place of the state in the metaphysical order yet, though as an activity its existence is dependent on that of actors. That states have some status fits well with the observation that if they are fictions, still they are more like Russell's logical fictions (bodies, minds, numbers) than like mere fictions (mythological or literary fictions, insane delusions, the golden mountain of Hume and Meinong. States are literally in history in a way that the Homeric gods and Conan the Barbarian never were.

For Plato, a state would be in some sense a particular in the world of flux, but unlike a

soul in being a collective in some sense. The rational part of a soul is eternal, but the rational part of a state seems no more than the collection of the rational parts of the souls of its citizens, or perhaps of its guardians. Still, states and souls and their parts participate in the same forms. Here I disagree with Hegel's view that Plato's state is an eternal and unchanging nature; my view is that for Plato, states have or participate in, to some minimal degree, such an eternal nature.⁶

C. Plato's Definition of the State

In light of the foregoing, and waiving the agent-activity distinction, I suggest this definition as a gloss on Plato:

x is a state

=Df

- (1) x is a group of persons G;
- (2) G has three proper and mutually exclusive subgroups, namely:
 - (a) those who primarily participate in wisdom;
 - (b) those who primarily participate in courage; and
 - (c) those who primarily participate in temperance; and
- (3) in virtue of (a)-(c), G participates to an adequate degree in justice.

Boiled down to saying that a state is a group having rulers, police-military auxiliaries, and a merchant-producer class, this definition is perhaps more pragmatic than theoretical. It is logically conceivable that people no longer need to consume goods, but still need to live in a state. But in

practice it is hard to picture any actual state as without any producers or merchants. Even a hunter-gatherer group has an economy. Ernest Barker says, “Because the Polis was more than a state-- because it was also... a religious confession and an ethical society; because it was also... an economic concern for the purpose of production and trade; because it was also... a cultural association for the common pursuit of beauty and truth-- because it was all these things, Plato expects it, in his Republic, to formulate the true idea of God and the rules of moral behavior, to regulate economic life, and to control all art and science by its system of education.”⁷ Thus Plato based his theory of the state on the detailed concrete reality of the city-states of his day at least as much as on his abstruse metaphysical theory of forms. That fact should be reflected in our Platonic definition of the state. I shall add supporting facts in a moment.

Several facts suggest that Plato, if asked, would assign states a very low ontological status in the Divided Line degrees-of-reality scheme. First, states come into being and perish; and while they exist they are imperfect or even corrupt.⁸ Thus they are not eternal perfect forms. Second, states are, in a clear sense, composed of individual humans, and their existence is dependent on these humans’ existing. Third, the first two facts are connected in that individual souls exist indestructibly, reincarnating in different bodies,⁹ while states cannot do so, since they are composed of such-and such embodied souls. Fourth, Plato seems to imply that the “kingly art”¹⁰ is imitative. States imitate individual humans.¹¹ Thus states resemble poems and sculptures in being mere appearances or images of things.¹² That is how Plato’s states resemble Conan the Barbarian in their ontological status. They may seem above Conan in that they have a function or instrumentality in serving human needs through imitation. But then even Conan serves needs for heroic inspiration and for escapism through imitation. Fifth, states are below the level of True

Opinion insofar as they use Plato's myth or False Opinion that human beings have different natures to help ensure state cohesion as continued existents.¹³ Considering how Plato rails against the imitations of art, these are very deep ironies about Plato's *Republic*. To be sure, Plato distinguishes between different kinds of art and imitation.¹⁴ But surely the kind of social acting involved in politics is close to theatrical acting in many ways. Insofar as Plato's state is an instrument to serve human needs and ends, Plato's state seems as utilitarian as Hobbes'.¹⁵ And the fourth fact mentioned in the last paragraph suggests that Plato's state is, in its way, as entitled to be called an artificial man as is Hobbes' state. Namely, Plato deliberately imitates the human soul in developing his notion of the state.

The nature of Plato's ideal state is a complex of four forms, grasped only by the intellect. It is metaphysical in the sense of "beyond the physical or empirical". Hobbes' modified nominalism is sharply against such a nature's existing. Hobbes' state is intended as a body which has a physical nature. Yet Hobbes refers to states as "artificial," by which he seems to mean that they are what is sometimes called a construction or fiction. Hobbes seems to imply he is aware that even a "body" which is alleged to exist over and above the bodies of people we see is just as metaphysical as a Platonic form, in the sense just mentioned of "metaphysical".

D. Hobbes' Definition of the State

Hobbes' defining states as bodies seems somewhat inert compared to my definition of states as patterns of action; but Hobbes does emphasize motion. At the same time, the nature of Plato's state is no more static and timeless than that of Hobbes' state, since Hobbes bases the state on a 'geometry' of static and timeless natural laws.

Hobbes constructs the state with two notions: representation and contract. A state is logically incomplete without both notions: a state is a contracted representation. A state “exists” just in case a group of people contracts that a proper sub-group of itself (a single ruler or an oligarchy) should represent it.

The foregoing suggests that Hobbes is best glossed as giving a contextual definition of the state as follows:

Group G lives in a state

=Df

(1) S is a proper sub-group of G;

(2) Enough members M of G have contracted that S will represent M.

One might object that in a pure democracy, $S = G$, so that (1) is false. Again, a group might invite an outsider or even a computer to make its governmental decisions, so that again (1) is false. I accept these criticisms as revealing minor mechanical difficulties. (1) can be easily rewritten,

(1') There exists some S.

(2) is the conceptual clause; (2) alone mentions contract and representation.

I remarked earlier that (successful) explicit and contextual definitions alike establish the existence of the defined item. However, this claim is more contentious in the case of contextual definitions; many hold that contextual definitions are eliminative. (Quine is a good example.) And

there are special grounds for questioning my claim in the case of the present Hobbist contextual definition. Namely, representations and contracts seem fictions.

There are two ways the word “represent” may be used. First, the word may be so used that one thing may be understood to represent another thing only if both things exist. Second, the word may be so used that a thing may represent that there is another thing, whether or not that other thing exists. Insofar as a ruler or oligarchy represents all the people in the group, Hobbes uses the word in the first way. But insofar as that the existence of a representation of the sort just described represents that a state exists, Hobbes uses the word in the second way. This second way paves the way toward viewing our neoHobbist contextual definition as eliminative.

Also, Hobbes’ understanding of states is relational. Representations in the first sense are relations. Contracts are relations as well. This makes the state fictional for Hobbes in a second sense. Not only are states constructed in terms of these relations, but on Hobbes’ own modified nominalism, surely all relations are fictions.

Nonetheless, even if all states, representations in the second sense, and contracts are fictions for Hobbes, not all fictions are alike. The 1918 Russell made numbers logical fictions, yet arithmetic remained for Russell a model of rigorous and totally objective science. Hobbes’ “geometry” of politics may be just as fictitious as all of mathematics on the 1918 Russell’s view, and just as objective. But because the question whether states are fictions seems so important, I shall discuss it further, along with the related question, Should an ontologically fictitious state be obeyed?

E. Is the State a Fiction?

One serious question raised in class is, If a state or a contract or a representation is a fiction, then why should we (and how could we) be morally obliged to conform to it?

Here, Hume's problem of deriving "ought" from "is" is a great leveler of all views. No matter what the ontological status of the state-- no matter what the state "is"-- nothing follows as to what we ought to do, including whether we ought to obey it. Even if states were the most real substances in the world, nothing would follow as to whether we ought to obey them. Nonetheless, I propose an analogical argument. Suppose that arithmetic is a logical fiction as the 1918 Russell says. It would be foolish to ask why we would be logically obliged to conform to it. The very reduction of arithmetic to logic establishes for the first time the logical necessity of arithmetical truths. Again, suppose that muons and gluons are mere theoretical fictions in physics. It would be foolish to ask why we would be physically obliged to conform to their theory. Their very reduction to lawful patterns of sensible events shows the futility of trying to 'disobey nature'. Now suppose that a contract is a fiction, and similarly for the liberty to assent to it, as well as the moral obligation to keep it. (For Hobbes, liberty is a fiction, and evidently so must be moral obligation.) It would be foolish to ask why we ought to keep the contract, since its very reduction to a geometry of physical law includes attached explications of liberty and moral necessity that apply to the contract out of the rational necessity of the geometry itself. Denying that we had a moral duty to keep the contract thus would be, for Hobbes, going against reason and mother nature rolled into one. That seems the general structure of the best Hobbist reply; I am not vouching for Hobbes' geometry as correct in detail. Yes, moral necessity is not logical necessity or physical necessity.

But the burden is on those who wish to show that the difference should make a difference.

And I shall be dealing with Hume's problem later. One may object that the word "fiction" is said in many ways. There is the ontological status of contracts and relations generally as fictions. But there is an ordinary sense in which contracts are fact or fiction. My rental contract is a fact; the building manager and I signed it. Hobbes' social contract, in the case of many societies, looks like a fiction. Who signed it? Who agreed to it? Who was even aware of it? Why was Hobbes the first to discover it? Did the rest of society somehow overlook or forget its existence? The objection would be that it is in this second sense of "fiction" that it may be questioned why we should (or how we could) have a moral duty to obey the social contract. My reply on behalf of Hobbes is that the ontological and the ordinary senses of the word "fiction" are not unrelated. The ontological sense arises out of and attempts to refine the ordinary sense. The fact is that even fictions in the ordinary sense often are intended to have, and often do have, some explanatory or even descriptive value. To say that a state exists really is very much like saying that many people made a tacit rough agreement to a certain kind of power structure. Saying that is much more like saying a state exists than is saying that the Moon is made of green cheese! I suggest that ontological fictions and ordinary heuristic fictions are more like real things in respect of having some basis in reality than are merely literary fictions. A literary fiction is based tenuously on physical reality in the form of a book or an actor; a hallucinated fiction is based only on some neural activity. But states are so directly based on physical groups that they are accidental features of such groups; they exist historically in a much more direct sense than Conan (who did not exist before 1900). This is a matter of degree; I emphasized the broad similarity of Conan and states in respect of having low ontological status a while back.

One might object that Hobbes' own word is not "fiction" but "artificial". As Samuel

Taylor Coleridge puts the common-sense view, “A million of men united by mutual confidence and free concourse of thoughts form one power, and this is as much a real thing as a steam engine”.¹⁶ And an artificial body, such as a steam engine or robot, is as real as a natural physical body. Hobbes’ state is arguably constructed out of the bodies of people much as a house is built of boards. To be sure, the social contract is not as literally cohesive as nails or glue. But given the role of Hobbes’ natural laws in leading to the state, even the social contract may be a sort of physical cohesive. Many people have noted the natural cohesiveness of states, and compared their life-growth-death cycle to that of physical organisms. Also recall Hobbes’ physicalism: what else could the social contract ultimately be but some sort of physical nexus, on such a metaphysic? Surely it consists of ‘mental motions’ of contractual assent, motions which are ultimately physical.

My reply is that “artifact” is only a refinement of what “fiction” should mean in Hobbes’ case. The refinement seems consistent with everything I have said. I might add that even if artificiality is associated with free choice, most of the artifacts we make result from fairly natural choices. Indeed, free choice in the everyday sense is itself part of human nature. I will say more on nature and artifice shortly.

One might still object that “artificial” means “fictitious” only if Hobbes is a reductionist, only if states are not ‘emergent properties’ of men, only if natural social laws cannot be logically deduced from individual laws together with suitable correlating definitions or bridge-laws. C.B. MacPherson might be viewed as raising such an objection:

...Hobbes’s psychological propositions do not contain all that is needed for the deduction of the necessity of a sovereign state.... [Y]ou cannot move from man as

a mechanical system to the universal struggle for power, or to the state of nature, without further assumptions. And the further assumptions are... tenable only about the relations prevailing in a certain kind of society...17

My reply is that without questioning MacPherson's argument, one may doubt his understanding of the capabilities of cybernetic feedback systems. Mechanical mice probably could be designed that try to 'feed' on each other's batteries or to 'fight' for access to some limited power supply, until they 'learn' they get enough power only if they 'cooperate'. Such mice must be designed thinking of their 'social' interaction. But there would be only one engineering diagram that describes a single mouse. This diagram would be used to build the whole mouse 'community' mouse by mouse. It is obvious that the laws governing the behavior of individual mice will logically entail the laws governing community behavior of mice. This update of Hobbes to artificial intelligence capabilities makes it reasonable to update Hobbes to a reductionist outlook. And "artificial" can now mean "fictitious" in just the sense the objector wished. (Compare the point made in lecture that in Rawls' "original state", one need consider only one person to assess what is a just state.)

Concerning the question "Why obey a fiction?", three great classes of very difficult inference converge. The first concerns Hume's problem of inferring values from facts. "X is real" does not entail "X ought to be obeyed," and "X is a fiction" does not entail "It is not the case that X ought to be obeyed." The second concerns the problem of inferring ontological status from kind of item. "X is natural" does not entail "X is real," and "X is artificial" does not entail "X is unreal." The third concerns the problem of inferring natural or artificial status from kind of item.

Most people would say that a violin is natural and an electric guitar is artificial. Yet a violin is highly artificial, and electricity is a natural phenomenon. It is probably wisest to say that any item which conforms to physical law is to that extent natural. And what is not natural in that sense? Concerning prudential obligation, these classes may work together as follows. For the 1918 Russell, lions are logical fictions-- classes of sense-data. Yet while lions lack reality in the primary sense they are real in a secondary sense concerning lawful correlation of sense-data, as opposed to 'wild' sense-data, or what we ordinarily call phantoms or hallucinations. Now even though a lion is a logical fiction and unreal in the primary sense, and a phantom lion is no fiction but real in the primary sense, we prudentially ought to fear attack by lions, and prudentially ought not to fear attack by phantom lions. Similarly, concerning moral obligation, a mother has certain duties to her child even though Russell would assay both as logical fictions. Likewise, a state which is a logical fiction having secondary reality in Russell's sense ought to be obeyed if, say, it promotes the best values, while a phantom state I hallucinate ought not to be obeyed, even though it is literally as real as anything can be in Russell's primary sense. (Here I follow common sense; Hume's problem shall be discussed later.) I suggest that when Plato and Hobbes deem states artificial they do so in certain senses of the word "artificial" which are consistent with calling states real and natural in important senses of the words "real" and "natural," and that the question ought we to obey states, understood in a common-sensical, pre-Humean way, will be unaffected by whether states are artificial in Plato's or Hobbes' senses, since states seem real and natural enough in the senses that count for obedience. I suggest further that whether states ought to be obeyed turns on other questions such as whether they promote good ends and whether they do so effectively. The question whether "fictions" should be obeyed is a red herring.

Suppose that personal egos are fictions, part of Maya, the world-illusion. You see this about yourself and others, being enlightened. Now one of the ego-illusions appears to come up to your ego-illusion, appears to be troubled about its illusory spiritual problems, and appears to ask your illusory assistance to attain enlightenment. Do you have an obligation to help? The Mahayana Buddhists would say that compassion requires that you help. Indeed, to what else, except a fiction, could you be obliged to help realize it is only a fiction? Besides, its problems seem real enough to it!

In a fairly thoroughly fictitious world such as David Hume's, obligations themselves may be fictions. Hume, despite his famous is-ought problem, seems to construct obligations from sentiments and interests in the *Treatise*. Thus Hume tailors obligations to fit his fictitious world. For Hume knows that whether we have obligations to fictions depends as much on what obligations are as on what fictions are. But Hume's problem confutes his own theory of obligation, since sentiments and interests are part of what "is". Usually when we say we have no obligation to fictions, we mean "fiction" in the sense of something that is not there. An English civil servant obliged to collect taxes from all English taxpayers is not obliged to collect taxes from Adam Dalgliesh, P.D. James' fictional detective, because Dalgliesh is, in the relevant sense, simply not there to collect taxes from. But a corporation is there to be taxed in the relevant sense, though virtually as fictitious as Dalgliesh. Both are ontological fictions; corporations are also legal fictions due to various pragmatic and policy reasons that might have been otherwise.

The three definitions of a state given above conjointly seem to attribute logically compatible characteristics to states. A structured governing activity may follow the Platonic structure in distinguishing three classes of citizens, and at the same time may follow the Hobbist structure in

group representation through a hub-and-spoke contractual agreement or something analogous to one. My own definition seems more fundamental and general than the other two. Broadly, I would say that a state, or de facto group activity, has a muted but definite (and causal) reality; but it generally wears a fictitious de jure cloak.

2. Values

A. Values as Properties

Like “political,” words like “courageous” and “just” seem pros hen. We speak of just men, laws, states, courts, acts, questions, reasons, rewards, punishments, distributions of goods, times, and places. Also like “political,” the primary sense of words like “courageous” and “just” is surely the sense in which they apply to acts. Just as a piece of wood not used in certain ways is not a king in chess, and a man who does not act in certain ways is not a king of a state, so a man who, in ordinary circumstances, never performs good acts is not a good man. Since “political” and “courageous” in the primary sense both describe acts, we may then speak alike of political acts, courageous acts, and politically courageous acts in the primary sense without fear of mixing primary and secondary senses.

As to the place of political values in the order of values, I incline toward this schema:

I. Value Theory

A. Ethics

1. Morality (Individuals)

2. Politics (Groups)

B. Aesthetics

C. Other Kinds of Values

The suggested kinship between morality and politics suggests the crapulousness of much actual politicking. Hobbes has a somewhat different schema. I doubt that political values would be assayed any differently from any other kind of values; the arguments are too general to allow any other option. Theories of values divide into theories of values as properties and other kinds of theories of values, such as the language-game, emotive, commendatory, or imperative theories. I shall discuss only theory of properties.

There are four main kinds of theory of properties: theory of universals (properties are literally and numerically the same entities across the things said to have them), resemblance theory (properties are only classes of similar items), conceptualism (properties exist only as concepts or ideas in minds), and nominalism (properties exist only as words in language). I accept the theory of universals roughly as presented in Butchvarov's *Resemblance and Identity*, and as applied to ethics in Butchvarov's *Skepticism in Ethics*, where Butchvarov argues that goodness is a generic universal.¹⁸ In short: there are individuals, sensible qualities, and generic properties, all of which are distinct only in reason from each other. I can choose which of these I attend to, but all of them are given as mind-independent. There are relations (here I follow Russell). There are merely grammatical descriptions-- Butchvarov's 'open sentences', such as "has no properties", which cannot denote an ontological property on pain of defeating its own applicability. I add

contextually defined properties, such as being a thief. Being a thief is not a sensible quality. Nor is it an abstraction from a sensible quality into a generic property. Nor would it seem merely an open sentence. Contextually defined properties are existing Fregean functions mapping values onto arguments. So are qualities and generic properties, but as mapping principles they are more straightforward. I am a modified realist: a realist as to all qualities, properties, and relations except the occasional open sentence. For present purposes, Plato may be said to hold an ante rem theory of universals. That means that forms are universals which exist even if no individuals participate in them. There is a sense in which forms are strictly individuals, but that is of no interest to us here.¹⁹

Thinkers as diverse as Bertrand Russell and Martin Heidegger, and not a few Hobbes scholars, have held that Hobbes is an extreme nominalist. I suggest that Hobbes is a modified nominalist. He is a realist as to individual bodies, a conceptualist as to sensible qualities, and a nominalist as to properties and relations. Hobbes flatly says, “Of... words, some are the names of the things conceived: as the names of all sorts of bodies.... Others are the names of the imaginations themselves; that is to say, of those ideas or mental images we have of all things we see or remember. And others again are names of names or of different sorts of speech”.²⁰ I shall speak of Hobbes as a nominalist only when I am concerned with the third sort of names, notably when I am concerned with moral properties, which are scarcely sensible qualities.

Richard S. Peters is mistaken when he says that for Hobbes, “[n]ames could be either of bodies or of properties or of names.... ‘Universal’ for instance, was a name of a class of names, not of essences designated by names. Such names are universals because of their use, not because they refer to a special type of entity. Similarly redness (which is a property) is not in blood in the same

way as blood (which is a body) is in a bloody cloth (which is another body) [emphasis mine].”²¹
 For Hobbes, “red” would name an idea or mental image in the mind, not a property which is in blood in any way.²²

B. Against Radical Ethical Relativism

In the first paragraph of this paper I advocated a modified relativism (or modified realism). You cannot conceptually slice nothing; an item cannot exist relative to nothing. I also advocated a modified ethical relativism of relative values depending on real values. However, the second theory is weaker than the first. It is possible that all values exist only relative to nonethical things. The view that this is so is radical ethical relativism (or reductionism).

Students in class gave two arguments for radical moral relativism. One was that since many moral rules have exceptions, it is an empirical generalization that probably they all do. The other was that every moral rule has exceptions; thus moral relativism is true. I have seven comments; for my purposes, both arguments for relativism can be lumped together.

First, the premisses of both arguments are compatible with moral claims’ existing in an objective precedential hierarchy of prima facie obligations. I see modern science with its systems of multiple interacting variables as a like case; you can always modify predictions by widening the system to include new variables. And surely such physics is objective empirical knowledge. You can achieve objectivity in morals merely by imposing closure: “Other things being equal, torturing babies just for fun is wrong.” And each time you widen closure by an addition of new variables, you get a new but equally objective moral result.

Second, consider Don Regan’s example T: “Torturing babies just for fun is wrong.”

Perhaps a world where babies are not much affected by torture and adults are seriously affected by not having fun, and can have fun only by torturing babies, would be an exception. But then T should be more fully written as T1: “Torturing babies just for fun is always wrong,” which is equivalent to T2: “It is always a duty not to torture babies,” the proposed denial of which is equivalent to T3: “It is sometimes (or in some possible circumstances) morally permissible to torture babies.” And T3 is just as much an objective moral claim as T1. Or more simply, T3 is equivalent to T4: “We do not have a duty not to torture babies in some circumstances,” which is just as much an objective claim as T1 concerning what our duties are or are not in various situations. And in general you can derive T5: “D is a duty in situation S” from T6: “Not-D is not permissible in S.” And “always” and “sometimes” scarcely affect the objectivity of any sentences in which they occur. So what the two relativist arguments really show is that “D is a duty” is logically incomplete and has no determinate truth-value, and that the logical form of objective moral duty claims is properly “D is a duty in situation S.” The “in situation S” is just a closure condition. Thus the arguments confuse relativism with objective relational facts, or at least show no difference between those options. This is not a new point.²³ But I add to it that the relational T5: “D is a duty in situation S” and the morally innocuous T7: “S sometimes obtains” conjointly logically entail T8: “D is sometimes a duty,” which, I submit, states a not specifically relational, if not nonrelational, moral claim. Yes, “sometimes” seems equivalent to “in some situation S”. But standard theory of existential quantification can be expounded and argued for without a hint of reliance on situations S. In T8*: “There exists an x such that: x is a duty,” the “in situation S” has vanished. That is part of the allowable generalization in existential generalization, or more accurately, of the allowable abstraction. Thus I submit that T8: “D is sometimes a duty” is in fact

nonrelational, as its semi-canonical paraphrase into T8* shows.

Third, one sort of private language argument is based on a situational problem of interpretation. One and the same metal band may or may not be a royal crown (i.e. truly called “a royal crown”) depending on the situation. But actually the argument aims at ending a vicious regress of interpretations (the band wearer is an actor in a play; the band worn by the actor is a royal device on loan from a king) by positing primary language-games which incorporate minimally enough context within themselves to be criterial vehicles of genuine objective reference. That is, in some situations, the metal band simply is a crown, if we can communicate using the word “crown” at all. Now, the argument applies to talk of duties as well as to talk of crowns. Here primary language-games are minimal closure conditions or minimal situations S; the two arguments for relativism pose a problem of multiple interpretation of the applicability of moral terms. The result is that the two arguments for relativism condemn all talk of morals as literally incommunicable. And that is absurd. What is more obvious about talk of duty than that we teach and learn it? The word “duty” is a word of English, a publicly shared language if there ever was one. And the situational private language argument must be right if verbal communication is possible at all.

Arguments for relativism condemn even themselves as verbally meaningless. If the word “duty” has no meaning because there is no situation in which it has determinate application, then the claim that a certain duty is relative is as meaningless as is the claim that the duty is objective. I might add that any relativist interpretation of the later Wittgenstein is terribly misguided-- unless Wittgenstein himself was terribly misguided.

Fourth, the familiar point made in class that from “Morality is relative” it is inconsistent to

infer any objective moral claims, such as typically “All things are morally permissible,” is well taken. This detects no flaw in the two arguments for relativism, but it limits their moral significance. This point is but an instance of Hume’s general problem of deriving “ought” from “is”. Even my later attack on Hume’s problem will not affect this particular application.

Fifth, the two relativist arguments also overlook the difference between relativism and our ignorance of which relational situation S we happen to be in. The difficulty of understanding our duty often passes over from theory of moral truth to theory of moral knowledge.

Sixth, the arguments fail to distinguish the objective truth of T from the objective meaning of T. How could we know that T is false unless we know what T means? And how could we know what T means unless we know what it would be for T to be true, assuming that T is possible? And how could we know what it would be for T to be true, assuming that T is possible, unless we sometimes do have some moral duties? The burden is on relativists to explain how we can know what a duty is (what the word “duty” means) without acquaintance with actual examples of duties. Could we know what red is without seeing examples of red things? Or is the word “duty” definable in terms of other, more primitive items, so that we can understand “duty” without being acquainted with duties? The burden is on relativists to identify these more primitive items, and to explain how we can teach and learn words for them in a public manner if they are not objective.

Seventh, much of what passes under the umbrella of moral duty is really only pragmatic. To say that something is a moral duty is to say that we ought to do it, that it morally must be done. But many rules in society might have been otherwise. We often must decide on one rule among many fairly reasonable alternatives. Consider slightly alternative traffic rules, criminal laws,

or federal rules of civil procedure. No one set of rules is likely to suit all possible situations. But it is our duty to obey such rules as we have settled on because society must, after all, have rules. This adds to the hierarchy of prima facie duties and overriding duties the fact that much of the bottom level of “duties” is not really moral at all, but only prudential at best. Sometimes it is not even that; sometimes we need arbitrary rules to promote certainty and equity of treatment in gray areas of life.

Thus much of the low-level bandying about of so-called exceptions to moral duties actually concerns merely reasonable practical rules which are morally obligatory only under some blanket rule such as that we ought to obey the state. Some people think that our highest moral duties “We ought to promote good,” “We ought to be just,” are too abstract to guide us. On my view, they may be our only moral duties, and largely function to give a blanket imposition of duty on large classes of merely reasonable practical rules. For that matter, “We ought to obey the state (or social custom)” is fairly specific.

C. Plato and Hobbes on Moral Relativism

Plato discusses relativism in several dialogues. In the *Republic*, he says that the form of beauty is beauty-in-itself and absolute, while things said to be beautiful “will in some point of view be found ugly” (5. 479). Similarly for objects of “the desires in general” (4. 437), “for good is the universal object of desire” (4. 438). Particular pleasures are such shadowy appearances that the mere cessation of pain may appear to be a pleasure; and they are often really mixed with pain (9. 583-585). It is the rational part of the soul that can tell truth from illusion when “the same object appears straight when looked at out of the water and crooked when in the water” (10. 602).²⁴

Hobbes seems to be a relativist:

But whatsoever is the object of any man's appetite or desire, that is it which he for his part calls good... For these words of good, evil,... are ever used with relation to the person that uses them, there being nothing simply and absolutely so, nor any common rule of good and evil to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves-- but from the person of the man, where there is no commonwealth, or, in a commonwealth, from the person that represents it... 25

I have seven comments on this nominalistic ("calls," "words") relativism.

My first comment is this. A simplistic comparison of Plato with Hobbes might suggest that since it is Plato's admission of forms that makes him an objectivist, it must be Hobbes' rejection of forms that leaves him in the relativism of the realm of objects. That is, Plato has a two-tiered world: a neoParmenidean realm of forms, and a neoHeraclitean realm of changing objects or flux. Hobbes rejects the first realm and is left with the second. Perhaps Hobbes himself saw things this way. In other words, Hobbes' relativism might seem due to his nominalism. However, Hobbes' general names should provide objectivity in much the way Plato's forms do. After all, they are substitutes for Plato's forms. They should function in Hobbes' metaphysic in much the same way forms function in Plato's. Hobbes should have mitigated his relativism of fleeting particular objects of desire with his nominalism of general terms in much the same way Plato mitigates the relativism of the realm of flux with his forms. The heart of the matter is that forms and general names alike are fixed, stable, one, and universal, while Plato's and Hobbes' particular objects alike are changing, unstable, many, and relative to the observer, or at least to her point of view. Surely Hobbes considers his own 'geometry' of laws of nature objective; and on his own showing it consists of nothing but names! Even names like "pleasure" and "pain" play a fundamental

objective role in the ‘geometry’. Why then should, or how then could, Hobbes resolve relativism by appealing to the personal predilections of the ruler?

Traditionally, “dead end” nominalism, as it is sometimes referred to by its detractors, has been thought to have a special consequence for value theory. In particular, nominalism is thought to be the death of classical morality because it denies any ontological status to values beyond making them mere names (For Russell they would not even be names, since names must always be names of something.) And names would seem to be arbitrary conventions. Thus values become relative to mere conventions of language. For example, the later Wittgenstein has been held to be a conventionalist due to extreme nominalism.

Yet there are problems with this moral critique of nominalism. First, the views of resemblance theory and conceptualism seem liable to the same critique. Our moral values can be conceptually sliced up just as arbitrarily using concepts or classifications as using names. Second and more deeply, one must distinguish between objects and objectivity. That properties are not entities in their own right does not make propositions about them any less objective. For Descartes and Hume, logical and mathematical propositions describe only relations of ideas; for Hobbes such propositions describe only relations of names. Yet for all three early moderns, logical and mathematical truths are as objective as can be. Russell makes numbers logical fictions; but mathematics is as fully objective for Russell as it is for Frege, who makes numbers eternal objects. Now if Descartes and Hume can have a very objective conceptualist theory of logic and mathematics, and if Hobbes and the 1918 Russell can have a very objective nominalist theory of mathematics, I do not see why very objective conceptualist or nominalist theories of values are not equally possible.

Second, the word “objective” is used in many ways. One of them may be called the phenomenological use. G. E. Moore and Russell bearded the idealist lion in its own den by showing that even a sensation is mind-independent. In this way, they also bearded the relativist lion in its den. Following the Continental phenomenologists, Butchvarov improves even on Moore and Russell by making presented objects more than mere sense-data. I follow Moore, Russell, and Butchvarov in rejecting the Hobbist theory of mental images. An object of my desire is presented to me as objectively desirable.²⁶ Hobbes is mired in the early modern theory of ideas; contemporary phenomenology of objects is better in my opinion. This criticism also applies to the alleged relativism of Plato’s Heraclitean realm of fleeting particulars.

Third, Plato and Hobbes alike fail to see that it is just as easy to provide objectivity by postulating a world of fixed and stable individuals as by postulating a world of fixed and stable universals, or by postulating that fixed and stable general terms carry the burden of objectivity. Physics has been the star provider of objective individual things for centuries, and was such during Hobbes’ time and even Plato’s (consider the Greek atomists). The idea is that adjudication across the phenomenological objects of different observers need not be achieved by positing a Platonic form, but can be done by assessing what the individual is which all the observers are said to observe in common. Common-sensically we can assess which individuals are good people just as easily as we can assess the color or shape of a stone, using the reports of phenomenological objects across observers. Nominalists should welcome that.

Indeed, whether an individual or act is objectively desirable is assessed by the very same test of social confirmation we have when I wonder whether an object presented to me as yellow is yellow or merely appears yellow due to my jaundice. If there is more social disagreement about

good and evil than about red and yellow, think of things-seen-in-a-fog or things-seen-at-a-distance, both of which seem very analogous to the difficulties we often have about moral perceptions. Or consider a world in which there is much more disagreement about colors than there is in the actual world.

Especially embarrassing to Hobbes' physicalism is the Berkeleyan relativity of size, shape, and motion. If these can be adjudicated across observers, then why not colors? And if colors, then why not courage and temperance?

Fourth, if Hobbes' nominalism creates any problem for ethics, it is not relativism, but the elimination of nonsensible values in favor of sensible objects such as this pleasure or that pain. Of course, Hobbes thinks he has achieved reductionist definitions of certain nonsensible values, notably, reductions of certain important Platonic forms. But, as I noted, nominalism is perfectly compatible with objective moral sentences. There is no need for their reduction; they are already only language.

Fifth, if nominalism eliminates nonsensible values, nominalism inevitably leads to utilitarianism.²⁷ And utilitarianism has classic troubles. Notably, it makes the morality of our duties contingent on their consequences. Ordinarily, we believe that moral duties obtain despite their consequences. It is really utilitarianism that leads to the Prisoner's Dilemma. The dilemma is little more than an elegant way to pose the choice between egoistic and social utilitarianism. The dilemma should never have existed in the first place. The traditional (and also Kantian) rejection of the Prisoner's Dilemma is that the prisoners simply have a duty to confess despite the consequences.

I am unfair to utilitarianism, for which there are many more consequences for both the

prisoners and society than the various sentences the two prisoners can obtain depending on who informs on whom. Good utilitarians think of the widening ripple of consequences in the long term. Also, utilitarianism remains of considerable importance in any good deontological theory. Kant himself says that it is a moral duty to do (or produce) good where we can, and admits the utilitarian principles of Epictetus and Hutcheson as moral duties in his sense. No doubt there are many prisoner's dilemmas in which the consequences of the prisoners' choices far outweigh the intrinsic value of their duty to confess. Indeed, in the very long term, virtually any act's consequences may outweigh its intrinsic value.

Sixth, contemporary phenomenological theory of universals attacks the basis of the split between sensible specific qualities and generic properties: Hobbes' modified nominalism. Again, Hobbes is not a strict nominalist; he is a conceptualist with respect to specific-quality-terms and a nominalist only with respect to generic-property-terms (and terms for kinds of speech more generally construed).

Hobbes' halfway house between conceptualism and nominalism is plausible in its way. It is harder to admit generic properties than specific qualities as ideas in the mind for much the same phenomenological reason that it is much harder to admit generic universals than specific universals: they do not seem to be presented to us in any instances, nor do we know what it would be like to be presented with instances of them.

Nonetheless, even this somewhat sophisticated halfway house is built on an outmoded conception of the phenomenology of properties. Generic properties are presented to us just as much as are specific qualities. Generic properties are simply identified by more generic principles of classification; specific and generic classifications of properties are made from the very same

sensory base of individuals. When we classify this as red and that as green, and both as having color, there is no change at all in the sensory basis of our principles of classification, but only a change in the principles of classification. That is, there is no change in presentation, but only in our level of abstraction. In short, generic and specific properties should be treated alike, be it as real universals, as mental concepts, or as sensible terms. Thus if pleasures and pains are objective enough to be part of a utilitarian science of ethics, then generic properties and contextually defined properties such as courage and temperance ought to be also.

Seventh, Hobbes' conceptualism, like the early modern theory of ideas in general, faces the problem of private languages. That is, Hobbes needs to show how public communication about private mental pleasures and pains is possible.

3. Human Nature

A. An Evolutionary Theory of Human Nature

I tentatively adopt an evolutionary theory of man based on science. From most generic to least, the levels I emphasize are: mass-energy, life, animal, mammal, the "double family" Hominidae-Pongidae, the subspecies homo sapiens sapiens. What is interesting is how many human properties are also prehuman. In particular, I shall try to place three types of asymmetric social organization on their proper levels: care-dependence, dominance-subservience, and leading-following. Plato's and Hobbes' rulers can then be classified by these types and so by their evolutionary level.

1. *Mass-energy*. One does not speak of conscious needs here. But one does need to

consider the limitations and properties imposed on man by belonging to this level. Any transfiguration upon death is merely dissolution into simpler forms of mass-energy, perhaps with accompanying hallucinations. There is no eternal Platonic rational soul, nor any Hobbist immaterial ‘body’, surviving death. (Local) space-time and physical law (these are not distinct in general relativity theory) impose limitations on human power and activity.

2. *Life*. The basic species-needs are for food, reproduction, growth. There may be in some sense competition for resources; slow-motion films seem to show plants elbowing each other out of the way to get more sunlight. There may also be need for cooperation in some sense, as in cross-pollination or acidulating the forest floor. Some claim that plants have some awareness and are in fact quite sensitive.

3. *Animal Life*. Animals are living beings which need to eat other living beings for food. A fairly related feature is animation (self-motion). Amoebas lack states, civil society, and even family life. They simply subdivide. Yet many animals show emotion and personality. Complex societies exist among ants and bees. “Some kind of care-dependency relationship is characteristic of any highly developed animal society. Among the social insects its role is so large that other social relationships are almost non-existent.”²⁸ “[D]ominance orders have been found in all the classes of vertebrates and in many arthropods as well, and many of our present basic ideas about social organization have been developed from them.”²⁹ “Any group of animals that can fight can set up a dominance order.... dominance orders have a wide variety of functions, but all result in the division of something which is limited in supply, such as mates, territory, or food.”³⁰

4. *Mammal*. Mammals are warm-blooded and air-breathing. Cats, dogs, horses, and elephants have unmistakably individual personalities. There are many kinds of society. “In true

leader-follower relationships the behavior concerned is allelomimetic with both animals responding to each other but to an unequal degree.... [Older females are true leaders in flocks of sheep.] Wild herds of red deer show the same tendency for the older females to lead and the rest to follow. There are very few authentic cases of consistent leadership in other species... Leadership develops in flocks of ducks, which, like the sheep, show an early following reaction.”³¹ What is allelomimetic is the transfer of a genetic offspring-follows-mother alternative (asymmetric) family relation to a whole-flock-or-herd-follows-same-few-old-females social organization. It seems that “being dominant does not help in becoming a leader, and vice versa. The two relationships are apparently learned separately, and it is probable that they even conflict with each other, since one seems to be dependent on rewards and the other on punishment.”³² The reward of following leaders would seem to be a generalization of the offspring-mother nurturing relation.

5. *Hominidae-Pongidae*. The family of human-like animals is most closely related to the family of great apes. In our family, humans are the only species (technically, sub-species) still surviving. This has been explained in terms of our warlike nature; specifically, it has been claimed that we killed off the other Hominidae in a Darwinian struggle for survival of the fittest. I follow Richard E. Leakey in rejecting this Hobbist claim in favor of the theory that we are essentially social and cooperative.³³ Chimpanzees can recognize themselves in a mirror and can count (recognize abstract groupings of different kinds of object), as well as use simple speech signs. They also use sticks and stones as tools. Primates exhibit mutual care, dominance relations, and a tendency to “combine not only for mutual defense but also for aggression.... [such behavior] is essentially that which is found in human warfare.”³⁴

6. *Homo sapiens sapiens*. Humans show all three types of social relation. Though humans need the longest period of nurture of all, recent research tends to confirm what most people always thought, that human nature has a great deal to do with human behavior. Recent computer analyses of data on emotions suggest that emotional responses are about 50% genetic and 50% learned; data on genetic twins culturally separated at birth suggest that our behavior is about 70% genetic across the board. Still, this is a vast difference from the social insects, whose societies are totally based on genetic differences between the classes of queens, drones, soldiers, and workers. Plato emphasizes genetic class differences, while Hobbes views all men as roughly equal in a state of nature. But Plato also emphasizes learning where Hobbes emphasizes obedience. Hobbes' emphasis on obedience and his great motivator, fear, suggest that his ruler is a dominant. Plato's emphasis on the rewards of philosophical rulership to all social classes suggests a form of intellectual and moral leadership. So Hobbes endorses a more primitive kind of rulership than does Plato. Intuitively, this seems obvious in retrospect. There is so much more humanity to Plato's leaders, so much more caretaking of the lower classes, so much more sharing of the good things in moderation. Basically, Hobbes would be satisfied by kowtowing to the biggest gorilla on the block, if it brought peace and quiet. The irony is that Hobbes pretends to be the expert on our biomechanical nature. It is Plato who is more up to date on human genetic evolution, while Hobbes makes us out to be more primitive than we really are. In evolutionary terms, Plato's emphasis on education is an extension of nurturing. Since nurturing is the genetic basis of true leadership, as shown among sheep and the red deer of Scotland, it only makes evolutionary sense to find Plato endorsing both nurturing and positive leadership and Hobbes, at least at his deepest level, endorsing neither. That Hobbes is a throwback to a more primitive social strategy is perhaps

due to his timidity. Timidity makes great biological sense in primitive natural settings; it is in the more civilized city-state that natural “fight-or-flight” reactions lead to inner tension and anxieties.

I would say that the best rule is a mixture of leadership-nurturing for long-term gains and dominance for important short-term necessities. What is more misguided than the liberal who gives away the candy store and lets all discipline vanish, or the Draconian conservative who uses only the whip? This seems to help reconcile Plato and Hobbes. Of course, Plato already has this mix in that his police-military auxiliaries provides dominance as needed. Hobbes does also, in that it is in a ruler’s best interest to keep his subjects happy. The mix is currently called the X-Y theory of leadership in management courses. Whether to emphasize X (positive reinforcement) or Y (negative reinforcement) depends on the individual situation, but again, Y is usually better long-term.

B. An Evolutionary Theory of Politics

One question pending from my definition of the state was whether politics applies only to human groups, and perhaps can even be dated to Greece. I shall now distinguish a broad sense and a narrow sense of “political”. In the broad sense, there may be prehuman states. In the narrow sense, states are human and may even be limited to the sort of politicking found in ancient Greece. The main cultures humans evolved through have been: Old Stone Age hunter-gatherers’ groups (20-30 people) and tribes (300-400 people), Early New Stone Age villages (up to 1000 people), Late New Stone Age cities (5000 people), Metal Age kingdoms and empires, the Industrial Age, the Atomic Age, and the Information Age.

The word “politics” comes from the Greek polis or place (of a city-state), as if there were

no politics before the Late Stone Age. This suggests a picture of man on which politics is just a recent cultural accident, since man lived without politics for a million years, and has used politics only for the last five thousand years. Historically, we view politics as a specific turn from “divine rule” to human rule. But caretaking, dominance, and leadership social relations are not only pre-Neolithic, but prehuman. Surely the leaders of goat and red deer herds are intelligent enough to negotiate, in some sense, where their herds are to go. Certainly many mammals hesitate between alternatives, and consider the behavior of their herd-mates before making eventual choices. This may be reasonably called politicking in a broad sense. In progressively narrower senses, politicking may be very reasonably said to have occurred among human hunter-gatherer groups, tribes, villages, cities, kingdoms, and empires.

Both Plato and Hobbes seem to admit politics in the broad sense. Plato amusingly says in the *Republic* that in a democracy, horses and asses “have a way of marching along with all the rights and dignities of freemen” (8. 563). He compares a city to a beehive and certain classes of men to drones with and without stings (*Republic* 8. 552). Hobbes admits Aristotle’s classification of bees and ants as political creatures, but differentiates their societies from human societies on a number of grounds, so as to explain why their societies need not be coercive.³⁵

The survival value of politics in general seems linked to the needs and dynamics of animal groups, or certain kinds of animal groups, and evolved from the nurturing and learning needs and dynamics of certain kinds of animal family units. Thus Hegel was right that civil society and the state develop from the family, but was wrong to confine this to man. Hegel was also wrong in advancing a Hobbist theory of the state of nature:

Hegel tacitly recognizes the superiority of Hobbes's philosophic basis to that of Descartes when he characterizes the experience from which self-consciousness originally arises as the life-and death struggle which is born in interest from recognition from others.... From this struggle arises together with the master-servant relationship the original form of self-consciousness. The consciousness of the servant is essentially determined according to both Hegel and Hobbes by fear of death; and in principle to Hegel just as much as to Hobbes the consciousness of the servant represents a higher stage than the consciousness of the master.

Hegel... recognized that Hobbes's philosophy was the first to deal with the most rudimentary form of self-consciousness.³⁶

Marx was more accurate in viewing primitive man as a cooperator. For the record, I view this as luck, since neither had scientifically very reliable information. Even today, Leakey admits his theory is somewhat speculative.

The survival value of politics in the narrow or exclusively human sense may be taken in two ways. The first way emphasizes the role of learning. As technology progressed and groups became more wealthy and leisurely, people came to see that specialization and group stratification were economically efficient strategies tending to improve life for the whole group. Hence people chose to grow their villages into cities, and their cities into kingdoms. The second way emphasizes the role of genetics. Man is naturally gregarious. Thus as improving conditions permitted, people tended to congregate more and more. My view is that both ways exist and reinforce each other in

the case of human political development. In light of identical twin research and emotion research, I cut politics in the narrow sense as perhaps 60% genetic and 40% learned.

This is the same as the question whether states are natural or artificial. Hobbes calls the state an “artificial animal”; I discussed his constructionist theory of the state in Part 1, section D. Peters points to a tension:

[Hobbes] saw clearly that the state is an artificial construction which does not develop naturally like a beehive. It depends on agreement, contract, institution and other manifestations of human decision. Laws do not develop naturally; for it is authority, backed by force, that makes a law....

Yet at the same time, Hobbes persistently suggested that man is a machine, like every other part of nature.... But this mechanical type of explanation of human actions, together with his belief in determinism and his attempt to develop a naturalistic ethical theory, is a strange theoretical basis on which to erect an account of politics which stresses the role of artifice and convention and the arbitrariness of definitions and institutions.³⁷

Hegel develops this tension into a criticism:

It has recently become very fashionable to regard the state as a contract of all with all. Everyone makes a contract with the monarch,... and he again with his subjects.... But the case is quite different with the state; it does not lie with an

individual's arbitrary will to separate himself from the state, because we are already citizens of the state by birth. The rational end of man is life in the state.... and therefore the state does not rest on contract, for contract presupposes arbitrariness. It is false to maintain that the foundation of the state is something at the option of all its members.³⁸

But I resolved this tension two paragraphs ago, if not already in Part 1, section E, where I said that human choice is a natural phenomenon. In line with my comments in that section on the many elastic, liquid, malleable, and vague natures of things, it seems to me that agreement, social organization, and the very use of artifice to promote and develop agreements and political states, are very natural human traits. At the same time, again in line with my views in section 1, contract theory remains fairly illuminative of the state by providing a useful analogy.

C. A Need-Hierarchy Theory of Values

My hierarchy of man's natural levels suggests a corresponding hierarchy of natural values. I correlate Abraham Maslow's famous hierarchy of needs somewhat arbitrarily as follows:

EVOLUTIONARY LEVEL.....MASLOW'S LEVELS OF NEEDS

1. Mass-energy.....No Needs
2. Life.....Physiological Needs (nutrition, exercise)
3. Animal Life.....Safety Needs (security, order, protection)

[plants too have protective functions]

-Social Needs (belonging)
4. MammalsEsteem Needs (chimpanzees)
5. Hominidae-Pongidae.....Self-Actualization (Neanderthal,
Cro-Magnon cave art, figurines, religious burials)³⁹
6. Homo sapiens sapiens.....Self-Actualization

I assume here that what we need is what we value; I admit that plants may not value nutrition in the ordinary sense of conscious valuing. In any case Hobbes' main concern seems with Safety Needs, and Plato's with Self-Actualization. This ranking is close to our earlier one. Hobbes remains on the Animal Life level, while Plato moves up from Mammal to Hominidae-Pongidae. (Intuitively, leaders seem evolutionarily earlier than self-actualizers.) Hobbes' safety concern is of permanent value; none of Maslow's needs ever disappears. Indeed, safety is a much more basic concern than is self-actualization. And in this sense, Hobbes is vindicated. (John Locke is vindicated even more, if we assimilate economic goods and property to Physiological Needs for food and environmental shelter. Physiological needs are the most basic of all!) However, self-actualization is the ultimate concern, and in that sense Plato is vindicated. The following is, in fact, a most apt description of the Republic, as well as a beautiful way to reconcile Plato and Hobbes further:

The self-actualizing person seeks fulfillment in a way that keeps other needs (and other persons) optimally satisfied. Developing persons do not, therefore,

‘outgrow’ or become ‘superior’ to lesser needs and less developed persons...40

D. A Need-Hierarchy Theory of Personality

Plato’s theory of man led to Sigmund Freud’s theory of personality (Freud was very interested in classical antiquities). Both make the same threefold division of the soul. Plato’s appetitive part is Freud’s id; Plato’s policing part is Freud’s superego; Plato’s rational part is Freud’s ego. For both Plato and Freud, the rational part comes to understand how things really are through a rational or analytic process of recollection of things forgotten. For Plato, the things remembered are intelligible forms known before this life; for Freud, they are emotional facts from childhood. Maslow, by the way, uses his theory of need levels to reconcile disputes between Freud and his followers, each of whom stresses the importance of a different level. The early Freud stresses security much as Hobbes does. Jung stresses the quest for self-fulfillment much as Plato does.⁴¹ Thus Maslow very deliberately includes Hobbist and Platonic outlooks on man, if not the specific views of Hobbes and Plato, in his theory of levels.

Maslow’s hierarchy may be enhanced by Hegel’s theory of personality. For Hegel there is a progressive developmental series of nine sorts of personality. The first five ‘personalities’ are in order: the Free Agent, the Moral Person, and three Ethical Persons: one each for The Family, Civil Society, and The State. In metaphysics we have four more. The final progression from Artistic to Religious to Philosophical Person concerns levels of self-mastery which amount to spiritual freedom, and which lead to entry into Absolute Person, the final and ninth stage of the Hegelian theory of personality. Absolute possession and absolute freedom are but two sides of the coin of Absolute Mind, or God. Thus Hegel’s famous Master-Slave dialectic, which begins with

the dominance of other persons, ends in one's own full self-mastery.⁴²

Hegel seems to imply that you cannot be fully human without politics. For without developing a political 'personhood' you would be limited to the fourth level. Yet as with Maslow, the earlier levels of personality are never wholly outgrown. Specifically, despite our need to rise above Free Agents in the state of nature, which is the first move in Hegel's series of transitions leading to The State and beyond, we also always remain Hobbist Free Agents in some sense, in Hegel's view.

E. Plato on Man's Place in Nature

The turn in ancient philosophy from nature to the human things began with the Sophists and Socrates. There is a deep conflict concerning whether the turn was a new application of philosophy of nature to humanity, or an abandonment of that earlier philosophy. Wilhelm Windelband sees the Sophists as raising the very same question about man and ethics which the Milesians raised about rocks and water: What remains the same through change? Does man have a nature? Is there any moral duty which remains the same across different cultures and times? The dialectical contests of the Sophists threw all objective knowledge in doubt. In contrast, Stewart Umphrey and many others have seen Socrates as turning his back on natural science and embarking on a wholly different kind of inquiry, a serious use of dialectics to discover negative objective truths. The very name "dialectic" suggests dialogue or discourse, something uniquely human. Since the Sophists came before Socrates, these two views are compatible.⁴³ I approve of the Sophists' raising naturalist questions about man and approve of Socrates' turn away from that as well; similarities and differences are both important. Note that dialectic applies to theory of

matter as well as to mind.

As for Plato, the salient fact is that Plato was the first comprehensive philosopher in history. His theory of forms was meant to explain the nature of physical things and human things alike. Dialectics evidently takes a third turn, since the theory of forms is a positive theory, not a 'negative truth'. (But the negative dialectics of the early 'Socratic' dialogues returns in the late 'Aristotelian' dialogues when Plato criticizes his own middle period theory of forms.) This third turn is indirect argument, proof by cases, or something like them. The idea is that by 'purifying' away poor theories through a process of negative criticism, somehow the truth will be winnowed out. This idea may be found in the Nay-saying spirits of Goethe (Mephistopheles), Hegel (dialectical subsumption), and Nietzsche (the better to say Yea to life on a high or perhaps finally fulfilling level).

What emerges from Plato is thus a complex picture. Man is part of nature; he participates in his form or ideal nature as horses and stones participate in theirs. Yet man has a special place in nature. Notably, only man can live in Plato's ideal republic; only man can engage in dialectics and rise to the level of the philosopher-king.

F. Hobbes on Man's Place in Nature

Hobbes is a comprehensive philosopher as well, but a reductionistic one. His theory of man reduces man to a mere complex box of springs and cogwheels in the larger mechanism of nature. Man no longer seems to have a special place in nature. This is, of course, a big underlying theme of early modern science and philosophy; the Earth itself is no longer the center of the universe. Hobbes says that human society differs from ant and bee societies mainly in greater

degrees of knowledge and artifice.

Frederick J. E. Woodbridge interprets Hobbes as follows. Hobbes based his whole philosophy on two theories: physics, and theory of man. As to physics, Hobbes made it “the cardinal principle of his systematic philosophy” that “the causes of all things must be sought... in the movements of bodies.” Hobbes’ theory of man came from his observation of the strife of his times and from his study of history, particularly of Thucydides on war. These two theories were independent of each other. In particular, the “doctrine of mutual fear did not depend on any antecedent metaphysics.” “His politics was one thing, his physics another. It may be said he could have had the former without the latter, but having the latter, he made it contribute a framework in which the former could be set.” “The Leviathan... needs neither an antecedent physics nor metaphysics to support it. For any genuine appreciation,... the reader would do well to forget the larger setting in which Hobbes would place it. The worth of the book lies in the picture of man...”. Woodbridge views Hobbes’ “passage from physics to politics” as contrived claptrap. “Hobbes divides his system into... three major parts,... body, man, and state. Strictly speaking, each deals with a body, [respectively:] lifeless body, living body, civil body. The second is made to mediate between the first and the third.” In other words, psychology is made to mediate between physics and politics. Woodbridge says “the politics depends heavily on the psychology.” Perhaps Hobbes would admit a friendly side of the human psyche, but in our natural “position of peril”, we fear others and desire power over them; and our friendly side, if any, is overruled. Woodbridge says, however, “The psychology needs, and really receives, little support from the physics. Hobbes links them together more by terminology than by evidence”; Woodbridge adds that Hobbes’ notion of “motions of the mind” is metaphorical.⁴⁴

Woodbridge says that Hobbes bases the distinction between man in a state of nature and man in society on a physical distinction between “the motion of bodies ‘when left to themselves’ and their motion when influenced by that of other bodies.” The psychological state of fear-of-and-need-to-dominate-others emerges as the natural motion of human brains “‘when left to themselves’”.⁴⁵ It seems to me that Woodbridge is right that Hobbes is cloaking his psychology in the garb of physics to give it a false authority. Perhaps a physical reduction of psychological phenomena can be achieved. But whether the laws of psychology can be derived from the laws of physics has not been scientifically established even in our own day. Hobbes is on the level of a Democritus or Lucretius who speculates that we might see things as red when they are composed of cubical bits of matter rotating clockwise relative to our eyes. Put bluntly, Hobbes did not cut any brains open to study their actual molecular motions. Sadly, he took in large measure “dead end” Cartesian a priori mechanics as a model.

But Woodbridge addresses only Hobbes’ failure to carry out his conception, not the conception itself. It is easy to point out specific technical failings with 300 years of scientific hindsight. It is perhaps harder to appreciate the more general conception Hobbes had which might be realized in a more reasonable and different way today. I think that Hobbes did conceive of all the parts of his philosophy in a unified, comprehensive way, and that he was right to affirm the systematic approach to philosophy, as opposed to doing political philosophy as an independent enterprise. I agree that he failed to execute his intentions adequately, but then so do we all. Miriam M. Reik says, “Hobbes seems to have remained convinced that the rules of psychology could eventually be derived in a demonstrable fashion from geometry and physics... The fact that not everyone found his principles evident, however, is well attested by his many critics.”⁴⁶

Hobbes' deduction of his politics from his psychology, and his psychology from his physics, can be assessed only by paraphrase into a canonical notation. Similarly for MacPherson's "very summary account" of Hobbes' deduction. I shall attempt neither task. MacPherson should have attempted both. But Hobbes' physics-to-psychology-to-politics deduction must ultimately be understood in terms of Hobbes' first philosophy, his modified nominalism. That is, the deduction must be assessed in light of Hobbes' philosophy of language. Martin A. Bertman does this as follows. On the level of politics, "man cannot live, or live well, without his own artificial creation: the body of the state. Man is the unique artificer in nature." But political artifice is based on a much deeper artifice: "without language, or speech, '[there is] neither commonwealth, nor society, nor contract'". "Hobbes' theory of semantics is at the basis of his understanding of science; and... he claims to have founded a science of politics". Hobbes contrasts the natural "thereness" or "THAT" of sense-experience and imagination with the artificial "RATIOCINATION" or "WHY" of scientific propositions in language. Such propositions correspond to no facts out there in the world. "Consequently, in a general sense, a science is a language construction or model." In this sort of science, nominal essences replace "the real essences of the Platonic tradition." The universal truth and necessity of science are both created through language; experience in contrast is particular and contingent. Among sciences, Hobbes makes a twofold division. Natural sciences allow for "progressive reorganization" in the light of ongoing experience, much in the manner of Pierre Duhem or W. V. O. Quine. Mathematical and civil sciences are deductive or demonstrable. Natural sciences "argue from effect to cause, unlike mathematics and civil society. Of the latter, unlike the natural sciences, we can be certain: 'Civil philosophy is demonstrable for we make the commonwealth ourselves. But because natural bodies

we know not from construction, there lies no demonstration of what the causes be that we seek but only what they may be'. ([English Works, ed. Molesworth (London 1841)] VII, 184)."

Bertman contrasts the linguistic conventionalism of Hobbes with Plato's basing of language on nature in the *Cratylus*. Bertman groups Plato, Descartes, and Chomsky as rational naturalists concerning language, and groups Hobbes and Wittgenstein as conventionalists. If one extends such deep groupings to include one's moral picture, then rational naturalist morality and conventionalist morality respectively result; here Bertman adds Protagoras to the latter group. Plato and Hobbes are humanists of different kinds. And "despite the difference in ontology, when Plato in the *Republic* speaks of the eternal idea of a man-made object, e.g., a bed, he is methodologically in concert with Hobbes." The only difference is that Plato's eternity is literal.⁴⁷

I have four comments.

First, I have nothing specific against Bertman's picture and find it revealing. But second, I am cautious in general about such big pictures and in particular about reading current philosophy into older philosophy. Third, Bertman does not realize it, but his picture absolutely devastates the physics-psychology-civil philosophy deduction. For on Bertman's picture, the deductive or demonstrable formal science of politics is deduced by Hobbes from physics and psychology, sciences which allow for progressive reorganization in the light of ongoing experience! This manifest absurdity makes our earlier efforts to reconcile the natural (physics) with the artificial (politics) in Hobbes pointless. Fourth, on Bertman's view, Hobbes' nominalism devastates his materialism. If science is a linguistic construction of experience, then there are no physical bodies.

4. Why Obey the State?

A. The Turn from Ancient Idealism to Modern Realism

Leo Strauss, in *What is Political Philosophy? and Other Studies*, contrasts the whole of modern political philosophy with classical thought:

The father of modern political philosophy is Machiavelli. He tried to effect, and he did effect, a break with the whole tradition of political philosophy.... I hasten to his critique of morality which is identical with his critique of classical political philosophy. One can state the main point as follows: there is something fundamentally wrong with an approach to politics which culminates in a utopia, in the description of a best regime whose actualization is highly improbable. Let us then cease to take our bearings by virtue, the highest objective which a society might choose; let us begin to take our bearings by the objectives which are actually pursued by all societies. Machiavelli consciously lowers the standards of social action. His lowering of the standards is meant to lead to a higher probability of that scheme which is constructed in accordance with the lowered standards. Thus... chance will be conquered.... In other words, one cannot define the good of society, the common good, in terms of virtue, but one must define virtue in terms of the common good. It is this understanding of virtue which in fact determines the life of societies. By the common good we must understand the objectives actually pursued by all societies. These objectives are: freedom from foreign domination, stability or rule of law, prosperity, glory or empire. Virtue in the effectual sense of the word is the sum of habits which are required for or conducive to this end....

Virtue is nothing but civic virtue, patriotism or devotion to collective selfishness.⁴⁸

Strauss continues:

[T]he main reason why Machiavelli's scheme had to be modified was its revolting character. The man who mitigated Machiavelli's scheme.... was Hobbes.... [Hobbes] accepted Machiavelli's critique of traditional political philosophy [that it] aimed too high.... [But] whereas the pivot of Machiavelli's political teaching was glory, the pivot of Hobbes's is power... Hobbes's teaching was still much too bold to be acceptable... [Its] mitigation was the work of Locke.... Locke took over the fundamental scheme of Hobbes and changed it only in one point. He realized that what man primarily needs for his self-preservation is less a gun than food, or more generally, property. Thus the desire for self-preservation turns into the desire for property, and the right to self-preservation becomes the right to unlimited acquisition. The practical consequences of this small change are enormous.... With a view to the resounding success of Locke, as contrasted with the apparent failure of Hobbes, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, we can say that Machiavelli's discovery or invention of the need for an immoral or amoral substitute for morality... became victorious through Locke's discovery or invention that that substitute is acquisitiveness. Here we have an utterly selfish passion whose satisfaction does not require the spilling of any blood and whose effect is the

improvement of the lot of all. In other words, the solution of the political problem by economic means is the most elegant solution, once one accepts Machiavelli's premise: economism is Machiavellianism come of age.⁴⁹

That the whole aim of modern political philosophy is to promote certainty seems simplistic. Nonetheless, Strauss' account seems plausible otherwise. Strauss says that the classical authors themselves would have found Machiavelli's views about actual states fairly accurate. I agree. Plato himself had plenty to say about the weaknesses and corruption of actual states. In any case, Strauss sets the stage. The Platonic reason for obeying the state is that the state promotes virtue. Specifically, the ideal state promotes four virtues: wisdom, courage, temperance, and especially justice. The modern political philosophers reject this reason as idle and utopian. They suggest that we ought to look at what states actually do. Hobbes in particular holds that the reason for obeying the state is essentially a selfish one, but also a realistic, down-to-earth reason we can believe in: our fear of death or loss from a struggle for power; our fear of even a few "bad apples" who want to dominate everybody else. This view is intimately tied to his view of classical theory of forms or essences as outmoded, unscientific, unrealistic, and thus in a deep sense irrational. These two views are not wholly distinct in Hobbes. The latter is in large measure Hobbes' theoretical justification of the former.

B. Resolving the Political Idealist-Realist Conflict

On a practical level, it is Hobbes' theory of man as essentially motivated by domination and fear which appears to us today as outmoded, unscientific, unrealistic. It would be in a deep

sense irrational to accept Hobbes' theory of man today, if Leakey is right in confirming our essentially cooperative nature. Leakey holds up war itself as a paradigm of highly organized cooperation.

On a theoretical level, ideals have a very important illuminative role to play even in the most austere and reductionistic approaches to science. Ernest Nagel's excellent neopositivist *The Structure of Science* describes this role:

A... device commonly employed in the natural sciences is to formulate a law for a so-called "ideal case," so that the law states some relation of dependence which supposedly holds only under certain limiting conditions, even though these conditions may be rarely if ever realized.⁵⁰

Hobbes himself, with his neoCartesian geometrical physics, should have known as much. What more perfect example is there of a science based on ideal entities never given in sensory perception than geometry? What is more illuminating or useful for physicists and engineers to use, even though geometry's theorems never exactly apply? More dramatically, Reik reveals:

By an act of the imagination, Hobbes proposes that we can conceive of man existing outside the state, without the form of law or even the moral cohesiveness of the clan; and this conception is man in the state of nature. It is an ideal conception which Hobbes knew could not be observed empirically, and which had sprung from a radical application of his [geometrical] method.... man in the state of

nature... was, in fact, a conceptual instrument of analysis created by Hobbes.⁵¹

It thus transpires that Hobbes is as fully committed to scientific ideal cases as is Plato. Both uphold geometry and its ideal cases. And where Plato has an ideal state, Hobbes derives his state from an ideal state of nature! And what better candidates are there in political science for political ideals than the virtues? Justice and wisdom need not be exactly Platonic forms; but they may still have great explanatory value as social paradigms or norms. In fact, they need not even exist! They may be ideal conceptions or conceptual instruments of analysis, following Reik.

The Nagel-Reik view of the role of the ideal case in science very strongly supports my view in section 1 that even if the state is a fiction, there may be great reason to obey it. What is the difference between an explanatory ideal and an explanatory fiction, in the case of theory of the state? Indeed, if the state is best understood in terms of how groups ought to live, the prescriptive nature of theory of the state makes that theory equally ideal and explanatory. But Nagel cautions us:

However, this strategy is not common in the social sciences, certainly not in inquiries which seek to establish relations of dependence between phenomena by correlating raw empirical data. Perhaps the chief reason for this is that adequate theoretical notions have not been developed in most of these disciplines, to suggest how laws universally valid for “pure cases” of social phenomena might be fruitfully formulated.⁵²

Perhaps cybernetics and artificial intelligence theory concerning goal-oriented mechanisms, coupled with recent sociobiological and anthropological theories of our cooperative nature, may someday find adequate theoretical notions that can underwrite the models or ideal pictures of behavior all societies intuitively use to orient their members to proper and useful behavior. Plato's virtues may well play a major role in explaining sufficiently complex societies's tropisms. If so, then this amounts to saying that a major aim of the state is to promote virtue, very roughly as Plato thought. Further, it is not clear that political philosophy is the sort of inquiry that correlates raw empirical data in the way physics does in the first place, as Nagel seems to be well aware. Further yet, on the face of it many societies promote models of virtue not only because they pay society in the long run, but because they seem intrinsically commendatory. Even ordinary people do not "live by bread alone," but deeply admire the ideals and ideal-exemplifying heroes of their societies.

Reductionism and ideal case explanation are compatible. Newtonian physics plugged into Hobbes' scheme would be a classic example. More important, on the face of it neither can supplant the other's kind of intellectual illumination. Each has its own special way of telling us what is really going on. Thus on deep methodological grounds, the Hobbist account can enhance, but can never supplant, the Platonic account. The former is an attempt to get down to the most primitive efficient causes of the state. The latter is an attempt to state the final cause (or the teleological explanation) of the state. Cybernetics, artificial intelligence, and functional explanations have not yet reduced final causes to efficient causes. Nagel gives as good a pro-reductionist account as can be given today, but it always remains intrinsically very plausible to make final cause an irreducible sort of explanation, once you remove Nagel's neo-logical

positivism.⁵³

The only other major problem I see is that science uses descriptive ideal cases, while Plato's ideals are in some sense prescriptive. But surely we can give ideal descriptions of ideal prescriptions. And the difference does not seem to matter to teleological theories. Perhaps there can be no prescriptively efficient effects, but there can be prescriptively teleological ends. Thus this problem seems to beg the question against teleological theories. Similarly for the claim that need-theories of personality are vacuous. They are empty if they are theories of efficient causation; but they are theories of final causation.

Ignoring such theoretical problems, Hobbes' best line against Plato is to try to show that the state in fact happens to have a reductionist physical cause, not a final cause. The supposedly unscientific character of forms and teleological explanation can legitimately reappear as supporting evidence. But then Glaucon (The Blind, as in glaucoma) tried this way out and failed. Glaucon is an ancient Hobbist. For Glaucon, justice is merely a necessity, not a good: "when men have both done and suffered injustice... they think they had better agree among themselves to have neither; hence there arise laws and mutual covenants; and that which is ordained by law is termed by them lawful and just."⁵⁴ Glaucon proceeds to a discussion of justice in utilitarian terms of "profit and interest" versus "pain and loss". My reply is that this is a two way street. It is just as open to Plato to argue that the state happens in fact to have a final cause. And that is just what Plato proceeds to do.

I think the heart of the matter is simple. Many law students dislike the use of absurd and fantastic hypothetical cases to illuminate principles, their consequences, and tensions between these. Like Antaeus, these honest souls must touch the ground often to renew their strength. Yet

such cases often illuminate our thinking in ways muddy actual cases often do not. And they allow extremely sensitive modifications to test our intuitions subtly yet also clearly. Plato's ideal-case state simply is, at bottom, just such a fantastic hypothetical case.

While I fully endorse the view that Plato's state can, as an ideal case, have a legitimate and important role in causal science, that view can be jettisoned if need be. Plato's state remains one of the honorable flock of hypothetical cases philosophers traditionally use for greater intellectual illumination of issues. Even if we would not want to live in Plato's state, it serves a great purpose if it merely helps us think better about the nature and value of real states.

That alone is reconciliation enough of "idealism" with "realism". Ironically, on this level the so-called realist views of Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Locke are just as idealist as Plato's. All are idealizations in that they simplify and select, as well as claims about real states. Conversely, in the metaphysical sense Plato is at least as realist as the others; it is only his theory of what reality is that is so different. As for Plato's practical realism, we must look not to his *Republic*, but to his *Laws*.

C. Why Be Good At All?

On that promissory note, I assume that one major reason to obey the state is that a major aim of the state is to promote justice and virtue. I grant that peace and prosperity, prudentially viewed, are other major reasons. But one may ask in turn, Why be virtuous or just? If it is open to Plato to argue for the intrinsic value of justice and virtue, then let us trot out the argument and take a look at it.

The whole question is settled by Butchvarov's general phenomenology, on which just acts

and good things are given as desirable. But the question is so important that I shall examine it further.

The suggestion was made in class that on inquiry one will simply come in the end to know why we should be just. Perhaps this somewhat mystical approach is not strictly circular. “The answer is that there is an answer which one can eventually find” seems merely circumlocutious for the noncircular “There is an answer which one can eventually find.” But the approach has no probative value, since one could use it to justify any position whose truth is not yet known. The sense of the emptiness of the approach was cheerfully admitted in class, but not its lack of probative value. That sometimes the approach is justified on the ground that we can do no better leads at best to a probability argument as to how often the approach is justified. “How will I know I can recognize the sound of a clarinet?” --“No definition can be given of the sound, but I assure you that if you seek diligently for clarinets, eventually you will find one, hear it played, and be able to recognize the sound if you hear it again.” In fact there are clarinets and their sound is distinctive. But what assurance is there that forms, including justice, are out there like so many clarinets? Is there not need for independent grounds for the existence of forms? And with those independent grounds, why not just state those grounds to anyone who wishes to know whether there are forms?

The clarinet approach is really a “Trust me” approach, where you assume the answerer has encountered clarinets before, or at least is connected by a chain of trust-relations to somebody who has. The only reason why the clarinet approach might work for Plato would lie in Plato’s theory of forms. For Plato, there is an answer to the question, “Why be just?” because the form of justice exists independently of us, so that we can “find” it through rational inquiry, much as we

can find a clarinet through empirical inquiry; and knowing this form somehow includes knowing why we should participate in it as much as possible.

Even that would be an empty answer for another reason-- sheer gratuitous postulation of an entity-- were it not for Plato's general battery of arguments for forms, given quite independently of political philosophy. Plato's theory of forms emerges as much like a theory of physics today: a postulation of entities to give a coherent account of far-flung data, which account can then be applied in new areas from which the original data did not come. That is, Plato's theory is substantive in a way somewhat like the way in which a theory of physics is.

There is even a sense in which Plato's theory can be falsified in the light of new data, though such data would likely be intellectual rather than empirical. Of course, the theory of forms is not predictive but only explanatory. The analogy to physics concerns only the explanatory power of physics.

What is included in knowing the form of justice is no doubt that form's participation in the form of forms, which is the form of goodness.⁵⁵ Thus the question "Why be just?" is postponed to the level of "Why be good?" Part of the answer to both questions might be that forms are ideal properties, perfections to which things in the world of flux aspire. But the question why people in the world of flux ought to aspire to be good is not answered by saying that they do in fact aspire to be good. Plato does hold that people always aim for the good and miss only because they misconceive it; and perhaps this is all he is really concerned with. But we can still ask our question from a stance external to the Platonic philosophy, and inquire whether Plato's theory has the resources to provide an answer, whether or not Plato himself used them to give that answer. Probably the answer does lie in the nature of goodness as a perfection, if only we can describe

what it is about that nature that makes it our duty to participate in it as much as we can. Indeed, the clarinet approach may return to haunt us in the end, since it may only be by apprehending that nature that we can come to know the answer. There are many things that can be identifiably described only to those who have ‘experienced’ them already: colors, sounds, tastes, smells; probably shapes, motions, hope, sadness, love, will. Why not justice and goodness as well?

Plato’s mystical answer may be not so different on resemblance theory, conceptualism, or even nominalism. On resemblance theory, perhaps we can come to understand why we should be just only by apprehending the true resemblances between just acts. On conceptualism, perhaps we can come to understand why we should be just only by acquiring the concept of justice by abstraction. On nominalism, perhaps we can come to understand why we should be just only by coming to see the intrinsic truth of the objective sentence, “We ought to be just.” Hobbes, then, could give Plato’s mystical answer in a nominalistic vein.

But perhaps the answer is not so mystical, in at least this sense: Plato has a naturalistic ethic in that the form of justice is just as much a nature as is the form of horses or the form of mud. Thus the realm of natures is wider than the realm of physical natures; we may call the form of justice an ideal ethical nature. Somehow, it seems much easier to apprehend a moral duty through apprehending an ideal ethical nature than through apprehending an ideal physical nature such as the form of a stone. It seems that much, if not all, of the difficulty in inferring values from facts lies in thinking of all natures as physical natures. This is like Richard Taylor’s point that it is hard to see how bodies can have consciousness when we think of a body such as a stone; but when we think of a living human body, it seems much easier to see.⁵⁶ Note that John Searle’s

derivation of an obligation to pay from a fact of promising to pay, whether ultimately valid or not, is plausible at least in part because the fact that Smith promised something is not a physical fact, but a human social fact, namely, the ethico-linguistic “institution” of promising.

D. Transcending the Is-Ought Dichotomy

Suppose we had some strong arguments that properties are Platonic forms; Plato himself gave some half dozen. There would still be a major difficulty with applying the arguments to moral values. Namely, properties are part of what is, moral values are what ought to be, and Hume says we logically cannot infer an ‘ought’ from an ‘is’. That is, if you apply the arguments, you destroy the obligatory nature of moral values; then they are no longer moral values.

The solution is that the supreme value, the Good, is far more generic than we might think; it is, in fact, transcategorical. It seems even to transcend the fact-value dichotomy. In some sense, Plato intended that, if not specifically intending to solve Hume’s is-ought derivation puzzle. Virtue is so deeply our ultimate nature that it would be impossible to explain why we “ought” to be virtuous except in fatuous terms. We “ought” to be virtuous for the same reason grass “ought” to grow or bucks to mate; it is in our nature, and it is bad to go against nature. Only if you understand your own nature can you understand why you ought to seek virtue. This may seem not much more than a “Trust me” approach, but it has the merit of being supported by Plato’s positive arguments that this is in fact our nature. If we cannot understand our own nature, then what nature can we understand?

A. E. Taylor says, “The distinguishing characteristic of the ‘Form of Good’ is that it is the transcendent source of all the reality and intelligibility of everything other than itself. Thus it is

exactly what is meant in Christian philosophy by the *ens realissimum*.... [I]t transcends the distinction, too often treated as absolute, between value and existence. It is the supreme value and the source of all other value, and at the same time it is, though 'beyond [the many lesser] being[s],' the source of all existence."⁵⁷ This solves Hume's problem about deriving "ought" from "is". It may seem that Hume is ignorant of this obvious and traditional solution, but Hume argues against the existence of the Christian *ens realissimum*, God, and also argues that existence is a mere abstract idea, as opposed to the being of things. I suggest only that Plato's theory of universals is arguably preferable to Hume's conceptualism, and that the form of the Good need be nothing other than the universal of universality. I uphold this Platonic solution to Hume as intelligible, reasonable, and incomparably deeper than Searle's concern with the 'institution of promising' or MacPherson's concern with factual postulates of equality and repeatedly 'shifting the burden of proof to the moralists'.⁵⁸ Hume would not have been impressed either with Searle's trivial inference of an obligation from the fact there was a linguistic act of promising, or with MacPherson's inference that it is all right to infer duties from facts because we cannot show values are not based on facts, a commission of the old fallacy of *ad ignorantiam* if there ever was one, not to mention *petitio principii* and *ignoratio elenchi*. MacPherson's way out is not valid against Hume's simple claim of nonvalid inference because *ignorantiam* is a logical fallacy, that is, an invalid inference form. Hume is raising the possibility that we have no moral obligations, or at any rate none deductively provable from the facts. Hume is raising, first and foremost, a logical problem concerning valid inference. MacPherson admits everything Hume wishes to show by his strategy of "assuming" obligations. MacPherson's strategy of putting the burden on the opposition to show there are not the obligations he thinks there are is misguided. The burden is on

those who make positive assertions of moral obligation, such as MacPherson, to show that they are doing more than merely assuming there are certain obligations. MacPherson's approach "has all the advantage of theft over honest toil."

MacPherson says that his Hobbist solution is "radically new", since Hobbes "was assuming that right did not have to be brought in from outside the realm of fact, but that it was there already"; whereas for Plato the Good, "brought in from outside the observed universe, was hypostasized as an outside force constantly imposing itself... on men." Even though Taylor himself says that the Good or *ens realissimum* "is rightly regarded as distinct from and transcendent of the whole system of its effects or manifestations", MacPherson's account is totally misleading because it leaves out the other half of the story. Yes, the Good is transcendent. But it is also immanent. It is our deepest nature.⁵⁹

Besides, Hume's problem logically cannot be solved on the level of ordinary facts about our equal abilities and needs, but only on a level which has bona fide metaphysical reasons for being so ultimate that it categorially transcends the ordinary distinction between facts and values. In contrast, Searle clearly understands Hume's challenge and carefully argues that at least one fact logically entails an obligation. His argument, reduced to its most basic terms, is:

1. FACT: Smith says, "I hereby promise to pay you, Jones, five dollars."
2. DUTY: Therefore, Smith ought to pay Jones five dollars.⁶⁰

Searle clearly aims to describe a genuine, if minor, counterexample to Hume's principle that no "ought" is logically entailed by an "is". Searle's solution is, of course, perfectly compatible with

our Platonic solution.

I follow established usage in saying that one and the same thing can be both transcendental, or “not given in sensory experience or introspection, but posited due to rational considerations,” and immanent, or “ontologically in or within an entity given in sensory experience or introspection as its rationally posited deepest nature.” The thing, of course, would then be not wholly given in experience; it would not be empirically given in its deepest nature. Perhaps even a nominalist could admit a certain ultimate category of word which logically transcends the categories of fact-words and value-words. After all, if a nominalist can admit sentential objectivity of geometry, why not also ontological propositions which transcend the distinction between factual statements and moral imperative sentences?

I proceed to consider five objections to a transcendental Good.

First, it might be objected that goodness is not a transcendental value nor even very highly generic, but is as specific a value as is courage: it is benevolence (compassion, loving-kindness, agape). The reply is easy: the word “good” is ambiguous. The good person is the benevolent person; but when we say that courage and benevolence are good, we do not mean that courage and benevolence are benevolent.

Second, it might be objected that transcendental goodness is superfluous as a value. If everybody were full of all the specific virtues-- courage, justice, wisdom, and temperance, truthfulness, loving-kindness, hope, faith, and charity, would anybody really need goodness? What would goodness add that anybody lacks? Indeed, the superfluity operates on a lower level than that. If everybody had all the specific virtues except justice in Plato’s sense, would anybody need justice? What need would a group then really have for a state or for politics? Justice seems

superfluous, and goodness even more so.

Plato logically could agree with this.⁶¹ His view could be that justice is eliminable by a reductive definition. If the guardians are wise, the police and soldiers are courageous, and the producers and merchants are temperate, then there is no additional need to make the state just. Conversely, it seems impossible to pursue justice except by pursuing the other three virtues. But this second line of objection, however reasonable, does not tell the whole story. It might eliminate justice or other complex virtues. But the Good is too transcendent to be eliminated by a reductive definition. We cannot even define color in terms of specific colors such as red and green! Like “Red is a color,” “Courage is good” is, on the face of it, synthetic a priori.

Third, if obligation implies free choice, then how can we be obliged to realize our nature? Is not nature deterministic? I already explained in section 2 that free choice is part of our nature. And since our nature has many levels with many needs, it is only natural if we often choose our lower level natural needs over our higher level natural needs.

Fourth, the *ens realissimum*, as the ground of both sides of every property distinction, should be beyond all such distinctions, including that between good and nongood and that between good and evil. “The sun shines on all alike.”

An initial reply is that there may be two senses of “good”: ‘nondiscriminative’ and ‘discriminative’. Plato’s reply would be that we can distinguish between good and evil, but only good is real. This removes the objection by collapsing the discriminative good-nondiscriminative good distinction.

A fifth objection might be most difficult: the problem of evil. Theory of universals should apply to good and evil indifferently. There seems arguably a form of evil as fundamental and

perfect as the form of good. And if the motive for being good is the ideal perfection of goodness, then an equal motive seems to exist for being evil. Thus it seems that the motive for being good should be found in the goodness of the Good as opposed to its ideal perfection, which is only its magnitude of goodness. Better to follow a weak and imperfect good than a real and perfect evil! But Plato cannot take this line. As befits the *ens realissimum*, the ideal perfection of the Good is its goodness. It is Formhood, the form of all forms, and does not happen in addition to be their goodness.

Thus Plato has the heavy burden of explaining why evil is not real, and not an ideal perfection, and not a justifiable motive. Plato's *Meno* solution is that what we call evil is really ignorance; that the men we call evil mistakenly pursue what they conceive to be good. Thus all men pursue the good after all; and ignorance has the lowest ontological status. John Hick gives three other ways out that seem open to Plato. The Augustinian way out is that evil is a corruption, malfunction, or privation of the good. The Irenaean view is that our souls are genuinely free but immature, so that we often make wrong choices. The Whitehead-Griffin view is that in the flux of interacting finite events, the two values of harmony and intensity cannot both be fully satisfied, so that there is always some inherent minimal evil of either discord or weakness.⁶² In fact, all four solutions can work together, making Whitehead's 'process evil' the exception to a general rule of ignorant immature choice leading to some privative corruption. But even that may seem a terribly unsatisfying account.

Worse, even granting the account, we see only that men do pursue the good, not why they should.⁶³

There are three other objections I do not take very seriously. First, one might argue that

goodness can be neither taught nor learned, either because it is innate or because it is a matter of choice. Second, one might argue that the aim of the state is preference-utilitarian: to maximize the projects we desire. Or third, one might argue that the aim of the state is to maximize autonomy as a precondition of preference utilitarianism, or even of morally adult choice of the Good.

I see these objections as narrow and provincial. (1) In some sense goodness is innate; in some sense it is a matter of choice. But in some sense there is moral training and encouragement, and very importantly so. (2) Personal projects, or even group projects of state subgroups, are not the only projects. There are also state projects. We pursue projects because we think they are good. We do not try to be good because that consists of projects, or because of some other utility. See Bishop Butler. We ought to obey the state not because it allows all these projects, but because so many of these projects are good. (3) Joseph Raz notes that autonomy, or the right to choose, is sharply different from self-realization, the highest value that exists in Maslow's hierarchy.⁶⁴ So to speak, if you gave Raz a choice between the right to choose the project of getting the thing of greatest value and simply getting that thing, he would choose the former. I find that absurd. Yes, Plato's state aims to maximize our getting the Good at the expense of our right to choose. Yet if Plato were right about the Good and about how we can best get it, Plato's state would be the best in very simple cost-benefit terms. Despite his Hegelian views, Raz forgets Hegel's distinction between negative freedom (from what) and positive freedom (for what). Both kinds of freedom have a mainly instrumental value; the "what" is what counts. To be sure, both kinds of freedom comprise the dignity of rational-moral-spiritual adulthood; yet they are not the final goal.⁶⁵ I endorse Robert Nisbet's anticipatory support of Raz that Plato and Hobbes are alike in making the state too strong at the expense of the social sphere in which we choose our

individual or sub-group projects; but I suggest that Plato's deep reliance on wisdom and Hobbes' on prudence may allow considerable mitigation of the state's dominance in practice.⁶⁶ My reason for accepting much of Raz's special pluralism is epistemic wisdom or prudence-- we just do not know exactly what things are good. But this is at the low level I characterized earlier as pragmatic. Certainly we do know that Plato was on target about the good in a general way. Certainly wisdom, courage, temperance, justice, honesty, and charity are goods; that seems synthetic a priori, though temperance, expressed as the Golden Mean of neither an excess nor a deficiency, is arguably analytic a priori. Thus we have intermediate generic guidance to the Good. Wisdom, courage, and justice are feathers in the arrow of the Good.

Assuming that all objections have been somehow met, and that we ought to be good, as well as courageous, just, wise, and so on, we may now answer the question raised in this part: Why obey the state? The state is the only good instrument for realizing all these virtues on a large scale.

E. Theory of Justice

Plato makes justice the form of the state. Thus the question, Why obey the state? is intimately related to the question, Why be just? for Plato.

In the first paragraph of Part 2, I said that "justice" and "courage" are pros hen terms, their primary sense concerning (just or courageous) acts. But concerning whether group or individual acts are more primary, these two words part ways. A lone individual facing a lion or imminent death from plague can show great courage. But even a Robinson Crusoe could not find it unjust not to forgive some shortcoming in himself, unless there were some implication that

every person should be similarly forgiven in similar circumstances. Thus “just” in the primary sense seems said of groups, as is “political”; but “courageous” in the primary sense seems said of individuals.

On a superficial level, Plato’s theory that justice is functioning the way one is supposed to, or functioning well, is too broad (a pirate band functions well but is unjust to its victims) and too narrow (a court gives just holdings by accident, its reasoning being inane). But if we refine our previous theory of “just” that “just” is said primarily not just of any acts, nor even of any group activities, but specifically of the state (which I defined as a special kind of group activity), then the criticism vanishes, at least on Plato’s view of the state. The reason is that in an adequate Platonic state, the wisdom and goodness of the guardians, combined with the enforcement of the auxiliaries, would seem to ensure justice in the ordinary sense of rightness or fairness.

The Platonic state is badly misunderstood as a mere collection of independent elements as in a salad or heap of different building materials. The guardian class in particular is a nexus, uniting itself to the other two classes; its function is to plan wisely for the state as a whole. And the auxiliaries serve to protect and to provide peace for all, while the producers serve to provide all with material necessities. Thus the Platonic state is best understood as an integrated whole, as in a cake or well-designed building. And justice arises naturally from the nexus of its elements. This is also why it is superficial to criticize Plato’s view as committing the fallacy of composition. The ‘elements’ of a business corporation may function well even though the whole corporation does not, due to a poor overall design. But the guardian ‘element’ of Plato’s state functions precisely to provide a wise overall design, and the auxiliary ‘element’ functions precisely to carry out that design. Now how can wise rulers backed by effective enforcers fail to impose justice in

the plain sense of fairness or rightness?

Justice is basically equity in some sense. But Plato is right that nature or life is inegalitarian. Thus the foundations of equality are problematic.

Everybody has an equal ultimate stake in society in a life-or-death sense. As Vice Admiral James Bond Stockdale puts it, in the thin veneer of ordinary civilized life, the merest accident can throw any of us back into a primitive struggle for basic moral survival in “The World of Epictetus” (Stockdale was unexpectedly shot down over Viet Nam).⁶⁷ Thus the Stoics were egalitarian. The world of Hobbes is similar, if less inspiring.

What is so inspiring about the Stoics is their positive account of human personhood. Being a human substance at all seems infinitely more important than the accidental features one has; and we are all equally substances. Epictetus says in the *Enchiridion*, “You are something more than property or speech.”⁶⁸ In Platonic terms, having a human form at all seems infinitely more important than one’s actual (accidental) degree of participation in the cardinal virtues. And we all equally have a human form. Shall Hobbes edify us that we are all equally boxes of springs and cogwheels? But Plato’s positive account goes much further.

For Plato having a human form at all seems incomparably more important than our accidental features; and we all equally have this form. Perhaps Plato treats men and women as equals just because both have human-form-at-all. But Plato goes much further toward justice than that. Plato makes justice itself the very form of the human soul! That striking Platonic intersection of value theory and theory of man literally assays man’s nature as the most egalitarian value of all. Indeed, the primary sense of “just” is arguably individual for Plato, in the Robinson Crusoe sense described in the beginning of this section, since for Plato the state is a mimesis of the soul. But

ontologically, actual-group justice is literal justice actually and historically; Crusoeian justice is a were-would extension to a hypothetical group of persons.⁶⁹ (My Hobbist-Rawlsian mechanical mouse is a Crusoe; its design concerns were-would group interactions, but the actual blueprint is of only one mouse.) Fairness to one's appetitive or spirited elements is not "justice" in any ordinary, much less the literal, sense of that word; Crusoe is not himself a human society. Thus extending justice as functioning well to the soul makes justice too broad.

Those who describe justice as "symmetry," and then wonder why we should pursue symmetry, change the subject to a greater abstraction. But perhaps even the "symmetrist" economists would be happy to learn that retributive justice is simply the "internalizing"⁷⁰ of consequences to any people who act badly. It is ensuring bad people bear the costs of their actions, i.e., get the consequences they deserve, or as much as is realistic. Justice emerges as the most efficient allocation of resources.

Retributive justice should include criminal punishments and punitive tort damages, but also nonpunitive personal liabilities for compensatory damages in intentional and negligence torts, and also in contracts (reliance, expectation, restitution, and equity damages). Thus retributive justice is highly generic.

Distributive justice may seem only socialist welfare economics these days, but it is still basic as to political rights distribution and the abolition of legalized social classes such as nobles, serfs, and slaves, as well as to equal opportunity in employment. Thus distributive justice, too, is highly generic.

The Golden Rule is the generic concept of justice embracing, as well as the justification underlying, retributive and distributive justice.⁷¹ On the face of it, Rawls' 'original state' motif is

an update of “There but for the grace of God go I.” Aristotle’s generic view of justice as proportionality is deeper, showing equality as but a special case. Plato’s view of justice as ‘functioning the way one is supposed to’ lies deeper still, insofar as that justice amounts to effecting a return to an ‘original state’ of equilibrium (proportionality), of how one was supposed to be in the first place. (Compare myths of a fall from a primal state, and the modern redemptive expression, “being made whole”.) This original state is different from that of Hobbes; it is closer to that of Rawls. One might picture Rawls’s original state as describing highly rational infants at birth, or souls about to reincarnate afresh. Actually, the ‘original state’ just is our deepest nature, on the egalitarian Stoic and Platonic accounts just described. Going deeper yet, justice might be analyzed as generic identity or as identity in the sense in which units qua units are identical, together with some prescriptive character concerning some deeper nature or ‘original state’ of being. Analysis reveals four elements: genericity, identity, prescription, and nature or state-of-being. Of course, consciousness is a fifth element of justice, and so our deeper nature is or involves some conscious state of being, if it is to ground justice. Even if one’s just punishment is unconsciousness of the value or beauty of life, this upholds a justice-consciousness relationship, if not the principle that to be punished one must be aware of being punished.

Of course, we may posit a minimal awareness of what we have lost; whether that is gratuitous metaphysics or good depth psychology I shall not discuss.

F. The Foundations of Political Obligation

On blending Plato’s and Hobbes’ justifications of obeying the state, the last word should be Hegel’s. Hegel begins with a Hobbist state of nature and ends with a neoPlatonic theory of

Absolute Spirit apprehended in dialectic. The question is not what values we need in certain situations, but what values we need to make us whole and free. And society is the natural means to this end.

One would be hard pressed to go deeper than Hegel's theory of personality to show how an ens realissimum can ground all human values and duties in human nature by transcendently and immanently being both the ultimate teleological good and the ultimate nature of all beings soever, including human beings. As for Hegel's Absolute Spirit, so too for Plato's form, the Good. Nonetheless, on this deepest level, Plato and Hegel are hardly beyond criticism. The questions are, Is there an ens realissimum? and What is it like? There are four broad alternatives. (1) There is no ens realissimum. (2) It is impersonal. (3) It is personal. (4) It transcends the impersonal-personal dichotomy. Hobbes' secular 'nominalism' seems to imply (1). Plato's Good, Formhood (the form of forms), implies (2). Locke's God and perhaps Hegel's Absolute Mind imply (3). Plotinus' One might imply (4); certainly the later Stoic Zeus, showing impersonalist and monotheistic trends combining together, was briefly a contender for ontological foundation of the Roman Empire. The mystical (4) is arguably implied in certain ontological conceptions underlying Asoka's Buddhist empire or feudal Japanese states, not to mention old Tibet. Such an ens realissimum might be describable only grammatically by open sentences, such as "has no properties" or even "is indescribable", and, ironically, not describable as transcendent or immanent.

Each of (1)-(4) has its difficulties; but that is beyond the scope of my paper. As to the basis of the state's differing as cultures differ, it is noteworthy that the single but complex culture of India embraces a trinity of great sages, each supporting a different view of the ens realissimum.

Shankara held (2), Ramanuja held (3), and Ramakrishna held (4). The *Bhagavad Gita* may be viewed in many ways, but to me it seems to allow any of (1)-(4) as the basis of Arjuna's duty to the state and to his kinsmen, as the personal ens Krishna explains. This historical resolution confirms the hypoethical claim at the beginning of this paper that people can co-exist in the same state, justifying obedience to it in radically various ways.

Which of views (1)-(4) one holds, and one's reasons for doing so, comprise one's conception of the world. This perhaps inevitably affects one's attitude toward life, and one's society and state, in not easily quantifiable but often tangible ways. Thus (1)-(4) arguably lead to palpably different states. My view is that of Ramakrishna. The states would be different in a sense, yet also the same in a sense, much as Ramakrishna experienced the Godhead in different ways. Fully showing why we should be good is ultimately self-defeating, since it amounts to showing why goodness is commendable, that is, why goodness is good. It is just as self-defeating as trying to show why we should be logical, since that amounts to giving logical reasons-- or showing the truth about truth, or the reference of "reference", or the meaning of "meaning", or the identity of identity, or the ontological status of being. However, in such ultimate cases, it is always possible and desirable to give elucidations, if not independent justifications.

Thus our professor is right that evaluating any conception of goodness presupposes some conception of goodness. But our professor is wrong that any argument for religious tolerance presupposes some substantive religious view, such as that God does or does not exist. This is evident from the fact that religious tolerance is far too specific to be ultimate enough to be presupposed in any attempts either to establish it or to disestablish it. Consider these three premisses, any one of which, if true, comprises an argument for religious tolerance: (1) Any kind

of toleration of substantive metaphysical views ought to be encouraged. (2) No substantive metaphysical views are knowable. (3) No substantive metaphysical views have cognitive meaning. If one thinks that (1) is about religious toleration among other kinds of toleration, or that (2)-(3) are about religious metaphysical views among other kinds of substantive metaphysical views, then one has simply never made the jump to modern logic. As Frege and Russell repeatedly pointed out, if I say “All men are mortal,” I do not say anything about some Chief Apkanya, of whom I may never have heard, nor about past and future men whom I cannot know (compare “All even numbers are the sum of two primes”), yet I know what I am saying, I know what I am talking about. And what about “No centaurs exist” or “All golden mountains are golden”? What are they about?-- centaurs and golden mountains? Nor can we sneak around the Frege-Russell analysis by saying that a universal statement is ‘impliedly about’ or presupposes its instantiations; the point is that any instantiations are implied to be thus-and-such only if they exist-- and that is never implied. Thus the purely hypothetical (1)-(3) apply directly to religious toleration without the mediation of any substantive metaphysico-religious premiss. It would be absurd to claim that a hypothetical is substantive, since it asserts absolutely nothing about what is actually the case. The proof that my criticism is not a logical sleight o’ hand is that it makes absolutely no difference to arguments using premisses (1)-(3) whether God exists or what He is like. Our professor failed to state a minimal standard of plausibility for arguments for toleration which successfully do not presuppose substantive religious views; but the arguments contemplated here seem reasonable enough.

One might even venture this sorites: i. (3) [or (2)], therefore (2) [or (3)]; ii. therefore (1); (iii) therefore, by universal instantiation, religious tolerance is good. This is behind the

persuasiveness of Kantianism and logical positivism, viewed as historically supporting religious tolerance without using substantive religious views (I mean Kant's famous critical views). Montaigne, a great advocate of religious tolerance, based tolerance on general skepticism, ironically becoming the conduit between Sextus Empiricus and the officially Catholic skeptic Descartes. Thus religious tolerance is not even historically always based on substantive religious views, but sometimes on much more general views. Of course, much like the "is" of moral relativism, the "is" of general skepticism or positivism does not strictly entail the "ought" of tolerance. But that is Hume's problem, not the problem our professor raises. And our sorites meets the standard of reasonability, while Hume's standard is strict validity.

One might object that although it is self-defeating to give objective reasons against objectivity, this does not positively validate objectivity. Objectivity may be nonexistent even if you cannot prove that (or even say it, as in the objective claim "There is no such thing as objectivity"). I reply that objectivity is ultimate enough that something must be objective. If, per impossibile, nothing were objective, then that itself would be an objective fact. Similarly, "There is nothing good" can be proved only by a good argument, and can be asserted only as a good assertion. If, per impossibile, nothing were good, that itself would be a fact about goodness that it is uninstantiated. One might add on behalf of philosophy that "All is ideology" and "All is dialectical" are as self-defeating as "Nothing is objective" and "There is no truth." One's first dialectical duty is to apply one's views to themselves.

G. The Ontological Foundation of Political Philosophy

My own last word is that each of the four sections of this paper would be unintelligible

apart from reasoning about the nature and existence of states, values, and human beings. And those are metaphysical issues. The foundations of political philosophy, I conclude, are totally metaphysical. It is better, then, to admit that and pursue such metaphysical questions openly than to throw them out the front door only for them to come in the back. When F. H. Bradley said that one who seeks to deny metaphysics “is a brother metaphysician with a rival theory of his own,” his words applied to political philosophers as well as to anyone else.

As I see it, the relation of metaphysics to political philosophy is much like that of basic manufacturing to a retail store. You can work in a retail store and do a good job without knowing much about basic manufacturing. But somebody who knows what your products are really made of and knows the same about your clients, knows what your store is really about. Even somebody who has merely worked through some basic theories will understand much. But then a good manufacturer has much to learn about retailing.

One might object that the ontological status of a state matters little, if a state is a mere conduit or instrumentality to effect a relationship between the main players: persons and values. Nor can it be said that the reality of a person affects that person’s obligations, if an “ought” cannot be inferred from an “is”, since a person’s ontological status is an “is”. More dramatically, the reality of a value cannot be said to affect its prescriptive character, if an “ought” cannot be inferred from an “is”, since a value’s ontological status is an “is”. But using the ontological status of the *ens realissimum* to light the way, I now punch my own hole in Hume’s principle precisely concerning values:

1. (FACT) Value V is prescriptive (Value V has a prescriptive nature).

2. (DUTY) Therefore, V ought to be pursued.

Premiss (1) is descriptive; conclusion (2) is prescriptive. The reason why this works is that “is” applies existentially, identitatively, and copulatively to anything that is not literally nothing, including prescriptive characters and obligations and values. You can even say, “There are three contradictions in this proof,” or “Three contradictions exist in this proof,” and identify and describe the contradictions. If the contradictions are all different, then at most one can be literally nothing. There is a sense in which contradictions cannot exist in reality. Contradictions are not and cannot be part of what is, but rather constitute much of what cannot be. But there is also a sense in which contradictions do exist in our reasoning. This second sense may be purely logical, but it is also ordinary and unexceptionable. Correspondingly there is a sense in which values, perhaps especially ideals, are not and cannot be part of what is, but rather constitute what ought to be; and there is also a sense in which many values do exist in our lives. All of these senses of “is” seem quite intelligible, even commonplace. All are in some sense descriptive, or at least concern what is as opposed to what ought to be. It is the second sense of “is” concerning values which is used in premiss (1) of my argument, albeit in a copulative grammatical form which merely implies the existential import. “An exemplification of a prescriptive character by value V exists” is logically equivalent to premiss (1). Hume’s mistake was, in effect, to suppose that the first sense of “is” concerning values was the only sense of “is” concerning values.

At this point, one might object that premiss (1) does not concern “is” in any significant ontological sense, since its predicate is a mere open sentence, expressing a purely logical property corresponding to the purely logical second sense of “is” concerning contradictions. My reply is

that open sentences are descriptive because they occur in true or false sentences; and premiss (1) is a true sentence, as is “There are values.” Open sentences are not ontologically descriptive, but they are grammatically quite descriptive.

Thus I rescue my conclusion, whose philosophical interest is only enhanced by my dialectically subsuming the Humean objection as valid concerning only the first of the senses of “is” concerning values, while using the second sense in premiss (1). Thus we may argue:

1. (FACT) There are values, such as goodness.
2. (DUTY) Therefore, people ought to be good.

And I think we may similarly punch a hole in Hume concerning persons:

1. (FACT) [Smith] is a person (specifically, a political leader).
2. (DUTY) Therefore, [Smith] ought to be good (specifically, wise).

These arguments seem to show that even without the *ens realissimum*, there are two categories deep enough to transcend the fact-value dichotomy: values and persons. I have already discussed how there ‘are’ values. As to persons, just as P. F. Strawson sees persons as logically prior to minds and bodies, I see persons as prior to values. The last indented argument shows persons’ priority over values. Hegel’s theory of personality seems to show the same priority on every level.

There are more senses of “is” than Hume dreams of in his philosophy.

One can consistently hold that moral properties exist and that they cannot be derived from

facts. That is Moore's famous position. But in my theory, moral properties (obligations) exist, and we can know they exist, *because* they can be derived from facts, or more precisely from the existence of certain sorts of things which transcend the fact-value dichotomy (in a narrow sense of "fact"). This is underwritten by the whole-part theory of deduction, on which a valid conclusion is always in some sense contained in the premiss(es), conjoined with the principle that if a whole exists, then its parts exist. Thus on my view, if my arguments are intuitively valid, then if values and persons exist, then they are logically wholes which contain existing moral obligations as logical parts.

Notes

1. That water is a good is relative to human nature. That water is an objective human good is due to human nature (though a human good is relative to human culture) The difference between real and relative values is itself a conceptual parsing, just as more generally the distinction between real distinction and distinction in reason is itself a distinction in reason. No identity in reason can exist if no real identities exist. Nothing can be conceptually sliced unless there is something out there to be sliced. Relative identity and identity in reason seem identical; both concern concept-shifting.
2. Panayot Butchvarov, *Skepticism in Ethics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), pp. 47, 89-90.
3. H. P. Grice and P. F. Strawson, "In Defense of a Dogma," in Robert Ammerman, ed., *Classics of Analytic Philosophy* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965), p. 346.

4. See C. D. Broad, *The Mind and its Place in Nature* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968), pp. 9, 11, 96-97, 438, 464; but the exact page I want eludes me.
5. "In Defense of a Dogma," p. 340.
6. See W. T. Stace, *The Philosophy of Hegel* (London: Dover, 1955), pp. 415-416. To be sure, Stace may be misrepresenting Hegel's view of Plato.
7. Ernest Barker, *Principles of Social and Political Theory* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1952), p. 5.
8. *Republic* 4. 445 B, 6. 496, 7. 519, 520, 8. 545ff., 9. 592; *Laws* 12. 950 A. Also, states are not forms because states are many, not one, *Republic* 4. 423 A; there is only one form of a state, and all states participate in it. All references to Plato are from Benjamin Jowett, trans., *The Dialogues of Plato* (New York: Random House, 1937); Stephens' pagination is used.
9. *Republic* 10. 614ff., 617, *Phaedo* 70, 78, 81, 86-87, 92ff., 107-108, 113-114; *Phaedrus* 245, 248-249; *Meno* 81, 86, *Gorgias* 523-525, *Cratylus* 403, *Laws* 10. Strictly speaking, the soul is not eternal but indestructible, *Laws* 10. 904 A.
10. Compare *Republic* 3. 400ff., 10. 596-598, 602, 605; *Alcibiades* I 107ff.; *Protagoras* 321-322; *Statesman* 260, 276, 289-293, 295 B, 300 E, 305 A, 308, 311; *Laws* 10. 889.
11. *Laws* 7. 817 B: "our whole state is an imitation of the best and noblest life." That states are "framed after the heavenly pattern," *Republic* 6. 500 E, means only that like every other particular, a state participates in a form. Plato also compares a state to a household, *Statesman* 259; compare *Republic* 5. 463.
12. Compare *Republic* 3. 401 B, 3. 398 A, 8. 568 B, 10. 595ff., 10. 605 A, 10. 607 A! This is the irony.

13. Ibid., 2. 382, 3. 389 A, 3. 414 C, 5. 459 D.

14. See Robert C. Lodge, *Plato's Theory of Art* (New York: The Humanities Press, 1953), Chapter IX, "Mimesis". Henry Teloh, *The Development of Plato's Metaphysics* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1981), p. 142, says that Plato "compares the philosophical activity of the *Republic* to artistic creation, and the philosopher to an artist, but unlike the justly reviled imitator of phenomena, the philosopher makes his sketch by looking at and using the Forms as models." Nonetheless, by letting the rulers tell a lie that people have golden, silver, or copper natures, Plato's state seems, in a very plain sense, a justly reviled imitation of the human soul. The forms that are selected as models are selected only because Plato really models the state after the soul, and the parts and whole of the soul participate in those forms.

15. *Republic* 2. 369: "A State... arises... out of the needs of mankind...".

16. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "On The Principles of Political Knowledge," in I.A. Richards, ed., *The Portable Coleridge* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1978), pp. 329-330.

17. C.B. MacPherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1965), p. 18.

18. Butchvarov, *Resemblance and Identity* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1966); *Skepticism in Ethics*, pp. 18, 54, 61-66, 70, 79, 115-120. See also Butchvarov, *Being Qua Being* (Indianapolis: University of Indiana Press, 1979).

19. Teloh, *The Development of Plato's Metaphysics*, p. 116, says that Plato does not distinguish particulars from universals: "Plato's Forms are paradigmatic individuals... In Plato's middle-period universe, everything is either an individual that is 'one in number' or a particular,

immanent characteristic of some individual, and Aristotle's notion of a universal that is not 'one in number' [but 'one in form;'] is utterly foreign to Plato's thought. Because Plato believes that Forms are individuals, they must be separate from their instances and they are common to them only in the sense that many things can participate in one and the same Form." Teloh shows only that Plato's forms are not Aristotle's universalia in re, not that they are not universalia ante rem. In fact he makes a good case that they are, since many things participate in one form. And any item is an individual in the sense of being one thing; each universal is one universal even on Aristotle's in re theory. The only thing marring Teloh's account is that his conception of universals is too limited.

20. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan: Parts I and II*, ed. Herbert W. Schneider (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958), p. 9 (Part IV, Ch. 46, "Of Darkness...").

21. Richard S. Peters, *Introduction to Hobbes' Leviathan*, ed. Michael Oakeshott (New York: Collier, 1977), p. 14.

22. *Leviathan: Parts I and II*, p. 9 (Part IV, Chapter 46); see Hobbes, *Elements of Philosophy Concerning Bodies*, in Frederick J. E. Woodbridge, ed., *Hobbes Selections* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), pp. 18-21 (Part I, Chapter V, paragraphs 1-8). If a name for a visible or tangible motion is a name of an idea in the mind, and if an idea is a mental motion which is ultimately a physical motion, then is this not a circular explanation in which the name names a physical motion after all, just not the one we think it does? Namely, it names a motion in the brain instead of in the body we say we see.

23. Due to Mortimer Adler.

24. Again, Stephens' pagination is used.

25. *Leviathan: Parts I and II*, p. 53.
26. *Skepticism and Ethics*, p. 44.
27. Schneider says, “Hobbes formulates nineteen laws of nature.... These rules are discovered by analyzing the consequences of their absence in the ‘state of nature’... In other words, Hobbes’ political rationalism is utilitarian. This is the first attempt to construct a systematic utilitarian rationalization of natural law,” Editor’s Introduction to *Leviathan: Parts I and II*, p. xi.
28. John Paul Scott, *Animal Behavior* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1963), p. 205.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 186.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 203.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 199-201.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 201-202.
33. Richard E. Leakey, *The Making of Mankind* (London: Sphere, 1982), pp. 219-237. Leakey refutes Raymond Dart and Robert Ardrey in some detail. Coleridge refutes the Hobbist theory in “On the Principles of Political Knowledge,” pp. 329-332.
34. *Animal Behavior*, pp. 203-205.
35. *Leviathan: Parts I and II*, pp. 141-142.
36. Leo Strauss, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: Its Basis and Its Genesis* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1936), pp. 57-58.
37. *Introduction to Leviathan*, pp. 13-14.
38. Alan Gewirth, *Political Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), purporting to quote section 75 of G. W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1942). My 1969 reprint of the Knox translation says “First published by the Clarendon

Press, 1952,” which is ten years later, and gives a quite different wording for section 75 on pp. 58-59.

39. Charles Hampden-Turner, *Maps of the Mind* (New York: Collier, 1982), p. 33.

40. op. cit., p. 32.

41. Ibid.

42. These are central themes in Hegel’s *The Phenomenology of Mind* and *The Philosophy of Right*.

43. Wilhelm Windelband, *A History of Philosophy*, Second Edition, trans. James H. Tufts (Westport: Greenwood, 1979), p. 73; see Stewart Umphrey, *Zetetic Skepticism* (Wakefield: Longwood Academic, 1990), p. 311, but again the page I want eludes me.

44. Woodbridge, *Introduction to Hobbes Selections*, pp. xix-xxv.

45. Ibid.

46. Miriam M. Reik, *The Golden Lands of Thomas Hobbes* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977), pp. 88-89.

47. Martin A. Bertman, “Semantics and Political Theory in Hobbes,” *Hobbes Studies* I (1988), pp. 134-143.

48. Strauss, *What is Political Philosophy? and Other Studies* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1959), pp. 40-42.

49. Ibid., pp. 47-49.

50. Ernest Nagel, *The Structure of Science: Problems in the Logic of Scientific Explanation* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987), p. 463.

51. *The Golden Lands of Thomas Hobbes*, pp. 87-88.

52. Ibid., pp. 508-509.

53. *The Golden Lands of Thomas Hobbes*, pp. 87-88.

54. *Republic* 2. 358-359.

55. The Good is in any case a form, *The Development of Plato's Metaphysics*, p. 136, citing *Republic* 508e, and it is hard to see what else it would be the form of, besides the other forms.

Teloh says that the Good is “probably only a final cause” (p. 136), but “this does not imply that the [other] Forms are not lower-level” final causes (p. 135); and indeed, all “[t]he Forms are final causes” (p. 134).

56. Richard Taylor, *Metaphysics*, Third Edition (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1983), pp. 26-28.

57. A. E. Taylor, *Plato: The Man and His Work* (London: Methuen, 1966), p. 289. Evidently my reply was not so original; in retrospect that is not surprising.

58. *Possessive Individualism*, pp. 72-78.

59. In the *Phaedo*, forms have “an immanent aspect... that later in the dialogue becomes an immanent characteristic different from the Form.” *The Development of Plato's Metaphysics*, pp. 81-82. Teloh says that the notion of an immanent universal is “obscure” (p. 228, Note 19), that finding immanent universals in Plato is a “type of subtle modernizing that is tantamount to misunderstanding” (p. 14), and insists that “Largeness itself is separate from the largeness in us.... Only the immanent characteristics are in phenomena” (p. 156). But Teloh also says that “Simmiias... has the immanent characteristic largeness because he participates in Largeness itself” (p. 112). For Plato, “x has the immanent character F if and only if x participates in the form F-ness” (p. 137). And I find it neither obscure nor misleading to say that forms are universals (see

my Note 19), and that immanent characteristics are distinct in reason from forms in the sense that they logico-metaphysically depend for their existence on the existence of forms.

60. John Searle, "How to Derive 'Ought' from 'Is'," *The Philosophical Review* 73 (October 1964), pp. 43-58.

61. This is manifestly not Plato's view. For Plato, justice is not a mere logical construction of wisdom, courage, and temperance, but a form in its own right. Even the complex form, Ideal City, which is not the same as the form as justice, is a form in its own right. *The Development of Plato's Metaphysics*, p. 142, citing *Republic* 9. 592a-b. But Plato could have held a logical atomism of forms. Indeed, Plato's actual view arguably makes justice even less necessary. For why require justice at all, if it is an independent form in its own right and states are already wise, courageous, and temperate?

62. John H. Hick, *Philosophy of Religion*, Third Edition (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1983), Chapter Four.

63. I omit ways out which seem to depend on a God Plato would not accept: Leibniz's view that this is the best of all possible worlds; and the rest of Irenaeus' view, that evil is a test or crucible to perfect the soul, which William James once called "the moral gymnasium theory of the universe."

I omit Plato's explanation of natural evils such as floods or earthquakes: "The irrational mechanistic nature of necessity is also a source of evil and deficiency in Plato." *The Development of Plato's Metaphysics*, p. 241. I omit the possibilities that evil is: (i) desirable much like good, (ii) is perhaps not opposed to good, and (iii) perhaps even works for good. As to (i), I recall a cartoon of some fifteen years ago in which a self-indulgent couple are passing by a large

tombstone with the epitaph, "Virtue is its own reward." The man says to the woman, "So's vice."

On the evolutionary theory, evil may be what was good on earlier levels, much as the gods of defeated groups become the devils of the conquerors, except that as Maslow indicates, we never outgrow our more basic levels completely. Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh's input is that pure anger or hatred freely expressed is a beautiful thing because it is real or authentic as opposed to crabbed or disguised. (He may or may not mean only harmlessly expressed emotions.) As to (ii), minor evil, or evil harmlessly expressed or fantasized or simply accepted, seems desirable as need-relief or catharsis which need not substantially interfere with being good, and (iii) may make it easier for one to be good. As one book puts it, a drop of black paint makes the white paint whiter. Also as to (iii), Jung's anima and animus, like the demon guardians of many Eastern temples, serve to protect the ultimate holy things from the unprepared seeker, or really, protect the unprepared seeker from the holy things. Again as to (iii), Nietzsche's Nay-saying spirit, like Goethe's Mephistopheles and Hegel's Spirit of Negativity, performs a purifying function on the ascent to the truly worth while-- much as in the Irenaean theodicy, and much like the anima or demon guardian, since if properly approached, these may serve as vehicles of instruction as to proper access to the sacred. I grant that such thoughts may not explain all evils as desirable, and that they may also cast doubt as to the genuinely evil nature of what they concern. Again, Hegel's view that the slaughter-bench of history allows major advancements of the world-spirit was never meant to excuse or justify the slaughterers; it is instead like Adam Smith's invisible hand theory, where a collective eventual benefit is a function of our genuine individual selfishness. John Hick notes elsewhere that animals experience many natural evils (Plato is a reincarnationist), and that even apparent evil may be painful.

I omit Plato's own later objections to the theory of forms from my list of objections to the theory of the transcendental Good (which is, again, a form).

64. Joseph Raz, *The Morality of Freedom* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), p. 375.

65. A beautiful analogy may be made to C. S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce* (New York: Macmillan, 1946), pp. 33-34. A selfish Ghost just arrived in Heaven demands his "rights". A Spirit replies, "Oh no. It's not so bad as that. I haven't got my rights, or I shouldn't be here [no sinner has a right to Heaven]. You will not get yours either. You'll get something far better. Never fear."

Raz does not cite Hegel. But Raz's views that social practices define our values and projects is deeply Hegelian. Raz's theory of autonomy as political individualism scarcely ascends to the dialectical subtleties of Hegel's view that self-realization, or submission to the Absolute, is also self-mastery and final freedom. Political individualism, if Hegel accepted it, would be on a much lower rung of Hegel's master-slave dialectic and theory of personality.

In Raz's list of elements of autonomy, positive freedom approximates most closely to (iii) having an adequate range of choices, and negative freedom most closely to (iv) the absence of coercion or manipulation. Freedom, in my view, is not a conjunction such as Raz's, but the generic property shared by positive and negative freedom. Of course, Raz is free to develop his own complex notion; there is no reason why his "autonomy" need be identical with freedom.

Our professor claims that at most any two of these three views of Raz are consistent, creating a problem of choosing which one of the three to reject:

1. Autonomy is valuable only if exercised to support the good, p. 381;
2. Autonomy is always valuable, p. 419;

3. Autonomy is autonomy even if used in support of the bad, p. 419.

Our professor then rejects view (3) on the basis of defining autonomy as “the ability to distinguish between good and evil and to choose the good sometimes.” But the definition is bad for two reasons. First, the definition is too narrow; it fits only moral choices. There are amoral, premoral, and perhaps postmoral choices. Second, the definition makes it logically impossible never to choose good things; but surely true autonomy implies the logical possibility of never choosing the good. My approach is different. The word “valuable” is ambiguous.

View (1) obviously concerns utilitarian value (“to support the good”). View (2) obviously concerns intrinsic value (“is always valuable”). Since “valuable” is thus ambiguous, views (1)-(3) are mutually consistent. The problem vanishes.

Raz’s preemption thesis (p. 46) is that the reason for obeying governmental authority as such is not just one more “normal justification”, where a normal justification consists in showing that the government is more likely to be right than is any private citizen (p. 53). The thesis has been criticized on the ground that there is no governmental right to impose its views unless its views are in fact the best views about what is good: in short, Raz’s normal justification thesis (p. 53) is really the biconditional that authority ought to be followed if and only if it is more likely to be right than any private citizen’s views. I disagree. Any rule utilitarian can tell you that authority “as such” is valued not “in and of itself,” but because rules build habits, promote certainty, and resolve intricate webs of expectation and reliance (as traffic schemes show), even if they do not always yield the best result. Cost-benefit analysis suggests a Prisoner’s Dilemma: *The Uniform Commercial Code* is a set of rough-and-ready rules that often undercompensate or

overcompensate for damages in sales transactions. The Code is authority. Now an individual genius economist might figure the true compensation for some muddy transaction. But would the high transaction costs of perhaps decades of labor be worth it? The justification for obeying rules is based not only on the accuracy of the rules, but also on their promoting certainty, speed, low costs, and quietude. Such policy considerations recall my earlier point that most of what passes as moral duty is pragmatic rules under a moral “covering blanket”. Such considerations seem higher-level normal justifications of why authority as such, but not in and of itself, is best for society. “A taut ship [as such] is a happy ship.”

66. Robert Nisbet, *The Twilight of Authority* as quoted in Russell Kirk, ed., *The Portable Conservative Reader* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982), pp. 660-661; compare Kirk’s Introduction, p. xvii. It is no doubt more politically correct and popular in academia to call this view “liberal”; but “That government is best which governs least” seems in fact very conservative.

67. James Bond Stockdale, VADM USN (Ret.), “The World of Epictetus,” in Malham M. Wakin, COL USAFA, ed., *War, Morality, and the Military Profession*, Second Edition (Boulder: Westview, 1986), pp. 10-22.

68. Quoted in Irving R. Copi, *Introduction to Logic*, Fourth Edition (New York: Collier, 1972), p. 34.

69. But I have great respect for Kant’s view that the ‘were-would’ is what has necessary, universal, and objective validity in morality, and concerns actions in the morally substantive noumenal realm. Thus my essay is a tough call. But then Kant himself distinguishes between a “Crusoeian” state of nature in which there is no justice, because everybody does what seems right to him, and an actual civil community which agrees on how to assess justice. (Note how Kant

anticipates the private language argument.) Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysical Elements of Justice*, trans. John Ladd (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965).

Kant in effect judges all morality as moral only if it is equitable or just, even though he makes legal justice (or retribution) only one moral duty among many. I agree that there is a basic level on which morality simply is justice.

Criticisms of Kant as anti-utilitarian are simply poor scholarship. Kant rejects utilitarianism as the basis of morality. But he promptly reintroduces it in four ways: making impacts on the fabric of society part of what I must consider when assessing if I can consistently will that all people act as I think I ought to; making it a moral duty to promote the good; adopting the more specific utility principles of Epicurus and Frances Hutcheson as moral duties; and making the difference between objective duty and subjective utilitarianism the difference between the logico-moral form and the empirical content of every moral imperative proposition he admits, a double-aspect theory on which to act morally is motivate oneself solely in terms of the form. What Kant does is rescue utilitarianism from difficulties by basing it on moral intuition and by limiting its scope: we ought to do good things, if they are otherwise morally possible. See: Lewis White Beck, *A Commentary on Kant's Critique of Practical Reason* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press); Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Beck (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1959); and Beck's famous Introduction to that work.

70. Harold Demsetz, "Toward a Theory of Property Rights," *57 Am. Econ. Rev.* 347 (Pap. & Proc. 1967).

71. Just as for Aristotle, the generic fact that lines intersecting a given line at the same angle are parallel explains the more specific fact that lines intersecting a given line at right angles are

parallel.

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