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HOBBS E O REINO DAS TREVAS: POLÍTICA E RELIGIÃO NO LEVIATÃ

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ALLAN GABRIEL CARDOSO DOS SANTOS

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Tese apresentada como requisito parcial para obtenção do grau de Doutor em Filosofia pelo Programa de Pós-Graduação em Filosofia da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul.

Orientador: Prof. Dr. Wladimir Barreto Lisboa.

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“[...] when the spiritual power moveth the members of a commonwealth (by the terror of punishments and hope of rewards, which are the nerves of it) otherwise than by the civil power (which is the soul of the commonwealth) they ought to be moved, and by strange and hard words suffocates their understanding, it must needs thereby distract the people, and either overwhelm the commonwealth with oppression, or cast it into the fire of a civil war.”

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 29.15.

RESUMOS

O Dilema da Escolástica: A crítica de Hobbes à Política Escolástica e ao Poder Papal no Frontispício do Leviatã

Palavras-chave: Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679); política; metafísica; Roberto Bellarmino (1542-1621); frontispício; Escolástica.

Resumo: A ideia de que o frontispício do *Leviatã* oferece um resumo visual do conteúdo do trabalho é generalizada. Entretanto, a análise do frontispício muitas vezes subutiliza o texto ou deixa certos elementos iconográficos de lado. Nas discussões sobre o emblema do 'Dilema' dos escolásticos, por exemplo, a imagem é geralmente reduzida a uma representação de 'lógica' ou 'escolástica', deixando de lado a intrincada inter-relação entre os objetos presentes na imagem e sua conexão com o conteúdo do livro. Este artigo argumenta que esta imagem ajuda a entender a crítica de Hobbes às doutrinas escolásticas e seus efeitos políticos no Leviatã. Para Hobbes, estes conceitos supostamente puramente filosóficos da lógica (tridente do 'Silogismo') ou metafísica (bidente 'Real/Intencional') escondem uma parte central do pensamento escolástico: uma concepção política 'sediciosa' a qual alega que o Papa tem um direito indireto ao poder temporal em assuntos relativos às questões espirituais (bidentes 'Espiritual/Temporal' e 'Direto/Indireto'). O modelo escolástico fez o povo ignorante acreditar que o Papa teria pelo menos tanta autoridade quanto o Soberano. Quando confrontados com a escolha entre obedecer ou ao Papa ou ao Soberano Civil, os súditos se encontrariam em um perigoso 'Dilema'.

Poder e Associações Religiosas no Leviatã de Hobbes

Palavras-chave: Thomas Hobbes; religião; política; poder; potentia; potestas.

ABSTRACT: Hobbes, em todas as edições latinas de suas obras, emprega uma concepção dupla de poder, *potentia* (poder não-jurídico) e *potestas* (poder jurídico). Embora o conceito de potestas não tenha sofrido mudanças significativas, a dimensão potentia do poder foi refinada nas obras de Hobbes. No *Leviatã*, Hobbes emprega uma concepção relacional de *potentia* que inclui a reputação como uma dimensão social do poder (Lev 10,5). Este posterior desenvolvimento da dimensão potentia do poder é fundamental para explicar a antropologia da religião de Hobbes, que engloba tanto a gênese quanto a destruição de grupos religiosos. Este desenvolvimento em sua análise crítica da religião também é relevante para descrever como Hobbes veio a retratar associações religiosas independentes como entidades políticas perigosas. Sob esta nova perspectiva, ou seja, associações religiosas atuando como nódulos de potentia, Hobbes reforça seu argumento a favor de uma regulamentação rigorosa pelo poder soberano sobre estas associações.

Hobbes, Religião e a Aparente Contradição do Juramento

Palavras-chave: Thomas Hobbes; religião; juramentos, juramentos; voto; estado de natureza.

ABSTRACT: Na edição latina do *Leviatã*, ao tratar da possibilidade ou não de fazer juramentos no estado de natureza, Hobbes parece contradizer-se. No capítulo 12, ele afirma que não é possível fazer um juramento fora do estado civil. Enquanto no capítulo 14, Hobbes afirma que a única maneira de reforçar a aplicação de pactos fora do estado civil é através de juramentos. Esta aparente posição contraditória não recebeu sequer uma nota de rodapé nas traduções mais célebres da edição latina do *Leviatã* (Tricaud, Curley e Malcolm). Este artigo argumenta que esta posição paradoxal pode ser explicada pela mudança de ênfase com a qual Hobbes descreve a religião. Após as críticas recebidas pela versão inglesa do *Leviatã*, Hobbes passa a enfatizar uma versão restrita de sua definição normativa de religião (como o conteúdo e as práticas definidas pelo soberano civil). Se os juramentos dependem da religião (EL 15.16; DCi 2.20; Lev 14.31), e a religião só pode ser instaurada após o estabelecimento da soberania, então os juramentos (em um sentido restrito) só podem existir no estado civil. Este artigo argumenta ainda que a posição de Hobbes poderia ser emendada se tomarmos o "voto" (DCi 2.13) como uma forma de proto juramento, possível no estado de natureza.

As Coisas Invisíveis de Thomas Hobbes

Palavras-chave: Thomas Hobbes; corpos invisíveis; substâncias incorpóreas; religião; filosofia natural; política.

Resumo: Hobbes rejeita as substâncias incorpóreas em seu trabalho (EL II.5-6; Lev 34.18, 34.24, 44.15-16, 44.34; EW6, p. 236). Entretanto, a análise da invisibilidade dos corpos e movimentos só se desenvolve plenamente no *Leviatã*. A inclusão de uma extensa discussão a respeito da influência da religião é, eu defendo, uma das fontes para uma discussão mais ampla a respeito das "coisas invisíveis". No *Leviatã*, Hobbes retrata a dificuldade dos indivíduos ignorantes em tentar designar as causas das coisas invisíveis (como corpos ou movimentos), confundindo-as com a intervenção de algum agente incorpóreo, invisível (Lev 12,6-7). Para Hobbes, esta é uma das causas do domínio do clero sobre o povo ignorante (Lev 2,8). Destacar a análise da invisibilidade no *Leviatã* é crucial para explicar como Hobbes aplica conceitos da filosofia natural para combater certas doutrinas escolásticas predominantes. Hobbes estabelece, além da dicotomia entre corpos imateriais e invisíveis, uma análise das "coisas invisíveis" que visa avançar argumentos mecanicistas que poderiam explicar fenômenos naturais pelo menos parcialmente, como um substituto para as teorias vigentes. Em última análise, este breve excursão em filosofia natural visa combater as doutrinas errôneas utilizadas para justificar o poder do Papa e da Igreja. Até agora, a literatura existente se concentrou quase exclusivamente na parte negativa da proposta de Hobbes de que as doutrinas a favor de substâncias incorpóreas dão apoio à reivindicação de poder da Igreja. Sua proposta positiva de substituir substâncias imateriais por corpos invisíveis, pelo contrário, não foi totalmente explorada. Hobbes argumentará que o universo é composto de inumeráveis corpos invisíveis. No entanto, o único corpo invisível com uma agência é Deus. Ao negar a existência de substâncias imateriais e substituí-la por corpos invisíveis, a filosofia natural de Hobbes evita o abuso clerical e a usurpação do poder eclesiástico.

ABSTRACTS

The Scholastic's Dilemma: Hobbes Critique of Scholastic Politics and Papal Power on the Leviathan Frontispiece

Key-words: Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679); politics; metaphysics; Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621); frontispiece; Scholasticism.

ABSTRACT: The idea that the *Leviathan* frontispiece offers a visual summary of the contents of the work is widespread. However, the analysis of the frontispiece often under-explores *Leviathan's* text or leaves certain iconographic elements aside. In discussions of the Scholastics 'Dilemma' emblem, for instance, the image is commonly reduced to a representation of 'logic' or 'scholasticism', leaving aside the intricate interrelationship between the objects present in the image and their connection with the content of the book. This paper argues that this image helps understanding Hobbes' critique of Scholastic doctrines and their political effects in *Leviathan*. For Hobbes, these supposedly pure philosophical concepts either in logic (trident of the 'Syllogism') or metaphysics ('Real/Intentional' bident) hide a central part of Scholastic thought: a 'seditious' political conception claiming that the Pope has an indirect right to temporal power in affairs concerning spiritual matters theory ('Spiritual/Temporal' and 'Direct/Indirect' bidents). The Scholastic model made the common people believe that the Pope would have at least as much authority as the Sovereign. When faced with the choice between obeying either the Pope or their Civil Sovereign the subjects would find themselves in a dangerous 'Dilemma'.

Power and Religious Associations in Hobbes' Leviathan

Key-words: Thomas Hobbes; religion; politics; power; potentia; potestas.

ABSTRACT: Hobbes, throughout the Latin editions of his works, employs a two-fold conception of power, *potentia* (non-juridical power) and *potestas* (juridical power). Although the concept of *potestas* did not suffer significant changes, the *potentia* dimension of power was refined throughout Hobbes' works. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes employs a relational conception of *potentia* that includes reputation as a social and relational dimension of power (Lev 10.5). This late development of the *potentia* dimension of power is fundamental to explaining Hobbes' anthropology of religion, which encompasses both the genesis and destruction of religious groups. This development in his critical analysis of religion is also relevant to describe how Hobbes came to portray independent religious associations as dangerous political entities. Under this new perspective, i.e., religious associations acting as nodes of *potentia*, Hobbes strengthens his argument in favor of strict regulation by the sovereign power over these associations.

Hobbes, Religion and the Oath's Apparent Contradiction

Key-words: Thomas Hobbes; religion; oaths, swearing; vow; state of nature.

ABSTRACT: In the Latin edition of *Leviathan*, when dealing with the possibility or not of swearing oaths in the state of nature, Hobbes appears to contradict

himself. In chapter 12, he states that it is not possible to swear an oath outside of the civil state. While in chapter 14, Hobbes states that the only way to strengthen the enforcement of covenants outside of the civil state is by oaths. This apparent contradiction position has not even received a footnote in the most celebrated translations of the Latin edition of *Leviathan* (Tricaud, Curley, and Malcolm). This paper argues that this paradoxical position can be explained away by the change in emphasis with which Hobbes describes religion. After the criticism received by the English version of *Leviathan*, Hobbes shifts to emphasizing a narrow version of his normative definition of religion (as the contents and practices defined by the civil sovereign). If oaths depend on religion (EL 15.16; DCi 2.20; Lev 14.31), and religion can only be instated after the establishment of sovereignty, then oaths (in a narrow sense) can only exist in the civil state. This paper further argues that Hobbes' position could be amended if we take the "vow" (DCi 2.13) as a form of proto-oath, possible in the state of nature.

Thomas Hobbes' Invisible Things

Keywords: Thomas Hobbes; invisible bodies; incorporeal substances; religion; natural philosophy; politics.

Abstract: Hobbes rejects incorporeal substances across his work (EL II.5-6; Lev 34.18, 34.24, 44.15-16, 44.34; EW6, p. 236). However, the analysis of the invisibility of bodies and motions only becomes fully developed in *Leviathan*. The inclusion of an extensive discussion concerning the influence of religion is, I argue, one of the sources for the broader discussion concerning "invisible things". In *Leviathan*, Hobbes portrays the difficulty of ignorant individuals in trying to designate the causes of invisible things (such as bodies or motions), mistaking them for the intervention of some incorporeal, invisible agent (Lev 12.6-7). For Hobbes, this is one of the causes of the clergy's domination over the ignorant people (Lev 2.8). Highlighting the analysis of invisibility in *Leviathan* is crucial to explain how Hobbes applies concepts from natural philosophy to counter certain prevailing Scholastic doctrines. Hobbes establishes, in addition to the dichotomy between immaterial and invisible bodies, an analysis of "invisible things" that aims to advance mechanistic arguments which could explain natural phenomena at least partially, as a substitute to current theories. Ultimately this short excursus into natural philosophy aims to counter wrong doctrines used to justify the power of the Pope and the Church. So far, existing literature focused almost exclusively on the negative part of Hobbes' claim that doctrines in favor of incorporeal substances give support to the Church's claim to power. His positive proposition to replace immaterial substances with invisible bodies, on the contrary, was not fully explored. Hobbes will argue that the universe is composed of innumerable invisible bodies. Nevertheless, the only invisible body with an agency is God. By denying the existence of immaterial substances, and replacing it with invisible bodies, Hobbes' natural philosophy forestalls clerical abuse and usurpation of ecclesiastical power.

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APRESENTAÇÃO

A presente tese, conforme possibilita a Resolução n. 093/2007 da Câmara de Pós-Graduação da UFRGS, é constituída por quatro artigos escritos em língua inglesa. Para teses nesse formato, a Resolução citada exige que haja Introdução, assim como Considerações Finais e Resumo escritos em língua portuguesa – o que se cumpre no trabalho. As referências bibliográficas aparecem nas notas dos artigos, mas estão reunidas também ao final. Não há uma lista inicial de abreviaturas, sendo essas expressas nos artigos, quando da primeira citação do autor que terá o título de sua obra abreviado. Textos clássicos são citados conforme se convencionou pelos comentadores ou, quando ainda não há uma convenção, se oferece o maior número de informações possíveis para que o leitor encontre a referência em qualquer edição. As normas da Associação Brasileira de Normas Técnicas (ABNT), apesar de tradicionais (porém não vinculantes), são seguidas quando não prejudicam a apresentação do texto.

INTRODUÇÃO

É indiscutível como o tema da religião e de suas ramificações políticas ganha espaço no *Leviatã*. Além do inédito capítulo 12 (“*Of Religion*”) que apresenta a antropologia hobbesiana da religião, o livro 3 expande considerações que já haviam sido exploradas de maneira breve na terceira parte do *De Cive*, e o livro 4 apresenta uma inédita e severa crítica aos indivíduos que, aos olhos de Hobbes, abusam da religião para obter controle sobre outros de maneira indevida e ilegítima, em detrimento da república.

Para Hobbes, os indivíduos que usam instrumentalmente da religião para obter fins políticos compõem o reino das trevas que de acordo com o pensador, “nada mais é do que a confederação de impostores que, para obterem o domínio sobre os homens neste mundo presente, tentam, por meio de escuras e errôneas doutrinas, extinguir neles a luz, quer da natureza, quer do Evangelho, e deste modo desprepará-los para a vinda do Reino de Deus” (Lev 44.1).

Apesar dos mais de 350 anos de idade, o texto de Hobbes se mantém pertinente e relevante para a reflexão de problemas semelhantes vividos cotidianamente no Brasil e em outras partes do mundo, como a manipulação dos fiéis por líderes religiosos mal intencionados e até mesmo o negacionismo científico pregado pelos mesmos¹. Não apenas no Brasil, mas nas Américas, é possível distinguir com nitidez um avanço do reino das trevas, dos enganadores que utilizam de doutrinas errôneas em benefício próprio, afastando os indivíduos não apenas da compreensão de outras dimensões do conhecimento (como a ciência), mas principalmente da política². Tendo este cenário atroz em vista, retornar aos clássicos que trataram do tema se faz necessário.

Muito embora o *Leviatã* seja considerado uma das mais importantes e conhecidas obras a tratar profundamente do entrelaçamento entre política e religião, ainda restam ali perspectivas a serem exploradas que podem ajudar a

¹ Valdemiro Santiago vende semente a R\$ 1 mil prometendo falsa cura da covid. **UOL**, São Paulo, 07 de maio de 2020. Disponível em: <<https://noticias.uol.com.br/saude/ultimas-noticias/redacao/2020/05/07/pastor-valdemiro-santiago-vende-sementes-prometendo-a-cura-da-covid-19.htm?>>. Acesso em: 23 Jan. 2023.

² Dias, Elizabeth. The Far-Right Christian Quest for Power: ‘We Are Seeing Them Emboldened’. **New York Times**, ova lorque, 08 de Jul. 2022. Disponível em: <<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/08/us/christian-nationalism-politicians.html?>>. Acesso em: 23 Jan. 2023.

esclarecer problemas políticos que ainda hoje se repetem. Minha tese é composta de quatro artigos independentes e complementares organizados em uma análise interna ao texto, buscando compor os artigos a uma maneira *lefortiana*. Ela visa analisar alguns destes nichos nos quais Hobbes sobrepõe religião, política e outras áreas de seu sistema filosófico. A análise e interpretação da religião como um fenômeno sociocultural visa não apenas a supressão das doutrinas que fortalecem o dito “reino das trevas”, mas o fortalecimento de seu próprio sistema que pretende não incorrer nos mesmos erros.

O primeiro artigo trata da crítica de Hobbes às doutrinas escolásticas, consideradas por ele, como errôneas e absurdas. O artigo parte da análise da iconografia do frontispício para demonstrar como Hobbes percebe o uso da lógica e da metafísica pelos escolásticos para a justificação e sustentação de doutrinas políticas perniciosas como a divisão entre poder espiritual e temporal, ou mesmo a divisão entre poderes diretos e indiretos. O frontispício ajuda a demonstrar de maneira mais clara como Hobbes percebe a operação deste movimento por parte da filosofia escolástica, em grande parte para o benefício da Igreja Católica e do Papa.

O segundo artigo esquadrinha a relação entre o refinamento do tratamento do poder no *Leviatã* e o desenvolvimento da antropologia hobbesiana da religião. Hobbes emprega nas edições latinas de suas obras um conceito de poder que apresenta duas dimensões, a saber, *potentia* (poder não-jurídico) e *potestas* (poder jurídico). No *Leviatã*, Hobbes afirma que a reputação de um indivíduo é também um tipo de poder, porque atrai a adesão de outros (Lev 10.5). Também no *Leviatã*, Hobbes afirma que inicialmente todas as religiões se assentam em torno da reputação de um indivíduo como “sábio” e “santo” (Lev 12.24). O refinamento no tratamento do poder esclarece uma via pela qual foi possível a Hobbes desenvolver uma antropologia da religião.

O terceiro artigo investiga a aparente contradição na qual Hobbes teria incorrido no tratamento dos juramentos na edição em latim do *Leviatã*. Como os juramentos, nas obras de Hobbes, estão sempre intimamente ligados à religião, neste artigo explorei o desenvolvimento da definição de religião nas obras de Hobbes. Ela apresenta duas dimensões, uma normativa (que prega que é

religião aquilo que é declarado como tal pelo soberano) e outra relativista (o que é considerado religião ou superstição varia de lugar para lugar devido à autorização do soberano). A segunda dimensão foi duramente atacada pelos críticos contemporâneos a Hobbes, algo que parece ter forçado o pensador inglês não apenas a destacar uma concepção normativa da religião, mas também em disfarçar a dimensão relativista dela. Além disso, meu artigo argumenta que é possível resolver a aparente contradição substituindo o termo “juramento” pelo termo “voto” (quando o evento ocorre durante o estado de natureza).

O quarto artigo trata da sobreposição entre filosofia natural e política no sistema hobbesiano. Em sua análise a respeito das substâncias imateriais, Hobbes apresenta duas propostas complementares. De um lado, uma proposta negativa, amplamente documentada, que visa negar a existência de tais substâncias, pois elas representam uma contradição interna ao modelo mecanicista. Do outro lado, uma proposta positiva que propõe substituir, nas explicações de filosofia natural, as substâncias imateriais por corpos invisíveis. Esse argumento coloca em movimento uma série de consequências para o sistema hobbesiano, como por exemplo, explicações mecanicistas para os fenômenos naturais, a corporeidade divina, a impossibilidade de agentes invisíveis (com exceção de Deus), e a deslegitimação de práticas espiritualistas usadas para angariar domínio sobre os indivíduos.

I - THE SCHOLASTIC'S DILEMMA: HOBBS CRITIQUE OF SCHOLASTIC POLITICS AND PAPAL POWER ON THE LEVIATHAN FRONTISPIECE

1. INTRODUCTION

According to his autobiography, Hobbes wrote the *Leviathan* so all his countrymen could read 'usefully and frequently' a book that had as its goal 'absolv[ing] the divine laws' of many 'great crimes [...] pointed out as God's commands'³. For this larger audience, Hobbes chose to write in English and to include a frontispiece, considered a visual summary of the work⁴. These iconographic elements provide a glimpse of the contents Hobbes envisioned as paramount for this larger public⁵. Hobbes scholars have not yet fully exploited this visual resource to understand Hobbes *magnum opus*. The image commonly associated with Hobbes' critique of Scholastic's doctrines, for instance, has been generally neglected⁶. Scholars have said little more about the emblem than that

³ (VCE, p. 91-92). See also: BE, p. 224-231. Hobbes' works are abbreviated as follows: VCE – *Vita, Carmine Expressa*, In: HOBBS, Thomas. **Opera Philosophica**, vol. 1. Londres: Molesworth, 1839, l. 81–99; Lev – HOBBS, Thomas. **Leviathan**. Tradução: Noel Malcolm. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, and HOBBS, Thomas. **Leviathan**. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994; LL – HOBBS, Thomas. **Leviathan**. Tradução: Noel Malcolm. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012; BE – **Behemoth**, In: HOBBS, Thomas. **The English Works of Thomas Hobbes**, vol. 6. London: Molesworth, 1840.

⁴ For the function of the frontispiece as a visual summary of the work, see: GINZBURG, Carlo. **Paura, Reverenza, Terrore**. Cinque Saggi di Iconografia Politica. Milão: Adellphi Edizioni, preface, 2015, §7.; AGAMBEN, Giorgio. **Stasis: Civil War as a Political Paradigm** (Homo Sacer II, 2). Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015, p. 25); Skinner, Quentin. **From Humanism to Hobbes: Studies in Rhetoric and Politics**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018, p. 284).

⁵ JOHNSTON, David. **The Rhetoric of Leviathan: Thomas Hobbes and the Politics of Cultural Transformation**. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986, p. 89. For different approaches concerning *Leviathan's* audience, see: SHAPIRO, Gary. Reading and Writing in the Text of Hobbes's *Leviathan*. **Journal of the History of Philosophy**, vol. 18/2, 1980, p. 147-157; STRONG, Tracy. How to Write Scripture: Words, Authority, and Politics in Thomas Hobbes, **Critical Review**, vol. 20/1, 1993, p. 128-159; VAUGHAN, Geoffrey. The audience of *Leviathan* and the audience of Hobbes's Political Philosophy, **History of Political Thought**, vol. 22/3, 2001, p. 448-471.

⁶ For texts that relate this emblem to Hobbes' critique to Scholastic's doctrines, see: CORBETT, Margery & LIGHTBOWN, Ronald. **The Comely Frontispiece: The Emblematic Title-page in England 1550-1660**. Londres: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., p. 228; MARTINICH, Aloysius. **The Two Gods of Leviathan: Hobbes on Religion and Politics**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 366; BERTOZZI, Marco. Thomas Hobbes. L'enigma del Leviatano (1983). Un'analisi della storia delle immagini del *Leviathan*, **Storicamente**, vol. 3/12, 2007. Disponível em: < <https://storicamente.org/03bertozzi>>. Acesso em: 23 jan. 2023, p. 194; SKINNER, Quentin. The Material Presentation of Thomas Hobbes's Theory of the Commonwealth. In: COLAS, Dominique & KHARKHORDIN, Oleg. **The Materiality of Res Publica: How to Do Things with Publics**, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009, p. 134; SKINNER, 2018, p. 279; CHAMPION, Justin. Decoding the *Leviathan*: Doing the History of Ideas. In: HUNTER, Michael. **Printed Images in Early Modern Britain: Essays in Interpretation through Images**,

it refers to 'scholastic logic'⁷ and 'intellectual' combat⁸. Even the richest interpretation of *Leviathan's* frontispiece has left aside some of the emblem's elements⁹.

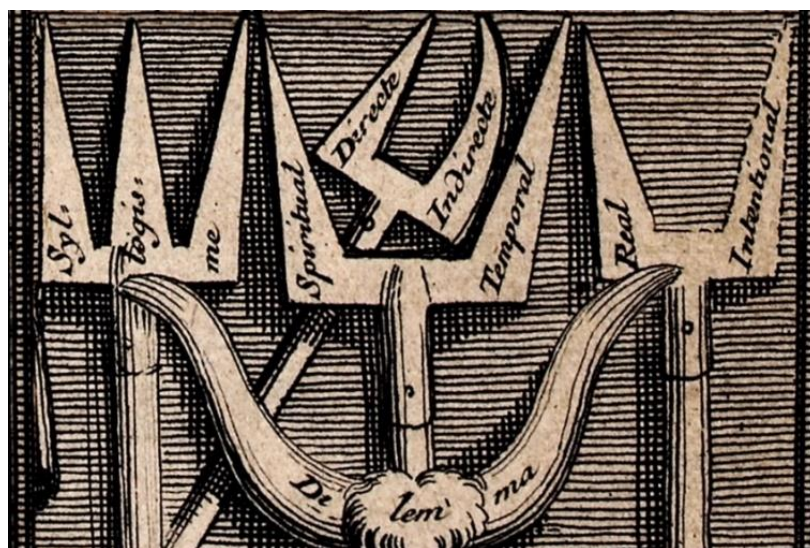


Figure 1 - Detail of *Leviathan's* frontispiece: the scholastics' 'dilemma' emblem.

This paper argues that existing analyses of the emblem have failed to appreciate how greatly Hobbes was bothered with the deep and complex interconnections between scholastics' logic, metaphysics, and politics. For Hobbes, scholastics' 'flawed' logic grounded an 'absurd' metaphysical model, which in turn based 'seditious' political doctrines - such as the distinction between

1651–1714, Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2010, 261; KRISTIANSSON, Magnus & TRALAU, Johan. Hobbes's hidden monster: A new interpretation of the frontispiece of *Leviathan*, **European Journal of Political Theory**, vol. 13/3, 2013, p. 195.

⁷ See: CORBETT & LIGHTBOWN, 1979, p. 228; BERTOZZI, 1992, p. 8; BREDEKAMP, Horst. Thomas Hobbes's Visual Strategies. In: SPRINGBORG, Patricia (org.), **The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes's Leviathan**, Nova Iorque: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 32; CHAMPION, 2010, p. 261; KRISTIANSSON & TRALAU, 2013, p. 303-304; AGAMBEN, 2015, p. 34; BERGER, Susanna. **The Art of Philosophy: Visual Thinking in Europe from the Late Renaissance to the Early Enlightenment**, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 195, 2017; MALCOLM, Noel. General Introduction. In: HOBBS, Thomas. **Leviathan**, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012a, p. 128-140.

⁸ See: BROWN, Keith. The Artist of the *Leviathan* Title-Page, **The British Library Journal**, vol. 4/1, 1978, p. 31; GOLDSMITH, M.M. Hobbes's Ambiguous Politics, **History of Political Thought**, vol. 11/4, 1990, p. 649; Martinich, 1992, p. 366; SCHMITT, Carl. **The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes: Meaning and Failure of a Political Symbol**. Londres: Greenwood Press, 1996, p. 18; SKINNER, Quentin. **Hobbes and Republican Liberty**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 194; *Idem*, 2009, p. 134.

⁹ Skinner only lists the 'Syllogisme' trident, and completely ignores one of the iconographic elements present there, namely the horns containing the word 'Dilemma'. See: SKINNER, 2018, p. 279-280.

temporal and spiritual power and that between direct and indirect power. This paper aims to show that *Leviathan's* frontispiece offers a rich and distinct angle to grasp how Hobbes conceived of the political instrumentalization of scholastic theoretical models. More specifically, it brings out how scholastic logic and metaphysics provided an intellectual basis, in Hobbes's views, for the Catholic Church's claims to political power.

The existing literature on Hobbes's critique of scholasticism does not make explicit the interconnections he perceived between the Scholastics' metaphysical, logical, and political doctrines. Some scholars have traced links between Hobbes' critique of Scholastic's logic and metaphysics while bracketing political implications¹⁰. Others have analyzed links between Hobbes' critique of scholastic metaphysics and politics without fully engaging with Hobbes's critique of scholastic logic in *Leviathan*¹¹. By reading *Leviathan* through its frontispiece, this paper provides a more integrated perspective into Hobbes's critique of Scholastics doctrines in *Leviathan* - including their mutual interconnections and political effects¹². My paper thereby helps explain Hobbes's objections to Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621), and to the Presbyterians and Anglicans who invoked his arguments in favor of a spiritual and sometimes indirect conception of power, to the detriment of sovereign authority. According to Hobbes, these scholastic doctrines were devised to 'make men see double, and mistake their Lawfull Sovereign'¹³. This was particularly interesting for Hobbes' political project, because 'when the spiritual power moveth the members of a commonwealth' instead of the sovereign power, it will inevitably cast it 'into the fire of a civil war'¹⁴.

¹⁰ See: PÉCHARMAN, Martine. Hobbes on Logic, or How to Deal with Aristotle's Legacy *In: MARTINICH, Alphonsus P. & HOEKSTRA, Kinch (org.), The Oxford Handbook of Hobbes*, Nova Iorque: Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 21-59; LEIJENHORST, Cees. Sense and Nonsense about Sense: Hobbes and the Aristotelians on Sense Perception and Imagination. *In: SPRINGBORG, Patricia (org.). The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes's Leviathan*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 82-108.

¹¹ See: PAGANINI, Gianni. Hobbes's Critique of the Doctrine of Essences and Its Sources. *In: SPRINGBORG, Patricia (org.), The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes's Leviathan*, Nova Iorque: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 337-357; SPRINGBORG, Patricia. Thomas Hobbes and Cardinal Bellarmine: *Leviathan* and 'the Ghost of the Roman Empire', **History of Political Thought**, vol. 16/4, 1995, p. 503-531; ROSE, Matthew. Hobbes contra Bellarmine, **Journal of Moral Theology**, vol. 4/2, 2015, p. 43-62.

¹² Since I agree with the thesis that the frontispiece works as a visual summary of the work (SKINNER, 2018, p. 284), I decided, as a methodological approach, to use exclusively the frontispiece, and the English and Latin versions of the *Leviathan*, and to bracket support that other Hobbes' works might provide.

¹³ Lev 39.5.

¹⁴ Lev 29.15.

Contradictory orders from the ecclesiastical and civil powers, Hobbes worried, have nefarious political effects. It creates a very dangerous *dilemma* for subjects, forcing them to choose between obeying the ecclesiastical or the sovereign authority.

The paper proceeds as follows: Section 1 analyzes what Hobbes meant by a dilemma, and more precisely what he meant by the scholastic's 'Dilemma'. Section 2 examines scholastic logic (expressed by the 'Syllogisme' trident). It highlights that for Hobbes: a) their logic does not start with well-established premises, but with sophistry or 'captions of words'¹⁵; and b) there is a politically problematical reification of the logical connective 'est' into 'essence'. Section 3 discusses Hobbes's critique of scholastic metaphysics (expressed by the 'Real/Intentional' bident). That metaphysics, he argues, is based on absurd and flawed concepts, like 'entity' and 'intentionality'¹⁶, on the *species* theory and the 'doctrine of separated essences'¹⁷. The concluding section 4 shows how, from Hobbes' perspective, the *flawed* logical model was mixed with erroneous metaphysics, resulting in a seditious political theory (expressed in the bidents 'Spiritual/Temporal' and 'Directe/Indirecte'). That pernicious political doctrine had a central place in scholastic thought, Hobbes believed, sustaining and strengthening the power of the Church and the Pope.

2. THE HORNS OF A DILEMMA

Hobbes' choice of horns as the pictorial representation of a 'dilemma' does not seem surprising. In rhetoric, 'dilemma' designates 'a form of argument involving an adversary in the choice of two (or, loosely, more) alternatives, either of which is (or appears) equally unfavorable to him'¹⁸. The alternatives are 'commonly spoken of as the "horns" of the dilemma'¹⁹. Some authors even referred to it as a 'horned argument'²⁰.

¹⁵ Lev 46.11.

¹⁶ Lev 4.1.

¹⁷ For Hobbes critique on Scholastic's metaphysics, see: GOLDSMITH, 1990; MARTINICH, 1992; SPRINGBORG, 1995; LEIJENHORST, 2007; PAGANINI, 2007; ROSE, 2015; Pécharman, 2016; RAYLOR, Timothy. **Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Thomas Hobbes**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018; SKINNER, 2018; NAUTA, Lodi. **Philosophy and the Language of the People: The Claims of Common Speech from Petrarch to Locke**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

¹⁸ DILEMMA. **Oxford English Dictionary**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ CORBETT & LIGHTBOWN, 1979, p. 228.

In its only direct mention in the *Leviathan*, Hobbes follows the classic definition of 'dilemma', describing a difficult choice between two equally harmful alternatives²¹. Hobbes states that those who believe that 'Divine Inspiration' is a so-called 'entring of the Holy Ghost into a man, and not an acquisition of Gods graces, by doctrine, and study' are in 'a very dangerous dilemma'. If they do not worship those whom they assume to be divinely inspired, they 'fall into Impiety; as not adoring Gods supernaturall Presence'. However, 'if they worship them, they commit idolatry', something that would have never been allowed by the apostles. This dilemma is set from the moment one accepts that 'divine inspiration' does not correspond with 'doctrine, and study', but with an 'entring of the Holy Ghost into a man'²². Nevertheless, Hobbes vehemently disregarded any claim about the substantiality of the Holy Ghost and any possibility of spiritual or demonic possession, there is 'no immaterial spirit, nor any possession of men's bodies by any spirit corporeal'²³. He credited 'ghostly men' with the invention of such superstitious beliefs and the scholasticism for 'nourishing it' into doctrines²⁴.

Hobbes accused the Catholic Church of using the universities as a platform for disseminating doctrines that benefited the Church to detriment of the civil sovereign²⁵. According to Hobbes, Pope Leo III devised the universities as a means to preserve the 'dominion of the Church'. They would serve as a long-term plan 'to transfer to himself [Leo III] all Christian kingdoms by means of the weapons of the kings themselves'²⁶. In Hobbes' account, Leo III persuaded Charlemagne and other kings into establishing universities in their dominions²⁷. However, those institutions were 'governed by the Roman Pontiff's judgment', who defined its laws and the contents taught there. According to Hobbes, the

²¹ The Latin *Leviathan* text omits this passage.

²² Lev 45.25.

²³ Lev 45.8. See: LEIJENHORST, Cees. Hobbes, heresy, and corporeal deity. In: BROOKE, Jon & MACLEAN, Ian (org.). **Heterodoxy in Early Modern Science and Religion**, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 193-222.

²⁴ Lev 2.8-9.

²⁵ See: JESSEPH, Douglas. **Squaring the Circle: The War Between Hobbes and Wallis**. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999.; NAUTA, 2021; LEIJENHORST, Cees. **Hobbes and the Aristotelians: The Aristotelian Setting of Thomas Hobbes's Natural Philosophy**. Utrecht: Zeno Institute for Philosophy, 1998.; Rose, 2015.

²⁶ LL, p. 1075.

²⁷ According to Malcolm, these letters cannot be found in the correspondence of Leo III or Charlemagne: 'Possibly there is a confused reference here to the Council of Chalon-sur-Saone (813), which required the setting up of "schools", in accordance with Charlemagne's orders' (MALCOLM, Noel. Notes. In: HOBBS, Thomas. *Leviathan*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012b, aj, 1074). See also: BE, p. 213-218.

universities focused on the ancient Aristotelian doctrines of 'logic, physics, metaphysics, ethics, and politics' as if 'the universe of the sciences were contained in one man'²⁸. Moreover, Hobbes accuses the universities of propagating a theological model, 'known as scholasticism', which consisted of 'a mixture of Aristotle's philosophy and the Holy Scriptures'. Its main proponents were '[Peter] Lombard', '[John Duns] Scotus', and 'Thomas [Aquinas]'²⁹.

According to Hobbes, the Pope used the universities' structure to spread its intellectual model through 'sermons and published writings' that were present in 'almost all the cities, towns, and parishes of the Christian world'³⁰. Moreover, the universities were used especially to make 'bashful youth put on a bold face', through training in 'disputes and public declamations' that enabled them to 'maintain and to preach the dogmas of the Roman Church'³¹. This was extremely problematic for Hobbes because he believed that the Pope's power consolidation over other Christian sovereigns was achieved not by any divine right, but through the dissemination of these scholastic 'erroneous doctrines'³². These doctrines were so widespread that they were taken, by sovereigns and subjects, as true, substantiating the Pope's claim about power. Hobbes argues that the main goal behind the dissemination of these doctrines was to 'indelibly' fix in the mind of all Christian three seditious principles: 1) that 'the only rule of just and unjust is the dictates of the Roman Church'; 2) that 'kings should be obeyed no further than is permitted by the Roman Church'; 3) that 'kings themselves should obey the Roman Pontiff like sheep'³³.

This intellectual model did not allow people to clearly consider the question concerning power from any other perspective, except that to some extent it always belongs to the Pope by a so-called divine donation. Therefore, in Hobbes'

²⁸ LL, p. 1075.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.* When these students were 'unable to settle metaphysical disagreements by reason or temporal authority', they had to 'look to spiritual authorities and their alleged sacramental powers and gifts of understanding' (Rose, *Hobbes contra Bellarmine*, p. 60). This helped the Catholic Church consolidate a hierarchical structure based on a supposed spiritually revealed order. For an in-depth analysis of scholastic disputation, see: WEIJERS, Olga. **La 'disputatio' à la Faculté des arts de Paris (1200-1350 environ)**: Esquisse d'une typologie. Amsterdam: Brepols, 1995, especially chapter 5 'The Institutionalization of Disputation: Universities, Polyphony, and Preaching'.

³² Lev 47.17

³³ LL, p. 1075.

perspective, the common people started to believe that the Pope would have at least as much authority and power as the civil sovereign. When faced with the difficult choice between obeying either the Pope or their civil sovereign they would find themselves in a dangerous 'dilemma', involving the scholastics' doctrines of logic, metaphysics, and politics, as the emblem suggests.

3. THE 'SYLLOGISME' TRIDENT: SCHOLASTIC LOGIC CRITICISM

A 'syllogism' is a type of argument composed of two premises and a conclusion derived from them. The trident, like the 'syllogism', is also composed of three parts, which might suggest a link between the image and the term inscribed on it³⁴. Hobbes states that the 'act of reasoning' is 'the natural outcome of man's invention of language'. It is also called a syllogism, for it is the same as 'summing up of the consequences of one saying to another'³⁵. When correctly executed results in the 'knowledge of all the consequences of names', what Hobbes defines as 'science'³⁶.

The fact that the 'syllogisme' trident is one of the horns of the dilemma suggests that it is in some way problematic (it is one of its unfavorable choices) and connected to metaphysics and politics (the other parts that compose the dilemma). If the syllogism is a mere 'act of reasoning', what then makes it so problematic as to warrant inclusion as a dilemma in the emblem? When the premises of a syllogism 'be not Definitions; or if the Definitions be not rightly joyned together', the conclusion or end can only be 'opinion' of the truth of the conclusion, which, for the most part, is 'absurd and senslesse' speech³⁷. According to Hobbes, insignificant and absurd speech characterizes the scholastic philosophy³⁸. In Hobbes' perspective, scholastics' propositions in logic did not start with well-established definitions, ending up with 'absurd

³⁴ CORBETT & LIGHTBOWN, 1979, p. 228.

³⁵ Lev 4.14. Although Hobbes continually uses the term 'syllogism', his use is 'detached from any Aristotelian logical ground', relying 'on an etymological justification for a strict "computational" approach of reasoning' (PÉCHARMAN, 2016, p. 33).

³⁶ Lev 5.17.

³⁷ Lev 7.4. A good example of syllogism created from erroneous premises and whose conclusion is a false opinion can be found in: 'The name of *fulmen excommunicationis* [*the thunderbolt of excommunication*] proceeded from the false imagination of some Bishop of Rome who, thinking himself King of Kings, imitated the heathen poets, who assigned a thunderbolt to Jove [Jupiter]' (LL, p. 807).

³⁸ Lev 6.2.

conclusions'³⁹. Their use of Logic – like the 'pseudologic of "Sophists and Sceptics"'⁴⁰ – which 'should bee the Method of Reasoning, is nothing else but Captions of Words, and Inventions on how to puzzle such as should goe about to pose them'⁴¹. According to Hobbes, this phenomenon has dreadful political consequences because 'the errors of definitions multiply themselves according as the reckoning proceeds', leading the common person to believe 'into absurdities'⁴².

The main motivation behind Hobbes' criticism of scholastics' logic seems to be its 'misuse or misapplication in theological explications'⁴³. Logic is out of play in theology. It is only 'appropriate for the singular purpose of demonstrating the truth of universal assertions'⁴⁴. Hobbes asserts that when interpreting difficult passages of the Bible one should 'not to labour in sifting out a Philosophicall truth by Logick, of such mysteries as are not comprehensible'⁴⁵. Nevertheless, Hobbes offers in the *Leviathan* scriptural interpretation which he claims accords with the rules of logic: 'And as to the whole doctrine [of the *Leviathan*], I see not yet but the principles of it are true and proper, and the ratiocination solid'⁴⁶.

Although there are fundamental links between Hobbes' critique of Scholastic's logic and metaphysics, what is at stake for Hobbes, at least in *Leviathan*, are the practical and political consequences brought on by these doctrines. A logical model that propagates erroneous conclusions, not based on proper definitions, and wrongfully applied to the interpretation of the Scriptures may be the reason why logic represents one of the horns of the dilemma in the frontispiece⁴⁷. Moreover, it is worth noting that the doctrine of separated essences had its origin with the reification of the logical connective 'es' into 'essence'.

³⁹ Lev 5.8. 'The seventh [cause of Absurd conclusions], to names that signifie nothing; but are taken up, and learned by rote from the Schooles, as hypostatical, transubstantiate, consubstantiate, eternal-Now, and the like canting of Schoole-men' (Lev 5.15).

⁴⁰ PÉCHARMAN, 2016, p. 26.

⁴¹ Lev 46.11. Even though Hobbes criticizes 'Aristotelian metaphysics, he did not criticize Aristotle's logic' (PÉCHARMAN, 2016, p. 22), his 'main charge is not against Aristotelian logic itself, but against its theological abuse when combined with Aristotle's metaphysical doctrine' (*Idem*, p. 27).

⁴² Lev 4.13.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ RAYLOR, 2018, p. 192.

⁴⁵ Lev 32.3.

⁴⁶ Lev R&C.13.

⁴⁷ According to Hobbes, 'the errors of definitions multiply themselves according as the reckoning proceeds', leading the common person 'into absurdities' (Lev 4.13).

According to Hobbes, the doctrine of separated essences and the reification of sensible qualities are the main sources of scholastic's flawed metaphysics and seditious politics⁴⁸.

4. THE 'REAL/INTENTIONAL' BIDENT – SCHOLASTICS' METAPHYSICS CRITICISM

Hobbes proposes that truth consists in the 'right ordering of names in our affirmations'. Whoever seeks 'precise truth' needs, as the geometer, to start by establishing definitions, from which one can start reckoning the names in question⁴⁹. For a clearer operation of these calculations, Hobbes categorizes these names into 'positive'⁵⁰, 'negative'⁵¹, or 'insignificant sounds'⁵². According to Hobbes, 'insignificant sounds' are usually coined in 'Latin or Greek'⁵³, which 'cannot be understood by the common people'⁵⁴. These sounds are divided into two categories: I) new ones whose meaning is not yet spelled out in definitions, of which there are many 'invented by Scholastics and philosophers'⁵⁵; II) the joining of two names whose meaning is contradictory and inconsistent, such as the expressions 'incorporeal body' or 'incorporeal substance'⁵⁶, again widely disseminated by Scholastic philosophy⁵⁷.

Hobbes cites among the many 'insignificant words of the School' the words 'entity', 'quiddity', and 'intentionality' (Lev, 48). However, besides this single direct mention, the 'intentionality' theory is not mentioned anywhere else in *Leviathan* - except in its iconographical representation on the frontispiece. There, it is

⁴⁸ LEIJENHORST, 2007, p. 101.

⁴⁹ Lev 4.12.

⁵⁰ Words or expressions used to designate things that exist in nature or that can be 'feign' [*fing*] in mind.

⁵¹ Words or expressions such as 'nothing', 'no man', 'infinite', 'indocible', 'three want foure', which, although they are not the name of anything, in particular, are used for reasoning either for its correction or for its reminding, because they make us 'refuse to admit of Names not rightly used' (Lev 4.19).

⁵² Lev 4.20.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ LL, p. 61. Historically 'the aura of Latin as a special language has all too long been used to mystify the people' for 'much of post-classical Latin had developed into the language of the papacy' (NAUTA, 2021, p. 189).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Lev 4.21.

⁵⁷ LEIJENHORST, 2007, p. 101-102; PAGANINI, 2007, p. 338-339; ROSE, 2015, p. 53; NAUTA, 2021, p. 183-188 (esp. p. 184-185).

captured by the 'Real/Intentional' bident. These two terms belong to scholastic metaphysics⁵⁸ and refer to the 'distinction between real things and the intentional objects of our passions and thoughts'⁵⁹. It is the 'reification to a philosophical doctrine of real sensible qualities' that starts the idea of a 'supposedly immaterial essence of natural things' in contrast to a 'bearer of real qualities'⁶⁰.

Due to the scarcity of direct mentions to 'intentionality' in Leviathan, for a more in-depth understanding of this theme and the emblem, I will investigate Hobbes' analysis of a correlated and more frequently used term: '*species*'⁶¹. That term is used by Thomas Aquinas and held in scholastic tradition 'as almost synonymous with *intentio*'⁶². For Aquinas, in *De unitate intellectus, contra Averroistas*, uses the words '*species*' and '*intentio*' interchangeably:

For if the thing understood were not the stone's very nature which is in things, but a species [*species*] which is in the intellect, it would follow that I would not understand the thing that is the stone, but only the intention [*intention*] which is abstracted from the stone.⁶³

'*Intentiones*' can be understood as 'the likenesses [*species*], *similitudines* or even *imagines* absorbed in the soul that represent the *res* or make it present again'⁶⁴. According to Scholastic epistemology, as conceptualized by Hobbes, *species* are the means to obtain knowledge about all beings, evincing that the concept of *intentio* is 'closely bound up with the Thomistic theory of knowledge, the so-called *species* theory'⁶⁵. Hobbes, like many other seventeenth-century philosophers adopting a mechanistic approach, wished to overcome the 'non-sense'⁶⁶ represented by the *species* doctrines through a 'mechanistic account of sensible qualities in terms of motion and impact of material particles'⁶⁷. The Scholastic *species* theory teaches that the object produces a 'visible *species*', a

⁵⁸ CORBETT & LIGHTBOWN, 1979, p. 229; MARTINICH, 1992, p. 366; CHAMPION, 2010, p. 261.

⁵⁹ SKINNER, 2018, p. 279-280. See also: MARTINICH, 1992, p. 366.

⁶⁰ LEIJENHORST, 2007, p. 100.

⁶¹ Lev 1.5, 2.9, 44.11, 46.27.

⁶² SPIEGELBERG, Herbert. 'Intention' and 'Intentionality' in the Scholastics, Brentano and Husserl, The Context of the Phenomenological Movement. **Phaenomenologica**, vol. 80, 1981, p. 6. For a deeper analysis concerning *Intentionio* and Intentionality see also: PASNAU, Robert. **Theories of cognition in the later Middle Ages**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.; BROWER, Jeffrey & BROWER-TOLAND, Susan. Aquinas on Mental Representation: Concepts and Intentionality, **The Philosophical Review**, vol. 117/2, 2008, p. 193-243.

⁶³ AQUINAS, Tomas. **On the Unity of the Intellect against the Averroists**. Tradução: Beatrice H. Zedler. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1968, §110.

⁶⁴ SPIEGELBERG, 1981, p. 6.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Lev 5.5.

⁶⁷ JESSEPH, 1999, p. 206.

type of appearance, or visible being whose reception in the eyes causes vision⁶⁸. (The same mechanism is applied to other senses: 'audible *species*').

However, for Hobbes, the '*species*'-theory worst facet is its adoption in scholastic theories of how understanding [*intellecta*] is produced. Namely, that the object sends an 'intelligible *species*' or 'intelligible being seen' which by entering into our mind creates understanding⁶⁹. For Aristotle and the Scholastics (as depicted by Hobbes), knowledge would be attained 'through the assimilation of a sensible form by an immaterial soul through the knower becoming informed by the likeness of the known'⁷⁰. As Jesseph notes, Hobbes 'scruples extended even further'⁷¹, including 'the abolition of the doctrine of intelligible *species* in favor of his materialistic theory of the mind'. Hobbes considers the '*species*' theory⁷² as a mere expression and dissemination of 'absurdities of Natural Philosophy'⁷³. Such absurdities should be 'left aside', precisely because they are not part of the domain of the 'doctrine of the Christian faith' but 'they are only answers from physics'. These erroneous yet eloquent answers were given to increase the reputation of wisdom (i.e., of power) of the priest and the Church by making it 'seem that all wisdom comes out of the mouth of priests'⁷⁴.

However, this very mixture between 'Scriptures' and a flawed Aristotelian 'metaphysical' model⁷⁵ propagated by the 'Schools' is, according to Hobbes, so full of 'contradictions and absurdities', that it ends up giving the clergy 'a reputation both of Ignorance, and of Fraudulent intention' and which 'inclined people to revolt'⁷⁶. While confirming the 'common prejudice', through the reification of sensible qualities, imaginations, and even linguistic particles (as with the case of 'essence'), the scholastics' metaphysics multiply superstitious opinions. This is of special concern for Hobbes because when the sovereign

⁶⁸ Lev 1.5.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ ROSE, 2015, p. 56.

⁷¹ JESSEPH, 1999, p. 206.

⁷² LL, p. 1089.

⁷³ Lev 46.24. See: ROSE, 2015, p. 57).

⁷⁴ LL, p. 1091. Hobbes proposes that 'Good successe is Power; because it maketh reputation of Wisdome, or good fortune; which makes men either feare him, or rely on him' (Lev 10.8).

⁷⁵ Lev 46.14.

⁷⁶ Lev 12.31.

power abdicates on controlling seditious doctrines 'superstitious citizens will be moved to rebellion by their own imaginings'⁷⁷.

According to Hobbes, the main source of the power of the Church and, consequently, of political instability was the 'doctrine of separated essences'⁷⁸. Hobbes imputes to Aristotle⁷⁹ the reification of the copula 'est' into 'essence' after their function as copula has finished⁸⁰ as well as the separation between essences and bodies. Both jointly resulted in the doctrine of 'separated essences', from which 'many other absurdities [...] follow'⁸¹. The doctrine of 'separated essences' states that essences can be indefinitely separated from their entities, grounding the conceptual division between spiritual and temporal. Hobbes criticizes this metaphysical concept in a work of politics to prevent men from 'suffer[ing] themselves to be abused, by them, that by this doctrine of Separated Essences, built on the Vain Philosophy of Aristotle, would fright them from Obeying the Laws of their Countrey, with empty names'⁸².

This doctrine of separate essences allows, priests to say that the soul of a dead man 'can walk separated from his Body'. It also allows them to affirm consubstantiation and transubstantiation, and to say that 'Faith, and Wisdome, and other Vertues are sometimes powred into a man, sometimes blown into him from Heaven' or 'a great many other things that serve to lessen the dependance of Subjects on the Sovereign Power of their Countrey'⁸³:

For who will endeavour to obey the Laws, if he expect Obedience to be Powred or Blown into him? Or who will not obey a Priest, that can make

⁷⁷LL, p. 279. I agree with Leijenhorst's suggestion that however easy it was for the people of the 17th century 'to believe that sensible qualities actually exist outside us', for Hobbes 'these are nothing other than mechanically provoked reactions stemming from the heart, in other words nothing other than a certain motion in our bodies' (LEIJENHORST, 2007, p. 99).

⁷⁸ For a detailed analysis concerning Hobbes' critique to the doctrine of separated essences see: SPRINGBORG, 1995, p. 527; LEIJENHORST, 2007, p. 99-101; KROM, Michael. Vain Philosophy, the Schools and Civil Philosophy, **Hobbes Studies**, vol. 20, 2007, p. 95-96; PAGANINI, 2007; ROSE, 2015; NAUTA, 2021, p. 183-188.

⁷⁹ Although Hobbes imputes the doctrine of 'separate essences' to Aristotle, 'there is not much historical foundation for doing so' (PAGANINI, 2007, p. 350). For Cicero attributed to Aristotle 'the idea that stars have souls that move them [...] (*De Natura Deorum*, II.xv.42), and has some basis in his writings: see *On the Heavens*, II.12, esp. 292a18-21'. While the 'idea of a separate (or separable) human soul was attributed to him by some writers on the basis of *On the Soul*, III.5 (430a17-26)' (MALCOLM, 2012b, p. 1080).

⁸⁰ PAGANINI, 2007, p. 344.

⁸¹ Lev 46.19.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ Lev 46.18. Hobbes considers the Scholastic metaphysics politically dangerous because whenever the citizens 'absurdly believe that earthly authorities are transcended by a higher spiritual authority' (ROSE, 2015, 58), they 'see double and mistake their lawful sovereign' (Lev, p. 734). See also: PAGANINI, 2007; SKINNER, 2018; SPRINGBORG, 1995.

God, rather than his Sovereign; nay than God himselfe? Or who, that is in fear of Ghosts, will not bear great respect to those that can make the Holy Water, that drives them from him?⁸⁴

It is important to highlight Hobbes' warning concerning the universities and the 'School-Men' inaction in combating such superstitious principles (as the opinion regarding the existence and power of fairies and spirits), because when they are not refuted, they are assimilated, and taught because it 'keep in credit the use of Exorcisme, of Crosses, of holy Water, and other such inventions of Ghostly men [*hominum spiritualium*]'⁸⁵. For Hobbes, to find the original political message of the Bible, one must remove the distorted interpretation provided by scholastic metaphysics⁸⁶. Hobbes turns to materialistic philosophy to accomplish this. He used it to expose the scholastics' abuse of linguistic abstraction and to exclude any spiritual or immaterial substance or agent⁸⁷. This is important to his political project, because the belief in spiritual entities played, in Hobbes' view, a fundamental role in politics, providing additional authority to the priests and the Catholic Church to the detriment of the civil sovereign⁸⁸.

Narratives inciting fear among citizens were exploited by the Catholic Church for a long time⁸⁹. They helped spread the absurd belief that 'there is within the kingdoms of Christian kings another kingdom, of spirits or ghosts, walking in darkness'⁹⁰. Moreover, it spread the seditious opinion that there are 'two sovereign powers in every commonwealth'⁹¹, a 'spiritual power' and a 'temporal power'⁹². According to Hobbes, this doctrine is inconsistent with the 'essence of the Common-wealth'⁹³, which is 'One Person, of whose Acts a great Multitude, by mutuall Covenants one with another'⁹⁴. Moreover, it is contrary to Scripture, for 'Christ himselfe proclaimed to be impossible [...] to serve two masters at the

⁸⁴ Lev 46.18.

⁸⁵ Lev 2.8.

⁸⁶ See: JONES, Meirav. 'My Highest Priority Was to Absolve the Divine Laws': The Theory and Politics of Hobbes' Leviathan in a War of Religion, **Political Studies**, vol. 65/1, 2016, p. 1-16; MCQUEEN, Alison. Mosaic Leviathan: Religion and Rhetoric in Hobbes's Political Thought. In: APELDOORN, Laurens & DOUGLASS, Robin (org.), **Hobbes on Politics & Religion**, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 128-134; ROSE, 2015, p. 54.

⁸⁷ See: SPRINGBORG, 1995, p. 522; ROSE, 2015, p. 56; NAUTA, 2021, p. 186.

⁸⁸ See: PAGANINI, 2007, p. 350.

⁸⁹ NAUTA, 2021, p. 186.

⁹⁰ LL, p. 511.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Lev 29.15.

⁹³ LL, p. 511.

⁹⁴ Lev 17.13.

same time⁹⁵. By being divided, this power is dissolved. A division of political power 'reduce[s] the Multitude into the condition of Warre, contrary to the end for which all Sovereignty is instituted'⁹⁶. In Hobbes's perspective, the main goal behind scholastic metaphysics, especially concerning the *species* theory and the 'doctrine of separated essences', is to enforce and defend a division between temporal and spiritual powers, granting the Church an exclusive. According to Hobbes, this doctrine grounded theoretically the claims of the Church for exclusive jurisdiction over spiritual matters. Consequentially, it grounded the supremacy of the power of the Pope over the Christian civil sovereigns⁹⁷.

5. THE 'SPIRITUAL/TEMPORAL' AND 'DIRECTE/INDIRECTE' BIDENTS - SCHOLASTIC POLITICS CRITICISM

For Hobbes, the main obstacle towards civil obedience is the abuse of 'simple' people's belief in 'superstitious fear of Spirits' by 'ambitious persons'. This mattered greatly for Hobbes because other seditious opinions, like 'Prognostiques from Dreams, [and] false Prophecies', depend upon this fear⁹⁸. Hobbes believes universities are duty-bound to combat these superstitious opinions. However, 'School-men', due to the advantages obtained from it, decided to 'nourish' these opinions into doctrines⁹⁹.

All these superstitious opinions and doctrines find their theoretical support within a complex and massive process of reification of 'what are merely figments of the mind'¹⁰⁰. One of scholasticism's hallmarks is precisely the reification of the logical connective 'est' into essence. Hobbes emphasizes the importance of his critic on the doctrine of separated essences because it conceals some of the most politically seditious scholastics' doctrines¹⁰¹. According to Hobbes, the doctrine of separated essences grounds the 'insignificant distinction between temporal and spiritual'¹⁰². And it is precisely this distinction that, according to Hobbes, ground the discourses of those who claim 'Supremacy against the

⁹⁵ Lev, p. 893.

⁹⁶ Lev 19.3.

⁹⁷ See: ROSE, 2015, p. 59; PAGANINI, 2007, p. 339.

⁹⁸ Lev 2.8.

⁹⁹ Lev 2.9.

¹⁰⁰ LEIJENHORST, 2007, p. 102.

¹⁰¹ See: LEIJENHORST, 2007, p. 101; PAGANINI, 2007, p. 339.

¹⁰² LL, p. 511.

Sovereignty; Canons against Lawes, and a Ghostly Authority against the Civil'¹⁰³. Nevertheless, in Hobbes' perspective, 'when the spirituall power, moveth the Members of a Common-wealth' instead of 'the Civill Power', it 'overwhelm the Common-wealth with Oppression, or cast it into the Fire of a Civill warre'. Moreover, when these two powers are in a conflict, the commonwealth 'cannot but be in great danger of Civill warre, and Dissolution'¹⁰⁴.

According to Hobbes, scholasticism was famous for applying the 'egregious distinction' between temporal and spiritual whenever faced with 'any difficulty whatsoever'¹⁰⁵. Nonetheless, for Hobbes, this 'empty' distinction had a problematic political goal. It was deliberately introduced to 'make men less able to recognize which of the two states they should obey'¹⁰⁶. The distinction between temporal and spiritual is dangerous because it gives support to the clergy's claims concerning power¹⁰⁷. Hobbes goes so far as to state that the expression 'power spirituall' is used to make people 'charmed', forcing the subjects 'to abandon their lawfull soveraigns'¹⁰⁸.

However, in Hobbes' view, when confronted with a materialistic framework, this distinction is 'but words'¹⁰⁹ – it lacks a proper meaning. For Hobbes, even 'the Spirituall Power of the Pope [...] consisteth onely in the Fear that Seduced people stand in, of their Excommunications'¹¹⁰. As with fairies, spiritual power 'have no existence, but in the Fancies of ignorant people'¹¹¹. It is this 'ecclesiasticall' or 'pastorall power' of excommunication that Scholastics erroneously name 'spirituall'¹¹². By extension, that by which Scholastics refer by 'temporal power' must be correctly referred to by the expression 'civil power'. Thus, in a commonwealth as conceived by Hobbes, the division corresponds to

¹⁰³ Lev 29.15.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Lev 46.21.

¹⁰⁶ LL, p. 735.

¹⁰⁷ See: LEIJENHORST, 2007, p. 102; ROSE, 2015, p. 56.

¹⁰⁸ Lev 47.2.

¹⁰⁹ Lev 42.123.

¹¹⁰ Lev 47.33. According to Hobbes, the process of excommunication necessarily needs the support of the civil power, otherwise it 'was no more than to avoid the company of them that were [excommunicated]' (Lev, p. 798). For Hobbes, the Early Church had 'no power to bind, no power to excommunicate, no power to depose' (ROSE, 2015, p. 51). Therefore, Hobbes claims to defend 'the practices of primitive Christianity' by insisting that the 'pre-Constantinian Church' (authorized as the official religion by the state) as a 'voluntary association of individuals' would have no 'coercive power' (*Idem*, p. 52).

¹¹¹ Lev 47.33

¹¹² Lev 42.121.

different functions assigned by the single and same sovereignty: civil (execution of justice) and ecclesiastical (education). It cannot refer to different metaphysical instances regulating different types of power as were the case with 'temporal' and 'spiritual', and even less to the subordination of the first to the latter¹¹³. Hobbes' political and semantical projects intend to supersede the concept of spiritual authority through that of an ecclesiastical one¹¹⁴.

Hobbes aims to demonstrate that the scholastics' interpretation concerning the submission of the civil power to the ecclesiastical power lacks Scriptural support. During Moses' time and even after the institution of Kings by the Jewish people, the Sovereign had control 'in all matters, both of Policy and Religion'¹¹⁵. Moreover, in Hobbes' biblical exegesis, after the final judgment, in God's prophetic Kingdom, there will be no distinction between 'temporal and spiritual Dominion'¹¹⁶. Hobbes dissects a key passage from the Gospel of Luke (22:38)¹¹⁷ to test and contradict traditional papal teaching. The 'papist' interpretation that takes the 'two swords' present there as representing the distinction between 'spiritual' and 'temporal' power does not hold sufficient exegetical grounds¹¹⁸.

Another example of a radical difference in biblical exegesis between Hobbes' and scholastics' concerns the text of Rom. 13¹¹⁹. In Hobbes' perspective, the scholastics, and specially Bellarmine, hold that temporal authority is derived from natural law and subordinate to spiritual authority¹²⁰. Hobbes, however, sees in the Scripture an appeal for absolute obedience to the civil power, as it is 'impossible to serve two masters at the same time'¹²¹. For Hobbes, according to Rom. 13, Christ commanded obedience only to the civil sovereign, justifying that

¹¹³ For Hobbes there cannot be 'subordination of powers' inferred from a 'subordination of purposes' (ROSE, 2015, p. 58).

¹¹⁴ For Hobbes 'this sort of terminology is not only philosophically insignificant but it has also proven to be politically pernicious' (NAUTA, 2021, p. 186). See also: ROSE, 2015, p. 59.

¹¹⁵ Lev 40.10.

¹¹⁶ Lev 12.22. For an analysis of the prophetic kingdom of God see: JONES, 2016, p. 8-11; MCQUEEN, 2018, p. 128-134.

¹¹⁷ All quotes make reference to the *King James Version* of the Bible.

¹¹⁸ 'Lev 44.20. The 'two swords' theory, based on Luke 22: 38 [KJV], was a traditional papalist teaching, embodied in the Bull of Boniface VIII *Unam sanctam* (1302)' (MALCOLM, 2012b, bw, 983).

¹¹⁹ LL, p. 893.

¹²⁰ ROSE, 2015, p. 50.

¹²¹ LL, p. 893. Although Hobbes' passage quotes Matthew 6:24 and Luke 16: 13, instead of Romans 13, it seems fit to illustrate his point of view.

‘Christ hath not left to his Ministers in this world, unlesse they be also endued with Civill Authority’¹²².

The metaphysical distinction between temporal and spiritual has practical political implications. It underlies the Catholic Church’s claim for temporal authority. Based on the Pope’s pastoral function, erroneously referred by scholasticism as spiritual, the Church attributes this additional authority to the Catholic Pontiff. Because ‘simple men’ believe the Pope has spiritual authority, they think he should preside directly in all matters concerning spirituality, even those related to the temporal government. Hobbes applies his materialistic approach to undermine any claim concerning the existence of spiritual beings or powers; his goal seems to conceive a political society that can be maintained without using the support of a so-called spiritual order¹²³.

This erroneous doctrine also dictates that the Pope would have powers to judge and command other Christian sovereigns and commonwealths in spiritual matters. This argument depends on the idea that secular authority must be subordinate to spiritual authority just as the body must be subordinate to its soul¹²⁴. This indirect right to rule, strongly defended by Bellarmine, is what Hobbes calls ‘indirecte power’¹²⁵. The ‘Directe/Indirecte’ bident on the emblem seems to capture the essence of this new forked argument, and its equally harmful choices between a direct and an indirect conception of Papal power¹²⁶. Hobbes’ goal is to make clear the practical effects of these erroneous doctrines. According to him, this would help the civil sovereigns to ‘weigh and think whether it is safe for them and useful and for the good of their subjects’ to grant any portion of sovereign power (including ecclesiastical power) to the Pope or other powerful foreigners¹²⁷.

¹²² Lev 42.10.

¹²³ See: ROSE, 2015, p. 59.

¹²⁴ Hobbes sees the idea that society needs a ‘spiritual power to guide its temporal power’ – given that ‘there can be no society without a soul to rule the body politic’ (*Idem*, p. 55) – as fallacious.

¹²⁵ Hobbes focused on Bellarmine and scholastics’ polemic conception of power. As Curley points out, by the claim made by Bellarmine that the Pope could not be entitled to temporal powers directly, his book entered the ‘*Index* at the end of Sixtus V’s papacy’ (CURLEY, Edwin. ‘Notes’. In: HOBBS, Thomas, *Leviathan*, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994b, n82, 391). See also: BE, p. 171.

¹²⁶ Although Martinich theorizes that ‘direct’ and ‘indirect’ refer to different ‘moods of the syllogism’ (MARTINICH, 1992, p. 366), Hobbes does not mention this distinction in *Leviathan’s* text.

¹²⁷ LL, p. 911. Hobbes argued that the pope’s claim to any form of indirect power ‘reflects a defective understanding of both revelation and reason’ (ROSE, 2015, p. 45).

Bellarmino was Hobbes' primary target because he was one of the main proponents of a seditious political doctrine. It strengthened papal claims of an unrestricted right to ecclesiastical power which, according to Hobbes, can only result in disobedience and rebellion¹²⁸. Moreover, Hobbes would attack at the same time the opinions of those who would have inherited some of the arguments of the Catholic thinker, like the Anglicans and Presbyterians¹²⁹. Therefore, to weaken the Church and the Pope's political power, Hobbes' strategy consisted in challenging Bellarmine's authority and biblical interpretation¹³⁰. The dispute between Hobbes and Bellarmine, as Rose argues can be seen as 'the most mature expression of a debate between temporal and spiritual authority'¹³¹.

Hobbes and Bellarmine strongly disagreed about a special right to indirect power belonging to the Pope in all spiritual matters. Bellarmine argued that the Pope had ecclesiastical power 'by a certain right, which is a necessary consequence of his Pastoral authority', after all, he could not 'exercise his Pastoral power [...] without it'¹³². Consequently, in Hobbes's interpretation of the Cardinal's text, Bellarmine attributes to the Pope 'a right to change the kingdoms by transferring to one or the other, according to what he himself sees as salvation of Souls'¹³³. Hobbes, however, disregarded any possibility concerning the Roman Pontiff's 'indirect' right to sovereignty, unless by 'indirect' he is referring to the 'deceitful' manner with which the Church intends to acquire power¹³⁴. With Bellarmine, the concept of 'indirect power'¹³⁵ becomes 'the centerpiece of Catholic doctrine'¹³⁶. According to this doctrine, the Church would be lawfully allowed to interfere in any temporal matters of Christian commonwealths¹³⁷. For example, the Pope would be allowed to punish those considered heretics,

¹²⁸ Springborg even argues that by raising points in favor of the Pope's supremacy over Christian sovereigns, his *Controversiae* would represent an 'anti-Leviathan' (SPRINGBORG, 1995, p. 518). See also: ROSE, 2015, p. 45.

¹²⁹ See: SOMMERVILLE, Johan. **Thomas Hobbes**: Political Ideas in Historical Context. Houndmills: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1992., p. 114.

¹³⁰ See: SPRINGBORG, 1995, p. 519.

¹³¹ ROSE, 2015p. 45.

¹³² LL, p. 909. See: *Idem*, p. 53.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ See: MALCOLM, 2012b, ih, p. 909; Indirect: 'Deceitful, Devious' (OED).

¹³⁵ For an in-depth analysis of the issue concerning indirect power see ROSE, 2015 (esp. p. 47-49); BALDIN, Gregorio. Hobbes, Sarpi and the Interdict of Venice, **Storia del Pensiero Politico**, vol. 2, 2016, p. 261-280; *Idem*, Chiesa, scomunica e potestas indirecta: Sarpi e Hobbes, lettori di Marsilio e critici di Bellarmino, **Dianoia**, vol. 28, 2019, p. 109-130.

¹³⁶ ROSE, 2015, p. 47.

¹³⁷ SOMMERVILLE, 1992, p. 116.

including sovereigns. If a sovereign was declared a heretic by the Pope, this would release all its Catholic citizens from obeying to the sovereign¹³⁸.

According to Hobbes, the Pope cannot obtain sovereign power in other commonwealths in a direct way. This power 'does not come to the Roman Pontiff by the same way that Kings obtain it'¹³⁹. Therefore, in Hobbes' perspective, the Pope does not obtain his power by the social pact expressed in the 'originall submission thereto of those that are to be governed'¹⁴⁰. His power, according to scholastic political theory as conceived by Hobbes, would be 'without the consent of the people, who were made his by a gift of God in his assumption into the papacy'¹⁴¹.

Hobbes accuses the Catholic Church of using religion and people's beliefs instrumentally to increase and consolidate its power or the Pope's¹⁴². According to Hobbes, the scholastics' writings and the Catholic biblical exegesis were used to make the Roman Pontiff able to 'by right rob the domains of princes and republics'¹⁴³. The Pope was allowed to intervene whenever 'it seems to him that it leads to their souls' salvation, that is, whenever he wants it'. For Hobbes, 'whatever the form' by which the power of the Pope is acquired 'the power is the same'¹⁴⁴. Moreover, Hobbes' criticism of the scholastic theory is a strong critique of both the structure and curriculum of the universities (Section 1)¹⁴⁵. That metaphysical background provided by scholastics' theories and by the Catholic Church to spiritual entities feeds the imagination of common people with supernatural entities and false beliefs¹⁴⁶. According to Hobbes, in this context, the universities could even be categorized as 'unlawful regular private bodies' which are those 'constituted by foreign authorities for the propagation of their doctrines or to create a faction contrary to the sovereign power of the Common-

¹³⁸ See: ROSE, 2015, p. 50; SOMMERVILLE, 1992, p. 115.

¹³⁹ LL, p. 911.

¹⁴⁰ Lev 42.123.

¹⁴¹ LL, p. 911.

¹⁴² See: SPRINGBORG, 1995, p. 521.

¹⁴³ LL, p. 911.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ See: LEIJENHORST, 1998, p. 33.

¹⁴⁶ 'Hobbes thus sees a straight-line connecting scholastic education—and its conceptual apparatus of supersensible forms, natures, souls, and essences—and the religious practices of Christian folk religion' (ROSE, 2015, p. 61).

wealth¹⁴⁷. Scholastics' politics, as defended by Bellarmine, will result in a division of power, and consequently, in the civil war¹⁴⁸.

Bellarmino and many doctors of the Church defended these political doctrines in books and sermons disseminated by universities and parishes. It is important to highlight, however, that the dissemination of these doctrines might have its genesis also in the decrees of the councils¹⁴⁹. According to Hobbes, the councils were used to justify and strengthen the claims of sovereign power by the Scholastics, the Church, and the Pope:

‘This Council [Laodicea] took place in the 364th year after Christ. At that time, although the ambitions of the great doctors of the Church still prevailed, taking no longer Emperors (even Christians) for shepherds but for sheep, and non-Christian emperors for Wolves, they wanted their doctrines not to be taken as advice, but as laws, and began to think about pious frauds’¹⁵⁰.

Emerging from Scholastic's metaphysics and logic is a mistaken and dangerous political theory, which bases and justifies the power of the Catholic Church and its representatives¹⁵¹. This is achieved by the dissemination of ‘insignificant’ concepts and definitions in the universities and in all parishes through its books and sermons. According to Hobbes, some of the most problematic of these ideas was the separation between ‘temporal and spiritual’ power, as well as the distinction between ‘direct’ and ‘indirect’ power. Both of these seditious doctrines, based on an erroneous metaphysical model build upon false premises, increase the likelihood of a civil war on the commonwealth.

6. CONCLUSION

This paper has shown that the scholastics' dilemma emblem provides an additional and underused way to shed light on Hobbes' critique of scholastics' doctrines on *Leviathan's* text. Its presence on the frontispiece attests that Hobbes considered it one of *Leviathan's* building blocks. Existing analyses of *Leviathan's* frontispiece either focus on historical discussions concerning visual iconography

¹⁴⁷ Lev, p. 369.

¹⁴⁸ *Idem*, p. 58

¹⁴⁹ See: WRIGHT, George. The 1668 Appendix and Hobbes's Theological Project. In: SPRINGBORG, Patricia. **The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes's Leviathan**, Nova Iorque: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 392-409.

¹⁵⁰ LL, p. 601.

¹⁵¹ LEIJENHORST, 2007, p. 101; SOMMERVILLE, 1992, p. 114; ROSE, 2015, p. 53 and p. 58.

or use the frontispiece merely to contextualize some of Hobbes' main arguments. This paper, instead, conceives the emblem as a way into the text, and using the iconography as an analytic tool for clarifying *Leviathan's* contents. The emblem highlights that *Leviathan's* political system requires not only 'a metaphysical foundation radically different from Aristotelianism', but a logical foundation different from scholasticism¹⁵². Hobbes was deeply concerned with scholastic doctrines being taught at the universities. Moreover, the scholastics' dilemma emblem helps to elucidate how Hobbes conceived the interconnection between the scholastics' philosophical doctrines of logic, metaphysics, and politics. These 'erroneous doctrines'¹⁵³ were used, in Hobbes' account, as the theoretical base for the consolidation of the Pope and the Church's power over other Christian sovereigns. According to Hobbes, when the Church acquired this power, the commonwealth was pushed near to the 'fire of a civil war'¹⁵⁴.

¹⁵² PAGANINI, 2007, p. 339.

¹⁵³ Lev 47.17.

¹⁵⁴ Lev 29.15.

II - POWER AND RELIGIOUS ASSOCIATIONS IN HOBBS' LEVIATHAN

1. INTRODUCTION

Hobbes, throughout the Latin versions of his works, employed a twofold conception of power, *potentia* (non-juridical power) and *potestas* (juridical power)¹⁵⁵. Recent studies point to a refinement in the concept of power in Thomas Hobbes' political works¹⁵⁶. The concept of *potestas* did not undergo significant changes throughout his writings. It remained as “just power”¹⁵⁷, a right to act within a jurisdiction¹⁵⁸. However, the concept of *potentia* received a major refinement, reaching its full development in Hobbes' *magnum opus*¹⁵⁹. In the *Elements of Law*, Hobbes defends a causal conception of non-juridical power: power corresponds to the natural faculties proper and internal to an individual¹⁶⁰. The secondary “powers”¹⁶¹, such as “riches, place of authority, friendship or favour, and good fortune”¹⁶², are always related to an individual possession of a natural faculty¹⁶³. While in *Leviathan*, Hobbes uses a relational concept of non-juridical power. The social interaction between individuals determines one

¹⁵⁵ Hobbes' works are abbreviated as follows: EL – HOBBS, Thomas. **Elements of Law, Natural and Politic**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928; DCi – HOBBS, Thomas. **De Cive**. Tradução: Richard Tuck & Michael Silverthorne. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998; VCE – *Vita, Carmine Expressa*, In: *Opera Philosophica*, I, p. 81–99; Lev – HOBBS, Thomas. **Leviathan**. Tradução: Noel Malcolm. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, and HOBBS, Thomas. **Leviathan**. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994; LL – HOBBS, Thomas. **Leviathan**. Tradução: Noel Malcolm. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

¹⁵⁶ See: HOEKSTRA, Kinch. The de facto Turn in Hobbes's Political Philosophy. In: Sorrell, Tom & Foisneau, Luc (org.). **Leviathan After 350 Years**, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004., esp. p. 48-57; DOCKÈS, Pierre. **Hobbes et le Pouvoir**, *Cahiers d'économie*, vol. 50, 2006, p. 7-26; ALTINI, Carlo. 'Potentia' as 'potestas': An interpretation of modern politics between Thomas Hobbes and Carl Schmitt, **Philosophy & Social Criticism**, vol. 36/2, 2010, p. 231-252; OLESTI, Josep. Le machiavélisme de Hobbes, *Archiv für Rechts - Und Sozialphilosophie*, vol. 97, 2011, p. 441-465; LIMONGI, Isabel. Direito e Poder: Hobbes e a dissolução do Estado, **doispontos**, vol. 6/3, 2009b, p. 181-193; LIMONGI, Isabel. Potentia e potestas no Leviathan de Hobbes, **doispontos**, vol. 10/1, 2013, p. 143-166; FIELD, Sandra. Hobbes and the Question of Power, **Journal of the History of Philosophy**, vol. 52/1, 2014, p. 61-85; FIELD, Sandra. **Potentia: Hobbes and Spinoza on Power and Popular Politics**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020, esp. p. 25-143; DUNN, John. The significance of Hobbes's conception of power, **Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy**, vol. 13/2-3, p. 417-433, 2010.

¹⁵⁷ Lev, Intro.2.

¹⁵⁸ EL I.19.10; DCi 5.11; Lev, 42.121; LL, p. 359; LL, 381.

¹⁵⁹ Lev, 10.1-54. See: FIELD, 2020, p. 50, p. 89.

¹⁶⁰ FIELD, 2020, p. 25, p. 29. See: EL 8.4.

¹⁶¹ EL I.8.5.

¹⁶² EL I.8.4.

¹⁶³ FIELD, 2020, p. 30.

individual's reputation and, consequently, his power: "Reputation of power is power" ¹⁶⁴.

This late development of Hobbes' non-judicial conception of power brings forth another conceptual novelty to *Leviathan*: a new and original critical analysis of religion¹⁶⁵. According to Hobbes', "all formed religion" relies on the allegiance of a group to an individual who has the reputation of "wise" and "holy" amongst them¹⁶⁶. Ultimately, it is an individual's *potentia* that gives rise to any religious institution. Limongi argues, for example, that Hobbes developed a political theory "specifically in chapters X through XIII of *Leviathan*", that would describe the "natural relations between men as relations of power"¹⁶⁷. However, she does not devote herself to explaining precisely how this conception of power connects to *Leviathan*'s 12th chapter, concerning religion. Field, like Limongi, recognizes the significance of religion within *Leviathan*'s conception of non-judicial power. According to her interpretation, religious institutions may be understood as nodes of *potentia*, making them "a this-worldly power block". In *Leviathan*, Hobbes modifies the way in which he portrays "informal associations", such as that of religious groupings. This new social dynamic would have led Hobbes to conceive a "new anthropology of religion"¹⁶⁸.

Gianni Paganini argues, that, while in Paris, Hobbes developed, for example, a conception of "natural religion" based on human passions and a critical analysis of political instrumentalization of religion¹⁶⁹. This paper will argue that Hobbes' refinement of his conception of relational power was, as Field and Limongi pointed out, related to his new critical analysis of religion. Although, as Paganini argues, curiosity is the initial step in discovering natural religion, it is not the "driving force behind all changes"¹⁷⁰. This paper will argue that it is the reputation of an individual as "wise" and "holy" that gathers a multitude that will

¹⁶⁴ Lev, 10.5. See: FIELD, 2020, p. 51.

¹⁶⁵ See: NAUTA, Lodi. Hobbes on Religion and the Church between 'The Elements of Law' and 'Leviathan': A Dramatic Change of Direction?, **Journal of the History of Ideas**, vol. 63/4, 2002, p. 579; STAUFFER, Devin. 'Of Religion' in Hobbes's *Leviathan*, **The Journal of Politics**, vol. 72/3, 2010, p. 868-869; FIELD, 2020, p. 101, PAGANINI, Gianni. Hobbes, the 'Natural Seeds' of Religion and French Libertine Discourse, **Hobbes Studies**, vol. 32/2, 2019, p. 134-136.

¹⁶⁶ Lev, 12.24.

¹⁶⁷ LIMONGI, 2013, p. 144.

¹⁶⁸ FIELD, 2020, p. 100-101.

¹⁶⁹ PAGANINI, 2019, p. 147.

¹⁷⁰ *Idem*, p. 135.

form a religious group¹⁷¹. The refinement in Hobbes' conception of power allows him to theorize on the formation and dissolution of religions, and the major role played by the commonwealth in the maintenance and regulation of the doctrines proposed by the religious groups.

This paper aims to develop Field and Limongi's arguments concerning the relationship between Hobbes' new conception of *potentia* that supposedly have guided the development of his anthropology of religion. This late refinement concerning the social and relational dimensions of power helps explain the process of genesis and destruction of religious groups. It also helps describe how Hobbes came to understand these groups as dangerous political entities. Religious groups can accumulate so much power that it is paramount that the sovereign power regulates them. Moreover, this paper shows a different source for Hobbes' anthropology of religion than that proposed by Paganini.

This paper proceeds as follows: Section 1 and 2 reviews the existing literature, reconstructing, respectively, the concept of *potentia* and *potestas* in *Leviathan* and Hobbes' earlier political works. Section 3 analyzes *potentia*'s role in *Leviathan*'s anthropology of religion for understanding religion as informal associations constituted around an individual's reputation (religions' genesis and dissolution). Section 4 examines interactions between religious groups' *potentia* and the State's *potestas*: first with Hobbes' take on factious religious groups, and second with religion's instrumentalization by the State.

2. *POTENTIA*: FROM A CAUSAL TO A RELATIONAL CONCEPTION OF POWER

In his first political work, Hobbes states that power "simply is no more, but the excess of the power of one above that of another"¹⁷². In this sense, power designates a "proper and internal" causal potentiality for individual action, i.e., a causal capacity¹⁷³. One of the main issues with this conception is that it does not properly address the complex social consequences of these potentialities. Hobbes states that social ramifications such as "riches, place of authority,

¹⁷¹ Lev, 12.24.

¹⁷² EL, I, 8.4.

¹⁷³ FIELD, 2020, p.29, p. 36.

friendship or favour”¹⁷⁴ are merely secondary effects of his causal conception of power. However, these effects must play a role in the way people perceive each other’s power. They cannot be properly detached from their assessment of the individual causal capacity. Moreover, when Hobbes states that “the power of one man resisteth and hindereth the effects of the power of another” he is thinking about “faculties of body and mind” and not about its social consequences¹⁷⁵.

In the *Elements*, Hobbes proposes that the "signs" by which each individual know his "own power" are reverent "actions, gesture, countenance and speech" by other individual who "contendeth or compareth himself". Among the many secondary powers, Hobbes briefly and laterally mentions the theme of reputation: "Beauty of person, consisting in a lively aspect of the countenance, and other signs of natural heat, are honourable, being signs precedent of power generative, and much issue; as also, general reputation amongst those of the other sex, because signs consequent of the same". According to Hobbes, reputation amongst those of the other sex is a sign consequent of his or her "power generative"¹⁷⁶. Reputation here is a consequence of power, and not power itself as in *Leviathan*¹⁷⁷. Later in the *Elements*, Hobbes hints indirectly to how important reputation might be. One of the main reasons why Hobbes sustains his position concerning Monarchy is that "the mind of one man is not so variable in that point, as are the decrees of an assembly". According to him, alterations to the law are more predictable and less drastic if they are taken by one individual. When people deliberate in an assembly, not only we have to take into account "the natural changes" of each individual, i.e., his or her own method of reasoning and set of dominant passions, but also the "eloquence and reputation" of particular people who can change the laws "today" and "abrogate" them tomorrow¹⁷⁸.

In *De Cive*, Hobbes returns to the inconvenience of the reputation of private citizens to the deliberation on assemblies. He argues that many individuals find in the public space of an assembly the perfect scenario to "declare his eloquence" and "gain the reputation of being ingenuous, and wise". This

¹⁷⁴ EL, I, 8.4.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ EL I.8.5.

¹⁷⁷ Lev 10.5.

¹⁷⁸ EL II.5.7.

would bring him praise from his friends and family, but on the other hand this "dexterous behaviour" is detrimental to society. Again, reputation plays a role, even if indirectly, in the deliberation of changes to the laws¹⁷⁹.

Hobbes' conception of power and his assessment of the relationship between individuals was refined in the *Leviathan*. Moreover, his deeper analysis of the social dimension of power and its implications may be causes for the refinement shown in *Leviathan*. Hobbes' early philosophical works portray power as internal capacities, i.e., "the faculties of body and mind"¹⁸⁰. However, Hobbes gradually moved away from this conception of power in direction to a more social approach, which resulted in a relational and contextual conception of power¹⁸¹. Many absurdities concerning the political reality of Great Britain become significant to Hobbes in *Leviathan*¹⁸². These anomalies seem to be related to the context of the English Civil War, leading Hobbes to "the necessity to think about the possibility of the State's dissolution"¹⁸³. This would have led him to theorize a new way of understanding power in a relational perspective¹⁸⁴. Hobbes' new account of *potentia* departs from his initial account of power as "inner causal principles"¹⁸⁵. In *Leviathan*, power is socially constituted through the "estimation" made of one another's capacities¹⁸⁶. In *Leviathan*, it is the perception of the "eminence" of certain characteristics that determines the "value" of individuals¹⁸⁷. In his *magnum opus*, Hobbes portrays power in a contextual and relational fashion, a social web based not only on causal capacity but also on appearance and reputation¹⁸⁸.

In *Leviathan*, power is found inside and outside individuals. It is in their effective causal capacity and in the opinion of other individuals regarding their

¹⁷⁹ DCi 10.15.

¹⁸⁰ EL I.8.4. See: LEIJENHORST, Cees. *The Mechanisation of Aristotelianism: The Late Aristotelian Setting of Thomas Hobbes' Natural Philosophy*. Brill: Leiden, 2002; LEIJENHORST, 2007; PAGANINI, 2007; Field, 2020, p. 33.

¹⁸¹ FIELD, 2020, p. 15, p.50, p. 54, p. 94-95.

¹⁸² Hobbes' autobiography (*Vita Carmine Expressa*) corroborates this idea.

¹⁸³ LIMONGI, 2013, p. 145. Among the anomalies Hobbes cites the reputation of eloquent private individuals (on which religious associations are founded) and also the reputation of religious leaders (Lev 29.15, Lev 29.20). These issues will be further explored in sections 3 and 4 of the present paper.

¹⁸⁴ Lev, 10.16.

¹⁸⁵ FIELD, 2020, p. 50, p. 54. See: EL I.8.4.

¹⁸⁶ LL, p. 133. See: LIMONGI, 2013, p. 150.

¹⁸⁷ Lev 10.2; Lev 10.16.

¹⁸⁸ FIELD, 2020, p. 45.

need for that causal capacity for that context: “an able conductor of soldiers is of great price in time of war present or imminent; but in peace not so”¹⁸⁹. Recognition for an appropriate causal capacity to the context attracts the adherence of other individuals who wish to exploit this potentia¹⁹⁰. *Potentia* is the moving force behind the association of individuals: “Reputation is thus the axis of a social dynamics of power, whereby not only power ‘grows as it progresses’, but in doing so it concentrates around a man or group of men”¹⁹¹.

There is a clear contrast between the early and the late conceptions of power in Hobbes’ political works. In the *Elements*, Hobbes presents power as the causal and internal capacities of an individual¹⁹². Alternatively, in the *Leviathan*, it is possible to see that humans show a tendency to associate spontaneous and constantly¹⁹³, “superseding the rough equality of individuals with the inequality of more or less mighty groupings”¹⁹⁴. However, due to the informal nature of these groups (they do not hold any legal status) and the relational nature of power, these associations are extremely unstable. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes presents a more complex portrait of society and its disparity concerning power (*potentia*).

3. *POTESTAS*: JURIDICAL CONCEPTION OF POWER

As mentioned earlier, Hobbes’ twofold conception of power also involves a juridical facet. Hobbes uses, in his Latin works, the term “*potestas*” to translate “just Power or Authority”¹⁹⁵. Hobbes also defines *potestas* as a power within a “jurisdiction”, freedom to move within a confined juridical space¹⁹⁶. *Potestas* is characterized for its juridical features that can only exist after the institution of a

¹⁸⁹ Lev, 10.16.

¹⁹⁰ See: LIMONGI, 2013, p. 150, DOCKÈS, 2006, p. 19-21; ZARKA, Yves Charles. **Hobbes and Modern Political Thought**. Tradução: James Griffith. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016, p. 72-105.

¹⁹¹ LIMONGI, Isabel. **O Homem Excêntrico. Paixões e Virtudes em Thomas Hobbes**. São Paulo: Loyola, 2009a, p. 109.

¹⁹² EL I.8.4.

¹⁹³ “Reputation of power is power, because it draweth with it the adherence of those that need protection.” (Lev 10.5).

¹⁹⁴ FIELD, 2020, p. 45.

¹⁹⁵ Lev, Intro.2.

¹⁹⁶ LL, p. 359; LL, p. 381. Hobbes uses “jurisdiction” and “power” (*potestas*) interchangeably in Lev, 42.121.

commonwealth, and, consequently, the institution of a sovereign power¹⁹⁷. Sovereign power, or *summa potestas*, creates the legitimate and material means for the organization of natural social relations. Since the sovereign has the largest jurisdiction, he may use his *summa potestas* to create a set of laws to deter or encourage specific behaviors.

Summa potestas can “circumscribe power [*potestas*]” and establish obligations to the natural freedom of men¹⁹⁸. However, “the material condition for formal validity of the contracts” lies in the State’s *potentia*, its effective capacity to impose punishment¹⁹⁹. Although fear is not the basis of contractual obligations, it acts as a reinforcement to the binding effect of a coherent representation of oneself²⁰⁰. In short, the “just power” of the State (*Summa Potestas*) consists in the jurisdiction to use the State’s *potentia*, “the greatest of humane powers”, and to establish juridical limits to human natural freedom²⁰¹.

Even though establishing a juridical framework increase the likelihood of a long and prosperous life for all individuals, anyone can still deliberately abandon the arrangement reached by the commonwealth’s institution. If individuals do not agree with the reasons for the institution of sovereign power (and the attribution of jurisdictions for the subjects’ actions), it remains for them to accept that the result of this choice is a “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” life²⁰². The possibility of insurgency is always open, as an infiltration of the state of nature present in the societal state. Whenever the subject resists, by his natural right to preserve his own life, he legitimately rescues his power (*potentia*) to resist the legitimate command of the sovereign power²⁰³. The sovereign then sees himself in the right of using the commonwealth’s coercive *potentia* as a means of punishment. This clash between sovereign and subjects’ powers (*potentia*) has severe legal consequences that can bring an end to the commonwealth²⁰⁴.

Hobbes is clear in saying that men (even if guilty) are free to unite and defend each other from the sovereign power, given that they cannot give up the

¹⁹⁷ FIELD, 2020, p. 63.

¹⁹⁸ LL, p. 295.

¹⁹⁹ LIMONGI, 2013, p. 158.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ Lev, 10.3.

²⁰² Lev, 13.9.

²⁰³ Lev, 21.12-17.

²⁰⁴ Lev, 21.17. See: LIMONGI, 2013, p. 159.

right to defend their own lives²⁰⁵. Since they are enemies of the sovereign power, there is nothing to prevent them from uniting to defend themselves, Hobbes even says that this does not configure a “new unjust act”²⁰⁶. Individual resistance can quickly become the resistance of a group because the subjects are free to use their *potentia* and to merge their powers as one. For example, by putting the life of a religious leader at risk, the sovereign also risks that believers will unite around their leader. To avoid this opposition, Hobbes insists that the civil sovereign is also the supreme religious leader of a republic²⁰⁷ and that his subjects must abide by his decisions even in religious matters²⁰⁸.

4. *POTENTIA* AND RELIGION

In the first two sections, I reviewed the twofold conception of power in Hobbes’ *Leviathan* and established that *potentia* corresponds to a causal capacity and/or reputation for it²⁰⁹. On the other hand, *potestas* corresponds to a juridical power, i.e., power within a “jurisdiction”²¹⁰. Now I will turn to the practical implications concerning the relationship between the concept of *potentia* (as reputation)²¹¹ and Hobbes’ new anthropology of religion in *Leviathan*’s 11th and 12th chapters. *Leviathan*’s anthropology of religion might be considered “new” because Hobbes’ arguments in the *Elements of Law* and in the *De Cive* had not reached the same sophistication as they would later²¹².

In this section, I will analyze how religious associations²¹³ are formed (subsection 3.1) and dissolved (subsection 3.2) based on the reputation of “wise” and “holy” of their ruler. Section 3.1 shows that these religious associations were political in nature because they are “strengths united”²¹⁴. Groups were formed around individuals reputed for wisdom and holiness, whom people thought were

²⁰⁵ Lev, 21.17.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ Lev 36.13; Lev, 40.9-12, LL, p. 755; LL, p. 863.

²⁰⁸ Lev, 20.16; Lev 36.41.

²⁰⁹ Lev, 10.

²¹⁰ Lev, 23.

²¹¹ Lev 10.5.

²¹² PAGANINI, 2019, p. 132-133.

²¹³ According to the definitions proposed by Hobbes, these religious associations can only be properly considered as “religion” if they have the public authorization of the sovereign (Lev 6.36). This dimension of Hobbes’ theory of religion will be thoroughly explored in the article “*Hobbes, Religion and the Oath’s Apparent Contradiction*”.

²¹⁴ Lev, 10.3.

able to provide answers to natural and supernatural events²¹⁵. Moreover, *potentia* (as a contextual and relational concept) explains how Hobbes conceived the formation of religious associations by those who founded them holding their followers hostage of their own “fear and ignorance”²¹⁶. In this case, his reputation was achieved through the use of flattery and eloquence²¹⁷. Section 3.2 shows that the same power that brought up the genesis of a religious association, causes its destruction. Hobbes’ perspective concerning how religions end highlights that reputation (*potentia*) is what keeps these associations stable. Therefore, when the rulers of religion lose their reputation, they bring forth the destruction of their religion.

4.1. *Potentia* and Religions’ Genesis

This section highlights how *Leviathan's* development on the conception of power is fundamental to Hobbes’ new analysis of religion. In *Leviathan*, besides curiosity (as proposed by Paganini), reputation emerges as a refined feature of Hobbes’ political system which enables him to lay down an anthropology of religion. *Leviathan* presents, unlike previous works, a human origin for religious beliefs, namely, curiosity²¹⁸. It is curiosity that leads to the discovery of God as the first cause of everything. It is also curiosity that will generate what Hobbes calls the “natural seeds of religion”²¹⁹.

However, these seeds need to receive “culture” in order for them to become an actual religion²²⁰. I argue that religion in a proper sense (“formed religion”) begins with the grouping of individuals around someone with a

²¹⁵ Lev, 12.24.

²¹⁶ Lev, 12.19.

²¹⁷ Lev, 7.7.

²¹⁸ MACMILLAN, Alissa. Curiosity and fear transformed: from religious to religion in Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan*, **International Journal of Philosophy and Theology**, vol. 80/3, p. 287-302, 2018, p. 4-7; STAUFFER, 2010, p. 871-872; BALDIN, Gregorio. Nothing but the Name of God, **Les Dossiers du Grihl "Les dossiers de Jean-Pierre Cavallé, Libertinage, athéisme, irréligion. Essais et bibliographie"**, 2019. Disponível em: <<https://journals.openedition.org/dossiersgrihl/7546>>. Acesso em: 23 jan. 2023, §16; PAGANINI, 2019, p.135-138.

²¹⁹ Lev, 12.11.

²²⁰ Lev 12:12. See: CURLEY, Edwyn. Hobbes and the Cause of Religious Toleration. *In*: Springborg, Patricia, **The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes's Leviathan**, Nova Iorque: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 323.

reputation not only of “a wise man”, but also of a “holy man”²²¹. Curiosity is not the "driving force behind all changes" in Hobbes' new critical analysis of religion as suggested by Paganini²²². Power (reputation) also plays a major role in religions' formation.

In his previous political works, Hobbes' is concerned with "the philosophical theory of religion on one hand and the biblical position on the other"²²³. As Paganini highlights, in the *Elements of Law* Hobbes is mainly worried about the "problem of the knowledge of God" and in establishing "his own ecclesiology"²²⁴. The major part of *De Cive's* arguments concerning religion can be found in *Leviathan's* third book. These arguments mostly deal with undermining catholic theological claims²²⁵, and confirming, through biblical exegesis that the sovereign rules over all matters, including religion²²⁶. As Paganini points out, *De Cive's* 16th chapter presents a short draft of what Hobbes will call "natural religion" in *Leviathan*²²⁷. There he presents briefly how was religion before God's covenant with Abraham. It was characterized by an "imperfect use" of reason, "fear of invisible things", and the worship of "spirits or vain visions"²²⁸. Yet, this effort does not configure a proper anthropological theory on religion.

In *Leviathan*, a constant desire for power, i.e., “means to obtain some future apparent good”, will help shape the formation of groups²²⁹. When individuals join themselves and form groups, their power also grows: friends or servants are power because “they are strengths united”²³⁰. The act of grouping generates a “common power” [*potentiae communi*]²³¹, which can provide more

²²¹ Lev, 12.24.

²²² PAGANINI,2019, p. 135.

²²³ *Idem*, p. 132.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ DCi, III, 17.10-14, 17.27.

²²⁶ DCi, III, 16.13-18. See: MCQUEEN, Alison. ‘A Rhapsody of Heresies’: The Scriptural Politics of On the Citizen. In: DOUGLASS, Robin & OLSTHOORN, Johan (org.). **Hobbes’s On the Citizen: A Critical Guide**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 180-198, 2020; SOMMERVILLE, Johann. On the Citizen and Church-State Relations. In: DOUGLASS, Robin & OLSTHOORN, Johan (org.). **Hobbes’s On the Citizen: A Critical Guide**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 199-216, 2020; NAUTA, 2002.

²²⁷ PAGANINI,2019, p. 132.

²²⁸ DCi, III, 16.1.

²²⁹ Lev, 10.1.

²³⁰ Lev, 10.3.

²³¹ Lev, 11.4.

protection and security than what an individual may achieve alone²³². The reputation of this group for providing security would, according to Hobbes, attract more members: “reputation of power is power, because it draweth with it the adherence of those that need protection”²³³. People or groups in fear of violent death or in search of leisure or knowledge would be keen to join a bigger and stronger group²³⁴.

In Hobbes’ perspective, humanity’s drive to associate is so strong that even ignorance and anxiety can contribute to the development of groups or alliances²³⁵. Curiosity compels men to search for the causes of natural events. This inquiry will, if completed, lead to the necessary conclusion that there is the first cause of all things, “which men call God”²³⁶. Human beings, nevertheless, usually abandon this investigation, ignoring the true causes of natural events²³⁷. They become so anxious about their own future²³⁸ that they start creating in their minds all sort of “power and agent invisible”²³⁹ to explain phenomena they do not understand²⁴⁰. By not fully inquiring into natural causes, they ignore whether or not there is a supernatural entity that truly has “power” [*potentia*] to cause them good or evil²⁴¹. According to Hobbes, they begin “to fear their own fancies” and even “to call upon them in adverse things, to praise them in prosperous times, and to finally make them gods”²⁴². As mentioned earlier, it is in the nature of all

²³² Lev, 10.3.

²³³ Lev, 10.5.

²³⁴ Lev, 11.4-5.

²³⁵ Lev, 11.16. See: FIELD, 2020, p. 84.

²³⁶ Lev, 11.26. See: PARKIN, Jon. Hobbes and the Future of Religion. *In*: APELDOORN, Laurens & DOUGLASS, Robin (org.), **Hobbes on Politics & Religion**, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 191-192; BEJAN, Teresa M. First Impressions: Hobbes on Religion, Education, and the Metaphor of Imprinting. *In*: APELDOORN, Laurens & DOUGLASS, Robin (org.), **Hobbes on Politics & Religion**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 60; MORTIMER, Sarah. Christianity and Civil Religion. *In*: MARTINICH, Alphonsus P. & HOEKSTRA, Kinch (org.), **The Oxford Handbook of Hobbes**, Nova Iorque: Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 502-507; PAGANINI, 2019, p. 134-136; DUMOUCHEL, Paul. Hobbes & Secularization: Christianity and the Political Problem of Religion, **Contagion: Journal of Violence**, vol. 2/1, 1995, p. 41-42.

²³⁷ Lev, 8.25.

²³⁸ Lev, 12.5. On anxiety and religion, see: COLLINS, Jeffrey. All the Wars of Christendom: Hobbes’s Theory of Religious Conflict. *In*: APELDOORN, Laurens & DOUGLASS, Robin (org.), **Hobbes on Politics & Religion**, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 237. STAUFFER, 2010, p. 872.

²³⁹ Lev, 12.6.

²⁴⁰ Such as invisible motion (OL, p. 127), invisible causes (Lev, 12.4), and invisible or subtle bodies (Lev, 34.3; Lev, 34.15; Lev, 34.24-25). This theme will be further explored on the paper “*Thomas Hobbes’ Invisible Things*”.

²⁴¹ Lev, 11.26.

²⁴² LL, p. 163.

individuals to search for the means to obtain future goods²⁴³. Among these goods, they can recognize protection against the unknown or inexplicable, which “ignorant” people would identify as the wrath of their imagined invisible powers²⁴⁴. In this perspective, only priests or holy men could placate the anger of these so-called gods²⁴⁵. Therefore, ignorant and anxious people grouped themselves around individuals whom they thought were wise (able to provide answers) and holy (pointed out by a supernatural entity)²⁴⁶.

Individuals who do not know “what things are or are not impossible”²⁴⁷ become more willing to rely on the opinions of those whom they believe are “his friends” and wiser than themselves²⁴⁸. An individual reputed for his wisdom or holiness tends to gather power because people usually follow his advice²⁴⁹. They think he can provide answers to otherwise unsolvable puzzles such as the mystery of death²⁵⁰ or what is necessary to eschatological salvation²⁵¹. He will attract many followers to hear his sermons and practice his doctrines, for such is the nature of power (*potentia*) “increasing as it proceeds”²⁵². Therefore, religions and religious associations are, in *Leviathan*, no more than clusters of *potentia* organized around a powerful individual who has enough reputation as “wise” and “holy”²⁵³. As Field points out: “Religion can give rise to durable social compounds that do not rely on sovereignty or punitive covenant”²⁵⁴.

The belief in a supernatural reality is deeply engrained in human nature²⁵⁵. Therefore, according to Hobbes, a person who already has the reputation of wise and holy has to do little to create a new religion. He has (to pretend) to act to revere these so-called “invisible powers”, and to cultivate certain superstitious

²⁴³ Lev, 10.1.

²⁴⁴ Lev, 12.17-18.

²⁴⁵ Lev, 12.20.

²⁴⁶ Even though their reputation might not cross over to their causal capacity of operating miracles (Lev, 32.9).

²⁴⁷ LL, p. 161.

²⁴⁸ Lev 12.4; Lev, 12.9; Lev, 12.24.

²⁴⁹ Lev, 10.20.

²⁵⁰ Lev, 12.6.

²⁵¹ Lev, 12.20.

²⁵² Lev, 10.2.

²⁵³ Lev, 12.24.

²⁵⁴ FIELD, 2014, p. 78.

²⁵⁵ PARKIN, 2018, p. 191; COLLINS, 2018, p. 237-238; STAUFFER, 2010, p. 876.

doctrines²⁵⁶. Hobbes highlights that any religion is a human creation that is based solely on the reputation of an individual, i.e., his or her *potentia*:

For seeing all formed Religion, is founded at first, upon the faith which a multitude hath in some one person, whom they believe not only to be a wise man, and to labour to procure their happiness, but also to be a holy man, to whom God himselfe vouch safeth to declare his will supernaturally (Lev, 12.24).

Nevertheless, the reputation of an individual is not necessarily linked to his own capacities. The new conceptualization of *potentia* as reputation helps explain how false religions are born. To attract followers and gather power, dishonest individuals use “flattery” and “eloquence” to disguise their real intentions behind an appearance of “wisdom and kindness”²⁵⁷. When individuals do not recognize the real “marks of wisdom and kindness”, they might end up empowering someone that might not possess neither of them²⁵⁸. The believers will not only spread “the truth they know not, but also the errors” of their leader²⁵⁹. His reputation, however, would attract more followers.

4.2. *Potentia* and Religion’s Dissolution

Another trace linking reputation and religion lies in the longevity of the institution. Religion is heavily based on the reputation of its leaders²⁶⁰. When they lose their reputation there is a breach in the religious institution’s credibility, which leads people to abandon it. Moreover, without the threat of the sovereign’s “coercive *potentia*”²⁶¹ this institution would cease to exist:

It followeth necessarily, when they that have the Government of Religion, shall come to have either the wisdom of those men, their sincerity or their love suspected; or that they shall be unable to shew any probable token of Divine Revelation; that the Religion which they desire to uphold, must be suspected likewise; and (without the feare of the Civill Sword) contradicted and rejected (Lev, 12.24).

²⁵⁶ Lev, 12.11. See: MACMILLAN, 2018, p. 5-7; JESSEPH, Douglas. Hobbes’ Atheism, **Midwest Studies in Philosophy**, vol. 26/1, 2002, p. 162; CURLEY, 2007, p. 323; DUMOUCHEL, 1995, p. 42; BEJAN, 2018, p. 55, p. 60; PARKIN, 2018, p. 191-192; CROMARTIE, Alan. The God of Thomas Hobbes, **The Historical Journal**, vol. 51/4, 2008, p. 874; BERTMAN, Martin. Hobbes on Miracles (and God), **Hobbes Studies**, vol. 20/1, 2007, p. 50; STAUFFER, 2010, p. 874-875; PAGANINI, 2019, p.135-138.

²⁵⁷ Lev, 11.16.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁹ Lev, 11.18.

²⁶⁰ Lev, 12.24.

²⁶¹ Lev, 15.3.

Conceptualizing religion as *potentia* allowed Hobbes to explain how religions disappear. Religious groups' dissolution starts with a "weakening of mens faith"²⁶². According to Hobbes, believers lose their faith when they suspect priests are not acting accordingly to their role²⁶³. This happens when priests lose their reputation concerning wisdom, sincerity, love, or holiness. The disjunctive in Hobbes' construction is quite interesting because it indicates that the loss of one of these reputations is enough to put the religious institution under suspicion. In Hobbes' perspective, these "unpleasing priests"²⁶⁴ were responsible for the dissolution of "all formed religion"²⁶⁵. In the English version of *Leviathan*, Hobbes claimed that they were present among Catholics and Protestants²⁶⁶. Despite the strong anticlerical character of his arguments²⁶⁷, Hobbes should not be classified as "antireligious"²⁶⁸.

Moreover, conceptualizing religious associations as *potentia* allowed him to explain which institutions had "politics as part of [their] religion", and which one had "religion as part of [their] politics"²⁶⁹. The first case was expressed in the historical prophetic Kingdom of God (from Moses to the establishment of kings) and, according to Hobbes, will happen again in the future Kingdom of God²⁷⁰. Until then, according to Hobbes' exegesis of the Scriptures, the subjects must obey their sovereign and firmly believe in their hearts that Jesus is the Christ²⁷¹. The second case, religion as "parts of politics", can be represented in the religion conceived by the "lawgivers of the gentiles"²⁷². They cultivated the roman religion according to "their own fancies"²⁷³, using it to obtain "obedience and peace"²⁷⁴.

²⁶² Lev, 12.29.

²⁶³ Lev, 12.24.

²⁶⁴ Lev, 12.32.

²⁶⁵ Lev, 12.24.

²⁶⁶ Lev, 12.32. Hobbes was probably referring to the Presbyterians. See: CURLEY, 1994b, note 20, p. 74; MARTINICH, 1992, p. 65-66; MANENSCHIJN, Gerrit & VRIEND, John. 'Jesus Is the Christ': The Political Theology of 'Leviathan', **The Journal of Religious Ethics**, vol. 25/1, 1997, p. 57. SPRINGBORG, 1995, p. 517.

²⁶⁷ See: CURLEY, 2007, p. 322; PARKIN, 2018, p. 190, p. 192; CARMEL, Elad. Hobbes and Early English Deism. In: APELDOORN, Laurens & DOUGLASS, Robin (org.), **Hobbes on Politics & Religion**, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 203-204, p. 214-215; COLLINS, 2018, p. 237-238.

²⁶⁸ STAUFFER, 2010, p. 878.

²⁶⁹ LL, p. 171.

²⁷⁰ Lev, 12.20. See: JONES, 2016; MCQUEEN, 2018.

²⁷¹ Lev, 43:22-23.

²⁷² Lev, 12.18.

²⁷³ Lev, 12.12.

²⁷⁴ Lev, 12.20.

According to Hobbes' perspective, the Catholic religion should be included in the same category as the religion of the Gentiles²⁷⁵. Both were "part of politics", and lost all of their reputation²⁷⁶. Catholic Church's dissolution happens not only because its *potestas* or jurisdiction was "abolished"²⁷⁷, but because its reputation or *potentia* was lost²⁷⁸.

The Catholic Church fulfills all the criteria proposed by Hobbes for the dissolution of religions²⁷⁹. It lost its reputation for wisdom, love, sincerity, and holiness. Its rulers were "unpleasing priests", known for their "uncleanness", "avarice", and for "juggling at between Princes"²⁸⁰ with their "fictitious predictions"²⁸¹. According to Hobbes' perspective, the Catholic Church lost its reputation of wisdom, and of love, when, trying to explain mysteries of the faith, assimilated Aristotelian doctrines into the Christian religion²⁸². This conceptual frame, known as scholastics²⁸³, resulted in so many "contradictions and absurdities", that the Church gained a reputation for both its "ignorance" and "fraudulent intention"²⁸⁴. For the "fayling of Vertue" of their priests and for meddling into human politics it lost its reputation of sincerity²⁸⁵. Finally, it lost its reputation of holiness because catholic priests were unable to produce miracles. Priests had to resort to the inventions of fraudulent individuals to produce false miracles and, consequently, maintain their reputation of holiness. The false belief in "fayries, and walking Ghosts" were taught "on purpose" aiming "to keep in credit the use of Exorcisme, of Crosses, of holy Water, and other such inventions of Ghostly men"²⁸⁶. Miracles are the most alluring feature of religious groups because they can help attain the true conversion of a new believer²⁸⁷. Reputation for producing them attracts more members searching for the same supernatural grace. When miracles fail, also fails the believer's faith²⁸⁸. As stated previously,

²⁷⁵ LL, p. 1119.

²⁷⁶ LL, p. 171.

²⁷⁷ LL, p. 185.

²⁷⁸ Lev, 12.31-32.

²⁷⁹ Lev, 12.25-28.

²⁸⁰ Lev, 12.31.

²⁸¹ LL, p. 185.

²⁸² LL, p. 1063.

²⁸³ LL, p. 1075.

²⁸⁴ Lev, 12.31.

²⁸⁵ Lev, 12.31-32

²⁸⁶ Lev, 2.8; LL, p. 1083.

²⁸⁷ Lev, 12.28.

²⁸⁸ Lev, 12.29.

religious groups start their dissolution when people lose their faith or have it “weakened”.

5. *POTENTIA*, *POTESTAS* AND RELIGION

This section analyzes the relationship between *Leviathan's* twofold conception of power and its implications concerning religion. Subsection 4.1 explores how Hobbes portrayed the factional and disruptive potential represented by religious associations' instrumentalization. These groups' *potentia* is based on the number and power of their members and can be used to oppose the sovereign power's orders. Subsection 4.2 explores how Hobbes portrays the instrumentalization of religion by sovereign power. Hobbes uses the “lawgivers of the gentiles” as examples because they had been able to cultivate a religion with many institutions which ensured “the peace of the commonwealth”²⁸⁹. The rulers of religion instrumentalize religious beliefs and ceremonies aiming for additional ways to strengthen their commands²⁹⁰.

5.1. Religious Associations as Factions

As mentioned earlier (section 2.1), religious associations are political by nature. They are “strengths united” around an individual with a reputation of wise and holy that procures for their security in so-called spiritual matters. These institutions can be used to empower an individual, and to reinforce desirable behaviors²⁹¹. His words can be imbued in a holy aura, designed to disguise the political nature of his actions²⁹². His violence could have been concealed as an act in the name of God²⁹³. He might even pretend that his actions were done as part of a covenant with God²⁹⁴. Religious associations might gather a

²⁸⁹ Lev, 12.19.

²⁹⁰ Lev 12:21.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*

²⁹² See: Lev, 29.8; Lev, R&C.10.

²⁹³ OL, p. 461.

²⁹⁴ Lev, 18.3.

considerable amount of power that could be used to the detriment of the civil sovereign²⁹⁵.

The amount of power these religious associations have poses a threat to the sovereign power. These institutions might start to dispute the subjects' obedience with the sovereign. This is important for Hobbes because "a kingdom divided in itself [...] cannot stand"²⁹⁶. Hobbes' concern justifies his argument in favor of the submission of religious power to civil power. Hobbes states that when Christian subjects prefer to obey some strange prince²⁹⁷, instead of his own "Christian sovereign" and his religion, they will end up "destroying all laws", and reducing "society to the first chaos of violence and civil war"²⁹⁸. These clusters of power represented by religious associations can be understood as factions²⁹⁹. The Catholic Church, for example, after losing its jurisdiction in England³⁰⁰, can only be understood as some sort of faction "for Government of Religion"³⁰¹. That is, an "unlawful regular private body", constituted by "foreign authorities for the propagation of their doctrines or to create a faction contrary to the sovereign power of the Commonwealth"³⁰². If the sovereign does not exercise strict control of their doctrines, "superstitious citizens will be moved to rebellion by their own imaginings"³⁰³.

Hobbes saw in these religious associations the danger of the "dissolution of all civil government". He thought that religion could be used to promote a political agenda by those falsely "pretending to be supernaturally inspired"³⁰⁴. These "evil men" use religion "to say any thing when it serves their turn, though they think it untrue"³⁰⁵. The conflicting orders of the civil and religious authorities cause a political "*epilepsy*", resulting in "violent and irregular motions" that may

²⁹⁵ Lev, 18.3, Lev, R&C.10. See: ABIZADEH, Arash. The Representation of Hobbesian Sovereignty: Leviathan as Mythology. In: LLOYD, Sharon A. (org.). **Hobbes Today: Insights for the 21st Century**. Nova Iorque: Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 146-148.

²⁹⁶ Lev, 29.15.

²⁹⁷ Lev, 46.13.

²⁹⁸ Lev, 36.20.

²⁹⁹ Lev, 22.29.

³⁰⁰ Lev, 12.31.

³⁰¹ Lev, 22.32.

³⁰² LL, p. 369.

³⁰³ LL, p. 279.

³⁰⁴ Lev, 29.8.

³⁰⁵ Lev, 2.8.

throw the political body "into the fire of a civil war"³⁰⁶. As Field highlights: "this concern is further developed in *Behemoth*, in which the wealth, influence, and popular support of religious groupings and great towns are identified as the matrix of England's descent into civil war"³⁰⁷.

Hobbes' worried that factions "for Government of Religion" might impact the political actions of the sovereign power³⁰⁸. These factions could, through the instrumental use of religion, empower individuals in a way that allowed them to challenge the subjects' obedience with the sovereign power. This would necessarily result in war³⁰⁹. The most obvious practical effect of these groups is the weakening of the sovereign's *potentia*. After all, losing members means losing "power" and "strength"³¹⁰. The complete destruction of these religious groups cannot be achieved without dangerous side effects. The sovereign must be able to control these groups or at least curb their influence by institutionalizing their practices as soon as possible.

5.2. Civil Religion: Sovereign Power's use of religion's *potentia*.

The Romans represent one of the most important examples of the instrumental use of religious *potentia* by the state *potestas*. As argued in subsection 3.2, the Romans' religion was a part of their "politics". It was cultivated according to their lawgivers' "own fancies"³¹¹ whose end was "obedience"³¹². The "lawgivers" found a way to use the religious groups' *potentia* to consolidate the State's *potestas*. of the state³¹³.

³⁰⁶ Lev, 29.15.

³⁰⁷ FIELD, 2020, p. 102.

³⁰⁸ Lev, 22.32.

³⁰⁹ Lev, 29.15.

³¹⁰ Lev, 10.1.

³¹¹ LL, p. 171.

³¹² LL, p. 175.

³¹³ Hobbes highlights another way to cultivate the natural seeds of religion. According to Hobbes, some cultivated them according to the "commandments of God" (Lev 12:12). I will not address this topic in this paper because of its extreme complexity, and also because it is not at the center of the discussion regarding the new conception of relational power. Concerning Christianity and civil religion on Hobbes thought, see: BEINER, Ronald. Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Rousseau on Civil Religion, *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 55/4, 1993, p. 624-631; BEINER, Ronald. **Civil Religion: A Dialogue in the History of Political Philosophy**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 46-60; MORTIMER, 2016, p. 506-509; SPRINGBORG, Patricia. The Politics of Hobbes's *Historia Ecclesiastica*. In: APELDOORN, Laurens & DOUGLASS, Robin (org.), **Hobbes on Politics & Religion**, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 152-153; TUCK, Richard. The civil religion of Thomas Hobbes. In: PHILLIPSON, Nicholas & SKINNER, Quentin (org.). **Political Discourse in Early Modern Britain**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 124-126.

As Paganini points out, one of the possible sources to Hobbes new critical conception of religion might be the French Libertines' "theory of the political use of religions". Among these elements is the "creation of 'invisible powers', induced by fear and ignorance", as well as the "political use of religious myths"³¹⁴. Hobbes had contact with these ideas through the works of Naudé and La Mothe Le Vayer, which filtered some Machiavellian themes present mostly in the chapters 10th to 15th of Machiavelli's *Discorsi*³¹⁵.

This instrumentalization aimed to make men "more apt to obedience, laws, peace, charity, and civil society"³¹⁶. To obtain such control the lawgivers "with gentleness, and dexterity" spread three basic ideas among the common people³¹⁷. First, that religious dogmas were supernaturally and directly communicated to their political leaders³¹⁸. This would help them achieve some sort of monopoly in religion's instrumentation³¹⁹. Second, that the behavior the gods' disliked was the same behavior prohibited by law³²⁰. This strategy helped blur the lines between divine and civil command. And third, that certain actions (rituals, ceremonies, sacrifices, etc.) could please or displease the gods³²¹. This would help to consolidate the idea that priests asserted some sort of control over those "invisible" power or "agents"³²². The roman lawgivers were able to make the "common people" attribute their "misfortunes" to neglect in their ceremonies, or to "their own disobedience to the lawes"³²³. These "institutions" made the subjects "lesse apt to mutiny against their Governors"³²⁴. This strategy seems to reveal the instrumentalization of the religion by Roman lawgivers: the commonwealth's *potestas* regulate the religion's *potentia*.

³¹⁴ PAGANINI, 2019, p. 142.

³¹⁵ *Idem*, p. 151. See also: BEINER, 2011, p. 630; ZAGORIN, Perez. **Ways of Lying: Dissimulation, Persecution and Conformity in Early Modern Europe.** Harvard; Harvard University Press, 1990, p. 322; STAUFFER, 2010, p. 875.

³¹⁶ Lev, 12.12.

³¹⁷ Lev, 12.19.

³¹⁸ Lev, 12.20.

³¹⁹ See: ABIZADEH, 2013, p. 147.

³²⁰ Lev, 12.20.

³²¹ *Ibid.*

³²² Lev, 12.6.

³²³ Lev, 12.21.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*

6. CONCLUSION

This paper has shown that *Leviathan's* refined conception of power is the basis in which Hobbes' founded his anthropology of religion and strengthened his argument concerning the regulation by the State over religion. From Hobbes' characterization of religions' political and factious potential, it is easier to see the argumentative movement he operated in favor of the regulation of ecclesiastical functions by the civil sovereign. Religion can provide an individual with enough *potentia* to dispute the subjects' obedience with the sovereign power. For Hobbes, there cannot exist two *potestas* inside one commonwealth, because "a Kingdome divided in it selfe, [...] cannot stand"³²⁵. Since the sovereign power cannot get rid of religion and cannot leave it free, it must control it, inscribing it to a jurisdiction subordinated to the sovereign power. Moreover, my article demonstrates that it is not exclusively curiosity (as Paganini argues) the "driving force behind all changes" in Hobbes' critical approach to religion³²⁶. The refinement of the treatment of power may have been instrumental in the development of the new anthropology of religion present in *Leviathan*.

³²⁵ Lev, 29.16.

³²⁶ PAGANINI, 2019, p. 135.

III - HOBBS, RELIGION AND THE OATH'S APPARENT CONTRADICTION

“Nor does swearing [*iusjurandum*] seem to be natural worship, because *outside the civil state there is no place for swearing*” (LL, p. 171)³²⁷.

“So that *before the time of civil society*, or in the interruption thereof by war, there is nothing can strengthen covenants against the desires of men better than the fear of that invisible agent which is called ‘god’ by all men, and worshipped with different ceremonies. Therefore to strengthen covenants, covenanters have thought it necessary to swear [*jurarent*], by the god they feared, that they would fulfil their covenants” (LL, p. 217).

1. INTRODUCTION

In the Latin version of the *Leviathan*, we find an apparent inconsistent position concerning swearing and oaths (terms used interchangeably throughout his political works). In *Leviathan*'s 12th chapter ('Of Religion'), Hobbes proposes that, 'outside the Civil state'³²⁸, any form of binding swearing is impossible. Nevertheless, only two chapters later, Hobbes asserts that “before the civil society”³²⁹, the only way to strengthen the promise of the individuals to execute a covenant is to swear an oath. How are we to understand his position regarding oaths? Was Hobbes inconsistent? And if so, what would explain his position? Moreover, what are the implications of this position in his latter works?

Hobbes' conflicting position concerning oaths was overlooked by the existing literature, which focused mainly on the analysis of contractual obligation³³⁰. Existing critical editions of *Leviathan* which take the Latin edition

³²⁷ Hobbes' works are abbreviated as follows: EL – *Elements of Law, Natural and Politic*. Ed. F; Tönnies (Cambridge, 1928); DCi – HOBBS, Thomas. **De Cive**. Tradução: Richard Tuck & Michael Silverthorne. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998; DHo – HOBBS, Thomas. **Man and Citizen**. Tradução: Bernard Gert. Gloucester: Doubleday & Company, 1972; Lev – HOBBS, Thomas. **Leviathan**. Tradução: Noel Malcolm. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, and HOBBS, Thomas. **Leviathan**. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994; LL – HOBBS, Thomas. **Leviathan**. Tradução: Noel Malcolm. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012; EW 4 – HOBBS, Thomas. **The English Works of Thomas Hobbes**, vol. 4. London: Molesworth, 1840; BE – *Behemoth, or the Long Parliament*, In: HOBBS, Thomas. **The English Works of Thomas Hobbes**, vol. 6. London: Molesworth, 1840.

³²⁸ LL, p. 171.

³²⁹ LL, p. 217.

³³⁰ See: EGGERS, Daniel. Liberty and Contractual Obligation in Hobbes, **Hobbes Studies**, vol. 22, 2009, p. 77, 93-94; FIASCHI, Giovanni. The Power of Words: Political and Theological Science in Thomas Hobbes, **Hobbes Studies**, vol. 26, 2013, p. 44-45; VENEZIA, Luciano. Crucial Evidence: Hobbes on Contractual Obligation, **Journal of the Philosophy of History**, vol. 7, 2013, p. 122-123.

into consideration, ignored this apparent contradiction³³¹. Tricaud's French translation of the Latin Leviathan does not dedicate even a single footnote to comment on the apparent contradiction (1971). Curley's edition "with selected variations from the Latin edition of 1668" also does not mention it (1994). And even Malcolm's translation of the Latin edition of Leviathan does not refer to it (2012). It is important to highlight the nuances of the concept of oaths, because according to Hobbes, even the covenant made by the people to create a commonwealth and "put the supreme power of the nation into the hands of their kings" received support from "oaths"³³².

This paper will argue that Hobbes' inconsistent position regarding oaths can be explained away if we take into consideration the normative emphasis he proposed to the concept of religion. The formal structure of oaths had not changed substantially across Hobbes political works: among many shared features, oaths remain dependent on the concept of religion³³³. Although Hobbes is consistent with his definition of oaths, his views on religion changed significantly. That definition rests on two axes. A normative axis, influenced by Erastianism, that establishes that religion correspond exclusively to the forms of worships and beliefs authorized by the sovereign³³⁴. And a relativistic axis, that has as its "consequence that whether a religion is a superstition or not depends upon time and place"³³⁵. Hobbes presents a normative dimension of religion,

³³¹ With the exception of Pécharman and Tricaud's translation of the Latin edition of Leviathan, which highlights this apparent contradiction (HOBBS, Thomas. **Leviathan**: Traduit du Latin. Tradução: François Tricaud & Martine Pécharman. Paris: Librairie Philosophique J.Vrin, 2004, p. 98).

³³² BE, p. 353.

³³³ EL 15.16; DCi 2.20; Lev 14.31; LL, p. 217.

³³⁴ Erastianism is understood here as the doctrine which defends that the church should be under the civil sovereign control. See: COLLINS, Jeffrey R. **The Allegiance of Thomas Hobbes**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 14, p. 121; MARTINICH, Aloysius. Hobbes's Erastianism and Interpretation. *In*: MARTINICH, Aloysius (org.). **Hobbes's Political Philosophy**, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021, p. 125, p. 237, p. 245, p. 249; OLSTHOORN, Johan. The Theocratic Leviathan: Hobbes's Arguments for the Identity of Church and State. *In*: APELDOORN, Laurens & DOUGLASS, Robin (org.), **Hobbes on Politics & Religion**, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 11; DUMOUCHEL, 1995, p. 52; SPRINGBORG, 2018, p. 152; SOMMERVILLE, Johan P. Hobbes, Selden, Erastianism, and the history of the Jews. *In*: JOHN ROGERS, G.A. and SORELL, Tom. **Hobbes and History**, Londres: Routledge, p. 159-187, 2000; NAUTA, 2002, p. 586-592; ABIZADEH, Arash. Hobbes's Conventionalist Theology, The Trinity, and God as an Artificial Person by Fiction, **The Historical Journal**, vol. 60/4, 2017, p. 20.

³³⁵ See: MARTINICH, 1992, p. 52. See also: ABIZADEH, Arash – Publicity, Privacy, and Religious Toleration in Hobbes's Leviathan, **Modern Intellectual History**, vol. 10/2, 2013, p. 287-288; ABIZADEH, 2017, p. 20-21; CURLEY, Edwin. Introduction to Hobbes' Leviathan. *In*: HOBBS, Thomas, **Leviathan**, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994a, p. x-xi; MARTINICH, 1992, p. 51-53, 57; BALDIN, 2019, p. 6/28; MACMILLAN, 2018, p. 11.

defined as the form of worship authorized by the Commonwealth. However, since each Commonwealth can institute a religion as true, as an effect of this definition, a relativistic facet of religion is incorporated across Hobbes' works. That relativism was severely criticized by his interlocutors of that time. The apparent contradiction concerning the oaths in the Latin edition of *Leviathan*, I argue, reflects an oscillation between the normative notion of religion and its consequent relativism.

The objections to the English edition of *Leviathan*, presented by Alexander Ross (c. 1590 – 1654), John Bramhall (1594 – 1663), and Richard Allestree (c. 1621 – 1681), induced Hobbes to redact all traces of his perspectivist position and to sustain a narrower normative definition of religion on his later works, encompassing only those forms of worship authorized by the sovereign power³³⁶. Worship not authorized is categorized as “superstition”³³⁷. If oaths are dependent on religion, and religion only exists when authorized by the sovereign, therefore we can understand Hobbes' revision of the term, as well as his new position stating that “swearing have no place outside the civil state”³³⁸. In a proper sense³³⁹, swearing and oaths cannot exist in the state of nature because they are based on religion, which can only exist, according to Hobbes' definition, after its authorization by the commonwealth³⁴⁰. Nevertheless, Hobbes maintains that the only way promises can be motivationally strengthened in the state of nature is with the elocution of a formula to a deity. I will argue that this proto-swearing can be identified with the Hobbesian term “vow”, that bears almost the same semantical sense, and for not being dependent on the concept of religion, can exist in the state of nature³⁴¹. Vows are part of a set of similar social practices that exist before the civil society (as superstition and stable union between individuals) and which, although gaining a juridical form, maintain their pre-existing one. Besides clarifying Hobbes' apparent inconsistency regarding oaths,

³³⁶ This is not a new position in Hobbes political philosophy. Lodi Nauta argued that this was one of the features that remains present in Hobbes' political philosophy concerning religion (NAUTA, 2002, p. 586-592). The point I am trying to make here, is that this feature, becomes the formal definition of religion in Hobbes' later works.

³³⁷ Lev 6.36.

³³⁸ LL, p. 171.

³³⁹ See: NAUTA, 2021, p. 202-208.

³⁴⁰ LL p. 87.

³⁴¹ DCi 2.13; Lev 14.23.

this chapter highlights some continuities between the state of nature and the civil state.

This paper proceeds as follow: section 1 will review the concept of oaths in Hobbes' political works, highlighting the consistency of his definition. Section 2 will investigate the changes in the emphasis of the concept of religion across Hobbes' works, highlighting two distinct perspectives of the aforementioned concept: a relativistic and a normative one. After the criticism *Leviathan* received, Hobbes increasingly stressed the latter. Section 3 will analyze the role of similar social practices in the state of society such as the proto-concepts of marriage (stable union), religion (superstition), and oaths (vows). I argue that the "vow" can fulfill the role of the oath, at least during the state of nature, in which a strict sense of oath is not possible.

2. OATHS IN HOBBS' POLITICAL WORKS

Hobbes' conception of oaths retains the same three fundamental features since *Elements*, Hobbes' first political work. First, oaths are portrayed throughout as a form of speech annexed to the promise of performing a covenant in which the performer declares to renounce his or her deity's mercy, if he or she willfully breaks his part. This feature, according to Hobbes, does not imply that an oath adds another obligation to a lawful agreement because a lawful covenant binds individuals "by the force of natural law, without the swearing of an oath". But if it is unlawfull it does not bind in any way³⁴². Second, oaths are introduced to increase the chance of two individuals to perform a covenant by fear of being severely punished by a deity in which they believe, fulfilling a motivational role, and providing mutual assurance on both parts. Lastly, oaths depend on the existence of an organized religion whose rituals and doctrines are so well-known that they can be relied upon by individuals that do not profess the same faith. According to Hobbes, oaths must be performed according to the rituals and deities in which the performer believes, and exclusively invoking, not human, but deities' names.

³⁴² LL, p. 219.

Across his works, Hobbes defines oaths as a "clause"³⁴³, more precisely a form of "speech"³⁴⁴, annexed to the promise of performing the covenant. This clause states that if one of the performers of the covenant (and oath) deliberately breaks her word, this individual renounce his gods' mercy and accepts to be severely punished by his transgressions³⁴⁵. This fear of an invisible judge and executor helped, according to Hobbes, individuals keep their faith and perform their covenants for fear of divine punishment³⁴⁶. No obligation is added by the covenant. If a covenant is lawful, it binds in the "sight of God" with or without an oath. If the covenant is unlawful or impossible, it does not bind, regardless of whether an oath is added to it³⁴⁷.

The fear of a deity's punishment would be, in most cases, enough to "strengthen" the will of individuals to make them play their part in their agreements. For Hobbes, the act of swearing an oath function as a way to increase the probability of the performance of covenants. According to him, it is unwise to expect that words alone be enough to oblige individuals in performing their agreements. In the *Leviathan*, Hobbes states that we should not expect as a rule that one individual, by pure "glory or pride"³⁴⁸, will abstain from breaking her word, emphasizing the mutual assurance problem. Therefore, the most effective way to incline individuals to keep their promises is by fear of the "consequence" of breaking it³⁴⁹.

The last common feature shared by Hobbes' definition of oaths in his political works, is that they are derived of or introduced by religion³⁵⁰. Oaths existentially depend on a religion, whose precepts are so well known that they can be accepted as belonging to a known institution. Hobbes calls for caution to

³⁴³ EL 15.15.

³⁴⁴ DCi 2.20; Lev 14.31.

³⁴⁵ EL15.15; DCi 2.20, 22-23; Lev 14.31.

³⁴⁶ EL15.15; DCi 2.20; Lev 14.31.

³⁴⁷ EL 15.17; DCi 6.16; Lev 14.33.

³⁴⁸ Lev 14.31.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*; also see, EL 15.15 and DCi 2.22. The *Elements of Law* contains one minor difference concerning this specific point. Hobbes states that breaking an oath would imply a "greater punishment" (EL 15.17). Some scholars have argued that this feature of oaths cannot be found in the *Leviathan* (EGGERS, 2009, p. 77; VENEZIA, 2013, fn. 51). Their interpretation seems, however, to not take into account that the very form of the oath - refusing the deity's mercy (Lev 14.31) - implies a "greater danger" as well as a "greater punishment" (EL 15.17), at least according to the oath swearer's perspective.

³⁵⁰ EL 15.16; DCi 2.20; Lev 14.31.

the form used to take an oath. First, he argues that it is useful to constrain the oath takers to swear by whichever god she believes is the true one. This is important because people do not believe in a power that they are ignorant of³⁵¹. Second, Hobbes defends that swearing should not be taken invoking human names, only gods' names. In the mind of a believer, only a god can guarantee an unavoidable punishment for the breaking of an oath³⁵². No private individual can assure a punishment as exemplary and certain as that one provided by the gods, therefore oaths in the name of human beings are void³⁵³. This is important to explain Hobbes' inconsistent position concerning oaths, because although its conception remained unchanged, the conception of religion changes in emphasis across his works.

The main change between the English and Latin versions of the *Leviathan* is the possibility that the oaths can take place before civil society³⁵⁴. Since oaths require the existence of religion³⁵⁵, this suggests that Hobbes might have considered that religions might have been possible even before civil society. But, how would that be possible, since religion needs to be "publicly allowed"³⁵⁶, i.e., depends on the authorization of the commonwealth³⁵⁷?

3. RELIGION IN HOBBS' WORKS

As shown in the previous section, the conceptualization of oaths has not suffered any major structural changes. It remains a form of speech, and it is used to strengthen the performance of covenants by fear of a divine punishment. Among these other shared features of oaths in Hobbes' political works, the most important to our analysis relies on its dependence on the concept of religion³⁵⁸. In this section, I analyze Hobbes' conceptualization of religion and the changes in emphasis he proposes throughout his political works. This section consists of

³⁵¹ EL 15.16; DCi 2.21; Lev 14.32.

³⁵² See: FIASCHI, 2013, p. 44-45.

³⁵³ EL 15.15; DCi 2.22, 15.15; Lev 14.32.

³⁵⁴ This is what he tries to rectify in the Latin version of the *Leviathan* when he states that the swearing of oaths "cannot have place outside the civil society" (OL, p. 171). I will advance this argument further in the next session.

³⁵⁵ EL 15.16; DCi 2.20; Lev 14.31.

³⁵⁶ Lev 6.36.

³⁵⁷ LL, p. 171.

³⁵⁸ EL 15.16; DCi 2.20; Lev 14.31.

two parts. First, to establish the existence and development, from the *Elements of Law* to the English version of *Leviathan*, of a twofold dimension of religion: normative³⁵⁹ and relativistic³⁶⁰. Second, to demonstrate the criticism suffered by Hobbes regarding his definition of religion and how it may have influenced his definition to take a narrower normative framework in his later works. Delimiting this narrow normative position will help explain Hobbes' apparent contradiction regarding oaths in the Latin edition of *Leviathan*.

3.1. Religion before the English edition of *Leviathan*

3.1.1. Religion's Normative Axis

Elements, contains no clear definition of religion. Nevertheless, Hobbes makes an interesting statement concerning the religion of many commonwealths in the Antiquity. The commonwealth of "Graecians, Romans" and "other Gentiles" commonly associated religion with conformity and, consequently, subordination to civil laws³⁶¹. According to Hobbes, even among them, religion and the rules of external worship had to be "ordered and approved" by their commonwealth. Hobbes highlights the normative aspect of religion by showing that in his system the laws presiding over religion are part of the "civil law"³⁶². He claims that, in the old gentile's commonwealth, it was necessary for a religious worship to be considered "the true worship of God" to be performed "*katá ta nomina*, (i.e.) according to the laws civil"³⁶³.

In *De Cive*, Hobbes first distinguishes between superstition and true religion. For Hobbes, superstition consists of "the fear of invisible things, when it is sever'd from right reason"³⁶⁴. Whereas, true religion, by contrast, can be defined as the fear of invisible things when it is not "sever'd from right reason"³⁶⁵.

³⁵⁹ The following passages highlight the normative aspect of religion: DCi 14.5; DHo 14.1; BE, p. 221; EW IV, p. 369 (*An Answer to Bishop Bramhall's Book, called 'The Catching of the Leviathan'*). See footnote 3.

³⁶⁰ The following passages highlight the relativistic aspect of religion: EL 15.16; DCi 2.21; Lev 6.36; EW 4, p. 292 (*An Answer to Bishop Bramhall's Book*). See footnote 4.

³⁶¹ EL 6.4.

³⁶² *Ibid.*

³⁶³ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁴ DCi 16.1.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

For Hobbes, right reason is not an “infallible faculty”, but “the act of reasoning, that is, the peculiar and true ratiocination of every man concerning those actions of his which may either redound to the damage, or benefit of his neighbors”³⁶⁶. Moreover, according to Hobbes, true religion teaches “that there was one God, the Creatour of the Universe”³⁶⁷.

The introduction of an analysis of superstition represents a conceptual gain over the *Elements*. With this concept Hobbes can explain why subjects often, on ideological grounds, rise up against their sovereigns: “Now, justice is of all things most necessary to Salvation, it happens, that Subjects measuring justice, not as they ought, by the Civill Lawes, but by the precepts and doctrines of them who, in regard of the Magistrate, are either private men or strangers, *through a superstitious fear dare not perform the obedience due to their Princes*, through fear falling into that which they most feared”³⁶⁸. Fear “sever'd from right reason”, spread by private men, leads subjects to disobey the commonwealth’s laws³⁶⁹.

Hobbes’ answer to the challenge imposed by superstition was to establish a normative definition of religion (beyond that of true religion, Jewish and Christian monotheisms). According to him, the laws of the commonwealth institute what should be considered religion and presides over it. According to Hobbes, civil laws determine what is “sacred”, i.e., “which pertain to Religion, that is to say, to the ceremonies, and worship of God”³⁷⁰. Hobbes’ normative approach asserts that the sovereign (and civil laws) presides over religious matters. In sum, religion is the fear of invisible things when it is not “sever'd from right reason”, and when these “ceremonies, and worship” are authorized by the civil law³⁷¹.

3.1.2. Religion’s Relativistic Axis

³⁶⁶ DCi 2.1 [annotation on the 1647 edition].

³⁶⁷ DCi 16.1. Although this conception of right reason is not at stake in the passage in DCv .16.1, this is the most clear and direct definition of right reason present in *De Cive*.

³⁶⁸ DCi 12.5, my emphasis.

³⁶⁹ DCi 16.1.

³⁷⁰ DCi 14.5.

³⁷¹ DCi 16.1. The account of the religion officially sanctioned by the commonwealth is in accord with religion being consonant with the use of “right reason” (DCi 15.18). Since, according to Hobbes, nothing expresses more clearly the use of right reason than submitting his will to the “reason of the City” in points of controversy (*Ibid.*).

Hobbes' normative dimension of religion, as that belief and worship which is authorized by civil law, makes room for a relativistic dimension on the concept. Each state has the right to establish a religion with its own forms of worship and belief, therefore whether an institution is considered a religion or a superstition "depends upon time and place"³⁷². Following this argument, the public worship of the Gentiles, "ordered and approved" by the civil laws, had to be classified as religion. Even the pluralist clause regarding oaths, that each one swears by the precepts of his religion which he "imagines" to be the "true religion"³⁷³, reinforces the idea that a relativistic dimension is an effect of Hobbes' normative dimension of religion.

Even in the *Elements of Law*, Hobbes adopts a relativistic perspective of religion in respect to oaths. According to him, whichever religion an individual professes, he also thinks it is the true one because he is taught so: "For though all men may know by nature, that there is an Almighty power, nevertheless they believe not, that they swear by him, in any other form or name, than what their own (which they think the true) religion teacheth them"³⁷⁴. The religion instituted by a commonwealth is perceived as the true religion by its law-abiding citizens.

3.2. Religion in the English edition of *Leviathan*

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes considerably alters his framing of the concept of superstition. In *De Cive*, superstition is an individual act of belief based on fear without the application of right reason to the phenomenon not understood³⁷⁵. In *Leviathan*, superstition is defined, in contrast to religion, as "Fear of power invisible, feigned by the mind, or imagined from tales" that are not "publicly allowed"³⁷⁶. Martinich mistakenly claims that the definition of superstition presented in *De Cive* is "similar" to that proposed by Hobbes in *Leviathan*³⁷⁷. However, the parameters are completely different between them. In *De Cive*,

³⁷² See: A. P. MARTINICH, 1992, p. 52.

³⁷³ DCi 2.21.

³⁷⁴ EL 15.16.

³⁷⁵ The term "superstition" appears only once in the *Elements*, twice in *De Cive*. The term appears nine times in the English and Latin versions of *Leviathan* (nevertheless some of the passages do not coincide).

³⁷⁶ Lev, 6.36.

³⁷⁷ A. P. MARTINICH, 1992, p. 52.

Hobbes seems to portray superstition as an act involving an individual not properly applying his right reason to a natural phenomenon³⁷⁸. While in *Leviathan*, superstition is any sort of worship or belief that does not have public permission to be performed³⁷⁹.

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes expanded considerably his examination into the political effects of superstition present in his earlier political works³⁸⁰. For Hobbes, superstition not only prevents individuals from being "much more fitted than they are for civil obedience"³⁸¹, it is also one of the main causes that can lead to civil war: "The fear of darkness and ghosts is greater than other fears" and can sometimes "destroy a commonwealth"³⁸². Hobbes argues that a sovereign needs tight control over the "opinions and doctrines" taught in her commonwealth³⁸³. Superstitious and erroneous doctrines are "pernicious to the public state"³⁸⁴.

Hobbes' normative definition of religion seems designed to help the citizens to avoid superstitious doctrines. According to him, religion is the "Fear of power invisible, feigned by the mind, or imagined from tales publicly allowed"³⁸⁵. If a belief or practice is "publicly allowed" it is religion; otherwise, it is superstition. Hobbes possibly sought to encompass all religions other than early Judaism and Christianity³⁸⁶. According to Hobbes, the authority of Greek and Roman religions "proceeded from the State"³⁸⁷.

However, *Leviathan's* normative position is less narrow than in his later works. Hobbes seems to assume relativism as a side effect of his normative definition of religion because if each sovereign can institute which doctrines should be publicly preached, then any kind of worship or belief endorsed and

³⁷⁸ DCi 16.1.

³⁷⁹ Lev 6.36

³⁸⁰ About the difference between the *Elements*, *De Cive* and *Leviathan* concerning religion, see: NAUTA, 2002, p. 596; DAVIS, Paul B. Devil in the Details: Hobbes's Use and Abuse of Scripture. In: APELDOORN, Laurens & DOUGLASS, Robin (org.), **Hobbes on Politics & Religion**, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 137.

³⁸¹ Lev 2.8.

³⁸² Lev 29.15.

³⁸³ Lev 18.9.

³⁸⁴ Lev 46.32.

³⁸⁵ Lev 6.36.

³⁸⁶ In *De Cive*, Hobbes states that the "true religion," spread by Abraham, teaches that "there was one God, the Creatour of the Universe" (DCi 16.1).

³⁸⁷ Lev 16.11. As shown in section 2.1.1, Hobbes had made similar claims in his previous works. See: EL 6.4; DCi 14.5.

authorized by the commonwealth should be considered a religion, no matter how superstitious or heterodox that institution might be. The relativistic dimension of religion creates blurred lines in the Hobbesian tradition, such as witchcraft and the status of Christianity before Constantine's authorization. According to him, the fear of invisible powers is the seed of "which every one in himself calleth Religion; and in them that worship, or feare that Power otherwise than they do, Superstition"³⁸⁸. The difference between religion and superstition is relativistic, it depends on the allowance or not of the religious practice, and whether a religion is considered a superstition depends on the laws of the commonwealth. Its consequence is that each religious group see their own worship as religion and different worship as superstition³⁸⁹. These beliefs were developed in a series of rituals so different, that the ceremonies "used by one man, are for the most part ridiculous to another"³⁹⁰. The difference between religion and superstition, in this case, does not depend on the sovereign's authorization, but on the perception of the believers.

Another cloudy spot can be found in Hobbes' analysis of witchcraft³⁹¹. For Hobbes, witchcraft does not correspond to a real power³⁹², but to the propagation of a "new religion"³⁹³ that stands as a rival to the official religion (legally and politically established by the sovereign power). Therefore, those who practice witchcraft deserve a punishment based on the political dimension of their false reputation of power rather than for any kind of direct damage that any members

³⁸⁸ Lev 11.26.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁰ Lev 12.11.

³⁹¹ For further reading on Hobbes and witchcraft see: PETERS, Edward, Thomas Hobbes. *In: GOLDEN, Richard (org.). Encyclopedia of Witchcraft: The Western Tradition*, Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, p. 498-499, 2006; HULL, Gordon. *Building Better Citizens: Hobbes against the Ontological Illusion*, **Epoche**, vol. 20/1, p. 105-129, 2015; BEVER, Edward. *Witchcraft Prosecutions and the Decline of Magic*, **The Journal of Interdisciplinary History**, Vol. 40/2, p. 263-293, 2009; WRIGHT, George. **Religion, Politics and Thomas Hobbes**. Dordrecht: Springer, 2006, p. 215 (fn. 16).

³⁹² The Egyptian Enchanters were not able to produce miracles by "their own power", they used "natural" and "ordinary means" (Lev 37.9) to achieve "imposture and delusion" (Lev 37.10). According to Hobbes, these "impostors need not the study so much as of natural causes, but the ordinary ignorance, stupidity, and superstition of mankind, to do them" (*Ibid.*). E. Curley suggests that "The view that no created creature can perform a miracle is in Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, qu. 110, art. 4; qu. 114, art. 4. If all works done by a power given by God are natural, and hence, not miracles (as the English version implies), this seems to deny the status of miracles to the works performed by Moses and the prophets" (CURLEY, 1994b, p. 297, footnote 15).

³⁹³ Lev 2.8.

of this sect may be able to produce with their craft³⁹⁴. According to the definition proposed in Leviathan's chapter VI, witchcraft should be categorized as superstition. Although the "silence" of the sovereign counts as permission³⁹⁵, this seems hardly the case with witchcraft. The Witchcraft Acts of 1562 (Elizabeth) and 1603 (James I) criminalized and prohibited the practice, in some cases imposing the death penalty³⁹⁶. The Witchcraft Acts destined the practitioners of witchcraft to a trial in common justice (instead of ecclesiastical justice)³⁹⁷.

The last grey area concerning religion and superstition resided in the status of Christianity before Constantine gave it legal status in 323 AD. with the Edict of Milan. Hobbes theorizes that before Constantine had adopted it, the Christian faith was a "doctrine" whose acceptance and contribution was "voluntary"³⁹⁸. Only after Constantine had "professed and authorized Christian religion"³⁹⁹, the Christian worship can be accepted as a Church (in a strict Hobbesian way), and more importantly a "lawfull" one⁴⁰⁰. These facts lead Hobbes to contest Bellarmine's arguments for papal supremacy and to conclude that Constantine was the "first Christian Emperor", and by "right", the "supreme bishop of the Roman empire"⁴⁰¹.

3.3. Religion after the English edition of *Leviathan*

3.3.1. Contemporary criticism of Hobbes' *Leviathan*

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.* According to Hobbes, in his *A dialogue between a philosopher and a student of the Common Laws of England*, "without doubt there is some great wickedness" in "witchcraft, sorcery and enchantment". Hobbes, however, states that he was unable to "conceive the nature" of these practices nor "how the devil hath power to do many things which witches have been accused of" (BE, p. 96).

³⁹⁵ Lev 18.21; Lev 26.7.

³⁹⁶ GIBSON, Marion. **Witchcraft and Society in England and America, 1550-1750**. Londres: Continuum, 2003, p. 3-7.

³⁹⁷ This passage (Lev 2.8) leaves the door open to interpret religion's "public" allowance to be broader than first expected. Further than the sovereign authorization, a social authorization seems to play a part in the case of witchcraft.

³⁹⁸ Lev 42.64.

³⁹⁹ Lev 45.35; Lev 42.42.

⁴⁰⁰ Lev 39.2.

⁴⁰¹ Lev 42.86. Hobbes cuts, in the Latin version of *Leviathan*, all mention of Constantine authorizing Christianity, and being the first Christian emperor (Lev 42.42, 42.64, 42.86, and 45.35). Although he refrains throughout the text, in the appendix on heresy, Hobbes maintains that Constantine is the first Christian emperor (OL, p. 1208) and that only after the Council of Nicaea, convened by Constantine (OL, p. 1194) were legal penalties for heresy instituted.

After *Leviathan's* publication, many adversaries objected to Hobbes' doctrines⁴⁰². His new definition of religion sparked an intense criticism, that led him to be mocked, and even publicly accused of heresy⁴⁰³ and atheism⁴⁰⁴. Edward Hyde, for example, states that the definitions proposed by Hobbes in chapter 6 of *Leviathan* delight much more for the "novelty and boldness of the expression, than for any real information in the substantial part of knowledge"⁴⁰⁵. According to him, most individuals said that "they better understood" the definitions "before" Hobbes' explanation than after⁴⁰⁶. Hyde claims that Hobbes' definition of religion is so nebulous that he prefers to leave this discussion "to his Friends of the Universities"⁴⁰⁷. Harsh though Hyde's accusation were, the most vicious assaults against Hobbes' analysis of religion were by Alexander Ross (c. 1590 – 1654), archbishop John Bramhall (1594 – 1663), and Richard Allestree (c. 1621 – 1681)

In *Leviathan drawn out with a Hook* (1653), Ross stated that Hobbes' perspective on religion was "not of a Christian"⁴⁰⁸. He criticizes Hobbes' differentiation between religion and superstition as distinguished from each other by whether or not they were publicly allowed. The "gentiles'" worship, for Ross, should not be considered "religious" but "superstitious" instead⁴⁰⁹. More importantly, "fancy, fiction, or imagination" should not be understood as "the substance and ground of things not seen" but "faith"⁴¹⁰. He states that "the just

⁴⁰² See: PARKIN, Jon. **Taming the Leviathan**. The Reception of the Political and Religious Ideas of Thomas Hobbes in England 1640–1700. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007; SCHRÖDER, Peter. *Fidem observandam esse: Trust and Fear in Hobbes and Locke*. In: KONTLER, László & SOMOS, Mark. **Trust and Happiness in the History of** DOWELL, John. **The Leviathan heretical, or, the Charge exhibited in Parliament against Mr. Hobbs justified**. Oxford: Lichfield, 1683 **Political Thought**, Leiden: Brill, 2017, p. 100 (Footnote 5).

⁴⁰³ DOWELL, John. **The Leviathan heretical, or, the Charge exhibited in Parliament against Mr. Hobbs justified**. Oxford: Lichfield, 1683.

⁴⁰⁴ BRAMHALL, John. **Castigations of Mr. Hobbes: His last Animadversions, in the Case concerning Liberty, and universal Necessity. With an Appendix concerning The Catching of Leviathan or, The great Whale**. Londres: J. Crook, 1657.

⁴⁰⁵ HYDE, Edward. **A brief View and Survey of the dangerous and pernicious Errors to Church and State, in Mr. Hobbes's Book, entitled Leviathan**. Oxon: Printed at the Theater, 1676, p. 20.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁷ *Idem*, p. 21.

⁴⁰⁸ ROSS, Alexander. **Leviathan drawn out with a hook, or, Animadversions upon Mr. Hobbs his Leviathan**. Londres: Newcomb, 1653, p.9.

⁴⁰⁹ *Idem*, p. 10.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.* Hobbes would later reply to that accusation by arguing that the beginning of "religion in all nations", was the same: "that God is, that is to say, that God really is something, and not a mere fancy" (EW 4 [*An Historical Narration concerning Heresie*], p. 393).

live by faith, not by imagination"; by faith they are "saved"⁴¹¹. Imagination does not help believers "overcom the world"⁴¹². Ross seems to criticize Hobbes' realist position concerning the beginning of religions, strongly influenced by "fancies, judgments, and passions of several men"⁴¹³.

John Bramhall focused his critique, in *Castigation of Hobbes' Animadversions* (1657), on Hobbes' normative dimension of religion. Bramhall claimed that the Hobbesian conception of religion⁴¹⁴ leads its authors' "deceived followers" to sail toward a "rock"⁴¹⁵. He argued that if Hobbes' doctrine was accepted, the subjects would be at the mercy of the "governours" and their oscillating opinions, changing religion into superstition and vice-versa ⁴¹⁶ . According to Bramhall, another consequence of admitting this doctrine is that "all the religions of the World, Christian, Jewish, Turkish, Heathenish, are true religions in their own Countries"⁴¹⁷. Bramhall argued that Hobbes' principles were not Christian because they disregard the suffering of the Apostles since "they would obey God rather than man"⁴¹⁸. Hobbes' interpretation would imply that the faith preached by the apostles should be seen as "a false religion, which was not warranted, or indeed which was forbidden by the Sovereign Magistrates"⁴¹⁹. In this same book, Bramhall adds an appendix called "*The Catching of Leviathan, the Great Whale*" in which, again, the archbishop charges against Hobbes' proposed distinction between superstition and religion⁴²⁰. Bramhall claims that

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*

⁴¹² *Ibid.*

⁴¹³ Lev 12.11.

⁴¹⁴ As whichever "the Sovereign Magistrate doth admit and injoyne" (Bramhall, *Castigation of Hobbes' Animadversions*, p. 176).

⁴¹⁵ BRAMHALL, 1657, p. 176.

⁴¹⁶ *Idem*, p. 177.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.* As Paul B. Davis remarks: "Edward Hyde, the first Earl of Clarendon, shrewdly noted, Hobbes's Erastianism placed the Bible on 'the same scale with the *Alcoran*, which hath as much authority by the stamp which the Grand *Signior* puts upon it in all his Dominion. Thomas Tenison had a similar critique, writing of Hobbes, 'He hath subjected the Canon of Scripture to the Civil Powers, and taught them the way of turning the *Alcoran* into Gospel.' Hobbes was well aware of the problems his theory posed for Christians living under non-Christian rulers, but he viewed this approach as the only way to avoid both the anarchy of private interpretation and the perils of divided rule through the power of independent prelates, foreign or domestic." (DAVIS, 2018, p. 137-138).

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁰ Although, as Hobbes would later remark in his "*An Answer to Bishop Bramhall's Book, called 'The Catching of the Leviathan'*" (EW 4, p. 295), Bramhall focuses on the definition proposed in *De Cive* and not in *Leviathan*: "He saw he could not catch *Leviathan* in this place, he looks for him in my book *De Cive*, which is Latin, to try what he could to fish out of that" (*Ibid.*).

Hobbes' analysis of the "natural seeds of religion" leads him to depart from the idea that there is "one God eternal"⁴²¹ and to admit that polytheistic forms of worship should be considered religions. These critiques seem to be justified if we take into consideration Hobbes perspective axis of religion

Richard Allestree preached a sermon before King Charles II, in which he publicly accuses Hobbes of atheism⁴²². He claims that Hobbes' doctrine was not based on Christian principles but on "Nature"⁴²³. According to him, if the doctrines contained in *Leviathan* were put into action, there would be no "Vertue or Religion" to maintain "oaths" and society⁴²⁴. Furthermore, Allestree claims that Hobbes spreads "Infidelity" and corrupts any "sense of Honestie or Vertue" by proposing that "Religion and a Deity" are products of "dreams or artifices"⁴²⁵. Allestree refers to the Hobbesian concept of natural religion, which states that primitive individuals would have begun to develop their forms of worship by contemplating nature and deducing superstitious doctrines from these phenomena⁴²⁶. Allestree objects that for Hobbes "Gods and Religions were invented for the mere necessities of Governours"⁴²⁷, leaving aside the Hobbesian definition of "true religion" (Lev 6.36) present in chapter 6 and the analysis of the "Christian Commonwealth" proposed in the third book of *Leviathan*.

3.3.2. Religion in *De Homine* (1658)⁴²⁸

After the harsh criticism imposed by so many objectors, Hobbes proposes, in *De Homine*, a narrow normative definition of religion as "the external worship (cultus) of men who sincerely honour God" consisting in "faith" and "worship"⁴²⁹ and that "depend[s] on the laws of the state"⁴³⁰. Religion is not merely the fear of

⁴²¹ BRAMHALL, 1657, p. 466.

⁴²² ALLESTREE, Richard. **A Sermon preached before the King at White Hall on Sunday Nov. 17. 1667**, Londres: Flesher, 1667, p. 7.

⁴²³ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴²⁵ *Idem*, p. 6.

⁴²⁶ Lev 12.5-11.

⁴²⁷ ALLESTREE, 1667), p. 7.

⁴²⁸ Hobbes' works are presented in chronological order of composition. See: MILTON, Philip. Hobbes, Heresy and Lord Arlington, **History of Political Thought**, vol. 14/4, 1993, p. 542.

⁴²⁹ DHo 14.1.

⁴³⁰ DHo 14.4.

invisible powers “publicly allowed”⁴³¹, but this publicly allowance belongs only to the sovereign. Moreover, Hobbes does redact all mentions to the relativistic axis of religion (although it can still be deduced from his normative definition). To honour, fear, and worship God, in any form allowed by the state, are common things “to religions among all peoples”. Moreover, Hobbes states that religion is in “in all states” a matter of the “law”. Therefore, it should be “observed” and not disputed as if it was a part of “philosophy”⁴³².

According to Hobbes, the ceremonies used by any religion “are the signs of the act of piety which arise not from the nature of the acts, but from the will of the state”⁴³³. Any religious ceremony has to be in accordance with the will of the sovereign. Polytheistic commonwealths, like the Greek and the Roman, commonly “deified” “whatsoever was nameable”⁴³⁴. According to Hobbes, these “different opinions” professed by believers are part of a “superstitious worship”⁴³⁵. However, Hobbes concludes that if these ceremonies were authorized by law, they have to be understood as religion: “local law was able to have this superstition called religion, and all other worship, superstition”⁴³⁶. Although “the ceremonies of other peoples” may seem irrational to some, and even in some cases are less “rational than others,” for Hobbes, the most rational behavior for a citizen was “to use ceremonies established by civil law”⁴³⁷. This brings us back to the question of the status of Christianity in Hobbes' political philosophy. Although for Hobbes, Christianity is the true religion, before the Edict of Milan (as seen in *Leviathan*), it could not be classified as such. Because the true religion status requires state approval, on the grounds that one of the “essential rights of sovereignty” is to control what doctrines are, be they civil or ecclesiastical, “conformable or contrary to the defence, peace, and good of the people”⁴³⁸.

3.3.3. Religion in the Latin edition of *Leviathan* (1668)

⁴³¹ Lev 6.36.

⁴³² *Idem*.

⁴³³ DHo 14.8.

⁴³⁴ DHo 14.11.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid*.

⁴³⁶ *Ibid*.

⁴³⁷ DHo 14.9.

⁴³⁸ Lev 30.3.

In the Latin edition of the *Leviathan*, Hobbes presents a more precise definition of religion, which is not very different from the English edition: "Feare of power invisible, whether feigned, or publicly allowed from histories, religion"⁴³⁹. However, following the lines in *De Homine*, Hobbes argues that even though some foreign ceremonies and forms of worship might be considered superstitious, if they are "approved by law in one commonwealth"⁴⁴⁰, they should be considered a religion⁴⁴¹.

Hobbes seems to restate his normative position toward religion presented in the English edition of *Leviathan*. For Hobbes, "religion and the knowledge of divine power are commanded by law in a commonwealth"⁴⁴². Therefore, if the normative aspect of religion is disregarded "seditions and civil wars spring up"⁴⁴³. According to Hobbes, even "Christ and the apostles required obedience" to the civil power of the pagans⁴⁴⁴.

Hobbes, however, fails to eliminate all evidence of the perspectivism arising from this position in the Latin edition of his *magnum opus*. His analysis of witchcraft falls prey to the same cloudiness concerning its status. In the Latin version of *Leviathan*, witchcraft is a "religion peculiar" to its practitioners⁴⁴⁵.

The main amendment from his position in the English edition of *Leviathan* lies in the fact that Hobbes attempts to amend his theory about the status of Christianity before Constantine. He suppresses the mentions of "authorization" granted by Constantine to Christianity⁴⁴⁶. However, the thinker claims that Christianity only becomes "lawful" after the Council of Nicea, convened by Constantine I⁴⁴⁷. He also claims that "before Constantine," not even the "Apostles

⁴³⁹ OL, p. 87.

⁴⁴⁰ OL, p. 171.

⁴⁴¹ While in the Latin version of the passage the ceremonies must be approved by the law of the commonwealth, the English version suggests that the encompassing criterion was just the practice: "the different fancies, judgments, and passions of several men hath grown up into ceremonies so different that those which are used by one man are for the most part ridiculous to another" (Lev 12.11).

⁴⁴² LL, p. 1206.

⁴⁴³ LL, p. 1200.

⁴⁴⁴ LL, p. 1210.

⁴⁴⁵ LL, p. 35.

⁴⁴⁶ LL, p. 821; LL, p. 1049.

⁴⁴⁷ *Idem*, p. 1238.

themselves had the power [potestatem] to inflict any penalty on the heretics they condemned"⁴⁴⁸.

3.3.4. Religion in *An Answer to Bishop Bramhall's Book, called 'The Catching of the Leviathan'* (1668)

Bramhall's attack on Leviathan helps shed light, specifically, on how Hobbes' conceived of the beginning of primitive religions and its differentiation from Christianity. The fear of invisible powers that dominated the "savages" was the "beginning of religion"⁴⁴⁹. Hobbes defends that God "imprinted" natural reason in everyone, even in the "hearts of the rudest savages"⁴⁵⁰, who tried to understand and explain the natural phenomena. The "invisible powers" were associated, due to a lack in method, with the "phantasms of their sleep, or their distemper", and were commonly called "ghosts"⁴⁵¹. The ignorance of these individuals regarding the causes of phenomena "made men fly to some first cause, the fear of which bred devotion and worship"⁴⁵². Therefore, it is the "fear of a God, though not [necessarily] the true one" that leads the savages to start their religious worship⁴⁵³. According to Hobbes, initially, "by nature", all individuals "had an opinion of God's existency", but not of God's attributes⁴⁵⁴. Gradually and "by reasoning" individuals started unfolding some of God's "other attributes"⁴⁵⁵. However, Hobbes concludes that "the attributes of the true God" were never "suggested" till "the Word of God" was written⁴⁵⁶. Superstition and polytheistic religions seem to be a prior step towards monotheism⁴⁵⁷.

Sovereigns cannot make "doctrines or prophetes true or false", but they have "a right to prohibit the public teaching of them, whether false or true"⁴⁵⁸. The

⁴⁴⁸ *Idem*, p. 1208.

⁴⁴⁹ EW 4 369 (*An Answer to Bishop Bramhall's Book*), p. 292.

⁴⁵⁰ *Idem*, 288.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.* For Hobbes, while the "fear of a God" was the beginning of religion, the fear of the true God was the beginning of wisdom for the Jews and Christian (EW 4, p. 292). With this argument, Hobbes seems to imply that monotheistic religions are more advanced than polytheistic ones.

⁴⁵⁴ EW 4 (*An Answer to Bishop Bramhall's Book*), p. 293.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵⁷ Monotheism, according to Hobbes, was first taught (after the deluge) by Abraham (DCi 16.1).

⁴⁵⁸ EW 4 (*An Answer to Bishop Bramhall's Book*), p. 329.

sovereign is by right the "judge of doctrines", he cannot make them true, but he is the only one that can decide which doctrines shall be publicly authorized and taught. Even if a "synod of bishops" is invoked to decide on a religious issue, the call for the synod is made by the civil sovereign⁴⁵⁹. Hobbes states that the "power of the clergy [...] amounts to nothing" if not backed up "legally by the king or illegally by the multitude"⁴⁶⁰. Hobbes remarks that Bramhall and him "think the same thing"⁴⁶¹, i.e., "that the supreme judicature in matter of religion could any where be so well placed as in the head of the church, which is the king"⁴⁶². Hobbes leaves no doubt about the authority concerning religious doctrines: the sovereign has the authority to make the "Scripture or any other writing" into law⁴⁶³: the authority over religion resides "in the king"⁴⁶⁴. The Scriptures become law only through the "authority of the commonwealth" and are, therefore "part of the civil law"⁴⁶⁵. For Hobbes, the doctrine of the objectors to this interpretation "smells of ambition and encroachment of jurisdiction, or rump of the Roman tyranny"⁴⁶⁶. Because, for Hobbes, the Pope and the Catholic Church were responsible for spreading seditious doctrines against the rights of the sovereign. They aimed to be the sovereign power themselves of the Christians all over the world.

3.3.5. Religion in *Behemoth* (1668)⁴⁶⁷

In *Behemoth*, Hobbes states that the causes that led to Charles I's execution were not purely economic⁴⁶⁸. He also mentions the influence of "Enemies" who promised the people, in addition to tax relief, "other specious things"⁴⁶⁹. Hobbes lists as the first three "enemies", "Presbyterians", "Papists", and

⁴⁵⁹ *Idem*, p. 330.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶¹ Although Bramhall "knew not how to deduce it", and became "angry" because Hobbes "did it" (EW 4, p. 330).

⁴⁶² *Ibid.*

⁴⁶³ *Idem*, p. 339.

⁴⁶⁴ *Idem*, p. 340.

⁴⁶⁵ *Idem*, p. 369.

⁴⁶⁶ *Idem*, p. 380.

⁴⁶⁷ *Behemoth* and *An Answer to Bishop Bramhall's Book, called 'The Catching of the Leviathan'* were published together in Crooke's 1682 edition of Hobbes' works *Tracts of Mr. Thomas Hobbs of Malmesbury*. However, since *Behemoth* is the first book of the tome and *An Answer to Bishop Bramhall's Book* the second, I have chosen to present my text this way.

⁴⁶⁸ BE, p. 166.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

"Independents"⁴⁷⁰. According to Hobbes the "Presbyterians" pretended "to have a right from God to govern every one his Parish, and their Assembly the whole Nation"⁴⁷¹. "Papists" defended that "we ought to be governed by the Pope, whom they pretended to be the Vicar of Christ, and in the Right of Christ to be the Governour of all Christian People"; the "Independents" had "declared themselves for a Liberty in Religion" and also had a "private Interpretation of the Scripture"⁴⁷².

All of these groups had a big influence on the opinions and actions of the "People", that were "ignorant of their duty" and knew not "what right any man had to command him"⁴⁷³. For Hobbes, these religious groups played a major role in inciting a revolt because "seditious preachers"⁴⁷⁴ taught superstitious doctrines that diminished the king's powers and authority, and promised rewards, in the afterlife, for civil disobedience practiced in this life. Hobbes' remark on this polemical topic tends towards a narrower version of his normative dimension of religion. According to him, in all nations in the world, religion was "established", and received "its authority from the laws of that nation"⁴⁷⁵. These laws, which encompassed religious practices, were determined by the sovereign power and had to be obeyed.

4. OATHS AND THE NARROW NORMATIVE DIMENSION OF RELIGION

Hobbes' normative dimension of religion, as that belief and worship which is authorized by civil law, effectively makes room for a relativistic perspective on the concept⁴⁷⁶. Each state has the right to establish a religion with its own forms of worship and belief. If, as Hobbes proposes, oaths are introduced by religion and the Romans, like the Christians⁴⁷⁷, had formulas for their oaths instituted and authorized by the commonwealth, then the polytheistic cult of the Romans should

⁴⁷⁰ BE, p. 167.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*

⁴⁷³ BE, p. 168.

⁴⁷⁴ BE, p. 223.

⁴⁷⁵ BE, p. 221.

⁴⁷⁶ Hobbes' normative dimension encompasses the institutionalized religions, i.e., those which have state approval. After this institution receives the sovereign's approval, its doctrines and decisions become lawful and backed up by the legislative power of the commonwealth.

⁴⁷⁷ DCi 2.20.

not be regarded as superstition, but as religion. The pluralist clause regarding oaths, that each one swears by the precepts of his religion which he "imagines" to be the "true religion"⁴⁷⁸, reinforces the idea that a relativistic dimension is an effect of Hobbes' normative dimension of religion.

My contention is that Hobbes' position concerning the impossibility of oaths outside the civil state is explained by the development of a narrower normative definition of religion in the Latin *Leviathan*. Hobbes' typical example of an oath depicts the ceremony invoking Jupiter employed in ancient Rome. Rome was a commonwealth in which religion had been authorized by the sovereign power⁴⁷⁹. According to the definition proposed in the 1651 *Leviathan*, religion is the fear of invisible powers "publicly allowed." This public permission (and the control of what is considered a legitimate doctrine or not) belongs only to the civil sovereign. Therefore, in a strict sense, legitimate oaths (those backed by publicly allowed religion) can only exist in the state of society.

However, if the axis considered is the relativistic one, then it is possible to affirm that oaths exist outside the civil state because oaths, in this case, would serve as a way to provide mutual assurance. Since the definition of religion, in this sense, depends only on the believer and the status of his "own religion"⁴⁸⁰, oaths must be speaker-belief-relative to be effective ways to improve motivation to fulfill covenants with other parties. However, if the axis considered is the normative one, in a proper sense (religion as whichever the civil power authorizes), oaths are only possible in the civil state because only the sovereign can efficiently and lawfully enforce a punishment for the break of an oath⁴⁸¹. The relativistic aspect of religion does not disappear from Hobbes' horizon, since it is a consequence of the normative aspect (as shown in the subsection concerning *De Cive*). However, Hobbes seems to commit himself to emphasizing in his later works, perhaps because of the objections that *Leviathan* received, a narrower normative aspect of religion, i.e., as dependent only on the sovereign's approval of the content and practice of religious worships.

⁴⁷⁸ DCi 2.21.

⁴⁷⁹ LL, p. 249.

⁴⁸⁰ Lev 14.31.

⁴⁸¹ LL 12.11.

5. ALTERNATIVE SOCIAL PRACTICES IN THE STATE OF NATURE

As shown in section 1, oaths in a strict sense cannot exist outside the civil state because their “signs” must be determined (as any other ceremony) by the will of the state⁴⁸², on the grounds that only the sovereign of a commonwealth can institute which doctrines should be taught and enforce the punishment for transgressions that might rise up against them. How then do we explain the “form[s] of speech, added to” promises that are performed outside the civil state⁴⁸³?

By proposing an amendment to the Hobbesian text, this section frames a possible solution to the apparent contradiction resulting from the positions taken by Hobbes regarding oaths⁴⁸⁴. Moreover, the existence of proto-oaths outside the civil state reveals a continuity of some social practices from the state of nature to the state of society. The main difference between these social practices is the legal content they acquire in the civil state. Besides the “vows” that acquire a legal content in the civil state, becoming swearing and oaths proper, we have other examples in Hobbesian philosophy that point to a continuity between state of nature and civil state. After the institution of a Commonwealth and the public authorization of its doctrines, superstition gains the status of religion. Also, the unions between individuals can only be called a marriage, for Hobbes, after the institution of a civil state.

Throughout his works, Hobbes offers some glimpses into how he conceived of certain social practices present in both the civil state and the state of nature. Among them, Hobbes describes the emergence of religions as the fruit of the set of superstitious beliefs authorized by the ruler. Before the sovereign's authorization all beliefs, in a strict sense, can only be considered superstition (as seen in much of the previous section).

Another social practice present in both the state of nature and society is marriage. Hobbes, however, states that the union between partners in the state

⁴⁸² DHo 14.8.

⁴⁸³ Lev. 14.31.

⁴⁸⁴ LL, p. 171; LL, p. 217.

of nature cannot be called that. According to Hobbes, "the essence of Marriage" is to be "a legitimate contract"⁴⁸⁵. Such a legitimate contract could only be "granted by the civill Law"⁴⁸⁶. Therefore, where there were commonwealths, and laws regulating unions between individuals, there were marriages "as among the Jews, the Grecians, the Romans"⁴⁸⁷, but never outside the civil state.

Hobbes also seems to offer an alternative state of nature's version of oaths. Those "not tyed by any Civill Law" are able, though "in vain," to make a "vow"⁴⁸⁸, a promise that commits them "to perform an [...] act"⁴⁸⁹. Vows are, like oaths, voluntary: "the openly declar'd Will of the obliger is requisite to make an obligation by Vow"⁴⁹⁰. A vow is, similarly to the oath, a promise invoking the worshipped deities, as shown by its definition present in the Latin dictionary present in Hobbes' library: a vow [*votum*] is simply a "promise made to God" [*promissio facta deo*]⁴⁹¹. Even though part of the vow is to invoke a god, they are not necessarily linked to the concept of religion (in a strictly normative sense), and can perhaps be related to the superstitious fear of individuals in the state of nature. The main difference between oath and vow seems to lie in the fact that while in the former the deity is invoked as a witness (and executor) of the promise, in the latter the deity seems to exercise a function of intermediary between those who utter them. Although there is a subtle difference between them, I argue that the vow can fulfill

⁴⁸⁵ DCi 6.16 [annotation on the 1647 edition].

⁴⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸⁷ *Ibid.* Concerning the topic of Hobbes and marriage, see: CHAPMAN, Richard Allen. Leviathan Writ Small: Thomas Hobbes on the Family, **The American Political Science Review**, vol. 69/1, p. 76-90, 1975; RUSTIGHI, Lorenzo. Rethinking the sexual contract: The case of Thomas Hobbes, **Philosophy & Social Criticism**, vol. 46/3, p. 274-301, 2010; HIRSCHMANN, Nancy J. Hobbes on the Family. *In*: MARTINICH, Alphonsus P. & HOEKSTRA, Kinch (org.), **The Oxford Handbook of Hobbes**, Nova Iorque: Oxford University Press, p. 242-263, 2016; LEVIN, Jamie & MACKAY, Joseph. Domestic entanglements: Family, state, hierarchy, and the Hobbesian state of nature, **Review of International Studies**, vol. 45/2, p. 221-238, 2019.

⁴⁸⁸ DCi 2.13.

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.* Hobbes does not mention the term "vow" in the Elements of Law. But a similar sense of the term can be found in Lev 14.23 and Lev 46.32. On this topic, see: GROVER, Robinson A. The Legal Origins of Thomas Hobbes's Doctrine of Contract, **Journal of the History of Philosophy**, vol. 2/18, p. 177-194, 1980; BRADLEY, Arthur. Let the Lord the Judge be Judge: Hobbes and Locke on Jephthah, Liberalism and Martyrdom, **Law, Culture and the Humanities**, vol. 0, p. 1-20, 2017; KIESSELBACH, Matthias. Hobbes's Struggle with Contractual Obligation. On the Status of the Laws of Nature in Hobbes's Work, **Hobbes Studies**, vol. 23/2, 2010, p. 109, p. 111.

⁴⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹¹ **Dictionarium**, seu Latinae linguae thesaurus. Volume 2. Paris: Stephani, 1531, p. 1519.

the role of the oath, at least during the state of nature, in which a strict sense of oath (dependent on religion) is not possible.

6. CONCLUSION

This paper has argued that Hobbes' apparent contradiction, in the Latin edition of *Leviathan* regarding the possibility of oaths in the state of nature can be explained away by a shift in emphasis in Hobbes' definition of religion. Although a normative dimension of religion (as dependent on the authorization of civil law) has been present since the Elements, Hobbes emphasizes, perhaps because of the criticism directed at this aspect of his philosophy in *Leviathan*, a narrower version of this dimension in his late works (section 2). Since oaths are dependent on the concept of religion (section 1), and, on a narrower dimension, religion can only occur in the civil state, therefore oaths can only occur in the civil state. As a possible amendment to Hobbes' text, this paper has proposed that the "form[s] of speech, added to" promises that are performed outside the civil state⁴⁹², be identified with the "vow," which holds almost the same purpose as oaths, but which is possible to be performed outside the civil state⁴⁹³.

⁴⁹² Lev. 14.31.

⁴⁹³ DCi 2.13.

IV - Thomas Hobbes' Invisible Things

1. Introduction

Opposition to the Scholastic thesis concerning the incorporeality of certain substances is a basic feature of Hobbes's mechanist philosophy, present from the *Elements of Law*⁴⁹⁴ to the *Behemoth*⁴⁹⁵. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes applies a widely documented nominalist strategy of delegitimizing "incorporeal substances," labeling them as "contradictory and inconsistent" and even "absurd"⁴⁹⁶. However, Hobbes needs a mechanist explanation for natural phenomena that would replace the Scholastic one provided by incorporeal substances and immaterial *species*. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes resorts to a second argumentative strategy to deal with the problem, namely a theory concerning "invisible things", which would explain such phenomena and, thus, help replace the prevailing theories. How is it possible for Hobbes to justify the existence of substances and motions that are not visible? And what are the implications of Hobbes' positive claim (to replace invisible matter for incorporeal bodies) for other areas of his system, such as his theological and political conceptions?

This paper argues that, in *Leviathan*, Hobbes applies a twofold strategy to combat the erroneous doctrines regarding incorporeal substances. On the one hand, Hobbes seeks to highlight the impossibility of incorporeal substances. On the other, advancing an analysis of invisible things and explanations based on his mechanistic natural philosophy, developed in more detail in *De Corpore*. This

⁴⁹⁴ Hobbes' works are abbreviated as follows: EL – HOBBS, Thomas. **Elements of Law, Natural and Politic**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928; DCi – HOBBS, Thomas. **De Cive**. Tradução: Richard Tuck & Michael Silverthorne. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998; DHo – HOBBS, Thomas. **Man and Citizen**. Tradução: Bernard Gert. Gloucester: Doubleday & Company, 1972; Lev – HOBBS, Thomas. **Leviathan**. Tradução: Noel Malcolm. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, and HOBBS, Thomas. **Leviathan**. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994; LL – HOBBS, Thomas. **Leviathan**. Tradução: Noel Malcolm. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012; EW I – HOBBS, Thomas. **The English Works of Thomas Hobbes**, vol. 1. London: Molesworth, 1840; EW IV – HOBBS, Thomas. **The English Works of Thomas Hobbes**, vol. 4. London: Molesworth, 1840; EW VI – HOBBS, Thomas. **The English Works of Thomas Hobbes**, vol. 6. London: Molesworth, 1840; EW VII – HOBBS, Thomas. **The English Works of Thomas Hobbes**, vol. 7. London: Molesworth, 1840; OL IV - HOBBS, Thomas. *Opera philosophica, quae Latinè scripsit, omnia*, vol 4, ed. Joan Blaeu (Amsterdam, 1668); VCE – *Vita, Carmine Expressa, In*: HOBBS, Thomas. **Opera Philosophica**, vol. 1. Londres: Molesworth, 1839, I. 81–99.

⁴⁹⁵ See: Lev 4.21, 8.27, 12.7, 34.1-2, 34.18, 34.24, 44.15-16, 44.34, 45.2, 46.15, 46.19-21; LL 46.9, 46.18, App 1.92-95, App 3.5-8; EW I, p. 430; EW IV, p. 61-62, p. 312-314; EW 6, p. 236; EW VII, p. 351.

⁴⁹⁶ Lev 4.21.

strategy is built to avoid the confusion among ignorant people between incorporeal and invisible⁴⁹⁷, which, according to Hobbes, was encouraged by priests and disseminated through scholastics' doctrines because this strengthened the power of the Roman Catholic Church⁴⁹⁸. This analysis is crucial to delegitimize contradictory and "absurd" scholastic theses and to conceive what kind of invisible things are and are not possible in the Hobbesian mechanist universe. My paper highlights how Hobbes' analysis of invisible things propels his mechanistic arguments to explain natural phenomena, but also to demystify theological dogmas, such as the existence of ghosts, divine corporeality and also demonic possessions.

The existing literature focuses almost exclusively on the Hobbesian denial of the incorporeality of substances and the implications for the critique of neo-Scholastic concepts⁴⁹⁹. A small portion of the literature focuses on the invisibility of spirits, however, without offering a broad explanation concerning not only the invisible things, but its role of substituting incorporeal substances as causes of natural phenomenon⁵⁰⁰. No existing work in the English language explains how Hobbes can justify in his natural philosophy the existence of corporeal yet invisible things. Nor have scholars explained how the existing of corporeal yet invisible things cannot equally be misused by priests to frighten the multitude into obedience. Focusing on Hobbes' analysis of invisible things, in addition to incorporeality, is crucial to highlight his attack to the Scholastic doctrine of incorporeal substances. On the one hand, he proclaims incorporeality to be absurd: everything that exists occupies space, therefore all substances are

⁴⁹⁷ Lev 12.7.

⁴⁹⁸ Lev 2.8.

⁴⁹⁹ On the impossibility of incorporeal substances in Hobbes, see: MALCOLM, Noel. **Aspects of Hobbes**. Nova Iorque: Oxford University Press Inc., 2002, p.190-191; LLOYD, Sharon. **The Bloomsbury Companion to Hobbes**. Londres: Bloomsbury, 2013, p. 29, p. 55-57, p. 88, p. 239, p. 288-295, p. 299-303; LEIJENHORST, Cees. Hobbes' Corporeal Deity, **Rivista di Storia della Filosofia (1984-)**, vol. 59/1, p. 73-95, 2004; DUNCAN, Stewart. **Materialism from Hobbes to Locke**. Nova Iorque: Oxford University Press, 2022, chapter 2; DUNCAN, Stewart. Hobbes, significance, and insignificant names, **Hobbes Studies**, vol. 24, p. 158–178, 2011; STAUFFER, Devin - **Hobbes's Kingdom of Light: A Study of the Foundations of Modern Political Philosophy**. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2018, p. 22-25, p. 32, p. 40-42, p. 46-48, p. 82, p. 101-102, p. 120-123, p. 133, p. 140-142; BALDIN, 2019; WRIGHT, George. Hobbes and the Economic Trinity, **British Journal for the History of Philosophy**, vol. 7/3, p. 37-41, 1999.

⁵⁰⁰ I found very little material on invisibility in Hobbes. The exceptions are some passages in MARTINICH, 1992, p.62); LLOYD, 2013 p. 69, p. 249-250; DUNCAN, 2012, p. 15-16); and HORSTMANN, Frank. Hobbes on Hypotheses in Natural Philosophy, **The Monist**, vol. 84/4, 2001, p. 488-491.

corporeal⁵⁰¹. On the other, he proposes an analysis of invisible things, differentiating bodies, motions, powers, and agents, to explain and demystify natural phenomena, often used by powerful men or priests to control the population. He will argue that although, there are countless invisible bodies, the only invisible agent is God. This paper helps, therefore, to explain how Hobbes applies mechanist concepts of natural philosophy to explain natural events and to counter theses considered by him as absurd, forestalling the clerical usurpation of ecclesiastical power.

The paper proceeds as follows. The first section provides a conceptual-analytical framework of Hobbes' refutation of incorporeal substances. The second section presents Hobbes' perspective on "invisible things" highlighting the importance of the "motion of invisible bodies" for his natural philosophy system. The third section analyzes the consequences of this new approach to theological areas, such as the corporeality of spirits and God. The last section deals with the political implications of the Hobbesian natural philosophy project, highlighting how his delegitimization of scholastic theories and superstitions was applied to combat the advances of the Catholic Church and its clergy.

2. Hobbes and Incorporeal Substances

The scholastic system was dominant in the universities, but, in the 17th century, was seen by the mechanists as decadent "and fundamentally misconceived"⁵⁰². According to Hobbes, it relied on the doctrine of *species*⁵⁰³ and in the absurd belief in "immaterial substances"⁵⁰⁴. One of the main goals of Hobbesian philosophy is to demonstrate the impossibility of the Aristotelian-Scholastic thesis of these incorporeal substances. According to Hobbes, this doctrine had had its beginnings with the Aristotelian doctrines concerning "separate essences," which propagated the idea that there would be certain substances that would subsist even when separated from their bodies⁵⁰⁵. For him,

⁵⁰¹ Lev 34-2.

⁵⁰² HENRY, John. Hobbes's Mechanical Philosophy and Its English Critics. In: Adams, Marcus P. (org.), **A Companion to Hobbes**, Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2021, p. 381.

⁵⁰³ Lev 1.5.

⁵⁰⁴ Lev 5.5.

⁵⁰⁵ Lev 46: 18.

the doctrine of "incorporeal substances" must be discarded not only because it violates nominalist⁵⁰⁶ and mechanistic principles, but also because it helps the clergy to maintain their domination over ignorant men⁵⁰⁷.

For Hobbes, the term "body" must be conceived in an extremely broad way, designating "that which filleth or occupieth some certain room or imagined place" and does not depend "on the imagination, but is a real part of that we call the universe", which is the "aggregate of all bodies"⁵⁰⁸. Therefore, "there is no real part therein that is not also body; nor anything properly a body that is not also part of that aggregate of all bodies, the universe"⁵⁰⁹. According to Hobbes, "substance and body signify the same thing", therefore, it is absurd to propose the existence of an "incorporeal substance", because it would be the same as proposing the existence of an "incorporeal body"⁵¹⁰.

A previous version of this argument can already be found in *Elements of Law*, Hobbes' first political work. When analyzing the popular belief in spirits or ghosts, Hobbes states that "all evidence is conception" and "all conception is imagination and proceeds from sense", therefore substances that "work not upon the sense" cannot be "conceivable"⁵¹¹. According to him, not even the Bible would give textual support to the idea that these spirits would be "incorporeal." On the contrary, all words used in connection with the term "spirit" designate locality. According to Hobbes, "locality is dimension", and anything that has dimension must be considered a body: spirits must have an extremely "subtle" nature, which is, nevertheless, corporeal⁵¹². Hobbes claims that those who believe that "spectra and images" are real things and not the fruit of their own "strong imaginations" are based "neither upon reason nor revelation."⁵¹³. Therefore,

⁵⁰⁶ Lev 5: 5-15. Hobbes goes so far as to affirm that Francisco Suarez must be crazy or trying to make others crazy, when he proposes, among other concepts, "immateriality", especially that of "spirits" (Lev 8.27).

⁵⁰⁷ Lev 2.8.

⁵⁰⁸ Lev 34-2.

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid.* The implications of these premises for the conception of God's nature in the Hobbesian system will be analyzed in section 3 of this paper.

⁵¹⁰ *Ibid.* See: Lev 5.8-12.

⁵¹¹ EL 11.5. This argument, however, does not exclude the existence of incorporeal or immaterial substances, it only dismisses the possibility that they are affecting the senses.

⁵¹² *Ibid.*

⁵¹³ *Ibid.*

when they propose the existence of incorporeal substances, instead of correctly describing natural phenomena, they would merely utter "absurdity of speech."⁵¹⁴.

According to Hobbes expressions such as "incorporeal substance" or "immaterial substance" are oxymorons and must be taken as "absurd" and "meaningless"⁵¹⁵. And for its "absurdity", it is not possible to create a mental image of these immaterial substances or things⁵¹⁶. Hobbes' argument against incorporeal substances seems much more "to start with the truth of materialism, rather than being arguments for it"⁵¹⁷. Hobbes' materialistic conception of substance does not consider the existence of incorporeal or immaterial substances possible, because they would represent a conceptual contradiction⁵¹⁸. Hobbes aims to propose a natural philosophy system, based on such principles, that can explain natural and mental phenomena without resorting to the action or existence of immaterial substances⁵¹⁹, building an alternative to both scholastic theory and Cartesian dualism and its implicit immateriality of the soul⁵²⁰.

However, delegitimizing the scholastic theory of incorporeal substances is only the first step in the Hobbesian strategy for implementing a new natural philosophy. After these theories are discarded, a theoretical vacuum is created that needs to be filled: the new Hobbesian theory needs to be able to explain events that occur imperceptibly. Hobbes intends to use mechanistic principles to fill this vacuum. Mechanical philosophy aimed to explain "all physical phenomena in terms of the motions and physical interactions of countless invisibly small

⁵¹⁴ *Ibid.* See: MALCOLM, 2002, 190–1.

⁵¹⁵ Lev 4.21, Lev 5.5.

⁵¹⁶ Lev 45.1.

⁵¹⁷ DUNCAN, 2012, p. 32.

⁵¹⁸ Lev 34.2.

⁵¹⁹ The Hobbesian speculative approach was viewed negatively, especially in the dogmatism regarding the impossibility of incorporeal substances and the premise that only material bodies are real. For Boyle, his experimental approach could not only dismiss Hobbes' "imprudently abstracted notions", but also "demonstrate that some physical phenomena [...] required the existence of God" (HENRY, 2021, p. 389). Among other important objectors to Hobbesian natural philosophy, especially regarding the impossibility of immaterial substances, Henry More and Ralph Cudworth can also be mentioned. See also: GAUKROGER, Stephen. **The Emergence of a Scientific Culture: Science and the Shaping of Modernity, 1210–1685**. Nova Iorque: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 368-379; VERMEIR, Koen. From Psychosomatic and Maternal Fancy to Demonic and Cosmic Imagination. Wonders, Imagination and Spirit of Nature in Henry More. In: PECHARMAN, Martine & Jaffro, Laurent (org.). **Animating the Mechanical World: New Perspectives on Cudworth and More**, 2012. Disponível em: <<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-01366653>>. Acesso em: 23 de jan. 2023; DUNCAN, 2012, chapter 3.

⁵²⁰ DUNCAN, 2012, p. 32. See: DESCARTES, René. **Discours de la Méthode**, Paris: Vrin, 1987, 4.33; DESCARTES, René. **Les Méditations Métaphysiques**. Paris: 1647, 2.6.

particles of matter", which compose all bodies in the universe⁵²¹. Therefore, the second part of Hobbes' strategy is to highlight the role and functioning of the countless invisible bodies and motions that permeate the universe. But what kinds of invisible things are considered real by Hobbes? And how is it possible for the English thinker to justify their existence to his readers, since they are as imperceptible as incorporeal substances would be?

3. Invisible Things

Hobbes's correspondence allows us to affirm that the theme of invisibility of bodies was present on the English thinker's horizon at least since August 1636⁵²². In a letter to William Cavendish, among essential points that would form his theory of natural philosophy, Hobbes mentions that natural philosophy depends "upon the motion of bodies so subtle as they are invisible, such as are ayre and spirits"⁵²³. Although in the *De Cive*, Hobbes uses the concept of invisibility to formulate his definition of "superstition", this theme would remain dormant in his published works until 1651, when it begins to be explored in *Leviathan* and later developed in *De Corpore*.

In his *magnum opus*, mentions of the term "invisible" (and its correlates such as "invisibility" and "unseen") grow exponentially, reaching an unparalleled 27 occurrences in *Leviathan*. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes refers to unknown causes as "things"⁵²⁴ and "invisible causes"⁵²⁵. For the first time across his published works,

⁵²¹ HENRY, 2021, p. 381.

⁵²² HORSTMANN, 2001, p. 490-491. Gaukroger states that Hobbes' interest in mechanicism can be traced to his involvement with the Mersenne circle in 1635 (GAUKROGER, 2006, p. 283). See also: JESSEPH, Douglas. Galileo, Hobbes, and the Book of Nature, **Perspectives on Science**, vol. 12/2, p. 191-211, 2004; LEIJENHORST, Cees. Hobbes and Fracastoro, **Hobbes Studies**, vol. 9/1, 1996, p. 123.

⁵²³ HORSTMANN, 2001, p. 490-491, citing: HOBBS, Thomas. **Correspondence**. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994, vol. I, p. 33.

⁵²⁴ Lev 11.26, Lev 45.14; DHo 12.5. The intense succession of discoveries in optics contributed to the "fascination with sight and seeing which dominated both the 17th and 18th centuries". Chief among these was the discovery of the dioptric mechanism by which the eye forms an image by Johannes Kepler in 1603. Besides the development of theories concerning sight, the development of "technical advances in optics and ophthalmology" may have been another factor that helped in the fascination with vision. For example, the improvement of the telescope or the development of microscopes (SWAIN, Virginia E. - *Lumières et Vision: Reflections on Sight and Seeing in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century France*, **L'Esprit Créateur**, vol. 28/4, 1988, p. 5-6).

⁵²⁵ Lev 12.4; DHo 10.5.

he also advances concepts such as "invisible motion"⁵²⁶, "invisible powers"⁵²⁷, "invisible agents"⁵²⁸, "invisible spirits"⁵²⁹, and "invisible body"⁵³⁰. There the author not only expands the lexicon of expressions containing the term "invisibility", highlighting its operation in a mechanistic framework, but also offers a solution coming from naturalistic philosophy to deal with the political stalemate resulting from the domination of the ignorant people by the clergy. The theory proposed by Hobbes will rely exclusively on the imperceptible motions of invisible bodies as the explanation of natural phenomena.

As a method, I will first analyze two mechanistic concepts used by Hobbes, namely motion and invisible bodies. By first demonstrating that the expression "invisible motion" designates not a different kind of motion, but the motion of the internal or invisible parts of bodies. And secondly, by explaining which bodies can be considered invisible by the English thinker⁵³¹. I will then pass on the implications of Hobbesian mechanistic theses in the field of theology, highlighting firstly how the confusion between invisible bodies and incorporeal agents takes place among ignorant individuals; and secondly, how Hobbes' mechanistic premises imply the corporeality of spirits, the soul, and God.

3.1. Invisible Motions

Hobbes defines motion as " the continuous deprivation of one place and acquisition of another."⁵³². From mechanistic precepts he states that "all" the "mutations" suffered by bodies can only be the result of "motion of the parts of that body which is changed"⁵³³. As this mutation can occur in a perceptible or imperceptible manner, Hobbes argues that motions can be divided into visible, or invisible, as those that occur "in the most minute parts of bodies"⁵³⁴. For Hobbes, the focus of "physics or natural philosophy" should be the investigation of these

⁵²⁶ Lev 6.1, 8.21, 45.1-2.

⁵²⁷ Lev 6.36, 11.26, 12.6, 12.9, 12.10, 12.13, 12.23, 12.26, 14.31, 27.20.

⁵²⁸ Lev 12.6-8.

⁵²⁹ Lev 14.31, 27.20, 45.8.

⁵³⁰ Lev 34: 3.

⁵³¹ Although Hobbes mentions these expressions in *Leviathan*, his clearest exposition of them is found in *De Corpore*, the work on which I will rely to compose this section.

⁵³² EW I, p. 204.

⁵³³ EW I, p. 126.

⁵³⁴ LL 9.4; see also: Lev 6.1.

invisible motions "of the internal parts of body"⁵³⁵. For, in addition to explaining more precisely how natural phenomena would occur, they would also serve to explain the workings of the mind and human behavior.

Hobbes already seems to consider the theme of invisible motions in the *Elements of Law*. From mechanistic principles Hobbes presents his argument to explain how the sound of a bell is produced. Hobbes contradicts the Aristotelian-scholastic principles and affirms the new mechanistic natural philosophy, when he proposes that the sound is not exactly a "quality" of the bell⁵³⁶, but the result of the "motion of the internal parts" of the body⁵³⁷. When the small parts that make up the bell are moved, they transmit "motion to the air"⁵³⁸. The air, also made up of small imperceptible⁵³⁹ bodies, transmits this motion to the "ears and nerves", and from there to the "brain". When this motion "reboundeth back into the nerves outward", it produces the "apparition" which "we call sound"⁵⁴⁰. Sound is therefore the result of the transmission of the motion of the small bodies that make up the bell to the small parts that make up the human being.

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes suggests a mechanistic explanation for the functioning of the human mind and senses. According to him, invisible motions explain their functioning. The "many several motions of the matter" transmitted from the "external object" to the internal parts of the body, such as the "nerves," the "heart," and the "brain" explain how a body is perceived by an individual⁵⁴¹. Those invisible "small beginnings of motion within the body of man" that occur "before they appear" in the external motions Hobbes calls "endeavour"⁵⁴². The motion of imperceptible or invisible bodies explains, in the endeavor, the most basic human movements of "appetite or aversion" towards an object⁵⁴³.

⁵³⁵ LL 9.4-5.

⁵³⁶ EL 2.4.

⁵³⁷ EL 4.9.

⁵³⁸ EL 4.9.

⁵³⁹ In *De Corpore*, Hobbes states that air is composed of two parts, "one ethereal, which has no proper motion of its own" and "the other hard, namely, consisting of many hard atoms, which have every one of them a very swift simple motion of its own" (EW I, p. 481).

⁵⁴⁰ EL 4.9.

⁵⁴¹ Lev 1.4.

⁵⁴² Lev 6.1.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*

Hobbes would resume the discussion regarding the motion in the internal parts of bodies in *De Corpore*. There, the English thinker states that the internal and imperceptible motions in the bodies would only occur because the "contiguous bodies", that is, those that are in direct contact, would transmit the motion to the contiguous particles through different mediums⁵⁴⁴. Again, extremely small bodies⁵⁴⁵ are responsible for the transmission of motions called "invisible"⁵⁴⁶. In the same work, Hobbes explains the functioning of smell as the transmission of the motion of the imperceptible particles exhaled by bodies to the "internal membrane of the nostrils"⁵⁴⁷. Hobbes claims that when the "invisible parts of the odorous body" are moved "they have simple and invisible motion"⁵⁴⁸. This demonstrates the deep interrelation between the "invisible parts" and the "invisible motion".

Therefore, when Hobbes refers to "invisible motions," he seems to be describing how the motion of the "internal"⁵⁴⁹ or "not perceptible"⁵⁵⁰ parts of bodies occur. Hobbes seems to use the term "invisible" not to theorize a specific type of motion by that quality, but to restate the transmission of motion from external objects to the smaller or more internal parts of a body.

3.2. Invisible Bodies

Although in *Leviathan*, Hobbes uses the expression "invisible body" only once⁵⁵¹, it is essential to discern what Hobbes points out as constitutional elements of invisible bodies, given the centrality of this concept for the mechanistic explanation of natural philosophy he proposed. In *De Corpore*, the English thinker states that he considers invisible all those bodies of "extreme

⁵⁴⁴ EW I, p. 124, 125, 205, 507, 526.

⁵⁴⁵ EW I, p. 511.

⁵⁴⁶ EW I, p. 73.

⁵⁴⁷ EW I, p. 502.

⁵⁴⁸ EW I, p. 503.

⁵⁴⁹ Lev 2.2.

⁵⁵⁰ EW I, p. 427, p. 468.

⁵⁵¹ Lev 34.3.

smallness"⁵⁵², referring to them also as "small atoms"⁵⁵³, or "small bodies"⁵⁵⁴. In the *Decameron Physiologicum*, Hobbes expands his postulate, considering that something can be invisible due to its "distance, smallness, or transparency"⁵⁵⁵.

The motion of invisible bodies constitutes, as argued in the previous section, one of the fundamental elements of the mechanistic natural philosophy proposed by Hobbes. He intends to fill the theoretical vacuum left by immaterial substances with a mechanistic explanation of natural phenomena, and that explanation, I have argued, heavily relies on invisible motions. It highlights the interaction between these innumerable imperceptible bodies that form the universe⁵⁵⁶. According to Hobbes, explanations that appealed to immaterial substances should be discarded because they were not able to explain natural phenomena according to the new mechanistic approach. From them, it would be impossible to explain how the motion would be transmitted between bodies if they can only be moved by "a body moved and contiguous"⁵⁵⁷. Hobbes makes a conceptual claim that it is "not imaginable" how bodies would be moved contiguously to a "body unmoved" as an "immaterial *species*"⁵⁵⁸. The transmission of motion between "contiguous" and invisible⁵⁵⁹ bodies is the real cause behind various mechanical phenomena, such as the formation of rain⁵⁶⁰, The "restitution" of the original shape of certain metals⁵⁶¹, the "thunder" generation⁵⁶², and the functioning of the human body⁵⁶³ and mind⁵⁶⁴.

Hobbes states, in the *Decameron Physiologicum*, that the particles that compose steam and rain are "very small and invisible parts of the water"⁵⁶⁵. These particles, although tiny and imperceptible, still have their natural weight,

⁵⁵² EW I, p. 511.

⁵⁵³ EW I, p. 426.

⁵⁵⁴ EW I, p. 502-503. It is important to note here that Hobbes was not associated with atomism, but rather with 17th century mechanistic corpuscularism. See: LEIJENHORST, 1996, p. 123; GAUKROGER, 2006, chapter 8.

⁵⁵⁵ EW VII, p. 78.

⁵⁵⁶ Lev 34.2.

⁵⁵⁷ EW I, p. 434.

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵⁹ EW I, p. 124.

⁵⁶⁰ EW VII, p.113.

⁵⁶¹ EW I, p. 478-479.

⁵⁶² EW I, p. 518.

⁵⁶³ Lev 45.1.

⁵⁶⁴ Lev 2.2.

⁵⁶⁵ EW VII, p.113.

which allows them to be "easily carried up and down with the wind". They float until they meet some large solid body like "some mountain or other clouds", against which they are pressed and joined "into greater drops", and fall by the accumulation of "their weight"⁵⁶⁶.

In *De Corpore*, Hobbes sets out to answer, among numerous phenomena of natural philosophy, how the process of "restitution" of certain metals to their original form occurs even after "bent"⁵⁶⁷. This "restitution" cannot be explained by "ambient air", nor even by "removing the force by which it had been bent"⁵⁶⁸. Hobbes attributes this effect to the fact that the particles of this substance "retain their motion". Should the metal remain bent, Hobbes claims that there is still "some motion though invisible" there, or "some endeavor" that prevents restitution from being made⁵⁶⁹.

Thunder is formed when "small bodies enclosed within the clouds", through "their motion break the clouds, and restore themselves to their natural liberty"⁵⁷⁰. When "compression is great enough", Hobbes theorizes that "the cloud will necessarily be broken". The result of the "breaking of the cloud" is the "first clap of thunder", which produces "a concussion of the air without, and from hence proceeds the roaring and murmur which follows"⁵⁷¹. According to Hobbes, it is this same concussion "falling upon the eye", which produces an "action upon our eye, which causeth in us a perception of that light, which we call lightning"⁵⁷².

Even vision can be explained according to mechanistic principles⁵⁷³. When the "impression made on the organs of sight by lucid bodies", is "reflected [...] or refracted", it produces an "imagination of the object from whence the impression proceeds"⁵⁷⁴. This "imagination" is what Hobbes calls "sight"⁵⁷⁵. He offers a simple experiment to prove the mechanical properties of vision. According to him,

⁵⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶⁷ EW I, p. 478.

⁵⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁰ EW I, p. 518.

⁵⁷¹ EW I, p. 519.

⁵⁷² *Ibid.*

⁵⁷³ See: PRINS, Jan. Hobbes on Light and Vision. In: SORELL, Tom (org.). **The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996; MAURIN, Paul-Marie & GREENSTEIN, Rosalind. On the Visual Perception Hypotheses of Hobbes, Gibson and Ronchi, **Leonardo**, vol. 8/4, p. 301-305, 1975.

⁵⁷⁴ Lev 45.1.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

by "violently" pressing the eyes, one can perceive the appearance of a "light"⁵⁷⁶. This sight is caused not by an external source of light, but only by the invisible "motion in the interior organs"⁵⁷⁷.

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes also explains the functioning of the human mind through mechanistic principles⁵⁷⁸. The human mind is affected at length by the motions caused by external and internal bodies. Just as the motion of the waves persists even after the wind ceases, the "motion which is made in the internal parts of a man" also remains for a time⁵⁷⁹. For "after the object is removed, or the eye shut", it is still possible to maintain an "image of the thing seen", although "more obscure" than the original vision⁵⁸⁰. It is this "decaying sense", or decelerating motion, that Hobbes calls "imagination"⁵⁸¹. Even "folly," often taken for spiritual possession or inspiration, is presented by Hobbes as the result of violent internal motions "not visible"⁵⁸², caused by the "ill constitution of organs"⁵⁸³.

The new Hobbesian natural philosophy, therefore, is not based on "invisible motions", but on the motion of "invisible bodies". It explains the most diverse natural phenomena through the interaction between these numerous "small bodies" and how their motion is transmitted. However, how is it possible for Hobbes to justify the existence of such bodies, being that they are as imperceptible as the "immaterial substances"? Moreover, what are the implications of this conception to his political theory?

3.3. Hobbes and the existence of Invisible bodies

In the English version of *Leviathan*, Hobbes is not clear about how it is possible to prove the existence of invisible bodies that would replace the Aristotelian-scholastic doctrine of immaterial substances, nor how it is possible to

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁸ See: APELDOORN, Laurens van. Hobbes on the Scientific Study of the Human Mind, **Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie**, vol. 97/3, p. 308-333, 2015; CHANDRAM, Amy. Hobbes in France, Gallican Histories, and Leviathan's Supreme Pastor, **Modern Intellectual History**, 2022, p. 23.

⁵⁷⁹ Lev 2.2.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸² Lev 8.21.

⁵⁸³ Lev 4.21.

conceive of such bodies⁵⁸⁴. Again, in the Latin edition of *Leviathan*, Hobbes claims that it is not possible to conceive the image of invisible things since images can only be formed from things "figured", i.e., that have "a quantity every way determined"⁵⁸⁵. For the same reason it is not possible to conceive God's image, who is infinite⁵⁸⁶.

However, in *De Corpore*, we can find Hobbes' most solid justification for his belief in invisible bodies. Hobbes briefly recounts his experience with microscopes⁵⁸⁷. He states that there are "some living creatures so small that we can scarce see their whole bodies"⁵⁸⁸. There are even smaller bodies that cannot be observed even with the aid of microscopes, such as the "little veins," "other vessels," "eyes," and "young" specimens of these microscopic bodies⁵⁸⁹. According to Hobbes, it is not possible to conceive of a "magnitude so little" that is not "actually exceeded by nature"⁵⁹⁰. God can create both the immense as well as the extremely small and "perpetually" divisible bodies⁵⁹¹: "For it belongs to the same Infinite Power, as well to augment infinitely as infinitely to diminish"⁵⁹². Hobbes, through his experiments with the microscope, substantiates his claims that the universe is made up of extremely small bodies. A good example of this belief can be found in his explanation of the magnetic properties of certain bodies. Hobbes states that even if the cause of the "magnetical virtue" of certain objects is unknown, when it becomes known "it will be found to a motion of body"⁵⁹³. Although, for Hobbes, there are substances invisible to human eyes, when they become known they will show themselves as small bodies in motion.

Hobbes' mechanistic philosophy seems to start "from natural-philosophical considerations and extrapolating to other areas"⁵⁹⁴. In *Examinatio and*

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸⁵ LL 45.16

⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸⁷ According to Malcolm, Hobbes already had it in his possession, at that time, microscopes. That would allow him to present an experimental version of the thesis that the universe is made up of bodies of such smallness that they are taken to be invisible. (MALCOLM, 2002, p. 182-183, note 96).

⁵⁸⁸ EW I, p. 446.

⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹² *Ibid.*

⁵⁹³ EW I, p. 430.

⁵⁹⁴ GAUKROGER, 2006, p. 282.

Emendatio, Hobbes states that although, with the human sensory apparatus, one cannot perceive “the accuracy of the ratio between two lines or two magnitudes”, geometry is still demonstrable⁵⁹⁵. For the same reason, the “imperceptibility of natural actions” should not be considered a hindrance to the demonstrability of physics⁵⁹⁶.

4. Spiritual and Divine Corporeity

Even though Hobbes' mechanistic natural philosophy proposes to explain all natural phenomena through the interaction of motion among invisible bodies, people still remained ignorant of the new scientific methods of the 17th century⁵⁹⁷. Hobbes states that when men are ignorant of “the natural causes of things” (i.e., the transmission of motion between small invisible bodies) they become “inclined to suppose and feign unto themselves several kinds of invisible powers” and to transform the creatures of their imagination into “gods”⁵⁹⁸. According to him, when it is invisible causes and phenomena that determine fortune, ignorant men begin to suppose the existence of “invisible powers or agents”⁵⁹⁹, endowed with will of their own and composed of “immaterial” or “incorporeal” substances⁶⁰⁰.

The very foundation of religions, one of the most fundamental institutions of the Commonwealth, depends on the belief in invisible powers. When the “fear” of “invisible powers or agents” is allowed by the republic we have, according to Hobbes, a “religion”⁶⁰¹. If it is not “publicly” allowed, it must be considered a mere

⁵⁹⁵ “Nonne etiam rationis lineae ad lineam, vel cujuslibet magnitudinis ad aliam magnitudinem, iupilleia sensum fugit e Potest tamen demonstrari. An non et verae physicae sua inest veritas, quae vel affirmative vel negative enuntiari potest? Nonne litigat cum mathematicis non minus quam cum dogmaticis Sextus Empiricus scepticus? Praeterea non minus oblectat animum in physicis, vel ethicis, vel politicis, inventa veritas, quam in geometricis.” (OL IV, *Examinatio et Emendatio*, p. 5).

⁵⁹⁶ HORSTMANN, 2001, p. 490-491.

⁵⁹⁷ Lev 37.5.

⁵⁹⁸ Lev 12.6. See: COLLINS, Jeffrey. Thomas Hobbes's Ecclesiastical History. In: MARTINICH, Alphonsus P. & HOEKSTRA, Kinch (org.), **The Oxford Handbook of Hobbes**, Nova Iorque: Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 527.

⁵⁹⁹ Lev 12.6.

⁶⁰⁰ Lev 12.7. Hobbes seems to portray this confusion between invisible and immaterial as a behavior developed later with scholasticism that mixed the interpretation of the Bible with Aristotelian principles (LL 46.14). For, according to him, the “heathens,” although they turned their “fancy” into “gods,” still did not make the mistake of treating them as “spirits or substances”, taking them as “bodies” (LL 12.7).

⁶⁰¹ Lev 6.36. See: DHo 12.5-6, EW IV, p. 292.

"superstition"⁶⁰². This allows Hobbes to say that fear is one of the "first seeds or principles" of religions⁶⁰³. It is this belief in innumerable invisible agents - which should be understood as the motion of invisible bodies - that underlies the cults practiced by different religions⁶⁰⁴ centered around individuals considered wise and holy⁶⁰⁵. It is also this belief in invisible agents that allows men to create the "swearing and oaths" that are the most effective way to "strengthen a covenant of peace"⁶⁰⁶ that can ultimately lead to the formation of commonwealths.

Hobbes admits that, according to Scripture, there must be "spirits," but that there is no textual basis for the admission of such entities as immaterial⁶⁰⁷. Rather, they should be regarded as "corporeal, though subtle and invisible"⁶⁰⁸. Even the human soul must have a corporeal principle like that of the spirits. According to the Hobbesian Biblical exegesis, soul means "either the life or the living creature; and the body and soul jointly, the body alive"⁶⁰⁹. Therefore, it cannot exist separately from the human body, nor can it be taken as an "incorporeal substance"⁶¹⁰.

Because of this possible corporeal property of spirits, the human body cannot be "possessed or inhabited by them"⁶¹¹. Spirit possession implies total control of the movements, and therefore of the nerves. However, the nerves are filled with fluids, such as "animal and vital spirits"⁶¹², that transmit motions to the body. If the spirits are corporeal, and the nerves are completely filled with fluids, there is a material impossibility for spirit possession⁶¹³. For the same reason, when a man claims that he committed a crime influenced by the "power of invisible spirits", in a way not permitted by the "commonwealth", he sets aside "the law of nature"⁶¹⁴. Therefore, this claim should not be considered true, for if it

⁶⁰² *Ibid.* See: DCi 16.1.

⁶⁰³ Lev 12.23.

⁶⁰⁴ Lev 12.9.

⁶⁰⁵ Lev 12.24

⁶⁰⁶ Lev 14.31.

⁶⁰⁷ Lev 45.5.

⁶⁰⁸ Lev 45.8; LL App3.16. See also: LUPOLI, Agostino – Hobbes and Religion Without Theology. *In*: MARTINICH, Alphonsus P. & HOEKSTRA, Kinch (org.), **The Oxford Handbook of Hobbes**, Nova Iorque: Oxford University Press, p. 453-480, 2016.

⁶⁰⁹ Lev 44.15.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹¹ Lev 45.8.

⁶¹² Lev 45.5.

⁶¹³ See: DEL OLMO, Ismael. Against Scarecrows and Half-Baked Christians: Thomas Hobbes on Spiritual Possession and (Civil) Exorcism, **Hobbes Studies**, vol. 31/2, p. 127-146, 2018.

⁶¹⁴ Lev 27.20.

were accepted as a justification, it would be the same as allowing "every private man" to do all things as he pleased, justifying his actions by spiritual possession, resulting in the dissolution of the Commonwealth⁶¹⁵.

The belief in invisible and immaterial agents, and consequently the whole "demonology of the heathen"⁶¹⁶ would be deviations from "true religion"⁶¹⁷. Which consists in the discovery of a first cause, "which men call God", of which they don't "have an idea or image of him" in their minds⁶¹⁸. Although God's nature is "incomprehensible", Hobbes imagines him to be the "most pure, simple, invisible spirit corporeal"⁶¹⁹, he is the only invisible body with agency. For Hobbes, since "all real things" have to be "corporeal"⁶²⁰, to deny that God is a body is equivalent to denying that he is real.

The definition that Hobbes proposes for angels can also be interpreted as a "supernatural" form of motion generated by God⁶²¹. Hobbes states that the term angel, according to the Scriptures, means "messenger" or "messenger of God"⁶²². This messenger manifests himself "especially" through "dreams and visions"⁶²³. The Scriptures do not make it clear how they are formed. Hobbes theorizes that angels must be like "apparitions" which are not "real substances" but "accidents of the brain"⁶²⁴. The peculiarity of the former would lie in the fact that these "accidents of the brain" have been caused "supernaturally" and purposely "to signify his will"⁶²⁵. As dreams and visions are, for Hobbes, the result of the transmission of invisible bodies' motion, angels would be the supernatural creation of the motion of the invisible parts of the human body. However, since "nature dictates nothing about how these invisible agents"⁶²⁶ would communicate

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁶ Lev 44.3.

⁶¹⁷ Lev 6.36.

⁶¹⁸ Lev 11.25.

⁶¹⁹ EW IV, p. 313-314. See: Lev 34.5. See also: GORHAM, Geoffrey. The Stoic Roots of Hobbes's Natural Philosophy and First Philosophy. *In*: Adams, Marcus P. (org.), **A Companion to Hobbes**, Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2021, p. 51-52; LEIJENHORST, Cees. Hobbes' Corporeal Deity, **Rivista di Storia della Filosofia (1984-)**, vol. 59/1, p. 73-95, 2004; LUPOLI, Agostino. Fluidismo e Corporeal deity nella filosofia naturale di Thomas Hobbes: A proposito dell'hobbesiano Dio delle cause, **Revista di storia della filosofia**, vol. 54/4, p. 573-609, 1999; HENRY, 2021, p. 392-394.

⁶²⁰ EW IV, p. 393.

⁶²¹ Lev 34.17

⁶²² Lev 34.16

⁶²³ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁴ Lev 34.17

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁶ Lev 12.10.

"good or evil fortune"⁶²⁷, it would be left to the ignorant to "believe the like prognostics from other men of whom they have once conceived a good opinion"⁶²⁸.

With his natural philosophy Hobbes seeks to demonstrate the material and mechanical reality of natural phenomena against the spiritualistic approach of the scholastic doctrine of the immateriality of substance, disseminated "into almost all the cities, towns and parishes of the Christian world"⁶²⁹. For him, if something is real, it is necessary that this entity has dimensions and is, therefore, a body. If spirits exist, and this is suggested by the Hobbesian exegesis of the Bible, they must be corporeal.

5. Political purpose of natural philosophy

Hobbes' conclusions about the nature of natural phenomena contradict the scholastic doctrines of incorporeal substances that supported the ideas of the incorporeality of the soul⁶³⁰ and of ghosts and spirits⁶³¹. Fighting these ideas is important to Hobbes because they have political implications⁶³². It is these false doctrines that give reputation and power to the "ghostly men"⁶³³. The belief in an invisible realm of immaterial beings is instrumentalized by members of the Church to dispute the sovereignty of Christian commonwealths, setting up "supremacy against the sovereignty, canons against laws, and a ghostly authority against the civil"⁶³⁴. This is achieved through the use of "words and distinctions that of themselves signify nothing," such as incorporeal substances, but which "bewray" ignorant men⁶³⁵.

The reduction of incorporeal agents to invisible substances operates a radical break with the Aristotelian-scholastic doctrines of the Catholic Church and has severe repercussions for the practices of the clergy⁶³⁶. Among the practices

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁹ LL 46.14.

⁶³⁰ Lev 44.15.

⁶³¹ Lev 46: 18.

⁶³² Lev 12.32.

⁶³³ Lev 2.8.

⁶³⁴ Lev 29.15.

⁶³⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁶ See: WALSHAM, Alexandra. *Invisible Helpers: Angelic Intervention in Post-Reformation England*, **Past & Present**, vol. 208, 2010, p. 120-122; BRIGGS, Robin. 'By the Strength of Fancie': Witchcraft and the Early Modern Imagination, **Folklore**, vol. 115/3, 2004, p. 261-263.

that raised more power for the Church, Hobbes cites rituals of purification with holy water⁶³⁷, exorcism⁶³⁸, and excommunication⁶³⁹. As the only invisible spirit theorized by Hobbes is God, holy water rituals are unnecessary⁶⁴⁰. If demons existed, they would have to be corporeal, something that would prevent them from invading fluid-filled bodily structures (such as the nerves that control motion), obviating the need for exorcisms⁶⁴¹. If the soul is corporeal and is not immortal by nature (but by divine grace), being remade by God on the day of final judgment⁶⁴², the power of coercion exercised by excommunication is severely reduced. Moreover, according to Hobbes, "all the faith required to salvation" is to belief in one article, namely, "Jesus is the Christ" ⁶⁴³. Therefore, the delegitimization of incorporeal substances directly affects each of these practices.

With the delegitimization of scholastic natural philosophy, which mixed "the philosophy and doctrine of Aristotle into religion," priests lost their reputation for wisdom and love and received "a reputation both of ignorance and of fraudulent intention," which "inclined people to revolt from them"⁶⁴⁴. The diminished capacity for coercion made possible by belief in invisible powers⁶⁴⁵ represents both a blow to the reputation of the priests and a loss of power by the religious institution⁶⁴⁶. The attack carried out by Hobbesian natural philosophy is ultimately aimed not only at replacing a dying system of natural philosophy, but at stripping the Catholic Church of power gained through the spread of superstitious beliefs based on biased and "erroneous doctrines"⁶⁴⁷. The model proposed by Hobbes (replacement of immaterial substances by invisible bodies) discards the idea that there are any invisible agents, except for God. This movement executed through the field of natural philosophy, by eliminating the idea of the influence of invisible agents (composed of immaterial substances), has important political

⁶³⁷ Lev 2.8.

⁶³⁸ Lev 44.16.

⁶³⁹ Lev 42.20-24.

⁶⁴⁰ LL 46.18.

⁶⁴¹ Lev 45.8.

⁶⁴² Lev 44.15.

⁶⁴³ Lev 43.12.

⁶⁴⁴ Lev 12.31.

⁶⁴⁵ Lev 12.26.

⁶⁴⁶ "Reputation of power is power, because it draweth with it the adherence of those that need protection" (Lev 10.5).

⁶⁴⁷ Lev 46.1.

consequences, such as the delegitimization of control strategies widely employed by the Church, such as exorcisms, rituals with holy water, and excommunication. The Hobbesian hypothesis of invisible bodies has as a result weakening of the doctrines that support papal power (or the excess of ecclesiastical power).

6. Conclusion

This paper has argued that Hobbes develops a twofold strategy to combat the Aristotelian-Scholastic doctrine of incorporeal substances. On the one hand by demonstrating the internal contradiction represented by such a concept. And on the other, by advancing a mechanistic explanation of natural phenomena that aimed to supply the theoretical demand left by the incorporeal substances and theories such as that of *species*⁶⁴⁸. Although the mechanistic explanation presented by Hobbes is based on the motion of invisible bodies (because of their size, distance, or transparency), he is not completely sure of the certainty of this possibility⁶⁴⁹. This, however, does not prevent him from basing his natural philosophy on such concepts⁶⁵⁰, proposing explanations for the most diverse physical and mental phenomena. Hobbes' mechanistic natural philosophy, besides being built to replace the scholastic explanation of natural phenomena, also seems to aim at delegitimizing the discourse of priests and religious institutions that instrumentalize the belief in incorporeal substances⁶⁵¹. Ultimately, Hobbes' proposals for natural philosophy have immediate and severe political implications for the Pope and the Catholic Church. An obvious consequence of the delegitimization of certain rituals, such as the sprinkling of holy water, exorcisms, and excommunication, would be the loss of reputation, followed by the loss of power over simple-minded men⁶⁵². Moreover, the religion of a commonwealth cannot be found in doctrines that defend immaterial principles because it would only result in the weakening of the sovereign power.

⁶⁴⁸ Lev 1.5.

⁶⁴⁹ Lev 45.14; EW I, p. 502.

⁶⁵⁰ OL IV (*Examinatio et Emendatio*), p. 5.

⁶⁵¹ Lev 12.26.

⁶⁵² Lev 12.31.

CONCLUSÃO

O problema político do uso instrumental da religião é tão evidente em nosso contexto quanto naquele ilustrado por Hobbes, principalmente em sua obra magna, *Leviatã*. Ali o tratamento das questões envolvendo a religião e grupos religiosos passa por um profundo refinamento e expansão que, segundo muitas interpretações, teria resultado da perspectiva que Hobbes desenvolveu a respeito da influência de facções religiosas que teriam culminado na Guerra Civil Inglesa. Para o pensador inglês, essas seitas teriam dividido a sociedade e minado a autoridade da soberania sem chance de uma solução pacífica: “um reino dividido que não pode durar” (Lev 29.16).

Meu trabalho buscou destacar o ataque que Hobbes opera em múltiplas frentes contra aquilo que ele denominou como o reino das trevas, uma corja de indivíduos que se utiliza do temor supersticioso dos ignorantes para obter domínio sobre eles. Esse reino ocupa suas forças em impedir a união da *Commonwealth*, disputando parte, senão todo, o poder soberano. Hobbes apresenta críticas e desenvolve respostas às mais diversas doutrinas que sustentariam conceitualmente as alegações daqueles que, utilizando da religião e do medo, disputariam a obediência dos súditos contra o poder soberano. Este trabalho demonstra como Hobbes: 1) revela e combate uma ligação entre lógica, metafísica e política escolásticas que sustentaria as alegações de poder do Papa e da Igreja Católica; 2) a partir do refinamento do conceito de poder, inaugura sua antropologia da religião; 3) defende um aspecto estritamente normativo de sua definição de religião, sendo ela aquilo que é determinado como tal pelo soberano; 4) propõe além da deslegitimação das substâncias imateriais uma teoria que substitui as mesmas por corpos invisíveis que comporiam tudo que existe no Universo.

O primeiro artigo demonstra que as doutrinas Escolásticas representam uma das principais preocupações de Hobbes no *Leviatã*. Elas estão claramente representadas em parte do frontispício da obra, que era utilizado para resumir as principais ideias contidas nos livros para que elas fossem mais clara e facilmente compreendidas pelos leitores. A partir do frontispício, meu artigo destacou a intrincada relação entre aquilo que Hobbes entende como a lógica e a metafísica escolásticas, e a sustentação que ambas dariam para a teoria

política escolástica. De acordo com Hobbes, autores como Bellarmino teriam proposto uma divisão para o poder soberano em espiritual e temporal e também em poder direto e indireto. Para Hobbes essas doutrinas eram profundamente disruptivas, haja vista que uma Commonwealth dividida inevitavelmente se vê no fogo da guerra civil. Hobbes propõe que não existe nenhuma forma indireta de poder, e também que ele não deve ser dividido em espiritual e temporal, mas em civil e eclesiástico. Essa divisão é importante porque passa a discussão a respeito do poder de um campo metafísico para um campo puramente jurídico de atribuições de função prática.

O segundo artigo destaca como o refinamento do conceito de poder na *magnum opus* de Hobbes o permite desenvolver uma antropologia da religião. Para Hobbes, a partir do *Leviatã*, o poder é representado pela reputação que um indivíduo porta em seu meio, variando de acordo com o tempo e lugar. O pensador inglês afirma que mesmo as associações religiosas estão sujeitas a esta dinâmica magnética do poder. Elas se formam em torno de um indivíduo cuja reputação seja de “sábio” e “santo”. Toda “religião formada” tem seu fundamento no poder de um indivíduo, capaz de angariar membros para a sua associação. Hobbes teoriza que a morte de todas as religiões também se dê por causa da reputação. Quando a reputação delas é danificada, quer ela seja pelo mau comportamento de seus sacerdotes ou pela contradição interna de suas doutrinas, ela perde poder porque deixa de angariar membros. O fato de que as associações religiosas representem nódulos de poder parece ter contribuído para a defesa de Hobbes da regulação das questões eclesiásticas pelo poder soberano. Ao fim e ao cabo, Hobbes parece propor a *potestas* (poder jurídico) do Estado para controlar todas as *potentiae* (poder não-jurídico) representadas pelas associações não autorizadas, principalmente as religiosas.

O terceiro artigo investigou uma aparente contradição no tratamento dos juramentos na edição em latim do *Leviatã*. Analisada de perto essa contradição ajuda a desvelar duas dimensões da perspectiva hobbesiana a respeito da religião, a saber, de um lado uma perspectiva normativa e do outro uma perspectiva relativista. A primeira defende que religião é somente aquilo que foi autorizado como tal pelo poder soberano. Como consequência desta, surge uma dimensão relativista, segundo a qual o que é considerado religião depende do

tempo e do lugar. Fortes críticas de seus leitores contemporâneos parecem ter forçado Hobbes, depois do *Leviatã*, a destacar a dimensão normativa e disfarçar a dimensão relativista da religião. Essa oscilação entre estas duas dimensões, parece ter resultado na aparente contradição relativa aos juramentos na edição latina do *Leviatã* (ali Hobbes parece propor em um capítulo que juramentos no estado de natureza são impossíveis, e em outro que são possíveis). Meu artigo propõe que essa contradição pode ser facilmente resolvida caso o termo “juramento” seja substituído pelo termo “voto”, quando essa promessa que invoca os deuses como testemunha é feita fora do estado de sociedade, haja vista a íntima e profunda relação entre os juramentos (propriamente ditos) e a religião (que só pode existir no estado civil, pois depende da autorização do soberano).

O quarto capítulo demonstrou que Hobbes emprega, além da proposta negativa de recusa das substâncias imateriais, uma estratégia positiva que propõe a substituição destas substâncias por corpos invisíveis nas explicações de filosofia natural. Os ínfimos e incontáveis corpos invisíveis são os elementos mais fundamentais que compõem o universo. Hobbes propõe as mais diversas suposições fazendo uso desta teoria corpuscular, como a explicação para a chuva, os raios e trovões e mesmo o olfato e a visão. Seus princípios de filosofia natural, levam Hobbes a deduzir que até mesmo a natureza divina deve ser de alguma forma corpórea. Além disso, para o pensador inglês, o único corpo invisível capaz de agência é Deus. Sua teoria de filosofia natural ajuda a combater práticas instrumentais de aquisição de poder pelas associações religiosas por meios fraudulentos. Caso as constatações de Hobbes sejam levadas a sério por seus leitores, a excomunhão, os rituais com água benta, e mesmo os exorcismos perdem seu poder e sentido. Em última instância, Hobbes utiliza de sua definição mais básica na filosofia natural para realizar um ataque contra a doutrina escolástica das substâncias imateriais que, de acordo com Hobbes, seria um dos pilares do tão grande poder da Igreja Católica em sua época.

Hobbes vê com preocupação uma sociedade dominada mais pelo medo supersticioso do que pelo progresso político, pois ela abre brechas para a instauração definitiva do “reino das trevas”. Hobbes percebeu quão ramificada e

complexa é a inter-relação entre religião, sociedade e política, e procurou atuar em diversas frentes para conter o avanço daqueles que usam indevida e instrumentalmente da religião através de doutrinas errôneas das quais, geralmente, incorreram sedição e guerra. Muito embora haja uma distância considerável entre nosso contexto e o de Hobbes, a análise da religião enquanto um fenômeno sociocultural oferece valiosas lições a respeito de como combater aqueles que buscam erigir o reino das trevas.

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