THOMAS HOBBES (1588-1679)

on close terms with many of the best scientists and mathematicians of the day, including Galileo
their discoveries seemed to imply that all things are made of material particles
and all change is reduced to motion of particles
basic premise of his metaphysics: *all that exists is bodies in motion*
two main types of bodies: physical and political
two divisions of philosophy: natural and civil

sometimes called the father of modern analytic philosophy

natural philosophy
Hobbes’ strategy was to show that there is a basic mental activity, *perception*
or “sense” as he called it
from which all other mental phenomena are derived
perception itself is reduced to matter in motion:
motion in the external world produces motion within us
this motion within is experienced as an external object having certain properties
these properties do not really exist in the objects
they are just the way they *seem* to us
so motion outside us causes motion inside, which is perception
if the internal motion remains for awhile after the external object is no longer present
then it is *imagination* or *memory*
*Thinking* is merely a sequence of these perceptions

humans, unlike animals, are able to form signs or names (words) to designate perceptions
this ability enables humans to reason
*reasoning* for Hobbes is nothing other than “adding and subtracting of the consequences of general
names”
as for *decisions* or other voluntary actions such as walking or speaking
these are all movements of the body that begin internally as *endeavors*,
which are caused by perceptions
when the *endeavor* is toward something that causes it, it is *desire*
when away from it, *aversion*
*deliberation* is simply the alteration of desires and aversions
*will* is nothing but the last desire or aversion remaining in a deliberation

thus Hobbes tried to establish that every aspect of human psychology is a derivative of perception
and that perception reduces to matter in motion

Life

1610 first visit to the Continent
discovered disrepute of Aristotelian philosophy
after returning to England, met Bacon
thought little of Bacon’s inductive method but agreed with Bacon in his criticism of Aristotelianism
agreed with Bacon about knowledge as power to be used for improvement of human society
translated Thucydides into English
warned of the dangers of democracy... civil war

1629 second trip to the Continent began his career as philosopher
developed passionate interest in geometry
gave him a method of analysis and a conception of scientific method
third trip to Continent in 1634 brought him in circle of Mersenne, who also patronized Descartes and Gassendi
1636 made journey to Italy to visit Galileo
Galileo’s notion that motion is the natural state of bodies

main outlines of his philosophy
method of geometry and concepts of new science of motion applied to man in society
focused on the problem of sensation
what was the nature and cause of sense
concluded the cause of everything, including that of sensation itself,
was in variations of motion
this went against main thread of Aristotelian thought in which rest was the natural state
developed a mechanistic psychology

fled England in 1640
in Paris composed some 16 objections to Descartes Meditations
led to acrimonious exchange with Descartes

1651 published Leviathan

Logic and Methodology
theme of the importance of method
Bacon’s Novum Organum
Descartes’ Discourse on Method
Spinoza’s Ethics
all take up the them of the importance of a proper method

Doctrine of Names
distrustful of the inductive method and its reliance on observations of nature
prudence not to be mistaken for wisdom
wisdom is the product of reason, which gives knowledge of “general, eternal, and immutable truths”
definitions of paramount importance in geometry
“The only way to know is by definition”

“Names are signs not of things, but of our cogitations”
animals cannot reason for reasoning presupposes words with meanings fixed by decision

Universals
two classes of concrete names: proper names and universals
Hobbes’ doctrine of universal names crucial to his attack on the scholastic belief in essences
“Universals” is the name of a class of names, not some entity designated by a name
error of those who believe in essences results from confusion of universal name with proper name
misuse of words
Hobbes often considered a precursor to modern analytical philosophy because he was particularly concerned with the way in which ridiculous doctrines can arise from confusions about how words have meaning.

Scientific truth
his theory of scientific truth not always consistent
stated with the insight that “true” and “false” are attributes of speech not things

thought that all the propositions of natural science are deductions from basic theory of motion

Philosophy of Nature
his natural philosophy seems to have been stimulated by the problem of the nature and cause of sensation
his theory was that the cause of everything lies in varieties of motion
seems to have been little troubled by the problems of epistemology
he assumed things exist independently of our perceptions

Motion and qualities
like Galileo and Kepler held that secondary qualities, smells, colors, and sounds
all are only appearances of bodies in motion
such secondary qualities are but phantasms in the head
caused by the interaction of the primary qualities of things with the sense organs

this notion of bodies in motion that exist independently of our perceptions of them disclosed by mathematics
deeply embedded in the new natural philosophies of the day

distinction of Hobbes’ mechanical theory: extended Galileo’s system in two directions
into geometry and one end and psychology and politics at the other
geometry becomes the science of simple motions
paves the way for mechanics

Causation
all causation consists in motion
extended this conception of causation to human actions
to bring about transition from mechanics to physiology and psychology
introduced concept of “endeavors”
notion of infinitely small motions
thus attempted to bridge gap between mechanics and psychology

Hobbes is often called a materialist
but better perhaps to refer to him as the great metaphysician of motion
social life in even understood in terms of bodies in motion, moving toward and away from other bodies

Substance and accident
held there is nothing in the world but bodies
by “accident” Hobbes understood a property or characteristic that is not part of a thing
but rather “the manner by which any body is conceived”
Psychology

Hobbes’ psychology was not behavioristic as often is thought
Hobbes stressed the indispensability of introspection in the analysis and explanation of human behavior

Hobbes’ view certainly mechanistic
general neglect of epistemological criteria undermines his psychology
fundamental difference between imagination and perception is not one of vividness but is an epistemological difference

dreams
was fascinated by dreams
tried to determine what distinguishes them from waking thoughts
tried to develop mechanistic explanation of dreams

Hobbes’ psychology was remarkable in its attempt to establish psychology as an objective study
untrammeled by theological assumptions
suggestion that man is a machine marked the beginning of scientific account of psychology

Difficulties with Hobbes’ account of perception
most serious difficulty is that all psychological states are derivatives of perception
thus if there is anything wrong with his account of perception, there is something wrong with his entire account of mental states
perception is merely the movement of particles within
caused by the movement of external particles
but what is it that experiences the internal movement?

Hobbes’ materialism expresses in rudimentary form a view that is attractive to many contemporary philosophers and brain scientists
namely that every mental activity is a brain process of some sort or another
the difficulties with Hobbes’ account is still a problem for even the most up-to-date versions of materialism

Ethics

was scornful of the notion that “good” and “evil” named any metaphysical essence
these words name objects of our desires and aversions

distinguished between short-term and long-term goods
peace was a long-term good and thus
all necessary means to produce peace are good

men cannot have the peace they desire until they accept the sword of the sovereign that will make death the necessary consequence of breaking the rules that are the necessary condition of peace

Determinism and free will
Hobbes denied that there is any power in men to which the term “will” refers
what is called will is only the last desire in deliberating
only a man is properly called “free”
not his desires, will, or inclinations
Liberty is only the absence of impediments to action
thus there is no contradiction in saying that a man acts freely even though his actions are completely
determined
Locke and Hume followed Hobbes on this notion of liberty

Hobbes thought of man as a natural machine
all causes as mechanical pushes
his doctrine carried the suggestion that the behavior of men is not only explicable but also somehow unavoidable
for choices and decisions are simply the manifestations of internal pushes

**Political Philosophy**

tried to conceptualize the relationship between the new nation-state, which had been emerging under the Tudors, and the individual citizen
the rise of individualism
social mobility that accompanied rise of commerce and capitalism
old medieval conceptions of man in society no longer applied
Hobbes’ picture of life a gruesome caricature of an age of individualism, restless competition, and social mobility
with the loss of traditional authority what other form of social control could arise?
The answer to be found in growth of statute law
together with development of individual conscience
civil society could be reconstructed as a simple mechanistic system

**Social contract**

Galilean analysis of the rationale of civil society—the social contract theory
an attempt to rationalize political obligation
Hobbes employed the social contract model to demonstrate that absolutism is the only logical outcome
Hobbes prided himself on grounding the authority of the sovereign and the liberty and duty of subjects on axioms of human nature rather than on tradition and divine right
because of his overriding concern with security
and his depressing estimation of human nature
without civil society the life of man would be “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short”
came thus to the conclusion of the inevitability of absolutism as the only rationally defensible form of government

Hobbes imagined the individual in a state of nature as having an unlimited right to “protect his life and members” and “to use all the means, and do all the actions, without which he cannot preserve himself” also had a right to all things
“to do what he would, and against whom he thought fit, and to possess, use and enjoy all that he would, or could get”
employing here a strange concept of right
Hobbes uses the term to refer to both what a person is entitled to
and what a person cannot be obliged to renounce
by the “right of self-preservation” he meant not that an individual is entitled by some rule to life
but that he cannot be obliged to renounce it because it is psychologically impossible to do so
“natural rights” thus mean something different from what Locke later articulated
The Introduction
notice the mechanistic theory of man and of civil society
“life is but a motion of limbs”
the heart but a spring, the nerves only so many strings

the commonwealth or State is but an artificial man
of greater stature and strength than the natural
seeks to describe the nature of this artificial man
seeks thus to describe:
1) the nature of man, who is the creator (*artificer*) of this artificial man or State
2) how and by what *covenants* this State is made; what are the *rights* and *just power or authority* of a
sovereign; and what *preserves* and *dissolves* the State
3) what is a *Christian commonwealth*
4) what is the *kingdom of darkness*

of the nature of man Hobbes thinks that because
“the similitude of passions which are the same in all men” (115)
that one only needs to look within oneself,
and consider what one does when he thinks, opines, reasons, fear, etc
“he shall thereby read and know, what are the thoughts and passions of all other men upon like
occasions” (115)

and thus:
“He that is to govern a whole nation, must read himself, not this or that particular man; but mankind”
(115)

Hobbes thinks perhaps that he sees mankind in reading himself, but perhaps he only reads himself....

Chapter 1 Of Sense

takes up mechanistic account of sensation (perception)
clear empiricist starting point
“For there is no conception in a man’s mind, which hath not at first, totally, or by parts, been begotten
upon the organs of sense” (116)

seeks to outline the natural cause of sense
all caused by the motion of external things upon the organs of sense

The cause of sense is the external body, or object, which presseth the organ proper to each sense, either
immediately, as in taste and touch, or mediately, as in seeing, hearing, and smelling; which pressure, by the
mediation of nerves, and other strings and membranes of the body, continued inwards to the brain and heart,
causeth there a resistance, or counterpressure, or endeavor of the heart, to deliver itself: which endeavor,
because *outward*, seemeth to be some matter without. And this *seeming*, or, *fancy*, is that which men call *sense*,
and consisteth, as to the eye, in a *light*, or *color figured*; to the ear, in a *sound*; to the nostril, in an *odour*; to the
tongue and palate, in *savour*; and to the rest of the body, in *heat, cold, hardness, softness*, and such other
qualities as we discern by feeling. All these qualities called *sensible*, are in the object, that causeth them, but so
many several motions of the matter, by which it presseth our organs diversely. (116)

these colors or sounds are not in the objects that cause them
[this would be the standard empiricist account of perception—the colors or sounds are not in the objects]
for if they were, they could not be severed from them
and yet sometimes we see they are
where we know the thing we see in one place, the appearance in another
Hobbes contrasts this account of perception with Aristotelian doctrine
the cause of vision
the thing sends forth a visible show, apparition, or aspect

Chapter 2 Of Imagination

when a thing lies still it will forever lie still
but when a thing is in motion it will forever be in motion, unless something else stops it
contrast this with Aristotelian notion of natural state of rest
“the schools say heavy bodies fall downward out of an appetite to rest”

“Imagination therefore is nothing but decaying sense, and is found in men and many other living creatures, as well sleeping, as waking” (117)

This decaying is product of distance and time, which has “one and the same effect in us”
“This decaying sense when we would express the thing itself (I mean fancy itself), we call imagination. . . but when we would express the decay, and signify that the sense is fading, old, and past, it is called memory. Thus, imagination and memory are but one thing which for diverse considerations have diverse names” (117)

memory of many things is called experience
contrasts simple imagination—when one imagines a man or horse one has seen before
with compound imagination—when one imagines a Centaur, properly only a fiction of the mind

the imagination of those who sleep is called dreams
“there can happen in sleep no imagination, and therefore no dream, but what proceeds from the agitation of the inward parts of a man’s body” (118)

a hard matter to distinguish between waking and dreaming
he considers the difference: in waking I often notice the absurdity of dreams
but never dream the absurdities of waking thoughts

dreams are caused by the distemper of some of the inward parts of the body
“In sum, our dreams are the reverse of our waking imaginations, the motion when we are awake, beginning at one end, and when we dream, at another” (118)

From this ignorance of how to distinguish dreams and other strong fancies from vision and sense did arise the greatest part of the religions of the Gentiles in time past, who worshipped satyrs, fawns, nymphs, and the like, and nowadays the opinion that rude people have of fairies, ghosts, and goblins, and of the power of witches. (118)

If this superstitious fear of spirits were taken away, and with it prognostics from dreams, false prophecies, and many other things depending on it, by which crafty ambitious persons abuse the simple people, men would be much more fitted than they are for civil obedience. (119)
Chapter 3 Of the Consequences or Train of Imaginations

refers here to the succession of thoughts which is called mental discourse
to be distinguished from discourse in words

we have no imagination of which we have not formerly had sense
we also have no transition from one imagination to another of which we never had the like before in our senses
“all fancies are motions within us, relics of those made in the sense”

mental discourse is of two kinds:
1) unguided, without design
2) regulated by desire and design

train of regulated thoughts is of two kinds:
1) when we seek the causes of some particular effect imagined
   this is common to man and animals
2) when we seek all the possible effects from a cause
   this is in man only

in trying to determine what events will follow from what actions
as he who foresees what will become of a criminal reconsiders what he has seen before
“this kind of thought is called foresight, and prudence, and sometimes wisdom” (120)

compare what he says about God with Descartes:
whatever we imagine is finite
there is no idea of anything we call infinite
God is thus incomprehensible, his greatness and power inconceivable
the name of God is not to make us conceive him, but that we may honor him
a man can have no thought representing anything not subject to sense

Chapter 4 Of Speech
(in much of what he says here Hobbes is a precursor of Analytic philosophy)

the invention of printing is no great matter compared to the invention of speech
general use of speech is to transfer mental discourse into verbal
or the train of thought into a train of words

Use of Names:
1) to serve for marks, or notes of remembrance
2) as signs, when many use the same words to signify related things

Special use of Speech:
1) to register what by cogitation we find to be the cause of anything
2) to show others what we have learned, to teach or counsel
3) to make known to others our wills and purposes
4) to please and delight

Four corresponding abuses:
1) when men register their thoughts wrong, by the inconsistency of the signification of words, and thus deceive themselves
2) when they use words metaphorically, in sense other than what they are ordained for, and thus deceive others
3) when they declare what to be their will is not
4) when they use words to grieve another

Of names:
1) some are proper and singular
2) some are common and universal

Hobbes’ nominalism:
“there being nothing in the world universal but names” (122)

Hobbes as the precursor of modern analytic philosophy:
“Thus, in the right definition of names lies the first use of speech, which is the acquisition of science, and in wrong, or no definitions, lies the first abuse” (124)

Chapter 5 Of Reason and Science
“For Reason, in this sense, is nothing but reckoning (that is, adding and subtracting) of the consequences of general names agreed upon for the marking and signifying of our thoughts—I say marking them when we reckon by ourselves, and signifying when we demonstrate or approve our reckonings to other men” (126).

“And words by which we conceive of nothing but the sound are those we call absurd, insignificant, and nonsense. And therefore if a man should talk to me of a round quadrangle or, accidents of bread and cheese; or immaterial substances; or a free subject; a free will; or any free, but free from being hindered by opposition, I should not say he was in error, but that his words were without meaning, that is to say, absurd” (127).

Causes of Absurd Conclusions:
1) the want of method
   “in that they do not begin their ratiocination from definitions, that is, from settled significations of their words...” (127)
2) the giving of names of bodies to accidents; or accidents to bodies
3) the giving of names of the accidents of bodies without us to the accidents of our own bodies; as they do who say the color is in the body; the sound is in the air, etc.
4) the giving of names of bodies to names, or speeches; as they do who say that there are universal things
5) the giving of names of accidents to names and speeches; as they do who say the nature of a thing is its definition
6) the use of metaphores, tropes, and other rhetorical figures, instead of proper words
7) to names that signify nothing

one who avoids these errors will not easily fall into absurdity

“To conclude, the light of human minds is perspicuous words, by by exact definitions first made clearer and purged from ambiguity; reason is the pace; increase of science, the way; and the benefit of mankind, the end” (128).
Chapter 6 Of The Interior Beginnings of Voluntary Motions: Commonly Called The Passions; and the Speeches by Which They are Expressed

two sorts of motions in animals: **vital** and **voluntary**
he refers to the beginnings of motion in the body of man before appearing in walking, speaking, etc
as **endeavors**
when the endeavor is toward something which causes it is **appetite** or **desire**
when it is away from something it is **aversion**
that which men desire, they are also said to **love**
and to **hate** that which they have aversion to
that which we neither love nor hate we are said to **contemn**
the objects of man’s desire are said to be **good**
the objects of his hate and aversion are **evil**

Chapter 10 Of Power, Worth, Dignity, Honour, and Worthiness

distinguishes **natural power**, the faculties of body or mind
from **instrumental power**, those powers that are the means to acquire more power
such as riches, reputation, friends, and luck (the secret workings of God)
The **value**, or WORTH of a man, is as of all other things, his price; that is to say, so much as would be given for the use of his power: and therefore is not absolute; but a thing dependant on the need and judgment of another.

Chapter 11 Of the Difference of Manners

here Hobbes is concerned with “those qualities of mankind, that concern their living together in peace, and unity
against the old moral philosophers (Plato and Aristotle?)
Hobbes argues there is no utmost aim (**finus ultimus**) or greatest good (**summum bonum**) Hobbes’ psychological egoism comes to the fore:
the voluntary actions of all men are aimed at securing the satisfaction of desires
I put for a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death.

the competition for power, riches, etc incline men toward contention, enmity, and war
thus desire of ease, and ease of sensual delight
as well as desire of knowlwedge, and the arts of peace
lead men to obey a common power

Chapter 12 Of Religion

begins discussing the peculiar nature of man
one who is inquisitive about the causes of events
especially the causes of their own good and evil fortune
goes on to suggest that every man is like Prometheus
tied to a rock with an eagle feeding on his liver by day, repaired in the night—an eternal torture
so that man, which looks too far before him, in the care of future time, hath his heart all the day long, gnawed on by fear of death, poverty, or other calamity; and has no repose, nor pause of his anxiety,
but in sleep.
“some of the old poets said that the gods were at first created by human fear”
eventually this led to the supposition of a first mover
some invisible agent that was the eternal cause of all things

Hobbes’ materialistic metaphysics quite evident in his critique of the notion of *incorporeal substance*

perhaps an anticipation of Hume’s analysis of causality here:

Then, for the way by which they think these invisible agents wrought their effects; that is to say, what immediate causes they used, in bringing things to pass, men that know not what it is that we call *causing*, (that is, almost all men) have no other rule to guess by, but by observing, and remembering what they have seen to precede the like effect at some other time, or times before, without seeing between the antecedent and subsequent event, any dependence or connexion at all: and therefore from the like things past, they expect the like things to come; and hope for good or evil luck, superstitiously, from things that have no part at all in the causing of it. . . .

thus the seeds of religion are four:
1) belief in ghosts, 2) ignorance of second causes, 3) devotion toward what men fear,
4) taking of things causal for prognostics

these seeds take root then in two sorts of men:
those who have nourished them according to their own invention
those who have done it by God’s commandment

the object of religion has been “to make those men that relied on them, the more apt to obedience, laws, peace, charity, and civil society

**Chapter 13 Of the Natural Condition of Mankind as Concerning Their Felicity, and Misery**

the opening paragraph is very important for understanding his conception of the state of nature:

Nature hath made men so equal, in the faculties of body, and mind; as that though there be found one man sometimes manifestly stronger in body, or of quicker mind than another; yet when all is reckoned together, the difference between man, and man, is not so considerable, as that one man can thereupon claim to himself any benefit, to which another may not pretend, as well as he.

thus, in the state of nature, all men are relatively equal, in terms of their power over others
though some are stronger than others, this strength is outweighed by wit, etc
this equality of ability is not necessarily a good thing, according to Hobbes:

From this equality of ability, ariseth equality of hope in the attaining of our ends. And therefore if any two men desire the same thing, which nevertheless they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies; and in the way to their end, (which is principally their own conservation, and sometimes their delection only,) endeavor to destroy or subdue one another.

this equality of ability then leads to diffidence—no one trusts another:

And from this diffidence of one another, there is no way for any man to secure himself, so reasonable, as anticipation; that is, by force, or wiles, to master the persons of all men he can, so long, till he sees no other power great enough to endanger him. . . .

the nature of man leads to three principal causes of quarrel: competition, diffidence, glory
Here then is how Hobbes the state of nature:

Hereby it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war, as is of every man, against every man. For WAR, consisteth not in battle only, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time wherein the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known... so that nature of war, consisteth not in actual fighting; but in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary. All other time is PEACE.

in the next paragraph we find the most famous line of the *Leviathan*

Whatsoever therefore is consequent to a time of war, where every man is enemy to every man; the same is consequent to the time, wherein men live without other security, than what their own strength, and their own invention shall furnish them withal. In such condition, there is no place for industry; because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving, and removing such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts, no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

Hobbes acknowledges that some would argue that this “state of nature” never existed he admits it was never generally so but thinks there are places—such as America:

For the savage people in many place of America, except the government of small families, the concord whereof dependeth on natural lust, have no government at all; and live at this day in that brutish manner, as I said before.

he says that even if there had never been such a time as this when there was no authority at all, and all were in a state of war with all in other words, even if there always has been some local authority, in all times kings and sovereigns have existed in such a state of war with each other

another important passage about this state of war:

To this war of every man against every man, this is also consequent; that nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice have there no place. Where there is no common power, there is no law: where there is no law, no injustice.

so, for Hobbes, it appears there cannot be any such thing as an unjust law

in such a state of nature there can also “be no propriety, no dominion, no mine and thine distinct; but only that to be every man’s, that he can get; and for so long, as he can keep it”

**Chapter 14 Of the First and Second Natural Laws, and of Contracts**

Hobbes begins with a few important definitions:

The RIGHT OF NATURE, which writers commonly call jus naturale, is the liberty each man hath, to use his own power, as he will himself, for the preservation of his own nature; that is to say, of his own life; and consequently, of doing any thing which in his own judgment, and reason, he shall conceive to be the aptest means thereunto.

here we see the notion of a natural right
for Hobbes it simply consists of the right to self-preservation

Hobbes’s conception of liberty comes next:

> By LIBERTY, is understood, according to the proper signification of the word, the absence of external impediments: which impediments, may oft take away part of a man’s power to do what he would; but cannot hinder him from using the power left him, according as his judgment, and reason shall dictate to him.

now his conception of natural law:

> A LAW OF NATURE, (lex naturalis,) is a precept, or general rule, found out by reason, by which a man is forbidden to do that, which is destructive of his life, or taketh away the means of preserving the same . . . .

thus a natural law is distinguished from a natural right in this sense

a right is the liberty to do something

a law is something that binds one from doing something

thus they are mutually opposed

in the state of nature, which is a condition of war . . .

it followeth, that in such a condition, every man has a right to every thing: even to one another’s body.

thus there can be no security

which leads to a general rule of reason (which is exactly how he has defined a natural law)

> that every man, ought to endeavor peace, as far as he has hope of obtaining it; and when he cannot obtain it, that he may seek, and use, all helps, and advantages of war.

thus the first, fundamental law of nature, is to seek peace

the fundamental natural right is to defend ourselves

the first law of nature leads to a second natural law:

> that a man be willing, when others are so too, as farforth, as for peace, and defence of himself he shall think it necessary, to lay down this right to all things; and be contented with so much liberty against other men, as he would allow other men against himself.

This natural law leads then to a laying down of one’s natural right

a divestment of one’s liberty

one lays one’s right aside either by simply renouncing it, or by transferring it to another

when one lays down one’s right, one is then obliged or bound not to hinder those to whom one has transferred the right

one thus has a duty not to hinder those to whom the right is transferred

for Hobbes, injustice is simply not accepting this duty

Hobbes goes on to point out, since the transfer of rights is done voluntarily (to escape the state of nature), and the object of such transference is thus some good to himself

that there are some rights which cannot transferred or be taken away:

> And therefore there be some rights, which no man can be understood by any words, or other signs, to have abandoned, or transferred. As first a man cannot lay down the right of resisting them, that
assault him by force, to take away his life; because he cannot be understood to aim thereby, at any
good to himself.

he seems to be saying here that one’s right to life cannot be taken away
this is the concept of an inalienable or indefeasible right
Hobbes goes on to talk about the Social Contract
it remains to be seen if there really are any inalienable rights in his social contract

by contract, Hobbes means simply a “mutual transferring of right”
any covenant, or contract, made in the state of nature simply upon mutual trust are, for Hobbes, void
the implication is that there is no power to enforce the contract if it is simply based on trust

thus, only “if there be a common power set over them both, with right and force sufficient to compel
performance” will the contract have any force

another passage suggests the notion of an inalienable right:
A covenant not to defend myself from force, by force, is always void. For (as I have shown
before) no man can transfer, or lay down his right to save himself from death, wounds, and
imprisonment. . . .

he goes on to argue that the only force that can maintain covenants
is certainly not the force of words but either one of two aspects of human nature:
the fear of the repercussions from breaking the covenant
or the glory, or pride, in appearing not to need to break it
and since the latter is too rarely found the only force to count on is that of fear

Chapter 15  Of Other Laws of Nature
a third law of nature follows from the second:
that men perform their covenants made: without which, covenants are in vain, and but empty words;
and the right of all men to all things remaining, we are still in the condition of war.

this leads again to Hobbes’ conception of justice
in the state of nature, where there is no covenant, no action can be unjust
justice is simply a matter of accepting the terms of covenants made
the definition of injustice is simply the breaking of covenants
And in this law of nature, consisteth the fountain and original of JUSTICE. For where no covenant
hath proceeded, there hath no right been transferred, and every man has right to every thing; and
consequently, no action can be unjust. But when a covenant is made, then to break it is unjust; and
the definition of INJUSTICE, is no other than the not performance of covenant. And whatsoever is
not unjust, is just.

thus justice depends totally upon some power to force men to uphold covenants made:
Therefore before the name of just, and unjust can have place, there must be some coercive power, to
compel men equally to the performance of their covenants, by the terror of some punishment, greater
than the benefit they expect by the breach of their covenant. . . .

Hobbes goes on at length in the rest of the chapter on the foolishness of breaking covenants
anyone who thinks he can break covenants cannot be a member of any society
the only way of gaining security is to not break the covenant
Justice therefore, that is to say, keeping of covenant, is a rule of reason, by which we are forbidden to do any thing destructive to our life; and consequently a law of nature.

he argues against the right to rebellion
those that think natural law derives not from the preservation of man’s life on earth
but rather the attaining of eternal reward after death
and thus think they can break any covenant, and rebel against a sovereign power
believing thus that there is a natural law above that of earthly covenants
Hobbes simply dismisses as being deluded by superstition of the supernatural

Part 2. Of Commowealth

Chapter 17 Of the Causes, Generation, and Definition of a Commonwealth
for Hobbes the final cause, or end, of man
is to escape the miserable condition of war that is the state of nature
and “covenants, without the sword, are but words”
the only human beings can escape this state of war is to erect a common power over all
and the only way to do this is to confer all power upon one man
or upon one assembly of men
thus all their individuals wills are united into one will
This is more than consent, or concord; it is a real unity of them all, in one and the same person, made by covenant of every many with every man, in such manner, as if every man should say to every man, I authorise and give up my right of governing myself, to this man, or to this assembly of men, on this condition, that thou give up thy right to him, and authorize all his actions in like manner. This done, the multitude so united in one person, is called a COMMONWEALTH, in Latin CIVITAS. That is the generation of that great LEVIATHAN, or rather (to speak more reverently) of that mortal god, to which we owe under the immortal God, our peace and defence.

this Leviathan thus has considerable power:
For by this authority, given him by every particular man in the commonwealth, he hath the use of so much power and strength conferred on him, that by terror thereof, he is enabled to form the wills of them all, to peace at home, and mutual aid against their enemies abroad. And in him consisteth the essence of commonwealth; which (to define it,) is one person, of whose acts a great multitude, by mutual covenants one with another, have made themselves every one the author, to the end he may use the strength and means of them all, as he shall think expedient, for their peace and common defence.

the obvious question that immediately should arise
is whether anyone retains any rights at all, even the right to life, in such a commonwealth
if the sovereign can use any means he thinks expedient, including terror
to keep subjects in fear

two ways in which such a sovereign power are attained
1) by natural force, as father over children, or conquering enemies in war
this is a commonwealth by acquisition
2) by covenant when men agree among themselves to submit to a sovereign
this is a political commonwealth, or commonwealth by institution
Chapter 18 Of the Rights of Sovereigns by Institution

here Hobbes defines how a commonwealth is instituted:

A commonwealth is said to be instituted, when a multitude of men do agree, and covenant, every one with every one, that to whatsoever man, or assembly of men, shall be given by the major part, the right to present the person of them all, (that is to say, to be their representative;) every one, as well he that voted for it, as he that voted against it, shall authorize all the actions and judgments, of that man, or assembly of men, in the same manner, as if they were his own, to the end, to live peaceably amongst themselves, and be protected against other men.

thus it is a simple matter of majority rule
does not leave much protection for the minority

then he lays out the rights of the Sovereign

1) the sovereign has absolute power and the subjects have no right to remove him

And consequently they that have already instituted a commonwealth, being thereby bound by covenant, to own the actions, and judgments of one, cannot lawfully make a new covenant, amongst themselves, to be obedient to any other, in any thing whatsoever, without his permission. And therefore, they that are subjects to a monarch, cannot without his leave cast off monarchy. . . .

for to do so would be to return to the state of nature

anyone who attempts to overthrow the monarch is unjust by definition

some men may claim they are duty bound to God and not king

but for Hobbes there is no covenant with God

for one can only covenant with someone that claims to represent God

and such claims are evidently lies

2) the sovereign is above the contract

he cannot ever be found in breach of the contract

because the right of bearing the person of them all, is given to him they make sovereign, by covenant only of one to another, and not of him to any of them; there can happen no breach of covenant on the part of the sovereign.

one argument seems to be that there could be no way to determine such a breach

if some subjects say there is a breach and others say there is not

thus this would again lead back to a state of nature

of war of all against all

another argument is again that only absolute power is sufficient to keep things in order

...that covenants being but words and breath, have no force to oblige, contain, or protect any man, but what it has from the public sword; that is, from the untied hands of that man, or assembly of men that hath the sovereignty. . . .

3) he that dissented must accept the majority rule and also be bound by the covenant

in taking part in the deliberative process at all one gives tacit consent to accept the result

he must either accept the covenant

or be left in the state of war, in which case he can without injustice be killed by anyone

4) the sovereign can never be accused of injustice

whatever the sovereign does cannot be said to be injury to any of his subjects
they only injure themselves in not submitting to his authority

5) the sovereign can never be justly executed or punished in any way by his subjects
the sovereign also has the right to any means necessary to secure the peace
   And because the end of this institution, is the peace and defence of them all; and whosoever has the
   right to the end, has right to the means; it belongeth of right, to whatsoever man, or assembly that
   hath the sovereignty, to be judge both of the means of peace and defence; and also of the hindrances,
   and disturbances of the same; and to do whatsoever he shall think necessary to be done, both
   beforehand, for the preserving of peace and security, by prevention of discord at home, and hostility
   from abroad; and when peace and security are lost, for the recovery of the same.

6) the sovereign thus has the right to determine who shall speak to multitudes
what books are to be published—what doctrines are allowed to be published
   though in the matter of doctrine truth should prevail
any doctrine repugnant to peace cannot be true
the sovereign is thus the judge of all doctrines and opinions

7) the sovereign has the right to determine all propriety
that is, whatever is good, evil, lawful and unlawful
the sovereign determines what civil law is
and there can thus be no conflict between moral and civil law

8) the sovereign has the right of judicature
of determining and deciding all controversies surrounding the law
there is thus no independent judiciary

9) the sovereign has absolute right of making war and peace with other nations
the sovereign is always the supreme military commander-in-chief

10) the sovereign has the right to choose all counsellors, ministers, magistrates, and officers
in both war and peace

11) the sovereign has the right to dole out rewards and punishment as he sees fit

12) the sovereign has the right to determine all honours
to give titles of honour
and to appoint what order of place and dignity each man shall hold

**Chapter 21 Of the Liberty of Subjects**
begins by repeating his definition of *liberty* or *freedom*
as simply the absence of external restraint

And according to this proper, and generally received meaning of the word, a FREEMAN, *is he, that
in those things, which by his strength and wit he is able to do, is not hindered to do what he has a
will to.*

for Hobbes the words *free* and *liberty* can only be applied to bodies (which are always in motion)
for anything which is not in motion is not subject to impediment
there is thus no such thing as *freewill*:
Lastly, from the use of the word *freewill*, no liberty can be inferred of the will, desire, or inclination, but the liberty of the man; which consisteth in this, that he finds no stop, in doing what he has the will, desire, or inclination to do.

A paragraph on how *liberty* and *necessity* are consistent

uses analogy of water that not only has the *liberty* to descend the channel

but also the *necessity*

After this preliminary discussion, then Hobbes turns to the particular liberties of the subject

“what are the things, which though commanded by the sovereign, he may nevertheless, without injustice, refuse to do”

“that every subject has liberty in all those things, the right whereof cannot by covenant be transferred”

thus

1) the subject has the liberty to disobey any sovereign command to kill, wound or main himself, or not resist those who assault him, or to abstain from any necessity without which he cannot live

2) a subject has liberty to remain silent and not accuse himself (even of a crime he committed) because no man can be obliged by covenant to accuse himself

3) a difficult passage here on whether a subject ever has the right to refuse the order to go to war he seems to say that one might refuse without injustice an order to go to war even though the sovereign has the right to punish the refusal with death to avoid battle is not injustice, but cowardice unless the defence of the commonwealth itself is at stake in that case everyone is obliged

No man has liberty to resist the sword of the commonwealth in defence of another man whether innocent or guilty because such liberty undermines the authority of the sovereign all other liberties depend upon the silence of the law

the obligation of subject to sovereign last as long as the power lasts that is, as long as the sovereign has the power to maintain the peace and protect the subjects it seems implied here that if the sovereign loses that power the people can replace the sovereign thus the sovereign must maintain absolute power

Chapter 29 Of Those Things that Weaken, or Tend to the Dissolution of a Commonwealth

1) when the sovereign does not assume enough power than defence of the commonwealth is required

2) the poison of seditious doctrines—such as that every private man is judge of good and evil actions this is true in the state of nature,

and under a civil government in cases not determined by civil law but there can be no conflict between moral and civil law under a civil government

From this false doctrine, men are disposed to debate with themselves, and dispute the commands of the commonwealth; and afterwards to obey or disobey them, as in their private judgments they shall think fit. Whereby the commonwealth is distracted and weakened. (240)

3) a related seditious doctrine is that “whatsoever a man does against his conscience is sin” for this depends on the presumption of making himself judge of good and evil
just as a man’s judgment may be erroneous, so may be his conscience 
[thus we should have no conscience under the commonwealth]

also argues against those who make themselves judges of good and evil 
by appealing to supernatural inspiration

4) another seditious opinion is that the sovereign is subject to civil law 
the sovereign is subject to the laws of nature, for such laws cannot be abrogated 
but he is not subject to the laws of the commonwealth 
the sovereign is thus above the law 
for Hobbes it is an error to set laws above the sovereign 
for then the sovereign is not sovereign and this leads to the dissolution of the commonwealth

5) another doctrine that leads to the dissolution of the commonwealth is that every subject 
has an absolute propriety in his goods 
which would thus exclude the sovereign 
the implication is that the sovereign may confiscate private property if necessary in times of war to 
defend the commonwealth against external enemies

6) another doctrine that is plainly against the essence of a commonwealth 
is that sovereign power may be divided 
Hobbes argues here for absolute monarchy—no separation of powers 
separation of power leads to danger of civil war and dissolution of the commonwealth