Chapter 4
Hobbes and Husserl

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I have a personal reason to discuss Hobbes and phenomenology in a paper honoring Richard Cobb-Stevens. He once told me about an incident that occurred while he was driving from Boston College to his home in Carlisle, Massachusetts. At one point, a police cruiser flagged him down and the officer came up and went through the usual inquiries. The interview gradually turned into a conversation, and the officer asked Richard what he did. He said he was a professor at Boston College, and the policeman asked, "What do you teach?" On hearing the answer "Philosophy," the officer drew himself up, pointed to his badge, and said, "Do you see this badge?" "Yes." Then, in stentorian tones, "Behind this badge stands the power of The Great Leviathan." This was a striking instance of philosophy flowing back into the *Lebenswelt*.

Husserl does not say much about Hobbes, in contrast with the extensive attention he gives to Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, but he does mention him in his surveys of the history of philosophy and he makes some insightful, if general, remarks about him as being the source for a number of problems in later British philosophers. In the "Critical History of Ideas" found in *Erste Philosophie*, for example, Husserl says that the psychology being developed by both Descartes and his contemporary Hobbes modeled itself after the new natural sciences of the time. It proceeded as a purely inductive science, which, Husserl says, one might call "a natural science of the soul (*des Seelischen*)" (1965, p. 88). Husserl distinguishes Hobbes from Descartes, however, claiming that while Descartes attributed thoughts to a spiritual substance, Hobbes took cognitional life as "merely subjective appearance," which was to be correlated with material objects; he thereby became "the father of modern materialism and also the new materialistic psychology" (Husserl 1965, p. 94, cf. p. 301 note). He did so by transmitting into modern philosophy a bad inheritance ("ein altes Erbübel") from ancient skepticism and medieval nominalism

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J. Bloechl, N. de Warren (eds.), *Phenomenology in a New Key: Between Analysis and History*, Contributions to Phenomenology 72, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-02018-1_4

(1965, p. 127). Such random remarks, drawn from Husserl's rather textbook knowledge of Hobbes, stand in vivid contrast with the detail of his discussion of later British Empiricists and their relation to his phenomenology.

This paper proposes to examine Hobbes's own work and to show how some of his doctrines can be illuminated by themes in phenomenology. It will be a retrospective analysis, examining not Hobbes's influence on Husserl but the light that Husserl's philosophy can shed on Hobbes.

Philosophical Method

At the beginning of *Leviathan*, in the introduction, Hobbes, after a long paragraph about the state as an artificial man, says that wisdom is acquired not by reading books but by "reading" men (1996, p. 10).[1] But there are two ways to read men, Hobbes says: one is by knowing the conduct of men in the world and gossiping about them, and the other is by knowing oneself, by looking into ourselves and using this knowledge to understand the ways of other men. Because of the "similitude of the thoughts and passions of one man to the thoughts and passions of another," anyone who proceeds this way will "read and know what are the thoughts and passions of all other men upon the like occasions." Hobbes claims, therefore, that we best know others indirectly, through self-knowledge. Trying to understand others without this philosophical knowledge of ourselves "is to decipher without a key," like trying to figure out a coded message without the help of the code book. This self-knowledge, however, will itself be clarified by the reading of Hobbes's writings, whose claims will be confirmed by our experience of ourselves. By reflecting on our own experience we will see that what Hobbes says is self-evidently true. Hobbes promises that his book will enable us to learn the formal structures of both human thinking and the various passions. He insists that this knowledge will focus on the passions themselves and not on their objects: "I say the similitude of passions, which are the same in all men, desire, fear, hope, etc.; not the similitude of the objects of the passions, which are the things desired, feared, hoped, etc."

These remarks of Hobbes bear an uncanny resemblance to Husserl's claim that philosophy consists in a reflective analysis of one's own ego. Husserl says that each person must "enter into himself," where the task at hand is to describe the structures of intentionality that are found in our cognitional activities: "The Delphic motto, 'Know thyself!' has gained a new signification. Positive science is lost in the world. I must lose the world by epochē, in order to regain it by a universal self-examination. '*Noli foras ire*,' says Augustine, '*in te redi, in interiore homine*

[1] Hobbes's use of the term "to read" in this context is noteworthy. It will recur in my citations. I will quote from this edition but will modernize the spelling.

habitat veritas'" (Husserl 1977a, p. 157).[2] Husserl spells out this procedure of reflection more explicitly and in greater detail than Hobbes does, and in doing so he offers us a more adequate analysis of what philosophy is. He formulates it in terms of the transcendental reduction, in which we elevate ourselves into a standpoint from which we can contemplate our natural attitude and our natural consciousness (the noetic domain), as well as the objects with which our experience is correlated (the noematic domain). Husserl also says that we must not just think about our individual conscious experiences but must raise them to eidetic generality, that is, we need to perform an eidetic as well as a transcendental reduction. One of the criticisms Husserl makes of Hobbes is that he did not recognize this eidetic dimension but remained an empiricist who worked merely with inductive procedures even in his psychology: Hobbes suffered from "a blindness in regard to ideas and ideal laws" (1965, p. 127). For Husserl, it is through eidetic insight based on our own conscious life that we can come to know what consciousness and truth are for all rational subjects.

Another major difference between Hobbes and Husserl lies in the total absence of any reference to political philosophy in Husserl, in striking contrast with the dominance of the political interest in Hobbes. After sketching the aims of his philosophy in his introduction, Hobbes says that a private person would find this knowledge of men useful only in his dealings with his acquaintances, but "he who is to govern a nation, must read in himself, not this, or that particular man, but Man-kind" (1996, p. 11). Hobbes is addressing the one who will bear the sovereignty. The philosophical achievement will be put into the service of political dominion. He concedes that this task of reading mankind might seem overwhelming, but he confidently adds that his book will make it easy: "When I shall have set down my own reading orderly, and perspicuously, the pains left another, will be only to consider, if he also find not the same in himself." All the work will have been done by Hobbes; the sovereign (and his subjects as well, as Hobbes will say later) will need only expose themselves to the methodic exposition of his writing. Husserl is very different from this. His aim is cultural and scientific, not political. He intends to clarify how philosophy is a science, not how it helps in governing. Hobbes, in contrast, wishes to teach both the sovereign and his subjects, whom he shows to be subjects by their own volition; at the close of Part II of *Leviathan* Hobbes expresses the hope that "men will learn thereby, both how to govern, and how to obey" (1996, p. 254).

There is, furthermore, nothing small-minded in Hobbes's ambition. In the previous chapter he had posed the rhetorical question: "Is it you will undertake to teach the universities?" (1996, p. 237) Will he presume to teach the teachers in the commonwealth? He concedes that this is a "hard question," but he responds, "It is not fit, not needful for me to say either I or No: for any man that sees what I am doing may easily perceive what I think." Husserl would not have been capable of such Machiavellian subtlety.

[2] Hobbes also appeals to the Delphic motto in his introduction to *Leviathan*: "Nosce teipsum, Read thy self" (1996, p. 10).

To conclude this discussion of philosophical method in Hobbes and Husserl, I would like to mention a curious passage at the beginning of *The Elements of Law*, where Hobbes discusses cognition. He writes, "There be in our minds continually certain images or conceptions of the things without us, insomuch that if a man could be alive, and all the rest of the world annihilated, he should nevertheless retain the image thereof, and of all those things which he had before seen and perceived in it" (1994, p. 22). Hobbes uses this thought experiment to show what he means by ideas; he continues, "Every man by his own experience knowing that the absence or destruction of things once imagined, does not cause the absence or destruction of the imagination itself." This passage resembles Husserl's own *Weltvernichtung* as presented in *Ideas I* and *Cartesian Meditations*, except that Hobbes seems to take this possibility rather casually as a step in his argument, while Husserl gives it a more important role. He uses it as one of his "ways to reduction," one of the arguments that establish his philosophical project and to explain the standpoint we need to occupy if we are to carry it out (1977b, p. 103, 1977a, pp. 17–18). Husserl drew this maneuver from Descartes, of course, and he calls it the "Cartesian way" to the epochē and reduction when he later criticizes it in *The Crisis of European Sciences*, but it is interesting to see that Hobbes made use of the same conceptual experiment even if he did not give it a very prominent place in his philosophy (1970, p. 155).

Perception and Imagination

One area in which a superiority of Husserl over Hobbes comes to the fore is in the analysis of perception and imagination, that is, in the analysis of these two basic structures of intentionality. Hobbes's treatment is vastly oversimplified. He discusses perception under the rubric of "sense." He claims that sense occurs when the object works on the eyes, ears, and other parts of the body and "produces diversity of appearances" (1996, p. 13). The effect of the object is essentially tactile; it or its effects "press" the organs of sense and then cause a further motion through nerves and other "strings and membranes" internally "to the brain and heart," where they cause "a resistance or counter-pressure or endeavour of the heart." This endeavour is a motion outward, and because it is outwardly directed, "it seems to be some matter without" (1996, pp. 13–14). Whether inward or outward, however, all we have is motion rolling on in "us," that is, in our bodies. The endeavour, this beginning of an outward motion, is tiny and barely perceptible if at all: "unstudied men" do not acknowledge it because they do not recognize any motion where the thing moved is not visible "or the space it is moved in is (for the shortness of it) insensible" (1996, p. 38). We must, however, admit its existence, because if we recognize larger motions we know there must have been small beginnings for them.[3]

[3] I would like to note the similarity between Hobbes's notion of this small displacement that he calls endeavour and Derrida's notion of différance.

Two points need to be made in response to these Hobbesian claims. The first is that Hobbes begins his analysis of sense by appealing only to bodily motions. They are generated by the object, traverse the space between the thing and the perceiver, enter the sense organs of the perceiver, and finally reach the brain and heart. At that point the bodily motion rebounds and becomes not just motion but a phenomenon: a seeming or a fancy or an appearance. How does this change occur? How does a motion become an appearance? In describing this process, Hobbes shifts from what I would call "body language" to "fancy language," but he does not explain how this transition from physical process to appearance takes place or how the transition from one kind of language to another is justified. He does not explain how we can shift from talking about bodies to talking about appearances. And yet, in a striking passage in the *De Corpore*, he recognizes the strangeness of this difference and seems to admit the dilemma: "Of all the phenomena that exist near us, 'the to be manifest' itself (*id ipsum to phainesthai*) is doubtlessly the most wondrous (*admirabilissimum*); that in natural bodies, some have in themselves 'exemplaria' of practically all things, others of none" (1839, p. 316).[4] This lyrical passage acknowledges the astonishing fact that appearances have suddenly "made their appearance" among simple bodies, but it seems to treat this fact as a mystery rather than as something to be explained. The passage is an expression of premodern, Aristotelian wonder, quite out of keeping with Hobbes's standard way of treating things and reducing them to matter in motion. I would also add, incidentally, that contemporary brain science has not progressed much beyond Hobbes on this issue; it also does not explain how the material processes in the brain and nervous system can also "be" thoughts and images in and through which we experience, name, and articulate things.

Hobbes goes on in this passage in *De Corpore* to make a statement that sounds very much like Husserl's "principle of all principles," the maxim that in our phenomenology we must take intuitive experience as the norm for all knowledge, and we must accept it with all its limitations ("aber auch nur in den Schranken") (Husserl 1977b, p. 51).[5] That is, there are absences as well as presences in intuitive experience. Hobbes's way of saying this is: "So that if phenomena are the principles of knowing everything else, and [if] sensing is the principle of knowing those principles, then it must be said that all science is to be derived from it [from sensing], and for the investigation of the causes of it [sensing], no beginning can be taken from any other phenomenon besides this one itself" (Hobbes 1839,

[4] I am grateful to James Hart for bringing this passage to my attention. See his book, *Who One Is* (Hart 2009, vol. 1, p. 61, n. 8). Part IV is entitled, *Physica, sive de naturae phanomenis, Physics, or on the phenomena of nature*. The passage reads: "Phaenomenōn autem omnium, quae prope nos existunt, id ipsum to phainesthai est admirabilissimum, nimirum, in corporibus naturalibus alia omnium fere rerum, alia nullarum in seipsis exemplaria habere." The translation in the text is my own. The passage is translated in J. C. A. Gaskin's edition of *The Elements of Law: Human Nature and De Corpore Politico* (Hobbes 1994, p. 213). My criticism of Hobbes is analogous to Augustine's critique of Democritus and Lucretius in §31 of his letter to Dioscorus (Letter 118).

[5] The title of §24 is, "Das Prinzip aller Prinzipien."

pp. 316–317).[6] The major difference between Husserl and Hobbes is that Hobbes restricts intuition to sensory perception while Husserl expands it cover categorial and eidetic insight as well.

The second point I wish to make concerning Hobbes's doctrine of perception deals with the spatial location of the appearances that bodies cause in us. Where do such appearances occur? Because a "seeming" or a "fancy" is an effect produced by a bodily motion, the appearance takes its place not in the thing that causes it but in the body that receives it, that is, it occurs in us as perceivers. The appearance is spatially displaced from the thing of which it is an appearance. This dislocation of appearances is vividly brought out in a passage in *The Elements of Law*. Hobbes writes, "Every man hath so much experience as to have seen the sun and other visible objects by reflection in the water and in glasses, and this alone is sufficient for this conclusion: that color and image may be there where the thing seen is not" (1994, pp. 23–24). The appearance is not in the thing but elsewhere, where it is a "thing merely phantastical" (1994, p. 24).[7] Hobbes refers to this shell game that nature plays on us as "the great deception of sense" and he says that it "is by sense to be corrected" (1994, p. 26). In *Leviathan* Hobbes says that if colors and sounds were in the objects, they could not have been severed from them, but we do see that there are situations "where we know the thing we see is in one place, the appearance in another" (1996, p. 14). Later on, while discussing the Kingdom of Darkness, he writes, "The phantastical forms, apparitions, or seeming of visible objects . . . are nothing real in the things seen, nor in the place where they seem to be" (1996, pp. 447–448).

Hobbes is not saying that appearances might on occasion be separated from the things that appear. He claims that they *never* are to be found in the thing and *cannot* be located there, because they are the outcome of a bodily motion that has departed from the object and has found its residence in us or on some reflecting surface. If from a certain distance the object may "seem invested [clothed] with the fancy that it begets in us; yet still the object is one thing, the image or fancy another" (1996, pp. 447–448).[8] Appearances are ontologically and spatially separated from the things of which they are the appearances.

We can use this colorful and interesting doctrine of Hobbes as a point of contrast with Husserl's doctrine of the intentionality of consciousness. For Husserl, the features that we experience as the manifold of sides, aspects, and profiles (*Abschattungen*) in which a thing presents itself to us are all experienced as lodged in the thing itself. They are given in the thing, not separated from it and dislocated

[6] Latin text: "Adeo ut si phaenomena principia sint cognoscendi caetera, sensionem cognoscendi ipsa principia principium esse, scientiamque omnem ab ea derivari dicendum est, et ad causarum eius investigationem ab alio phaenomeno, praeter eam ipsam, initium sumi non posse."

[7] We might note how strongly Hobbes substantializes appearances when he speaks of a "thing merely phantastical."

[8] Hobbes seems to imply that the fancy that occurs in us is like the image that occurs in a mirror.

elsewhere. The thing is the identity given to us in this manifold, not something separable from it. Following his "principle of all principles," Husserl takes our intuitive experience as normative for our philosophical descriptions. Features are experienced intuitively in things and not in us and we need to begin our philosophical analysis with this phenomenon as given.[9] We must not reconstruct it. Instead of appealing to a bodily motion that goes from the object to the perceiver, Husserl describes things as they directly show up to us, and with great subtlety formulates a vocabulary appropriate to such appearances. He also explains how the standpoint we adopt when we carry out such reflective analysis differs from the standpoint we enjoy when we are involved with things in the world. By working out the intricacies of the transcendental reduction, he clarifies the difference between what I have earlier called philosophical "body language" and "fancy language."

One of the strengths Husserl brings to this argument is his extremely refined differentiation of the many kinds of presences, images, and representations that enter into our experience, along with the differentiated intentionalities that are correlated with them. Husserl distinguishes between empty and filled intentions, categorial and sensory perception, imagination and memory, and imagination and after-images. A phenomenologist might go on in this spirit and further distinguish between mirrors and pictures, moving pictures and stills, television and movies, photographs and paintings, and so on. Perception itself takes on many forms, depending on the kind of thing being perceived, each kind having its own style of manifolds. Hobbes fails to make enough distinctions. His vocabulary for imaging is univocal. For Hobbes, "sense" is reduced to one kind of thing because it is reduced to matter in motion, and the appearances that are displaced from things are also flattened out into one kind: Hobbes uses the mirrored reflections in water as being the same kind of "appearance fantastical" as imagination and memory, and he does not adequately discuss pictures.[10] Because a mirrored image can be displaced from the object it mirrors, he concludes that even in perception the look of a thing can be detached from the thing itself, which is counter-intuitive and philosophically illegitimate.

Hobbes's blunt univocity in his philosophical lexicon for appearances accounts in part for his scathing, amusing, but unfair critique of scholastic theories of knowledge. Toward the end of his chapter on imagination in *Leviathan*, for

[9] In a footnote in *Erste Philosophie*, Husserl (1965, p. 151) mentions Hobbes and says that both he and Locke make the mistake of considering the perceived object as a complex of sensory data instead of seeing it as the substrate for its features. In the main text on this page he is discussing Berkeley, who, he says, fails to recognize that *Dingbewusstsein* must be seen as *Einheitsbewusstsein* and that the perceived thing is a synthetic identity in a manifold of presentations. Each of the thing's features, furthermore, such as the color or shape, is itself an identity in a manifold. Husserl observes in the footnote that the philosophical failure to recognize the identity of things seems "ineradicable, *unausrottbar*."

[10] Hobbes claims that statues do not resemble things; rather, they resemble images in the brain of the person who makes them. In discussing statues and idols, he says, "And these are also called images, not for the resemblance of any corporeal thing, but for the resemblance of some phantastical inhabitants of the brain of the maker" (1996, p. 448).

example, he writes, "Some say the senses receive the species of things, and deliver them over to the common-sense; and the common sense delivers them over to the fancy, and the fancy to the memory, and the memory to the judgment, like handing of things from one to another, with many words making nothing understood" (1996, p. 19). The scholastic term *species* is like the Greek word *eidos*. It does not name a thing, no more than the English word "look" – as in "the look of a building" – would name a thing. But Hobbes takes it to name a thing. The scholastics, drawing on Greek philosophy, were trying to get a vocabulary appropriate to the philosophical discussion of thinking and appearing, but Hobbes was obviously unsympathetic with their efforts. He did not offer them a charitable interpretation, to say the least, in his linguistic analysis. Each of the first eight chapters of *Leviathan* conclude with an almost ritualistic fling at the scholastics and their "absurd" verbiage, and the attacks continue at intervals later in the work. Husserl, in contrast, is concerned with trying to get the right words to name the way things show up, and to introduce the right stance that will allow us to describe how things can be identified. He also wishes to find the vocabulary to express how we ourselves can become identifiable as speakers and agents of truth. In this regard Husserl's work is more compatible with the ancient philosophy than is that of Hobbes.

Metaphysical, Mathematical, and Political Questions

Chapter One of *Leviathan* deals with sense, which is caused in us by an object that is present. Chapter two deals with imagination, whether simple or compound, which Hobbes defines as decaying sense, the continued "rolling" of the motion within us; such decaying sense occurs when the object that caused the original sense is absent and yet the motion it engendered persists. He also discusses memory (imagination considered as past), experience (many memories), afterimages (imaginations derived from strongly pressed sense), dreams (imaginations during sleep), and understanding (imagination joined to words or other voluntary signs such as nonverbal sounds, hence common to man and beast).[11] The latter five phenomena are essentially reducible to imagination but imagination is not reducible to sense; it is, rather, what happens after sense is finished. There is an irreducible distinction between sense and imagination, even though both are different stages in the continuous motion caused by the object in us. Imagination is that motion as it has rebounded within us, so it is partially generated from within and not, like sense, simply from without.

The relationship between sense and imagination demands further study. Although the two phenomena are just one motion, the motion is differentiated by its direction, first from without and then from within. But in addition there is an

[11] Hobbes's failure to distinguish different kinds of intentionality is especially obvious in regard to afterimages. He considers them a kind of imagination, but they clearly are different.

identity between the two; what we imagine is recognized as the same as what we perceived. Hobbes, however, does not account for such identity. He says, for example, that memory occurs "when we would express the decay, and signify that the sense is fading, old, and past." He also says that simple imagination occurs "when one imagines a man, or horse, which he has seen before," and he refers to imaginations of "cities we have seen" (1996, p. 16). But why do we not take the image we now have as simply another "sense"? What is it that allows us to recognize the sameness between the present image and the original sense? How is the sense of pastness introduced? If imagination is merely another stage in a bodily motion, why is it not taken as something simply present, as simply another perceptual experience and not "the same thing again"? Once again, the shift from "body language" to "fancy language" is not clarified, and a classical metaphysical issue – that of identity and difference, sameness and otherness, and even the special temporal forms of same and other – are not considered. Husserl, in contrast, with his extensive attention to the theme of identity in manifolds, directly faces such topics and develops a vocabulary to treat them.

I would like to draw attention to a beautiful philosophical formulation in Hobbes. It deals with his treatment of speech. After discussing sense, imagination, and trains of thoughts (imaginations), he moves on, in chapter 4 of *Leviathan*, to speech, the form of expression proper to man. Words, he says, are under our voluntary control, both as reminders to ourselves ("marks") and as instruments of communication ("signs"). We can manipulate them in a way that we cannot manipulate our thoughts. Words enable us to order and guide our ideas in a way that animals cannot, and they also enable us to represent or "personate" ourselves and others and so enter into political life. In leading the reader into this topic (in chapter 2), he mentions and emphasizes a particular feature of words: they exist not as single items, but are woven together in a deliberate manner by a speaker. Hobbes refers to such interweaving as the "sequel and contexture of the names of things" (1996, p. 19).[12] This is a wonderful way of expressing syntax, which Husserl calls categoriality and categorial form. Hobbes's phrase alludes to the temporal sequence of words, the fact that they follow one another in time, and it also signifies their grammatical threading and weaving, their combing and carding. However, Hobbes's ontology of speech, his explanation of how words as physical sounds are related to the meanings and the things that they embody, is far less successful than Husserl's intricate clarification of the metaphysics of verbal meaning in the first two chapters of *Logical Investigations* (2001, pp. 184–215).

Both Hobbes and Husserl were involved in mathematics, and this intellectual formation affected both their doctrines and the way they wrote philosophy. Hobbes thinks of reasoning as computation and he often uses mathematical terms to describe logical operations; adding and subtracting comprise the essential operations in thinking: "When a man reasoneth, he does nothing else but conceive a sum

[12] Ibid., p. 19. On Hobbes's philosophy of language, see the valuable book: Pettit, P 2008, *Made with Words: Hobbes on Language, Mind, and Politics*.

total, from addition of parcels; or conceive a remainder, from subtraction of one sum from another" (1996, p. 31). Sums of names are affirmations, sums of affirmations are syllogisms, and sums of syllogisms are demonstrations. He says that "Reason ... is nothing but reckoning," and he compares someone who makes an error in moving from premises to conclusions with arithmeticians who "cast up false" (1996, p. 32).[13] Definitions for Hobbes are sums of ideas, and in particular his many definitions of the passions, in chapter 6, seem to be so many equations made up of a few elementary terms. One might present his definitions formally as follows[14]:

(1) hope = appetite + likelihood of attainment
(2) despair = appetite + unlikelihood of attainment

One might even think of substituting values in such equations. For example, since:

(3) anger = courage + suddenness
and
(4) courage = aversion + hope of avoidance by resistance

we might substitute the definition of courage found in equation (4) for the term "courage" in equation (3) and change the latter into:

$(3)^1$ anger = aversion + hope of avoidance by resistance + suddenness

This procedure is very much like the substitution of terms in physics. If force equals mass times acceleration:

(1) $f = ma$

and acceleration is distance over time squared:

(2) $a = dt^{-2}$

then:

$(1)^1$ $f = mdt^{-2}$

In the way he thinks, Hobbes seems to anticipate Newton. Husserl's first book, of course, was a philosophical study of arithmetic, and his writing always maintained a mathematical tone in its precision of expression.

The most conspicuous difference between our two philosophers is the total lack of any political philosophy in Husserl. In radical contrast with both Plato and Hobbes, Husserl enters philosophy from the world of science, first from mathematics and then from logic as the core of scientific thinking. Even *The Crisis of European Sciences* responds to the cultural problem posed by science, not that

[13] Ibid., ch. 5, p. 32.

[14] For the following definitions, see Hobbes 1996, p. 41. I will discuss only hope, despair, anger, and courage, but one could perform similar operations on many of the definitions Hobbes gives in this chapter.

presented by modern political ideas. He resembles Descartes in this neglect of politics as a setting for philosophy. But although Husserl says practically nothing about political life, what he does can still be of great importance for it. After all, Hobbes begins *Leviathan* by talking about perception, imagination, reasoning, and words. His "epistemology" is a prelude for his treatment of politics. His understanding of human cognition and speech is geared toward the politics of sovereignty. It describes how a sovereign and a subject in a modern, Machiavellian state exercise their reason. Hobbes's anthropology is suited for subjects of the modern sovereign state.[15]

Husserl's metaphysics of knowledge differs from that of Hobbes, and it can be put into the service of a more classical understanding of human beings as citizens. The human person described by Husserl is a responsible agent, someone who does not need to have the definitions of moral terms imposed on him by the sovereign. If he is a virtuous agent, he can discover through his own prudence what is good and noble by nature. He can think for himself and he can converse with others; he is also capable of friendship, for which Hobbes gives no account.[16] He is an agent of truth and a practical agent, and he can politically act for himself as a citizen. He need not be personated by others or concede the whole of political action to the sovereign power. If Hobbes dissociates himself from ancient and medieval thinking, Husserl opens the possibility of regaining philosophy as such, which transcends the differences between ancient, medieval, and modern, and treats human beings as citizens and statesmen, not subjects and sovereigns. He enables us to retain our dignity even before a representative of the great Leviathan.

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[15] On the threat to human freedom in Hobbes's theory, see *Hobbes and Republican Liberty* (Skinner 2008, pp. 211–216).

[16] Thomas Prufer gives a highly compressed digest of Hobbes's political theory, under the heading, "Hobbes's sovereign teaching." The title is ambiguous; it can refer to both Hobbes's teaching about sovereignty and his teaching as being intellectually sovereign, that is, as ruling over minds. In a note to this section Prufer says that his major point "began to become clear to me through a remark of Francis Slade . . .: 'For Hobbes, friendship is terrible'." See *Recapitulations: Essays in Philosophy* (Prufer 1993, p. 25). Without Hobbes's instruction, we are left in a standoff between tyranny and tyrannicide: "Tyranny and tyrannicide are left facing each other unless both sovereign and subject are ruled by Hobbes's teaching. The book *Leviathan* is the mortal god, the knowledge of good and evil" (Prufer 1993, p. 26).

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