

Glory and the Evolution of Hobbes's Disagreement Theory of War: From *Elements* to *Leviathan*

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Abstract: The centrality of glory, contempt, and revengefulness to *Leviathan*'s account of war is highlighted by three contextual features: Hobbes's displacement of the traditional conception of glory as intrinsically intersubjective and comparative; his incorporation of the Aristotelian view that revengefulness is provoked by expressions of mere contempt; and the evolution of his account between 1640 and 1651. An archeology of *Leviathan*'s famous chapter thirteen confirms that Hobbes's thesis throughout his career was that disagreement is the universal cause of war because prickly, glory-seeking humans view its expression as a sign of contempt: although *Leviathan* abandons Hobbes's previous argument that war is primarily rooted in vainglorious individuals pursuing domination, *Leviathan*'s 'glory' argument for war is a descendent of the older 'comparison', not 'vanity', argument.

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Thomas Hobbes is infamous for his contention that war in the state of nature is inevitable, and civil war immanent to every political society.¹ The question is why this is supposed to be the case. According to one interpretation, Hobbes explained war as the outcome of competition over scarce material resources; according to a second, war erupts because even benign individuals, without a common sovereign to protect them, and uncertain of others' intentions, have rational incentive to engage in pre-emptive first strikes; and according to a third, the vainglorious, aggressive, indeed 'evil' natural drive to dominate others inevitably propels humans to war.² None of these traditional interpretations is without textual warrant. Each echoes one of the three 'principall causes of quarrel' rooted 'in the nature of man' singled out in *Leviathan*'s thirteenth chapter: *competition*, *diffidence*, and *glory*.³ Each is compatible, moreover, with acknowledging the other 'principall' psychological causes; the difference lies in what each takes to be the "universal" cause for why war is *inevitable* in the state of nature and immanent to political society.

* Primary texts cited as: abbreviation [chapter.paragraph: page]. Translations frequently modified; all underlining is my emphasis. For Thomas Hobbes: EW = *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury*, ed. William Molesworth, 11 vols. (London, 1839-45); EL = *The Elements of Law* (Harley MS 4235, British Library, London [1640]; chapters renumbered consecutively); DCv = *De Cive: The Latin Version*, ed. Howard Warrender (Oxford, 1983 [1642, 2nd ed. 1647]) [*De Cive: The English Version*, ed. Howard Warrender (Oxford, 1983)]; AW = *Critique du De Mundo de Thomas White*, ed. J. Jacquot and H. W. Jones (Paris, 1973 [1642/43]) [*Thomas White's De Mundo Examined*, trans. H. W. Jones (London, 1976)]; L and LL = *Leviathan: The English and Latin Texts*, ed. Noel Malcolm (Oxford, 2012 [1651, 1668]); DH = *De Homine*, in *Opera Philosophica Quae Latine Scripsit Omnia*, ed. William Molesworth, 5 vols. (London, 1839-45, volume 2 [1658]) [*Man and Citizen (De Homine and De Cive)*, ed. Bernard Gert (Indianapolis, IN, 1991)]. Other primary texts: BL = John Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, ed. A. Clark, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1898); BR = Anonymous, *Briefe of the Art of Rhetorique*, in *The Rhetorics of Thomas Hobbes and Bernard Lamy*, ed. John T. Harwood (Carbondale, IL, 1986); DCD = Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, Loeb Classical Library, 7 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1957-1972); NE = Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Loeb Classical Library, Aristotle vol. 19. (Cambridge, MA, 1929); R = Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, Loeb Classical Library, Aristotle vol. 22 (Cambridge, MA, 1926) [*On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, trans. George A. Kennedy, 2nd ed. (New York, 2007); Edward Meredith Cope, *Commentary on the Rhetoric of Aristotle* (Cambridge, 1877)]; ST = Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, the Latin/English Edition of the Works of St. Thomas Aquinas, Vols. 13-20 (Lander, Wyoming, 2012); TD = Cicero, *Tusculanarum Disputationum*, Loeb Classical Library, Cicero vol. 18. (Cambridge, MA, 1927).

¹ Hobbes was explicit on both points: 'that miserable condition of Warre...is necessarily consequent...to the naturall Passions of men, when there is no visible Power to keep them in awe', and 'though Sovereignty, in the intention of them that make it, be immortal; yet is it in its own nature, not only subject to violent death, by foreign war; but also through the ignorance, and passions of men, it hath in it, from the very institution, many seeds of a naturall mortality, by Intestine Discord'. L 17.1: 254; 21.21: 344.

² See David Gauthier, *The Logic of Leviathan: The Moral and Political Theory of Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford, 1969); F.S. McNeilly, *The Anatomy of Leviathan* (New York, 1968); Leo Strauss, *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes: Its Basis and Its Genesis*, trans. Elsa M. Sinclair (Chicago, 1963), respectively.

³ L 13.6: 192.

More recently, however, a rival reading has emerged, according to which the heart of Hobbes's theory of war lies in the combination of glory and the external stimulus that most commonly offends and provokes it, namely, expressed *disagreement*. The universal cause of war ultimately centres, on this reading, not on underlying conflicts of interest, nor the strategic rationality of pre-emptive strikes, nor an evil drive to dominate, but on ideological conflicts that break out into the open.⁴

A major difficulty confronting this reading, however, is that *Leviathan* (1651)—which articulates Hobbes's most famous account of war—appears to say very little about glory. Indeed, many have argued that while glory may have been central to Hobbes's account of war in *De Cive* (1642, second edition 1647), and even perhaps *Elements of Law* (1640), it becomes relegated to an afterthought in *Leviathan*.⁵ Hence the glory- and disagreement-centred reading is open to the objection that it fails properly to account for the evolution of Hobbes's thought and, in particular, what supposedly led him to abandon the emphasis on glory in his mature theory of war.

My task here is to deepen our understanding of Hobbes's account by way of defending the glory- and disagreement-centred reading against this charge. I argue that Hobbes's central thesis throughout his political writings is that disagreement is the universal cause of war, above all because prickly, glory-seeking humans are inclined to view its expression as a sign of contempt. To be contradicted by others, especially by a supposed equal, and sometimes even if the disagreement concerns mere trifles, is to suffer a blow to the glory that humans desire—so grievous a blow that it typically provokes the desire for vengeance even at risk to one's own life. The widespread failure to see the centrality of glory, contempt, and revengefulness in *Leviathan*'s theory of war arises, I argue, because of a failure to appreciate three contextual features: Hobbes's

⁴ Arash Abizadeh, 'Hobbes on the Causes of War: A Disagreement Theory', *American Political Science Review* 105 (2) (2011), pp. 298-315; Teresa M. Bejan, 'Difference without Disagreement: Rethinking Hobbes on "Independency" and Toleration', *The Review of Politics* 78 (1) (2016), pp. 1-25. For precursors to the disagreement-theory reading, see Sheldon S. Wolin, *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought*, Expanded ed. (Princeton, 2006); Richard Tuck, *Hobbes* (Oxford, 1989).

⁵ See McNeilly, *The Anatomy of Leviathan*; Jean Hampton, *Hobbes and the Social Contract Tradition* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 74; François Tricaud, 'Hobbes's Conception of the State of Nature from 1640 to 1651: Evolution and Ambiguities', in *Perspectives on Thomas Hobbes*, ed. G. A. J. Rogers and Alan Ryan (Oxford: 1988), pp. 120-2. For an important analysis of the evolution of Hobbes's treatment of glory, see Gabriella Slomp, 'Hobbes on Glory and Civil Strife', in *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes's Leviathan*, ed. Patricia Springborg (Cambridge, 2007). As shall become clear, I disagree with Slomp's claim that in *Leviathan* 'glory is an instance of human motivation that affects only some' (p. 195). (Slomp's claim stems from an erroneous reduction of 'glory' to aggressive, domination-seeking vainglory.)

sharp departure from traditional conceptions of glory as intrinsically intersubjective and comparative, towards an individualistic, subjective, and extremely broad-ranged conception; the Aristotelian background shaping Hobbes's account of the passions furnishing the psychological causes of war; and the precise nature of, and reasons behind, the evolution of Hobbes's formulation of those causes between 1640 and 1651.

Whereas glory had been traditionally conceived *intersubjectively*, to consist in one's superior reputation and social standing—which consist in how one is praised or honoured by *others* in their attitudes, expressions, and treatment—for Hobbes glory consists in the purely *subjective* pleasure of contemplating one's own powers. Hobbes's account of why the desire for glory disposes humans to war, moreover, is grounded in and linked to an Aristotelian conception of anger and revengefulness. Hobbes adopted from Aristotle the view that people are provoked by expressions of not just hatred but also contempt—the latter of which Hobbes took to be ubiquitous. Yet because in *Leviathan* Hobbes largely abandoned his previous argument that a primary cause of war is the presence of aggressive, vainglorious individuals seeking to dominate others, many have thought he thereby diminished the role of glory in 1651. This thought stems from a failure to realize that what in *Leviathan* Hobbes called the 'glory' argument is not a descendent of the earlier 'vanity' argument, and that the desire for glory is not always manifested as a vain desire to dominate others. The older 'vanity' argument that, as many readers have rightly discerned, becomes deemphasized and transformed is relabelled in Hobbes's mature work as the 'diffidence' argument. By contrast, *Leviathan's* glory argument corresponds to the older 'comparison' argument for war—which holds pride of place in Hobbes's theory. Properly understanding Hobbes's novel conception of glory, the Aristotelian background, and Hobbes's intellectual development shows how the significance of glory—which Hobbes took to be much more pervasive a passion than vanity or vainglory—actually *increased* with each iteration of Hobbes's political theory.

I. The Psychological Basis of War: Desire, Pleasure, and Glory

Hobbes's account of human psychology furnishes the starting point of his theory of war. Just as sensory perception comprises a motion within the head caused by external objects, the 'simple Passions'—'Appetite, Desire', or 'Love', on the one hand, and 'Hatred' or 'Aversion', on the other—comprise a physical 'Motion, or Endeavour' in or from the heart. Such cardiac motion, which furnishes the 'small beginnings' of all voluntary motions or actions, constitutes desire when

it ‘seemeth’ to help or corroborate the body’s internal vital motions and is consequently directed towards the objects causing it; it constitutes aversion when it seems to hinder the body’s vital motions and is consequently directed away from the objects causing it.⁶ Humans may desire or be averse to objects, but they may also be indifferent to or condemn (‘neither Desire, nor Hate’) them. To desire something is to see it as good for oneself, which is to say, to take it to be pleasant or conducive to self-preservation; to be averse to something is to see it as evil, which is to say, to take it to be painful or destructive of self-preservation. In the state of nature, where there is no sovereign to enforce common significations for words, individuals are inclined to call the objects of their present desire ‘*Good*’, of hatred ‘*Evill*’, and of contempt ‘*Vile and Inconsiderable*’.⁷

Hobbes asserted that all subjectively unsatisfied desires or aversions are accompanied by pleasures or displeasures of *anticipation*.⁸ These are ‘*Pleasures of the mind*’ or ‘JOY’ and displeasures of mind or ‘GRIEFE’; they are the pleasures and displeasures that ‘arise from the Expectation, that proceeds from foresight of the End, or Consequence of things’.⁹ The anticipation or ‘Expectation’ that produces joy typically comprises a hope of the foreseen consequence being realized, but it might also comprise a purely fictional ‘Expectation of consequences’: Hobbes was well aware that mental pleasures sometimes arise from ‘feigning or supposing’ things and their imaginary consequences, such as those ‘nourished by the Histories, or Fictions of Gallant Persons’, or such as when a person takes anticipatory pleasure in ‘imagining, or dreaming of the death of him, from whose life he expecteth nothing but dammage, and displeasure’. The phenomenon is ubiquitous: ‘to be pleased in the fiction of that, which would please a man if it were reall, is a Passion so adhaerent to the Nature both of a man, and every other living creature’.¹⁰ (Mental pleasure can even consist in the memory of past desire satisfaction.¹¹) If subjectively unsatisfied desires or aversions give rise to pleasures or displeasures of anticipation, to perceive one’s desires or aversions presently satisfied yields pleasures or displeasures of *satisfaction*, which in *Elements* Hobbes called ‘FRUITION’.¹² But just as Hobbes equated anticipatory with mental pleasure, he equated pleasures of satisfaction or fruition with ‘*Pleasures of Sense*’ and displeasures of

⁶ L 6.1-13: 78-84. Cf. EL 7.2.

⁷ L 6.7: 80.

⁸ L 6.11: 82.

⁹ L 6.12: 84.

¹⁰ L 6.12: 84; 6.41: 88; 27.1: 452.

¹¹ AW 30.23; 38.5.

¹² EL 7.5.

satisfaction with displeasures of sense or ‘PAYNE’.¹³

All passions comprise some combination of these four basic elements—appetite, aversion, pleasure, and/or displeasure—and vary according to the particular combination and intensity of each basic element; the object(s) of appetite or aversion; one’s opinion of the likelihood of attaining or avoiding the object(s); and the speed or succession of the passion’s occurrence.¹⁴ Thus ‘FEARE’ is an aversion to objects one believes can cause ‘*Hurt*’ (i.e., pain, grief, or death);¹⁵ ‘REVENGEFULNESSE’ is a desire to hurt others in order to make them openly ‘condemn’ their own action (which had hurt the avenger);¹⁶ ‘ENVIE’ is ‘*Griefe*, for the successe of a Competitor in wealth, honour, or other good...joyned with Endeavour to supplant, or hinder’ the competitor; and ‘ANGER’ is ‘*Sudden courage*’, i.e., the swift coalescence of an aversion to an object that one believes hurtful (which amounts to fear), a desire to resist the object, and a belief that one can avoid the hurt by so resisting (which amounts to hope).¹⁷

Hobbes’s account of the human passions is the starting point of his theory of war because voluntary action is, according to Hobbes, always in pursuit of satisfying a desire (or aversion). Since humans inherently project goodness onto the objects of their desire, this is equivalent to saying that ‘of the voluntary acts of every man, the object is some [apparent] *Good to himselfe*’.¹⁸ Desires or aversions, and so voluntary actions, are not prompted by what is *objectively* good or harmful, but by what each person subjectively *believes* is so: ‘mens actions are derived from the opinions they have of the Good, or Evill, which from those actions redound unto themselves’.¹⁹ Opinions or beliefs therefore not only constitute but also causally give rise to passions, such that

¹³ L 6.12. See Arash Abizadeh, *Hobbes and the Two Faces of Ethics* (Cambridge, 2018), chapter 4.

¹⁴ L 6.13: 84.

¹⁵ L 6.16: 84.

¹⁶ L 6.34: 86. Cf. EL 9.6; DH 12.4.

¹⁷ L 6.48: 90; 6.18: 84.

¹⁸ L 14.8: 202.

¹⁹ L 42.67: 850. None of this is to say that individuals’ conception of their own good is necessarily selfish: depending on their opinions, they may desire and take pleasure in other persons’ good, and may deem fulfilling their duty as good (whether instrumentally, or as a pleasurable end in itself). See the discussions of psychological egoism in Bernard Gert, ‘Hobbes and Psychological Egoism’, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 28 (4) (1967), pp. 503-520; Hampton, *Hobbes and the Social Contract Tradition*; David Boonin-Vail, *Thomas Hobbes and the Science of Moral Virtue* (Cambridge, 1994); Abizadeh, *Hobbes and the Two Faces of Ethics*. See also Hobbes’s comments about the fear of consequences in breaking one’s word, and the glory some experience ‘in appearing not to need to break it’ (L 14.31: 216) and about ‘Gallantnesse of courage’ (L 15.10: 226-227), discussed in Michael Oakeshott, *Hobbes on Civil Association* (Indianapolis, IN, 1975).

the voluntary ‘Actions of men proceed from their Opinions’. Beliefs play a causal role in the explanation of voluntary action.²⁰

Voluntary action therefore depends on at least three conditions: (1) the existence of a *passion* or disposition for doing something under given circumstances; (2) the presence of some external, circumstantial *stimulus* to trigger or elicit the passion to action; and (3) a set of *permissive* conditions comprising the absence of interfering causes that would prevent the triggered passion from resulting in action. Circumstantial stimuli include not only (a) *incentives* for instrumentally rational action, directed towards realizing one’s ongoing desires, but also (b) *provocations* that may compromise the rational pursuit of one’s long-run ends. The set of permissive conditions thus comprises (a) an *affective* component, namely, the absence of stronger countervailing passions, and (b) (since passions in part stem from and are constituted by opinions) a *cognitive* or ideational component, namely, the absence of countervailing, motivationally efficacious opinions about one’s interests or duties.

To identify the circumstances under which these three conditions are met for violent action is to identify the psychological causal mechanisms of war. In order to isolate the primary, psychologically grounded causal mechanisms of war—to isolate them, that is, from war’s structural causes—Hobbes turned to the device of the state of nature. The device involves imagining a pre-political condition in which there is no sovereign power, no political obligation to obey, and covenants are scarcely viable.²¹

The most ubiquitous and important passion in Hobbesian psychology is glory. Unless the anticipatory mental pleasure one takes in imagining the satisfaction of one’s desire is accompanied by the *hope* it will be satisfied, such pleasure will be typically disrupted and even outweighed by despair, i.e., by the mental pain of imagining the object of one’s desire eluding satisfaction. Hope, in turn, depends on belief in one’s ability or power to satisfy one’s desires. Glory for Hobbes is the mental pleasure one takes in contemplating this power to satisfy desires: as he put it in *Leviathan*, ‘GLORYING’ is an ‘exultation of the mind’ or ‘Joy, arising from imagination of a mans own power and ability’. Hobbes distinguished three types of glory. The first he called ‘*Confidence*’, which is glory ‘well grounded...upon the experience of [one’s] own former actions’,

²⁰ L 18.9: 272. See Arash Abizadeh, ‘Hobbes on Mind: Practical Deliberation, Reasoning, and Language’, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 55 (1) (2017), pp. 1-34.

²¹ On the state of nature as a methodological device, see Tricaud, ‘Hobbes’s Conception’, . On the systemic- and social-structural causes of war, see Abizadeh, ‘Hobbes on the Causes of War’.

i.e., upon a belief about one's power grounded in a track record of having been able to satisfy desires in the past. The latter two he called vanity or 'VAINE-GLORY': one is a *self-delusional* kind of vainglory, 'a foolish over-rating of [one's] own worth' and power often 'grounded on the flattery of others' or in fortuitous success in 'some precedent action'; the other is a *self-indulgent* kind of vainglory that 'consisteth in the feigning or supposing of abilities in our selves, which we know are not', simply 'for delight in the [imagined] consequences of it'.²²

Given its intrinsic link to power, glory—not vainglory in particular, but glory in general—permeates our mental life. The desire for power is itself a universal, instrumental desire for the means of satisfying desires as such. It is a consequently ubiquitous desire, which is to say there is 'a generall inclination of all mankind' to have 'a perpetuall and restlesse desire of Power after power, that ceaseth onely in Death'.²³ Hence the ubiquity of the associated mental pleasure of glory, which proceeds from the 'Expectation' of the consequences of the power one contemplates in oneself. Since mental pleasure arises from anticipating the satisfaction of one's desires, and since hopeful anticipation partly consists in contemplating one's power to satisfy desires, *all* mental pleasures ultimately reduce or at least relate to glory. As Hobbes put it in *Anti-White* (1642/43):

if in fact every mental grief [*dolor animi*] lies in recollecting or feigning [*fictione*] one's own weakness, then every mental delight [*animi jucunditas*] consists in the recollection, or at least feigned imagination [*fictâ imaginatione*], of one's own power, or excellence. Therefore joy, or delight of the mind [*delectatio animi*], is nothing but a kind of triumph of the mind, whether internal glory [*interna gloria*], or glorying over one's own power & excellence with respect to another to whom one compares oneself.²⁴

We can fully grasp the significance of Hobbes's conception of glory only by contrasting it with the traditional conception he was displacing. On the traditional conception stretching back to the ancient Greeks, and inherited by Hobbes's scholastic and humanist predecessors,²⁵ glory was

²² L 6.39-40: 88; 27.13: 460; 11.31: 156. In *Elements*, Hobbes labelled the first, self-delusional kind of vainglory 'FALSE GLORY' and reserved the term 'VAINE GLORY' for the second, self-indulgent kind. EL 9.1. But elsewhere in *Elements*, he referred to the first psychological cause of war as 'vanity', which concerns 'vaynely Glorious' persons, persons vainglorious not because they revel in fictional imaginations, but because they are inferiors or equals vainly demanding acknowledgement of their 'superiority above their fellows'. EL 14.5; 14.3.

²³ L 11.2: 150. Cf. 'From Desire, ariseth the Thought of some means we have seen produce the like of that which we ayme at'. L 3.4: 40.

²⁴ AW 38.8.

²⁵ For the humanist background, see Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*,

taken to be intrinsically intersubjective and comparative: *intersubjective* insofar as it consists in one's reputation and social standing or worth (*dignitas*), which in turn consists in how one is praised or honoured by *others* in their attitudes, expressions, and treatment; and *comparative* insofar as one's glory consists in a *superior* reputation and standing relative to others. The intersubjective dimension is illustrated, for example, by the Aristotelian and the republican Roman traditions, for which glory consists in the widespread praise, honour, and reputation one is accorded for being virtuous. While in one passage Aristotle suggested happiness (*eudaimonia*) is the reward of virtue, in another he suggested honour (*timē*) is its reward—even though, as he noted elsewhere, happiness cannot consist in honour given that the latter depends more on other people than on oneself.²⁶ Aquinas canonized these two suggestions for subsequent generations by fusing them: happiness is the true reward for which the virtuous themselves act, but honour is the reward others offer to the virtuous.²⁷ Cicero had already landed on a similar view: although glory—the widespread ‘praise’ and ‘judgement of the multitude’—is not the proper aim of the virtuous, and ‘although there is nothing in glory to make it desirable, yet it follows virtue as its shadow’.²⁸ Cicero added, moreover, that because true glory ‘is the praise agreed by the good, [or] the uncorrupted voice of those of good judgement concerning preeminent virtue’—because glory ‘usually accompanies right actions’—it is ‘not to be scorned by good men [of honour: *bonis viris*]’.²⁹ For Cicero, as for the Roman republican tradition in general, glory is the just reward of those who virtuously sacrifice their private good for the public good of the *patria* or *civitas*—especially through virile, spectacular displays of military courage or great political actions such as lawmaking.

Augustine's famous attack on this Roman ‘avidity for praise and passion for glory [*laudis aviditas et cupido gloriae*]’ reiterated the term's intersubjective meaning: the glory the Romans ‘so ardently desired to possess, is the judgement of men thinking well of other men’.³⁰ It is true, Augustine conceded, that ‘for the sake of honour, praise, and glory’ the Romans ‘were so devoted

2 vols. (Cambridge, 1978), vol. 1.

²⁶ NE 1.8-9: 1098b-1099b; 4.3: 1123b-1124a; 1.5 1095b.

²⁷ ST I-II 2.2.

²⁸ TD 1.38, 1.45.

²⁹ TD 3.2. Cicero did, however, contrast true glory, which ‘resounds as if were an echo of virtue’, to ‘popular fame’, a counterfeit imitation that ‘for the most part commends faults and vices’ and ultimately destroys polities and men.

³⁰ DCD 5.12.

to the *patria* in which they sought their own glory, that they did not hesitate to prefer its safety to their own'.³¹ But although their love of glory prompted them to overcome many vices, including avarice, and although God rewarded the Romans' virtues with *honor*, *imperium*, and *gloria*, it should nevertheless be acknowledged that the love of earthly glory is itself a vice.³² The truly virtuous therefore recognize that 'it is a great virtue to disdain [*contemnere*] glory', and true Christians are virtuous only for the sake of eternal happiness and hence of heavenly glory.³³ (This Augustinian distinction is precisely the one Aquinas had synthesized with his Aristotelianism: if 'glory consists in being well known and praised', then happiness depends not on human glory, but 'on the glory which is with God'.³⁴)

The frequent association of glory with *honor*, *imperium*, and *dignitas* reflects the second aspect of the traditional conception: that glory is intrinsically comparative. The desire for glory, on this conception, is always a desire for (intersubjectively recognized) *superiority*. The relation to social hierarchy is explicit in the aristocratic notion of honour, of course.³⁵ And even if Renaissance humanists would come to insist that the true grounds for aristocratic distinction and rank is virtue (rather than lineage),³⁶ the true virtue that merits honour and praise is found—according to the Aristotelian tradition—only amongst the superior few. In the Roman republican tradition, moreover, the comparative nature of glory often took on a specifically imperial form: the desire for the glory accruing to virile, manly actions in war and politics was often fused to a desire for *imperium* or *dominium*. As Augustine put it, because the Romans 'viewed it as inglorious for their *patria* to be in servitude, and glorious for it to rule [*dominari*] and command [*imperare*], the first object of all their desire was liberty, and then dominion'.³⁷ If domestically this took the form of a desire to rid themselves of kings and institute republican rule, in their external relations it took the form of a desire for imperial conquest. Nevertheless, although *cupiditas gloriae* can be fused with *cupiditas dominationis* in this way, Augustine was careful to distinguish the two conceptually: because the desire for glory tempers cruelty, one 'who despises glory yet is avid for mastery

³¹ DCD 5.13.

³² DCD 5.16; 5.13.

³³ DCD 5.19; 5.18.

³⁴ ST I-II: 2.3.

³⁵ On the dual notion of honour current in Hobbes's milieu, see Clifton Mark, 'The Natural Laws of Good Manners: Hobbes, Glory, and Early Modern Civility', *The Review of Politics* 80 (3) (2018), pp. 391-414.

³⁶ Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, vol. 1, pp. 45-46, 81-82.

³⁷ DCD 5.12.

[*dominationis*] surpasses even beasts in vicious cruelty and luxury'.³⁸

Hobbes's conception displaced both of these traditionally intrinsic features of glory. As we have seen, for Hobbes glory is not an intersubjective relation but a *subjective* mental state: the pleasure one takes in contemplating one's own power. To be sure, others' praise and honouring are *instruments* to one's glory in Hobbes's sense: widespread praise can cause one to contemplate oneself as powerful and worthy; indeed, a positive reputation can itself be a form of power.³⁹ This is why honour is pleasurable, dishonour painful. And if others' praise takes the form of unfounded flattery, leading one to overestimate one's own power, then it can produce the first, self-delusional kind of vainglory. But in no case does others' praise itself *constitute* what glory is for Hobbes.

Nor is Hobbesian glory intrinsically comparative. As the passage from *Anti-White* quoted earlier makes clear, Hobbes allowed an 'internal' species of glory in addition to the comparative species that concerns one's power relative to others. It is of course true that even for Hobbes the comparative species of glory is the one most relevant to politics. This is because of two Hobbesian facts: power in the context of sociopolitical relations is typically zero-sum; and, as a result, humans often do desire eminence over those with whom they have such relations. Thus two years prior to *Anti-White*, in his specifically political treatise *Elements*, Hobbes had, in conjunction with a relational conception of power, defined glory in comparative terms as 'that Passion, which proceedeth from the Imagination or Conception, of our owne power, above the power of him that contendeth with us'.⁴⁰ And when he advanced his thesis that all mental pleasure ultimately reduces to glory, he again put the matter in comparative terms: 'all ioye and greife of minde' consists 'In a Contention for precedence to them with whom they Compare themselves'.⁴¹ Similarly in *De Cive*, having asserted that 'all the mindes pleasure is either Glory, (or to have a good opinion of ones selfe) or referres to Glory in the end', he declared that 'Glory is like Honour, if all men have it, no man hath it, for they consist in comparison and precellence'.⁴² He then repeated *Elements*' formulation almost verbatim: 'all the pleasure, and jollity of the mind [*omnis animi voluptas*

³⁸ DCD 5.19.

³⁹ L 10.5: 132.

⁴⁰ EL 9.1. For power, see EL 8.4.

⁴¹ EL 27.3. See also *Elements*' claim that 'the nature of the Passions' of the mind consists in 'the pleasure men have, or displeasure, from the signes of Honour or Dishonour done unto them', where 'The Signes of Honour are those by which we perceive that one Man acknowledgeth the power and worth of another'. EL 8.8; 8.6.

⁴² DCv 1.2.

omnisque alacritas] consists in this; to be able to compare oneself favourably against others, and form an eminent sense of oneself [*quod quis habeat, quibuscum conferens se, possit magnificè sentire de se ipso*].⁴³

Yet we find Hobbes in *Leviathan* once again rolling out his more general, not specifically relational, definitions of power and glory: power is there defined simply as one's 'present means, to obtain some future apparent Good', i.e., to satisfy desires,⁴⁴ and his definition of glory similarly drops any reference to others. In my view, the presence of this generic, more expansive formulation within a specifically *political* work reflects a well-known innovation in *Leviathan*, namely Hobbes's novel theory of political authorization and representation.⁴⁵ This innovation prompted Hobbes explicitly to acknowledge a politically salient, non-zero-sum, collective or 'compounded' form of power: the 'Power of a Common-wealth', which is the 'Greatest of humane Powers' and 'compounded of the Powers of most men, united by consent, in one Person'.⁴⁶ Thanks to his novel theory of authorization and representation, Hobbes could now say that the collective power of the commonwealth, although 'owned' by the sovereign, is nevertheless exercised in the name of each individual subject, and therefore is nominally each individual's own power in a sense robust enough to enable him to glory in it. Indeed, he could now say something similar about any other (non-sovereign) representative corporate body (or 'system'). Thus, while in *De Cive* Hobbes declared that 'the society of others' does not 'advance any whit the cause of my glorying my selfe; for every man must account himself, such as he can make himselfe, without the help of others', in *Leviathan*, by contrast, he acknowledged that individuals' glory depends not only on signs of value 'direct in their Persons', but also 'in their Kindred, their Friends, their Nation, their Profession, or their Name', that is, in the societies of which they take part.⁴⁷

⁴³ DCv 1.2; 1.5. See the reiteration at DCv 15.13: 'Joy consists in this, that a man contemplate...any power whatsoever, as being, or as though it were his own; and it is nothing else but a *Glory*, or Triumph of the mind conceiving it selfe honoured'.

⁴⁴ L 10.1: 132.

⁴⁵ Quentin Skinner, 'Hobbes on Representation', *European Journal of Philosophy* 13 (2) (2005), pp. 155-84; Michael J. Green, 'Authorization and Political Authority in Hobbes', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 53 (1) (2015), pp. 25-47.

⁴⁶ L 10.3: 132.

⁴⁷ DCv 1.2; L 13.9: 192. It is true that the power of a commonwealth contrasts with that of *other* commonwealths, such that a 'nation's' power, and glorying in one's nation, can be in relation to other nations. But it is nonetheless a *shared* power possessed by *individuals* that is not zero-sum in relation to those who share in it. Both McNeilly, *The Anatomy of Leviathan*, p. 146, and Gabriella Slomp, 'From *Genus* to *Species*: The Unravelling of Hobbesian Glory', *History of Political Thought* 19 (4) (1998), pp. 552-569, take Hobbes to have begun his career with intrinsically comparative conceptions of power and glory;

Yet power typically remains zero-sum in sociopolitical relations; individuals consequently do often count amongst their desires a desire for power superior to others. Thus even in *Leviathan*, when Hobbes reiterated his thesis that all mental pleasures ultimately relate to glory, he did so in comparative terms, asserting that a human being's 'Joy consisteth in comparing himselfe with other men', for humans 'can relish nothing but what is eminent'.⁴⁸ The desire for superiority is conceptually distinct from the desire for glory—which generically is the desire to contemplate one's power to satisfy *any* desires one may have—but insofar as one does desire superiority, glorying will take the form of contemplating one's superior power or worth. Moreover, because in desiring something one imagines its intentional object,⁴⁹ to desire being superior is at least to *imagine* oneself as superior, which, insofar as one is not superior, yields the second, self-indulgent kind of vainglory. Indeed, sometimes the very desire to be superior may cause one (falsely) to *believe* that one is, which yields the first, self-delusional kind of vainglory. As Hobbes put it with respect to intellectual matters, humans almost universally suffer from

a vain conceipt of [their] own wisdome, which almost all men think they have in a greater degree, than the Vulgar; that is, than all men but themselves, and a few others, whom by Fame, or for concurring with themselves, they approve.⁵⁰

The predominantly comparative nature of glory is also reiterated in *Leviathan*'s account of the passion that provokes laughter in persons, namely, '*Sudden Glory*', which is caused not just by 'some sudden act of their own, that pleaseth them', but also 'by the apprehension of some deformed thing in another, by comparison whereof they suddenly applaud themselves'.⁵¹ Laughter is ultimately grounded in the pleasure of seeing oneself as superior to others—which laughter is, as we shall see, a herald of war.

McNeilly thinks he abandoned this view in *Leviathan*, while Slomp thinks he implicitly maintained it. While I previously followed Slomp (Abizadeh, 'Hobbes on the Causes of War', p. 305), I now think *Anti-White* demonstrates that from early on Hobbes recognized both absolute and relative kinds of power; the comparative formulations in *Elements* and *De Cive* are explained by the fact that relative power is usually the most pertinent in political contexts.

⁴⁸ L 17.8: 258. This passage speaks against Slomp's claim that there is a shift in *Leviathan*, away from the view that mental pleasures are all ultimately related to glory. Slomp makes way for the claim that there is a shift by mistakenly claiming that Hobbes's earlier position was that '*all* human passions derive from the pleasure or displeasure' of glory. But Hobbes's thesis concerns only *mental* pleasures. Slomp, 'Hobbes on Glory and Civil Strife', pp. 184-5. See also 'From *Genus* to *Species*'.

⁴⁹ Abizadeh, 'Hobbes on Mind'.

⁵⁰ L 13.2: 188.

⁵¹ L 6.42: 88. See Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics Volume III: Hobbes and Civil Science* (Cambridge, 2002), chapter 5.

The desire for and/or belief in one's superiority, in turn, can lead to the more specific desire to be *acknowledged* by others as superior. This is because (as I have noted) intersubjective acknowledgement is a means of producing the subjective pleasures of glorying. But if human beings are equal by nature, then the desire to be acknowledged as *naturally* superior to other humans would constitute 'pride' in the classic Augustinian sense. (For Augustine, pride consists in failing to defer to one's proper rank in the normative hierarchy of things: 'what is pride', Augustine asked, 'but an appetite for perverse elevation?'⁵²) Hobbes echoed this Augustinian language in the ninth law of nature, against '*Pride*', which prescribes 'That every man acknowledge other for his Equall by Nature'.⁵³

The desires to be superior and to be acknowledged as superior can also take on a specifically martial and political form: the desire to conquer and dominate others. But crucially for Hobbes, even comparative glory need not be linked to a desire for *superiority* or for *domination*. It can simply take the form of the widespread desire not to be inferior, which with respect to specifically political power shows up in the fact that 'there are very few so foolish, that had not rather governe themselves, than be governed by others'.⁵⁴ Thus when Hobbes in *Leviathan* wrote that 'men...naturally love Liberty, and Dominion over others', the collective noun 'men' should be read as aggregate rather distributive, so that an *individual* man may love either dominion *or* freedom from it.⁵⁵ Or, even if everyone does love dominion,⁵⁶ it is for many not a particularly strong passion. For while 'there be some, that' take 'pleasure in contemplating their own power in the acts of conquest', others—perhaps most—are moderates who 'would be glad to be at ease within modest bounds' without lording it over others.⁵⁷ Although the desire for glory is ubiquitous to all, the specifically vainglorious desires for taking pleasure in conquest and superior power are not.

In sum, fully to grasp the role of glory in Hobbes's theory of war we must distinguish (a) *glory* in general from (b) *comparative glory* in particular, and comparative glory in general from (c) the species of comparative glory centred on the desire for *superiority* (as opposed to equality),

⁵² DCD 14.13.

⁵³ L 15.21: 234, italics removed.

⁵⁴ L 15.21: 234. *Contra* Philip Pettit, *Made with Words: Hobbes on Language, Mind, and Politics* (Princeton, 2008), p. 96.

⁵⁵ L 17.1: 254.

⁵⁶ L 36.19: 674: 'to rule, and reign...is a thing that all men naturally desire'.

⁵⁷ L 13.4: 190.

and this in turn from (d) the *aggressive* (martial and political) species of comparative glory centred on the desire for superiority via conquest and dominion. As we shall see, Hobbes's explanation of war begins, in *Elements* and *De Cive*, by focussing on (c) and (d), but shifts in *Leviathan* to (a) and (b). It is precisely by appealing to glory in its most generic and ubiquitous forms that the argument in *Leviathan*, far from abandoning its emphasis on glory, greatly expands its importance and scope. To see how glory in its most generic Hobbesian sense could be the basis for war requires appreciating the specifically Aristotelian background to Hobbesian psychology.

II. The Aristotelian Heritage: Revengefulness and Contempt

Glory's central role in instigating conflict is rooted in its intimate relation to the passion of *revengefulness* and the latter's link to perceived expressions of *contempt*. Ironically, modern readers of Hobbes may be prone to overlook this intimate relation between glory, revengefulness, and contempt precisely because it was so fundamental to Hobbes's account of war: Hobbes took the relation so much for granted, and could expect it to be so evident to his contemporary readers, that he sometimes failed to make the relation explicit. He presumed that his readers would understand the nature of his argument because he took for granted the influence of Aristotle on their understanding of human psychology.⁵⁸

The centrality of signs of mere contempt in provoking revengefulness—even without signs of full-blown hatred—would have seemed entirely unsurprising to anyone with views shaped by Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*. This was a text that, while formally a manual on the art of persuasion, had supplied the European tradition one of its first, and most influential, systematic treatments of the human passions. It is also the one major Aristotelian text that, despite his scathing attacks on the ancient philosopher's other works, Hobbes held in high esteem.⁵⁹ He studied the text closely. He translated it into Latin, produced a Latin abstract he dictated to his pupil for transcription, and either himself translated or, more likely, had his pupil translate the abstract into a *Briefve of the Art of Rhetorique* (1637), the first published rendering of the text into English. Moreover, when Hobbes outlined his list and definitions of the human passions, he closely followed the definitions

⁵⁸ For the influence of Aristotelian psychology in this period, see Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge, 1996); Susan James, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth-Century Philosophy* (Oxford, 1997).

⁵⁹ John Aubrey's *Brief Lives* reports Hobbes to have said that 'Aristotle was the worst teacher that ever was, the worst politician and ethick...but his rhetorique and discourse of animals was rare'. BL I: 357.

found in the *Briefe*.⁶⁰

Anger (*orgē*), Aristotle wrote in Book 2 of *On Rhetoric*, is a ‘desire, accompanied by pain, for perceptible [or conspicuous] revenge [*timōrias*] for a conspicuous [or perceived] slight [*oligōrian*] directed towards oneself or those near to one, when the slight is undeserved’, a desire that is ‘accompanied by a kind of pleasure, from the hope of gaining revenge’.⁶¹ *Oligōria* or slighting, which provokes this desire for revenge, is ‘an actualization of opinion in regard to something that appears valueless [*mēdenos*]’, a point Aristotle clarified by noting that ‘bad or good things...we consider worthy of attention, but those that are of no importance [*mēden*] or trifling we suppose worthless [*oudenos*]’. Aristotle identified three species of *oligōria*: *kataphronēsis*, *epēreasmōs*, and *hubris*, which the *Briefe* translates as ‘Contempt’, ‘Crossing’, and ‘Contumely’, respectively. ‘Contempt’ Aristotle defined almost identically to *oligōria*, in terms of supposing something to be valueless; it is *oligōria*’s paradigmatic species. Crossing or spitefulness ‘consists in impeding another’s wishes, not to get anything himself but so that the other does not’, which exhibits *oligōria* because one acts as if others are so insignificant that they can neither harm nor benefit oneself. And contumely or insult, of which dishonouring (*atimazōn*) is a constituent feature, consists in acting so that the sufferers are disgraced or dishonoured (*aiskhunē*), simply for the pleasure of it, which pleasure comes from seeming superior to others by ill-treating them.⁶²

This is almost precisely the picture of human nature Hobbes incorporated into his own theory of the passions. There were, however, a few important, if subtle, changes. Hobbes divided the basic, core elements of Aristotelian *orgē* between two distinct passions: revengefulness and anger. If Aristotelian *orgē* is a desire for revenge accompanied by displeasure and pleasure, then what Hobbes called revengefulness is essentially the same passion minus the displeasure. The displeasure accrues instead to Hobbesian anger, which is primarily an *aversion* to something,

⁶⁰ See, e.g., Strauss, *Political Philosophy of Hobbes*, pp. 26-41; Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes*, p. 38; Karl Schuhmann, ‘Skinner’s Hobbes’, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 6 (1) (1998), pp. 115-25, p. 118. See also Tom Sorell, ‘Hobbes’s UnAristotelian Political Rhetoric’, *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 23 (2) (1990), pp. 96-108.

⁶¹ R 2.2.1-2 1378a-b.

⁶² R 2.2 1378b-1379a; BR 2.2. Besides abridging the discussion, the *Briefe* departs in two significant ways from Aristotle. First, the definition of anger as a ‘desire of revenge, joyned with greefe for that He, or some of his, is, or seems to be *neglected*’ omits Aristotle’s qualification that the slight is ‘undeserved’. All slights, deserved or not, prompt anger, according to the *Briefe*’s formulation. Second, contempt is characterized as ‘when a man thinkes another of little worth in comparison to himselfe’, thus adding a comparative dimension missing in Aristotle. The effect of both changes is to magnify the subjective elements of what provokes the desire for revenge.

combined with the desire and hope of resisting it. So one motivation for Hobbes's amendment was the fact that, whereas Aristotle allowed for desires and aversions each to be accompanied by both pleasures and displeasures, for Hobbes a desire intrinsically gives rise only to anticipatory pleasure, and aversion only to displeasure. In Hobbes's hands, moreover, anger became the name of a passion much more general than revengefulness or Aristotelian *orgē*: Hobbesian anger is provoked by being hurt in general, and not only by the mental displeasures one suffers in being contemned or dishonoured. So another motivation for distinguishing between revengefulness and anger was to account for aggression prompted by stimuli other than merely suffering contempt—to include suffering bodily pain, for example, or outright hatred. Hobbes had been rather forthright in his criticism of Aristotle on this matter in *Elements*: having defined anger as the 'desire of overcoming present opposition', he noted that it 'hath bene commonly defined, to be greife proceeding from an opinion of Contempt, which is confuted by the often experience we have, of being moved to Anger, by thinges inanimate, and without sense, & consequently incapable of Contemning us'.⁶³

Recall that, for Hobbes, if hatred for something implies that one perceives it to be '*Evill*', contempt simply implies that one perceives it to be '*Inconsiderable*', of no importance. Thus beyond the centrality of vengeance, the key feature of Aristotle's account Hobbes incorporated is the view that grief and the ensuing desire for revenge are not simply provoked by positive expressions of *hatred*, but also by non-aggressive expressions of neglect or *contempt*. (In *De Homine* Hobbes claimed anger 'ariseth most often from the belief that one is contemned'.⁶⁴) To be sure, expressing hatred is one way to provoke anger, a desire for revenge, and hence conflict. Yet if this were the only catalyst for war, the remedy would be straightforward: refrain from expressing hatred. Matters are much more difficult, however, because anger and the desire for revenge are also triggered on much more minimal—indeed, unavoidable—grounds. Here is the heart of Hobbes's argument for why the state of nature is inevitably a state of war. When others act in ways we perceive to signify contempt, they frustrate our ubiquitous desire for glory. They

⁶³ EL 9.5. Tuck reads this passage as Hobbes 'clearly criticizing Bacon', but Bacon was merely following the Aristotelian definition of anger in terms of contempt. Richard Tuck, 'Hobbes's Moral Philosophy', in *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes*, ed. Tom Sorell (Cambridge, 1996), p. 201. The language of the 'commonly' held Aristotelian definition Hobbes was rejecting here follows closely the rendering in the *Briefe*.

⁶⁴ DH 12.4.

consequently anger us and incite the desire to extract revenge to force them openly to condemn their previous actions. Thus although glory in Hobbes's generic sense is not the same as honour or vainglory, it nevertheless provides a recipe for revengefulness—on a much more expansive basis. For not only do humans desire glory, we are also prickly: we perceive signs of contempt everywhere, in trifles, in others' mere indifference to us, in differences of opinion, in short, whenever others act in ways we perceive to signify they do not value us as much as we value ourselves. To highlight the Aristotelian heritage concerning vengeance and contempt is to bring into relief the fundamental thought behind Hobbes's account of war: because the desire for revenge is provoked amongst humans by mere signs of contempt, social interaction is *inevitably* conflict-ridden. This is the heart of Hobbes's argument for why the state of nature is inevitably a state of war. We can see this most clearly if we trace the evolution of his account between his three political treatises.

III. Elements of Law: Vanity, Comparison, and Appetite

The first iteration of Hobbes's defence of the thesis that the state of nature is inevitably a state of war appears in *Elements*' fourteenth chapter. The argument for the state-of-nature thesis here has two parts: first, the identification of three psychological mechanisms that dispose human beings to clash, which Hobbes labelled 'vanity', 'comparison', and 'appetite'; and second, the identification of a permissive condition of war, which Hobbes identified with the right of nature.

Hobbes prefaced his two-premise argument with a descriptive and a normative point: considering, firstly, how 'little force' is needed for 'the taking away of a man's life', and consequently 'with how great facility, he that is the weaker in strength, or in witt, or in both, may utterly destroy the power of the stronger', human beings in the state of nature ought, secondly, to be 'moderate' in their claims against each other: they 'ought to admitte amongst themselves equality'.⁶⁵ As Hobbes would clarify three chapters later, the violation of the law of nature prescribing that each 'acknowledge other for his equall' is called 'PRIDE', and the reason one ought to claim no more than natural equality is prudential: in order to keep the peace.⁶⁶

Having made this prefatory point about natural equality, Hobbes then immediately turned to the first part of his argument, namely, the three psychological mechanisms showing why humans

⁶⁵ EL 14.2.

⁶⁶ EL 17.1. For discussion of natural equality in Hobbes, see Kinch Hoekstra, 'Hobbesian Equality', in *Hobbes Today: Insights for the 21st Century*, ed. S. A. Lloyd (New York, 2013).

are prone to conflict. The first, ‘vanity’ argument is grounded in the fact that, although many are ‘moderate’, and would be content with recognition of their ‘equality of nature’, some are ‘vainly Glorious, and hope for precedency and superiority above their fellows, not only when they are equal in power, but also when they are Inferiour’. Although only some are vainglorious aggressors who ‘attempt to subdue’ the rest by ‘force’, as a result of their existence even moderates must out of fear resort to force to protect themselves—a circumstance that provokes, without a common sovereign to impose order, ‘a generall diffidence in mankind, and mutuall feare one of another’.⁶⁷ *Elements* follows this vanity or ‘generall diffidence’ argument with the ‘Comparison’ argument, grounded in a different manifestation of the passion of glory: because ‘every man’ thinks ‘well of himselfe’, and hates others to think well of themselves, each necessarily provokes fight in the others ‘by words, and other signes of Contempt and hatred, which are incident to all Comparison’. Finally, according to the ‘Appetite’ argument, ‘battle’ is provoked when different people desire the same thing, and that thing ‘can neither be enjoyed in Common, nor divided’.⁶⁸ These three causes echo those listed—in the same order—by the Athenian ambassadors to Sparta in Thucydides’s *Peloponnesian War*, which Hobbes himself had translated: ‘we were forced to advance our dominion’, Hobbes had the Athenians say, ‘out of the nature of the thing itself: as chiefly for fear, next for honour, and lastly for profit’.⁶⁹

Thus the first two arguments, vanity and comparison, are grounded directly in the mental pleasures of glory (and, in vanity’s case, in the displeasures of fear and diffidence as well); the third is grounded in desires that apparently may be for objects yielding pleasures of sense or of mind (Hobbes here did not specify which). Each argument identifies the relevant passions and their respective circumstantial stimuli; what remains to be specified is the permissive condition of war.

Hobbes filled in this gap with chapter fourteen’s conclusion that once one adds to these three psychological arguments the natural ‘right of every man to every thing’ in the state of nature, a universal condition of war necessarily results. This is Hobbes’s summary of chapter fourteen’s two-part argument:

Seeing then to the offensiveness of mans nature one to another, there is added a right of every man to every thing whereby one man invadeth with right, and

⁶⁷ EL 14.3.

⁶⁸ EL 14.4-5.

⁶⁹ EW 8: 81.

another with right resisteth. And men live thereby in perpetuall diffidence, and study how to preoccupate each other. The estate of men in this naturall liberty is the estate of warre.⁷⁰

Hobbes's inclusion of the right of nature as one of the *causes* of war in the state of nature has often puzzled his modern readers, so much so that the failure to mention natural right by name in *Leviathan*'s defence of the state-of-nature thesis has led many to conclude that he there eliminated it, introducing it only after he had already established that the state of nature is a state of war. As we shall see, however, he implicitly maintained its causal role in *Leviathan*, and in all three versions of the theory its role is rather straightforward: it indicates a *permissive* cause of war. The point is this: if there were some recognized norms that effectively led individuals to refrain from violence, there might be a way, in the state of nature itself, to resolve potential conflicts non-violently. But there are no such norms: by nature it is within persons' right each to do whatever they think necessary for their own preservation, including using violence. They are under no obligation to refrain, and *everyone recognizes this*: opinions are such that the three psychological causal mechanisms are free to wreak their havoc.

An important puzzle about *Elements*' account remains, however: when Hobbes summarized his account of the causes of war in the text's twenty-ninth and final chapter, he made no mention of the three psychological mechanisms of vanity, comparison, and appetite. He announced instead the core of his disagreement theory of war, declaring that 'In the state of nature, where every man is his owne Judge, and differeth from other, concerning the names and appellations of thinges...from those differences, arise quarrells, and breach of Peace'. This is precisely why peace requires that in political society there 'be a Common measure of all thinges, that might fall in Controversie; as for example, of what is to be called Right, what Good, what, vertue. what Much, what little, what meum, and Tuum, what a Pounde, what a Quart etc'.⁷¹ The puzzle is how this disagreement theory is supposed to relate to the account of human nature central to the argument of chapter fourteen. Hobbes provided the answer explicitly in the restatement of his view in *De Cive*.

IV. De Cive: Vanity, Comparison, and Appetite Again

The second iteration of Hobbes's defence of the state-of-nature thesis, in the opening

⁷⁰ EL 14.11.

⁷¹ EL 29.8.

chapter of *De Cive*, has roughly the same contours as the previous one, but with two important alterations. The first is that the assumption of natural equality is now deployed as an unequivocally *descriptive* first premise to explain why ‘the naturall state’ is ‘a War of all men, against all men’.⁷² Here Hobbes cited ‘how easie a matter it is, even for the weakest man to kill the strongest’, not as a reason for why one ought to *acknowledge* equality with others, as in *Elements*, but as grounds for the *fact* that all ‘are by nature equall’.⁷³ *De Cive*, in other words, incorporates human beings’ natural equality—our existential vulnerability—as a factual premise in the argument for why the state of nature is inevitably a state of war. Thus whereas in chapter fourteen of *Elements* Hobbes’s summary of his argument comprises two parts—the first concerning the conflict-inducing passions and their stimuli, the second concerning the right of nature—his equivalent summary in *De Cive* has three: (1) our natural equality, which makes it extremely difficult ‘to provide against an enemy invading us’, combines with (2) the three psychological mechanisms by which we acquire the ‘desire, and will to hurt others’, to produce a universal condition of ‘mutuall fear’ in the state of nature; and these combine in turn with (3) the natural ‘right of all to all’ to produce a state of war.⁷⁴

In line with this alteration, the vanity argument in *De Cive* drops *Elements*’ reference to persons who claim supremacy but are in fact equal or inferior, and clarifies that *any* person (even of superior individual strength) who, ‘supposing himselfe above others’, claims for himself more honour than for others, is afflicted with ‘Vain glory’ and a ‘false esteeme’ of ‘his owne strength’.⁷⁵ A further, related development is that Hobbes also clarified, in the preface to *De Cive*, a tacit premise relevant to the vanity argument: a *generalized* state of mutual fear arises in part because of the *epistemic vulnerability* of human beings, in particular their incapacity to judge with confidence the intentions of others: ‘though the wicked [*mali*] were fewer than the righteous [*boni*], yet because we cannot distinguish them, there is a necessity of suspecting, heeding, anticipating, subjugating, selfe-defending, ever incident to the most honest, and fairest condition’d [*bonis et modestis*]’.⁷⁶

⁷² DCv 1.12.

⁷³ DCv 1.3.

⁷⁴ ‘The cause of mutuall fear consists partly in the naturall equality of men, partly in their mutuall will of hurting’. DCv 1.3. The expression ‘desire, and will to hurt (*Voluntas lædendi*)’ occurs at 1.4. The summary of the three reasons why the state of nature is a state of war (natural equality, the passions, and the natural ‘right of all to all’) occurs at 1.12.

⁷⁵ DCv 1.4. Mark, ‘The Natural Laws of Good Manners: Hobbes, Glory, and Early Modern Civility’, argues that the honour in question is a specifically ‘categorical’ kind concerning one’s social standing.

⁷⁶ DCv Preface.

The second significant alteration occurs in *De Cive*'s much-expanded comparison argument. In *Elements*, the argument's brief presentation could easily be read as Hobbes's attempt to incorporate the phenomenon of duelling into his account of war.⁷⁷ But in *De Cive* Hobbes clearly dispensed with such a reduction: he clarified his intention by directly tying the comparison argument, and the passion of glory on which it is based, to the phenomenon of ideological *disagreement*—especially religious and political disagreements. Expressed disagreement, in other words, is the interactional, circumstantial stimulus that triggers glory. Moreover, Hobbes here laid bare the underlying purpose of his state-of-nature construct, by explicitly characterizing disagreement as a key cause of civil war in *political society*—a characterization that seems rather out of place in a chapter dedicated to explaining why the *state of nature* is a state of war. The relevant passage, which expresses the core of Hobbes's disagreement theory of war, is worth quoting in full:

since the combate of Wits [i.e., intellectual dispute] is the fiercest [*maximum sit certamen ingeniorum*], the greatest discords which are, must necessarily arise from this Contention; for in this case it is not only odious to contend against, but also not to consent [i.e., not to agree]; for not to approve of what a man saith is no lesse than tacitely to accuse him of an Errour in that thing which he speaketh; as in very many things to dissent, is as much as if you accounted him a fool whom you dissent from; which may appear hence, that there are no Warres so sharply wag'd as between Sects of the same Religion, and Factions of the same Commonweale, where the Contestation is Either concerning Doctrines, or Politique Prudence. And since all the pleasure, and jollity of the mind consists in this; even to get some, with whom comparing, it may find somewhat wherein to Tryumph, and Vaunt it self; its impossible but men must declare sometimes some mutuall scorn [or: hatred: *odium*] and contempt either by Laughter, or by Words, or by Gesture, or some signe or other; then which there is no greater vexation of mind; and then from which there cannot possibly arise a greater desire to doe hurt.⁷⁸

Hobbes forcefully reiterated the point later in chapter six declaring 'that all controversies are bred from hence, that the opinions of men differ concerning *Meum & Tuum, just and unjust, profitable and unprofitable, good and evill, honest and dishonest*, and the like, which every man esteems according to his own judgement'; and again in chapter seventeen, observing that 'when every man

⁷⁷ This is how Tricaud, 'Hobbes's Conception', reads the comparison argument. Duelling is surely part of what Hobbes had in mind (see Keith Thomas, 'The Social Origins of Hobbes's Political Thought', in *Hobbes Studies*, ed. K. C. Brown (Oxford, 1965)), but Tricaud is wrong to reduce the significance of comparison to duelling. While this reduction is a possible reading of *Elements*, reading *De Cive* in this way does intolerable violence to the text.

⁷⁸ DCv 1.5.

followes his owne opinion, it's necessary that the controversies which rise among them will become innumerable, and indeterminable; whence there will breed among men (who by their own naturall inclinations doe account all dissention an affront [*contumeliâ*]) first hatred, then brawles and warres'.⁷⁹

To be sure, this is not the first time Hobbes identified disagreement as a primary stimulus for war: the passage from chapter six is simply a redaction of Hobbes's statement in *Elements*' conclusion that what leads to 'quarrells, and breach of Peace' are the 'differences' and 'Controversie' that arise 'where every man is his owne Judge, and differeth from other, concerning the names and appellations of things'.⁸⁰ Yet if in 1640 Hobbes already had in hand the main thesis of his disagreement theory of war, still missing at the time was an explicit account of its relation to his theory of the human passions and, in particular, its relation to the tripartite set of psychological mechanisms he had outlined in *Elements*' fourteenth chapter. By linking his disagreement theory directly to the passion of glory, *De Cive*'s expanded discussion of the comparison argument fills in this lacuna: glory is the passion, disagreement its circumstantial stimulus. Although this development in Hobbes's account may have been partly driven by a desire to give greater coherence to his theory of war, it was also evidently driven by historical circumstances: Hobbes's emphasis on ideological disagreements of a *religious* and *political* kind indicates the influence on his thinking of ongoing events in England, i.e., the influence of the religious and political conflicts surrounding the Long Parliament and presaging the decade's civil wars.⁸¹

Another important feature of *De Cive*'s account is that the whole analysis is framed by a dichotomy between sensual desires and pleasures of sense, on the one hand, and mental desires and pleasures of mind, on the other. Hobbes here associated the former with *commodum* (which, depending on the context, may be translated as convenience, advantage, interest, profit, or gain, and which the passage links to *egestate* or material need) and the latter with *gloria* (to which, Hobbes here claimed, all mental pleasures either amount or refer). Hobbes argued that human beings' positive motivation for seeking the society of others is always either their own *commodum* or *gloria*, rather than love for their fellows. Yet even the desires associated with *commodum* and

⁷⁹ DCv 6.9; 17.27. Cf. AW 38.7.

⁸⁰ EL 29.8.

⁸¹ Jeffrey R. Collins, *The Allegiance of Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford, 2005).

gloria are insufficient for the establishment of ‘great, and lasting Societies’; political societies originate more crucially in an *aversion* (accompanied by mental displeasure) that individuals have, namely, ‘the mutuall fear they had of each other’.⁸² While it is clear that the first two mechanisms of war—vanity and comparison—draw on *gloria* and that the first draws on fear, *De Cive*, like *Elements*, remains unclear on whether the appetite argument refers to desires related to *commodium* or to *gloria*.

V. Leviathan: Competition, Diffidence, and Glory

By the time Hobbes wrote *Leviathan*’s famous thirteenth chapter, his defence of the state-of-nature thesis had undergone several further notable changes. The two most glaring are that Hobbes altered the three psychological mechanisms’ order of presentation, moving ‘appetite’ to the head, and relabelled each mechanism, so that ‘appetite’ now became *competition*, ‘vanity’ *diffidence*, and ‘comparison’ *glory*. The point here—crucial, I argue, for understanding the significance of glory in *Leviathan*—is that *Leviathan*’s glory argument is *not* a descendant of the earlier vanity or vainglory argument.⁸³

A further change is that, whereas in *De Cive* Hobbes’s argument comprised three parts—natural equality, the three psychological mechanisms, and natural right—*Leviathan* reduced the argument to the three psychological mechanisms. He simply incorporated *natural equality* as a premise in the competition argument and *natural right* as a premise in the diffidence argument. The content of the natural equality premise, moreover, is again slightly altered in *Leviathan*: in *Elements*, natural equality is a partly normative principle prefacing the vanity argument; in *De Cive*, it is a strictly descriptive premise about our existential vulnerability that combines with all three mechanisms to yield war; but in *Leviathan*, natural equality becomes a descriptive premise about our abilities and existential vulnerability incorporated directly into the competition and diffidence arguments.⁸⁴

Leviathan’s competition argument is therefore rather more elaborate than its previous

⁸² DCv 1.2.

⁸³ The failure to recognize this is a weakness of Abizadeh, ‘Hobbes on the Causes of War’.

⁸⁴ Hobbes’s marginal headings suggest the competition argument could also be called the equality argument. As I see it, the competition argument begins at the very start of the chapter, with ‘Nature hath made men so equall’, and ends with the concluding sentence ‘And therefore if any two men...or subdue one an other’. The diffidence argument begins with the competition argument (including the assumption of natural equality) and picks up at the next sentence, beginning ‘And from hence it comes to passe’ and ending with ‘it ought to be allowed him’.

incarnations. The new version has three explicit premises—*equal ability and vulnerability*, *vainglory*, and *equal hope*—and a conclusion. The argument begins, first, by noting that humans are roughly equal by nature in both bodily and intellectual ability: we are equal enough in body so that even ‘the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest’, and are all the more equal in ‘the faculties of the mind’. This is our natural equality. Second, whatever intellectual inequalities might *objectively* exist, those of an inferior mind are, subjectively, largely oblivious to them thanks to a ubiquitous feature of human nature: individuals almost universally have ‘a vain conceipt’ of their ‘owne wisdom, which almost all men think they have in a greater degree’ than almost everyone else. This ‘vain conceipt’ (which Hobbes’s Latin translation describes as a more than warranted esteem of self) is a vain manifestation of glory in its comparative form. Third, the combination of roughly equal natural ability with vainglory gives rise to ‘equality of hope in the attaining of our Ends’. From these premises *Leviathan* draws the following conclusion: ‘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 owne conservation, and sometimes their delectation only,) endeavour to destroy, or subdue one an other’.⁸⁵ Several paragraphs later, rephrasing the argument’s conclusion, Hobbes declared that the initial motive underlying the competition mechanism is ‘Gain’, what he translated into Latin as *lucro* (connoting avarice or profit); and individuals’ resulting actions are directed towards making ‘themselves Masters of other mens persons, wives, children, and cattell’, what in Latin he called *dominium*.⁸⁶

Also significantly altered from its previous incarnation is the diffidence argument. In *Elements* and *De Cive*, what he there called the vanity argument relies crucially on the mechanism of a few bad apples: the whole dynamic initially gets underway thanks to the presence of a set of immoderate, aggressive vainglorious individuals who demand and hope for *more* than natural equality warrants, and who thereby force others to adopt a warring posture to defend themselves. This is what produces, as *Elements* puts it, ‘a generall diffidence in mankind, and mutuall feare one of another’.⁸⁷ But in *Leviathan*, the diffidence argument explicitly originates in, and is parasitic on, the dynamic of enmity and invasion produced by *competition*—which, I submit, is precisely why in *Leviathan* Hobbes dropped ‘vanity’ as the mechanism’s label, and placed competition

⁸⁵ L 13.1-3: 188-190.

⁸⁶ L 13.6-7: 192.

⁸⁷ EL 14.2-3.

before it. It is true that the aggressive, vainglorious immoderates do not wholly disappear from the diffidence argument. Once Hobbes had already established the argument's core premises and conclusion, they make an ancillary appearance to *aggravate* the dynamic already under way thanks to competition:

Also because there be some, that taking pleasure in contemplating their own power in the acts of conquest, which they pursue farther than their security requires; if others, that otherwise would be glad to be at ease within modest bounds, should not by invasion increase their power, they would not be able, long time, by standing only on their defence, to subsist.⁸⁸

But the core of the diffidence argument proceeds without these immoderates who glory in conquest, on the basis of six premises: *competition*, *probable expectation*, *human vulnerability*, *mutual diffidence*, *anticipation*, and the *right of nature*.

It is, first, from the 'endeavour to destroy, or subdue one an other' resulting from competition that, second, 'it comes to passe, that' if a person is alone and should 'plant, sow, build, or possesse a convenient Seat, others may probably be expected to come prepared with forces united, to dispossesse, and deprive him, not only of the fruit of his labour, but also of his life, or liberty. And the Invader again is in the like danger of another'.⁸⁹ Thus whereas in *Elements* and *De Cive* what initially explains the probable expectation of invasion is the presence of immoderates claiming more than equality, in *Leviathan* the expectation of invasion already arises even amongst moderates, precisely *because* they see themselves as equals and therefore possess 'equality of hope' in attaining their ends. The point is not that individuals each initially expect all others to attack them at every turn; the point is that they expect *some* others eventually will attack, and that, epistemically, they are unable to discern with certainty who in the state of nature poses such a threat and who does not. The third premise of the argument comprises two types of *human vulnerability*—existential and, implicitly, epistemic—that transform the probable expectation of invasion into, fourth, a generalized state of mutual fear, which, when constant, amounts to a condition of *mutual diffidence*.

Fifth, under these circumstances of generalized, fearful expectation, there is an incentive—a circumstantial stimulus—for instrumentally rational individuals concerned with 'their owne conservation' to engage in pre-emptive strikes. As Hobbes put it, 'from this diffidence of one

⁸⁸ L 13.4: 190.

⁸⁹ L 13.3: 190.

another, there is no way for any man to secure himselfe, so reasonable, as Anticipation; that is, by force, or wiles, to master the persons of all men he can, so long, till he see no other power great enough to endanger him'.⁹⁰ Sixth, under such circumstances, a person engaging in 'Anticipation' is doing 'no more than his conservation requireth, and is generally allowed', i.e., it is both permissible and generally *recognized* as permissible.⁹¹ This is where the right of nature makes its appearance, as a permissive cause, in *Leviathan's* defence of the state-of-nature thesis: far from disappearing, as Hobbes's modern commentators have often asserted, it is simply incorporated directly without name into the diffidence argument.⁹² The right of nature is a permissive, 'ideological' cause of war because it implies there is no acknowledged reason to refrain from violence, i.e., no commonly accepted ideology specifying rules of conflict resolution in the state of nature. The result is that, once begun, mutual diffidence is reinforced and escalates in a vicious cycle, because now *everyone*, whatever their initial inclinations, has incentive and free reign to strike first. Hence even moderates descend into a spiral of mutual aggression simply for 'Safety', i.e., in order to safeguard their own person and possessions from expected attack.

⁹⁰ Annabel S. Brett, *Changes of State: Nature and the Limits of the City in Early Modern Natural Law* (Princeton, NJ, 2011), p. 117, interprets 'Anticipation' differently, writing that 'The best defence is what *The elements* calls 'preoccupation', *Leviathan* 'anticipation', but it is the same thing: occupy something before the other party does'. But anticipation is in the first instance about subduing persons rather than occupying territory.

⁹¹ L 13.4: 190. Cf. Hobbes's Latin translation, which reads 'ad omnibus concedi solet'.

⁹² The reason why it remains unnamed here is not hard to discern: not until the beginning of the next chapter did Hobbes introduce the concept and its definition. Tricaud, 'Hobbes's Conception', pp. 115-16, is a partial exception to the tendency to read the right of nature out of L 13's account of the causes of war since, as Tricaud notes, the right of nature is 'briefly alluded to' there. But having made this justified observation, Tricaud then proceeds to confuse matters. In order to accuse Hobbes of having blatantly contradicted himself in the span of two sentences, he cites the following passage: '[1] And because the condition of Man...is a condition of Warre of every one against every one; in which case every one is governed by his own Reason; and there is nothing he can make use of, that may not be a help unto him, in preserving his life against his enemyes; It followeth, that in such a condition, every man has a Right to every thing; even to one another's body. [2] And therefore, as long as this naturall Right of every man to every thing endureth, there can be no security to any man, (how strong or wise soever he be,) of living out the time, which Nature ordinarily alloweth men to live'. L 14.4: 198. Tricaud accuses Hobbes of (1) first asserting that the right of nature is the *consequence* of the state of war, and then (2) immediately thereafter implying it is a *cause* of war. This is because, according to Tricaud, the first sentence (1) 'admits of no other interpretation than this: the right of nature is not a cause of war, but a philosophical conclusion concerning the actions that are made lawful by a situation of war'. The sentence admits of another, more plausible, interpretation. Tricaud fails to notice that Hobbes had just defined the right of nature, not as a right to *everything*, but as the right to do what one judges necessary for self-preservation. The first sentence (1) does not imply that the right of nature itself is a consequence of the state of war; it says that, as a consequence of the state of war, our natural right to self-preservation effectively amounts to a right to everything.

The glory argument in many respects remains faithful to its ancestor, the comparison argument, although *De Cive*'s references to ideological disagreement between members 'of the same Commonweale'—out of place in a chapter about the state of nature—are excised from *Leviathan*'s chapter thirteen. The account here is consequently much more succinct. Glory results in conflict because

every man looketh that his companion should value him, at the same rate he sets upon himselfe: And upon all signes of contempt, or undervaluing, naturally endeavours, as far as he dares (which amongst them that have no common power to keep them in quiet, is far enough to make them destroy each other,) to extort a greater value from his contemners, by dommage; and from others, by the example.⁹³

Glory is the passion, 'signes of contempt' its circumstantial stimulus.⁹⁴ And as Hobbes's Latin translation makes clear, both the ensuing 'dommage' and the 'example' are matters of *vengeance* (*ulcisci, ultionis*). Revengefulness, it will be recalled, comprises the desire to hurt those who injure us, to force them openly to condemn their actions. Hence the function of revenge is not simply to retaliate or inflict harm or 'dommage'. Its ultimate aim is to *triumph*, to 'extort' a profession of regret and hence an acknowledgement of the avenger's power and 'value'⁹⁵—although the violent means used to extract revenge do, to be sure, frequently 'destroy' one's contemners. Later in chapter fifteen, Hobbes made explicit the account of human nature presupposed by the glory argument: 'all signes of hatred, or contempt, provoke to fight; insomuch as most men choose rather to hazard their life, than not to be revenged'.⁹⁶

If glory is provoked by contempt, suffering others' contempt is inevitable in large part because of the ubiquitous role *disagreement* plays in causing humans to feel contemned. Given the prickliness of human beings, to disagree with others is effectively to imply they are idiots: to

⁹³ L 13.5: 190.

⁹⁴ Strictly speaking the passion one experiences from signs of contempt is glory's opposite, dejection, which is '*Griefe*, from opinion of want of power'. L 6.40: 88. But it still makes sense to say glory is provoked, since it is the frustration of one's desire for glory that causes one to experience dejection.

⁹⁵ Hobbes was explicit about this in *Elements*: 'For though it be not hard, by returninge evill for evill, to make ones Adversary displeased with his owne fact, yet to make him acknowledge the same, is soe difficult, that many a man had rather dye then doe it. Revenge aimeth not at the death, but at the Captivity and Subiection of an Enemy...To kill is the aime of them that hate, to ridde themselves of feare. Reveng aimeth at tryumph, which over the dead is not'. EL 9.6. Hobbes made a similar point in DH 12.4, where he also linked anger to the desire for vengeance.

⁹⁶ L 15.20: 234. Hobbes made this point when discussing the natural law whose breach he called 'Contumely', which, recall, is the *Briefe*'s translation for the third species of *oligōria*, namely *hubris*, which comprises dishonouring.

‘agree with in opinion, is to Honour’, whereas to ‘dissent, is Dishonour; and an upbraiding of error’ or to dissent ‘in many things’ is to upbraid for ‘folly’.⁹⁷ Humans feel condemned by others’ different opinions because of a ‘vain conceipt’ of their ‘owne wisdom’ and their natural tendency to identify with their own opinions or to see their opinions as constitutive of who they are—no matter how trivial or unfounded those opinions happen to be.⁹⁸ They take disagreement personally. Nor does it help that disagreement is frequently exacerbated by the fact that people couple its expression—people can hardly help it, Hobbes insinuated—with invidious smiles and laughter.⁹⁹ And if pedestrian disagreement provokes anger and revengefulness, then what predictably ensues when one holds a ‘Vehement opinion of the truth of any thing’ and is ‘contradicted by others’ is the ‘Madnesse called RAGE, and FURY’—a madness that also arises from a ‘habituall’ and ‘excessive desire of Revenge’ and from an ‘Excessive opinion of a mans own selfe, for divine inspiration, for wisdom, learning, forme, and the like’.¹⁰⁰

Thus, when Hobbes in chapter thirteen summarized the glory argument, despite having excised *De Cive*’s references to disputes within political society, he retained the argument’s link, first made explicit in 1642, to disagreement as such: the signs of contempt that prompt human beings to ‘use Violence’ include mere ‘trifles, as a word, a smile, a different opinion, and any other sign of undervalue’.¹⁰¹ Here is Hobbes fleshing out the account of human nature presupposed by the glory argument: the point here is not—as with the immoderate protagonists of the older, vanity argument—that human beings are aggressive and vainglorious, but that they are defensive and *prickly* and hence interpret even mere ‘trifles’ as signs of contempt—signs that hurt them and provoke their fear, anger, and, ultimately, vengeance.

Another reason why signs of contempt are inevitable in human interaction stems from a further change Hobbes made to Aristotle’s account. Just as the *Briefe* had done, Hobbes here dropped one of Aristotle’s prerequisites for triggering the desire for revenge: that the slight be ‘undeserved’. It is irrelevant, for Hobbes, whether others’ expression of contempt is justified or not; the baseline of evaluation is *subjective*, not objective. ‘To Value a man at a high rate, is to

⁹⁷ L 10.30: 138. This passage incorporates some of the material in *De Cive*’s formulation of the comparison argument he trimmed from chapter thirteen of *Leviathan*.

⁹⁸ Hobbes himself confessed ‘I am a man that love my own opinions’. L Epistle Dedicatory: 6.

⁹⁹ On laughter as an expression of contempt according to Hobbes, see Skinner, *Visions of Politics III*, chapter 5.

¹⁰⁰ L 8.19: 112.

¹⁰¹ L 13.9: 192.

Honour him; at a low rate, is to *Dishonour* him. But high, and low, in this case, is to be understood by comparison to the rate that each man setteth on himselfe'.¹⁰² Humans feel slighted or undervalued, and so desire revenge, when they are not valued by others *as much as they value themselves*, which is of course usually too much to hope from others. Thus the point of Hobbes's most generic argument is not that people all desire superiority and react vengefully when others fail to acknowledge it. Hobbes's most generic argument is not comparative to other persons, but *subjective*, i.e., comparative to one's own self-evaluation: even those who see themselves as *inferior* to their social superiors (such as aristocrats in relation to their king) will be provoked to seek revenge if their superiors fail to acknowledge the worth (*dignitas*) they believe they merit. The subjective rather than comparative quality of Hobbes's most generic argument is presumably why the 'comparison' argument became the 'glory' argument. Combine the generic glory argument with the passion's frequently interpersonally comparative nature, and one has an even more noxious recipe.

If the most important and ubiquitous sign of contempt for prickly glory-seekers is 'a different opinion', then the most important kinds of disagreement are *normative*. Hobbes had already suggested this in both *Elements* and *De Cive*;¹⁰³ he reiterated the point in a well-known passage of *Leviathan* singling out disagreement over evaluative terms in particular for special treatment:

Good, and *Evill*, are names that signifie our Appetites, and Aversions; which in different tempers, customes, and doctrines of men, are different: And divers men, differ not onely in their Judgement, on the senses of what is pleasant, and unpleasant to the tast, smell, hearing, touch, and sight; but also of what is conformable, or disagreeable to Reason, in the actions of common life. Nay, the same man, in divers times, differs from himselfe; and one time praiseth, that is, calleth Good, what another time he dispraiseth, and calleth Evil: From whence arise Disputes, Controversies, and at last War.¹⁰⁴

Disagreement over normative terms—evaluative, prescriptive, and political—is of course a *permissive* cause of conflict, because such terms provide the basis for shared rules of social interaction, which temper the expansive liberties embodied in the right of nature. Without effective, shared rules, an indispensable means for resolving potential conflicts is unavailable. But

¹⁰² L 10.17: 136.

¹⁰³ EL 29.8; DCv 6.9.

¹⁰⁴ L 15.40: 242.

Hobbes's theory of passions makes clear that disagreement is also, more importantly, a direct stimulus of the passions leading to war, i.e., a *positive* cause of war in its own right. Disagreement leads to war because for prickly glory-seekers to be contradicted by others, especially by supposed equals—and sometimes even if the disagreement concerns trifles—is to suffer a grievous blow. Thus the problem in the state of nature is not simply that, without an enforced common procedure for settling disputes about right action, conflicts stemming from other sources—competition or fear of death, for example—cannot be resolved. The problem is, rather, that the mere expression of disagreement is itself a catalyst for war.¹⁰⁵ This means that, in principle, disagreement over *any* of the terms used in social life could give rise to war—including, as Hobbes noted in *De Cive*, disagreements over the purely descriptive terms of natural science.¹⁰⁶ Even here, though, normative words are both more likely to spark disagreement—since they often implicate persons' 'ambition, profit, or lust'¹⁰⁷—and twice as inflammatory when they do: in disagreeing over the language of praise, duty, or authority, one is not only telling others what to think, and thus insinuating that they are too stupid to think for themselves, but also telling them what they are worth, what they should do, or how they should be commanded or punished. And if disagreements over evaluative, prescriptive, and political words are the most dangerous, then disagreements over *religious* words—as Hobbes made clear from 1642 onwards—unite elements of all three in explosive combination.¹⁰⁸

VI. The Relation between Competition, Diffidence, and Glory

The glory argument identifies the psychological heart of Hobbes's disagreement theory of war: the relevant passions (glory and revengefulness), their most important stimulus (disagreement), and the relevant permissive condition (disagreement again). Yet many readers have concluded that, because Hobbes moved competition to the head of his three 'principall causes of quarrell' rooted 'in the nature of man', and recast the diffidence argument so that competition,

¹⁰⁵ While Wolin, *Politics and Vision* and Tuck, *Hobbes*, have both emphasized disagreement as a cause of war for Hobbes, neither draws the crucial link to glory (and Wolin treats disagreement as a merely permissive cause). See Abizadeh, 'Hobbes on the Causes of War'.

¹⁰⁶ DCv 17.12. Cf. 'There is scarce any Principle, neither in the worship of God, nor humane sciences, from whence there may not spring dissensions, discords, reproaches, and by degrees war it selfe; neither doth this happen by reason of the falshood of the Principle, but of the disposition of men, who seeming wise to themselves, will needs appear such to all others'. DCv 6.11.

¹⁰⁷ L 11.21: 158. Cf. L Review & Conclusion: (396); EL Epistle Dedicatory.

¹⁰⁸ DCv 1.5.

rather than vainglory, becomes its primary motor, the significance of glory diminishes considerably in *Leviathan*, and is eclipsed by competition (or, on some readings, by diffidence). As our archeology of chapter thirteen has shown, however, Hobbes's reordering and relabelling reflect a reduction in the importance, not of glory as such, but of aggressive, domination-seeking vainglory. Furthermore, both the competition and diffidence arguments are parasitic on glory: glory is not only the *universal* cause explaining why the state of nature is inevitably a state of war, and hence the most important psychological mechanism of war in its own right, it is also the *organizing* cause shaping and explaining the other two causal mechanisms.

The fact that the second premise of the competition argument involves vainglory already speaks in favour of competition's reliance on glory. But competition relies on glory in a more general and fundamental way as well. Recall that from equal ability and vulnerability, vainglory, and equal hope, the competition argument derives the conclusion that when individuals desire the same thing, and that thing cannot be shared, they become enemies and are prompted to kill or subdue each other. The fact that Hobbes identified the motive of this argument as 'Gain' (*lucro*) might be taken to suggest that his intention was to ally the competition argument with the motive that, in *De Cive*, he called *commodum*, in contrast to *gloria*. The suggestion would be that competition is motivated by desires related to physical needs and pleasures of sense, and, above all, by the desire for survival. Yet that suggestion would leave a crucial question unanswered: Why would individuals who each desire the same object, but who desire their own survival above all, risk their lives—and hence the ongoing satisfaction of almost all their desires—by fighting over the object of only *one* of their particular desires?

Many of Hobbes's commentators have supplied an ostensible answer: that the desire for the same particular object leads to violent conflict because of the relative scarcity of the material resources necessary for survival. If individuals deem something *indispensable* for survival, then they would see *not* fighting as posing the greater risk to their life. Such a reading is advanced, for example, by David Gauthier, who thinks that according to Hobbes the most important and universal cause of war is competition over the relatively scarce material goods necessary for survival by instrumentally rational individuals whose fear of death or desire for survival overwhelms all other passions.¹⁰⁹ A major textual difficulty with this 'resource-competition'

¹⁰⁹ Gauthier, *Logic of Leviathan*, pp. 11-18. See also Marvin Schiller, 'Political Authority, Self-Defense, and Pre-emptive War', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 1 (4) (1972), pp. 409-426.

reading, however, is that neither Gauthier nor any of Hobbes's numerous other commentators has been able to furnish any textual evidence for imputing to him the assumption of resource scarcity.¹¹⁰ Hobbes did not in fact believe the resources necessary for survival were scarce in the state of nature. He wrote of the 'Plenty', not scarcity, of goods provided by nature, 'consisting in Animals, Vegetals, and Minerals' that 'God hath freely layd' before human beings, which 'Plenty dependeth (next to Gods favour) merely on the labour and industry of men'. It is true that the needs of commonwealths outstrip the survival needs of state-of-nature humans, so that once individuals have formed commonwealths, the 'Territory under the Dominion of one Common-wealth' is unlikely to provide for 'all things needfull for the maintenance, and motion of the whole Body'. But even here, in the state-of-nature relations between commonwealths, Hobbes suggested that the likeliest remedy is interstate commodity exchange or trade, rather than war.¹¹¹ Humanity would be afflicted by material resource scarcity, and the wars prompted by it, only in some future age of increased population levels. Meanwhile, there is America.¹¹²

Of course, even in the interpersonal state of nature there may be localized (and contingent) resource scarcities, and these might help explain local conflicts. Such contingent scarcities do not, however, explain why the state of nature is *necessarily* a state of war. In fact, far from relying on scarcity to explain war, Hobbes asserted to the contrary that those humans are most prone to war for whom material goods are *abundant*: creatures without reason 'cannot distinguish between *Injury*, and *Dammage*; and therefore as long as they can be at ease, they are not offended with their fellows: whereas Man is then most troublesome, when he is most at ease'. Hobbes's Latin translation of this passage is even more pointed: 'man is then most troublesome, when his leisure

¹¹⁰ When Hampton, *Hobbes and the Social Contract Tradition*, p. 60, imputes the assumption to Hobbes, she resorts to quoting *Hume*! Others who impute it without textual evidence include McNeilly, *The Anatomy of Leviathan*; Gregory S. Kavka, *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory* (Princeton, 1986), pp. 17, 22-23, 102; Delphine Thivet, 'Thomas Hobbes: A Philosopher of War or Peace?', *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 16 (4) (2008), pp. 701-721, p. 707.

¹¹¹ L 24.3-4: 386.

¹¹² L 30.19: 540. Hobbes expressed the same sentiment, that war from competition over scarce material resources would arise only in the future when population levels had risen, in *De Cive*: 'were the nature of humane Actions as distinctly knowne, as the nature of *Quantity* in Geometricall Figures, the strength of *Avarice* and *Ambition*, which is sustained by the erroneous opinions of the Vulgar, as touching the nature of *Right* and *Wrong* [*ius & iniuriam*] would presently faint and languish; And Mankinde should enjoy such an Immortall peace, that (unlesse it were for habitation, on supposition that the Earth should grow too narrow for her Inhabitants [*nisi de loco, crescente scilicet hominum multitudine*] there would hardly be left any pretence for war'. DCv Epist. Ded.6.

and resources are most abundant [*quando otio opibusque maximè abundant*].¹¹³

The implication that humans are troublesome because they become ‘offended with their fellows’ reflects, of course, the universal psychological cause of war: glory, which is the ultimate basis of the competition argument. The implicit premise of Hobbes’s competition argument, necessary to explain why when individuals desire the same thing they become enemies, and risk their lives fighting over what they might be able to find (or themselves produce) elsewhere, is that deferring to another person over an object of mutual desire is an affront to one’s glory—as is the other’s refusal to defer to oneself. Prickly, glory-seeking individuals who have a ‘vain conceipt’ of their own abilities, and as much ‘hope’ in attaining their own ends as others, will interpret the fact that another is hindering them from what they want as a sign of contempt or even hatred. Aristotle would have drawn no such conclusion, because impeding or hurting another in the course of gaining something—as opposed to hurting another without gain, or just for the pleasure of hurting—is for Aristotle not a sign of *oligōria* towards another, but of pursuing one’s own interest. But on Hobbes’s account, because of the subjective and frequently comparative nature of glory, when others hinder one’s objectives, even when they do so for their own gain, one is inclined to interpret their action as a sign of their low estimation of one’s power and worth. Precisely these signs of undervalue, according to the glory argument, trigger anger and the desire for vengeance.

It is therefore no surprise that when Hobbes pointed to the problem of competition over wants, he did not appeal to scarce material goods needed for survival. He appealed instead to *intrinsically* scarce positional goods—above all, those that implicate one’s comparative glory. Here is Hobbes telling his readers what kind of goods the competition argument presupposes: human beings come to blows because they ‘are continually in competition for Honour and Dignity...and consequently amongst men there ariseth on that ground, Envy and Hatred, and finally Warre’. This is because ‘man, whose Joy consisteth in comparing himselfe with other men, can relish nothing but what is eminent’.¹¹⁴ Hobbes repeated the point in *Leviathan*’s ‘Review, and Conclusion’, writing that ‘the Businesse of the world...consisteth almost in nothing else but a perpetuall contention for Honor, Riches, and Authority’. The sandwiching of ‘Riches’ between ‘Honor’ and ‘Authority’ indicates that even the role riches play in fuelling contention is intricately

¹¹³ L 17.11: 260, 261. Cf. DCv 5.5; 12.10. See also Yves Charles Zarka, *Hobbes et la pensée politique moderne* (Paris, 1995), p. 139.

¹¹⁴ L 17.8: 258.

linked to their *symbolic* value in establishing social status.¹¹⁵ (Hobbes was explicit about this in *Behemoth*: the reason why London merchants are motivated by the pursuit of ‘private gaine’ is that growing rich is ‘their onely glory’.¹¹⁶) Thus even if the object one desires is, initially, a good unrelated to glory—a good desired, let us say, to satisfy physical survival needs, or simply to produce pleasures of sense—we end up risking our lives *fighting* over it when and because our glory is implicated. We do the same even should the object be a mere trifle, unnecessary for survival.¹¹⁷ The point is not that we *always* jeopardize our lives for glory in this way; often the rational fear of death prevails and we refrain from fighting over dispensable things. The point is, rather, that because of glory sometimes we do so fight, sometimes even when survival is not at stake.

The diffidence argument is parasitic on glory as well. Recall that for the argument’s logic to get underway, there must be some initial reason to ‘expect’ that some others in the state of nature are inclined to threaten one’s ‘Safety’. In the argument’s older incarnations, the reason for the expectation is the aggressive vainglory of some; in *Leviathan*, it is primarily competition amongst equals. The fact that diffidence is parasitic on competition, and competition on glory, already indicates one way in which diffidence relies on glory. But the diffidence argument relies on glory in another way as well. Neither Hobbes’s earlier account nor his mature account in *Leviathan* assumes that *everyone* is initially inclined to attack others (because of vanity or competition). The point is, rather, that sometimes some people are so inclined, which, given humans’ epistemic and existential vulnerability, generates a generalized state of mutual diffidence providing each an incentive pre-emptively to strike first, in ‘Anticipation’.¹¹⁸

What remains to be shown is that mutual diffidence would yield an all-things-considered incentive to strike first. Why, in other words, would striking first be a dominant strategy? If the diffidence argument is fuelled by the fear of death, why would anyone be rationally motivated to

¹¹⁵ L R&C.3: 1132. See also Thomas, ‘The Social Origins of Hobbes's Political Thought’. Cf. L 11.3: 152: ‘Competition of Riches, Honour, Command, or other power, enclineth to Contention, Enmity, and War: Because the way of one Competitor, to the attaining of his desire, is to kill, subdue, supplant, or repell the other’. Cf. EL 27.3.

¹¹⁶ B 3: 276.

¹¹⁷ Cf. R 2.5.9 1382b.

¹¹⁸ The purpose of anticipatory first strikes is to *subdue* (not kill) others: ‘by force, or wiles, to master the persons of all men he can’. L 13.4: 190. In any case, pre-emptive killing would *not* be a dominant strategy for rational survivalists in the state of nature given Hobbes’s assumptions (Abizadeh, ‘Hobbes on the Causes of War’).

alleviate this fear by engaging in pre-emptive strikes that, insofar as they involve fighting, invariably put one's own life at risk as well? After all, one has at least two options available: as Hobbes put it, 'Feare of oppression, disposeth a man to anticipate, or to seek ayd by society'.¹¹⁹ If the fear of invasion were the sole passion behind the diffidence argument, then the second strategy would be dominant. Since violence poses a potential risk of death to anyone, survival-seeking individuals would have overwhelming incentive simply to surrender immediately. Instead of first strikes, instrumentally rational survivalists would have incentive to avoid violence at all costs, either by immediately surrendering or by proposing to form a commonwealth to anyone they encounter—before coming to blows.¹²⁰ This is not a state of first strikes leading to war, but a state of first surrenders or proposals leading to peace. The upshot of the diffidence argument would be that the state of nature cannot last: that we are *inevitably* led to form a commonwealth, whether by surrender or agreement. Yet the case for why the state of nature *inevitably* leads to a commonwealth becomes a case for why the state of nature *immediately* leads to a commonwealth—which undermines the case for why a state of nature is inevitably a state of war. War never stands a chance.¹²¹ This goes against everything Hobbes wanted to say: we form a commonwealth, he wanted to say, *because* the state of nature is such a nasty state of war.

Although the fear of death plays a crucial role in the diffidence argument, the concomitant desire for survival by itself cannot explain why individuals in the state of nature resort to first strikes, as opposed to surrendering or proposing association, in response to that fear. What explains pre-emptive strikes is glory. Individuals risk their own life in pre-emptive attacks because even if they are 'moderates', they are averse to being forced into submission by fear: given that all desire liberty or dominion, pre-emptively surrendering to others is a blow to their glory. Aware that this aversion holds not just for oneself but also for *others*, each individual recognizes that *others* too

¹¹⁹ L 11.9: 154.

¹²⁰ Gregory S. Kavka, 'Hobbes's War of All against All', *Ethics* 93 (January) (1983), pp. 291-310, p. 298, makes a similar point. He adds that pre-emptive strikes are also irrational because they identify anticipators as especially dangerous, prompting others to eliminate them, and because successful anticipators may become tempting targets for those seeking glory in conquest. As an alternative to first strikes, instead of immediately surrendering, Kavka considers the strategy of 'lying low', and shows that in a world of rational survivalists this strategy is not dominated by the strategy of striking first (*Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, pp. 120-124). But he does not explain why a survivalist would not, instead of lying low, rather go out and surrender to aggressive glory-seekers.

¹²¹ Hampton's contention that instrumentally rational persons, whose primary motive is survival, would be 'clamoring to create' a commonwealth is exactly the right conclusion to draw from this interpretation of the Hobbesian state of nature. Hampton, *Hobbes and the Social Contract Tradition*, p. 149.

are inclined pre-emptively to strike, which, of course, puts one's life at even greater risk of violent death if one fails to strike pre-emptively. Hence the escalating spiral of mutual fear. Indeed, even the fear of death itself is intimately linked to glory, because fear arises from vulnerability and weakness: to be in a state in which one fears for one's life is itself a grievous blow to one's glory. Grief arises both from imagining one's own future death, and from contemplating one's weakness or incapacity to prevent others from bringing it about. This is why Hobbes renamed the argument *diffidence*: diffidence is the opposite of *confidence*, which is *Leviathan's* label for the first (well-grounded) species of glory.

Thus Hobbes's emphasis in *Leviathan* was not on the aggressive vainglory of a few, but on glory in general—its ubiquitous *defensive* and prickly manifestations especially. Glory in this broader, more widespread sense permeates all three of *Leviathan's* psychological mechanisms of war: neither competition nor diffidence can be understood in isolation from this ubiquitous passion.