

'Leviathan'

99 years

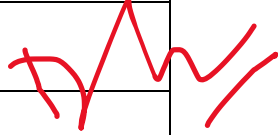
Hobbes (1581-1679)

Quick Bio:

- Born in a family of an Anglican clergyman
- Most turbulent period of English history
- Higher education from Oxford
- Appointed as tutor to the heir of William Cavendish
 - Personal contact with : Ben Jonson, Bacon and Galileo

Influenced by:

Prevalent situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Civil War in England b/w <table border="1" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td>Monarchy</td> <td>Republicanism</td> </tr> </table> ♦ Hobbes sided with monarchy ♦ Charles I was beheaded and monarchy was abolished ♦ Left a deep impact in his mind <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Idea of human nature → NEGATIVE ✓ Man is an animal → motivated by 2 considerations <table border="1" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td>Fear</td> <td>Self-interest</td> </tr> </table> ✓ A strong and stabilized govt. is the basic need for a civilized life → that could only be provided by ABSOLUTE MONARCHY 	Monarchy	Republicanism	Fear	Self-interest
Monarchy	Republicanism				
Fear	Self-interest				
Plato and Hooker	Idea of Social Contract (though was vague)				
Machiavelli	Depiction of human nature				
Grotius	Law of nature <table border="1" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td>Hobbes equated that with</td> <td>'dictates of reason'</td> </tr> </table>	Hobbes equated that with	'dictates of reason'		
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Bodin	Sovereignty concept Improved by Hobbes
Galileo	Mechanical nature of the world
Desecrates	Materialistic theory and scientific method
Euclid	Love for geometry Applied to the study of politics

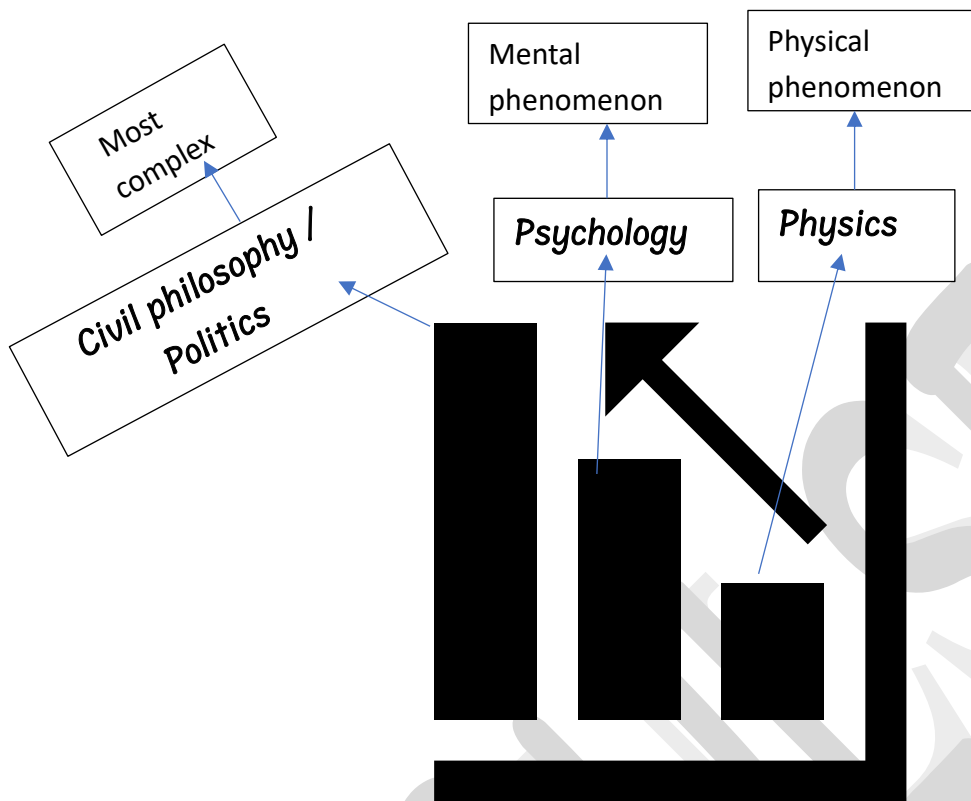
'Leviathan'	
wrote in exile @ France	published @ 70 years of age

Methodology:

scientific

- **Scientific method**
- Applied for the first time to social sciences
 - Tried to draw deductions from the axioms, assumptions and already established truths.
- **Undoubtedly, Plato applied first for the study of political thought,**
 - But Hobbes was the first to show that political theory was based on the existence of **matter and motion** → **PHYSICS**
 - **Every existing thing is particles → moving in a mechanical way → the state is a mechanism resulting from the movement of those particles.**
 - Hobbes based his concept of human nature, the formation of civil society and possible human relationship over this concept.
 - This **mechanical principle** forms the centre of Hobbes's system.

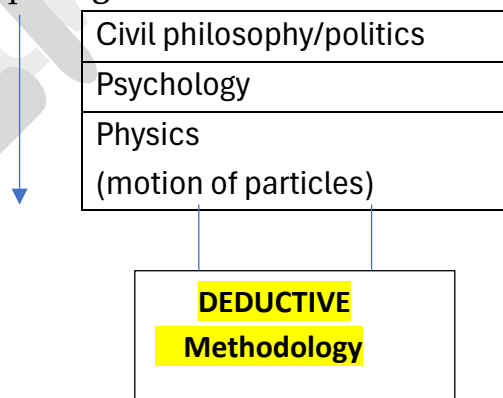




- There are 3 different parts of philosophy as shown in the graph above.
 - All these 3 parts of the philosophy → result of moving particles.

- Tried to assimilate psychology and politics → to the exact physical science.

- Applied geometrical method



Criticism:

- ✧ Failed to completely deduce psychology from physics.....as it was impossible to.....as straight line progress from physics to psychology is not possible.

Significance:

- ☒ Rejected the **medieval conception of soul and spirit**.....H's interpretation of all in materialistic terms.....so, forerunner of Marx.
- ☒ Rejected the medieval theory → state is the result of **Classical Fall**
- ☒ Proponent of **individualism**.

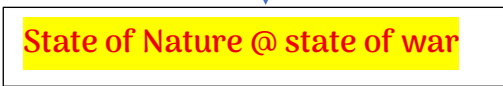
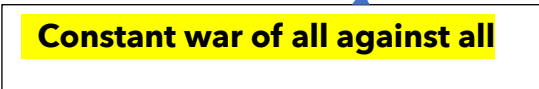
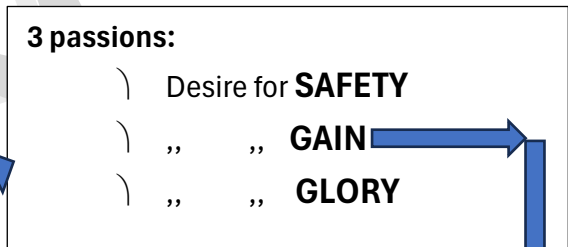
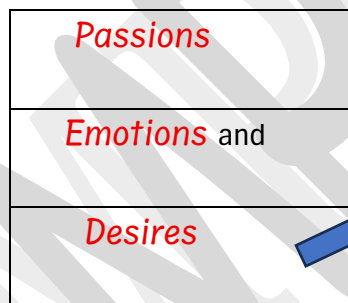
On Human Nature:

Bad and Dark

- Basis of H's political philosophy.....spring board of his thought.
- Individual is **not a rational creature**

BUT

an embodiment of



○ What a man desires, he calls it good.....dislikes@ bad/evil.

-not fixed or objective.....but subjective → **ever changing.**
- No final end or goal of life
- Want to obtain those which he desires.

○ Psychological principle behind all behaviour →

SELF-PRESERVATION.....continuation of individual's
biological existence

○ Men by birth → **EQUAL**

- Some have better mental faculties, some physical
- Object of desire → same
- Lead to **CLASH** with each other

Competition, glory and differences make people **brute and quarrelsome.**

Every individual has "a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death.....cannot be content with a moderate power**acquisition of more**"

"war of every man against every man"

Man is essentially

-) **Selfish**
-) **Contentious**
-) **Quarrelsome**
-) **Mean**
-) **Wicked**
-) **Non-altruistic**
-) **Non-rational**
-) **Impulsive**
-) **Self-centred**



Criticism:

- ✧ How would it be possible for the **irrationals** to form civil society from the State of Nature ?
- ✧ Human being @ **anti-social, self-centred, egoistic**.....how was such people became social and instituted civil society ?
- ✧ **Fails to deduce** sensations and perceptions from the motions of particles.
- ✧ **All men are not equal in reality.**

On State of Nature:

State of war

Uncertainty

- Extension of his view of human nature.
- **Desire → Distrust → Violence**
- State of nature is a state of war.
- **Life of man → solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.**
- No distinction b/w right and wrong, just and unjust.
- No Law → No Justice
- **Private property → NO RIGHT**

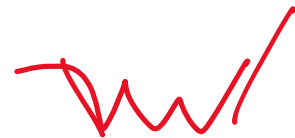
Irrevocable

The Social Contract:

-fed up with the **prevailed state of uncertainty** in the SoN
 - Motivation to self-preservation → birth of Sate.
- Rational desire to escape from the natural condition of war
-need for setting up of a **COMMON POWER**
-conferring all their power and strength upon **one man or assembly of men**...so to restrain and protect every individual

Features:

- 1) Party to the contract →
 -) individual/ **NOT GROUP**
 -) **Sovereign** → NOT a PARTY → rather **product/outcome**



"Instead of becoming a charter of human freedom, the contract becomes in the hands of Hobbes **a bond of human slavery**"

2) The Commonwealth or State → **is based on reason** → NOT FEAR

-) Realised the reason → **self-preservation better to be served if state exists.**
-) But H further points out → a very few would respect and obey state/authority on rational ground → **so, law to be enforced effectively.**

"Covenants without sword are but words"

- 3) Sovereign is not a party to contract → so **not guilty of violating the contract.**
- 4) Once concluded (submitted consent) → **can't reverse back w/o the permission of the sovereign.**
- 5) **Minority** → **no right to object** → to the choice of majority.
- 6) Individual surrendered all right → **EXCEPT the right to live viz.**
 -) If sovereign commands him **"to kill, wound or maim himself"**
 -) Sovereign not resisting those who are **disallowing him from the access of life preserving things** viz. food, air, medicine etc

Self-preservation, not to be frustrated at any point

On Sovereignty:

absolute, indivisible, inalienable

○ **Sovereign** → outcome of the contract → enjoys all the powers as surrendered to.

○ Objective of the Sovereign:

) **Maintain peace and order**

) **Promote the welfare**

Policy of Sovereign:

) whatever is **EXPEDIENT**

○ 'Leviathan' (i.e. first Sovereign) is **IRREVOCABLE**.

) **No reverting back** → else would be SoN

○ Sovereign → not only the chief source of **law** → but **SOLE INTERPRETER**

) **Natural law, God → all are subservient to**

○ Sovereign is the source of distinction between

- ◆ Good and bad
- ◆ Moral and immoral
- ◆ Just and unjust

) Whatever is **in conformity** with the law is **just** and vice versa

) **Right to property** → created by Sv → **can impose tax** → w/o subject's consent

○ **Chief source of justice**

) Exclusive power of declare war and make peace.

) **NO SEPERATION OF POWER** → Sv is everything

Summary understanding:

- Has been vested with indivisible, inseparable and incommunicable powers.
- Not entitled to share power with others.
- No rights to subjects except SELF-PRESERVATION

Criticism:

- 1) **Unreal and untrue to facts** → in actuality, not possible → if still the concentration happens → will lead to giving birth of frustration.
 - ☞ May be Hobbes chief objective was → to determine the amount of the power to be vested to Sv → not factual description of power to be wielded by the Sv.
- 2) As was not provided any right to subjects → **will lead to tyrannical rule** → **reduces the whole herd to slavery.**
 - ☞ Hobbes's thing may be carried through absolutism.....but H's absolutism was in the interest of social security and welfare ...allowed the right to disobey @ self-preservation
- 3) **Clear inconsistency regarding right on the context of absolutism theory** → either one would be having right or not.
- 4) **Right to Resist is not possible** → only possible in a democratic form
- 5) **Rousseau's criticism:-**

Self-contradictory and revolting.

Gifts of nature like life and liberty –
can never be renounced for any supposed benefit.

H's concept of law

1) an improvement over Bodin's concept of law

- Bodin allowed → constitution, law of God, Right to property → **as limitations to the authority of sovereign**


2) lead to the Austin's theory of positive law

(theory of legal sovereignty)

- **John Austin's** theory of sovereignty, rooted in legal positivism, defines the sovereign as a "determinate human superior"—a person or body not in the habit of obedience to a like superior—who receives habitual obedience from the bulk of society. **Sovereignty is absolute, indivisible, and defines law as a command backed by sanctions.**
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On Laws:

Coercive

- Distinction b/w right and wrong
 - Sv earned the **right to command over others** → **by virtue of the contract.**
 - Sv has been authorized with the power → make and enforce law → **coercive power**
 - ✓ Coercive power distinguishes the civil law from → natural law, divine law and moral law
 - **No limitation** to the law enacted by Sv
 - **Sv is above and beyond the law** → no right to individual to discuss the law whether those are reasoned or not → H abandoned the 'reason factor' that used to exist in the SoN
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On Rights and Liberty:

**Only
self-preservation**

- **NO rights or liberty**
- Freedom to **do what law permits**
- **Right to life → ALLOWED → can disobey state if state endangers it →**
Negative Liberty
- Right to

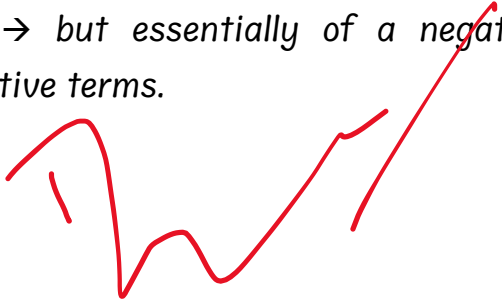
Buy and sell and otherwise contract with one another
To chose their own abode
Own diet
Own trade of life
Educate children as wished and deemed by parents

Liberty is to be find in the silence of the law and the individual is free to do anything where the law is silent

".....as hedges are set not to stop travelers but to keep them on their way"

Summary:

- ◆ *Concedes liberty and freedom → but essentially of a negative character and is conceived in relative terms.*



Hard to decide any either

On Individualism and Absolutism:

- Some considers.....as pure and naked despotism → others....one of the greatest individualist.
- Hobbes was the deadliest enemy of individualism.....but its irony, over this the later individualistic theories have been developed.

□ “Hobbes was at once the complete utilitarian and a complete individualist” – *Sabine*

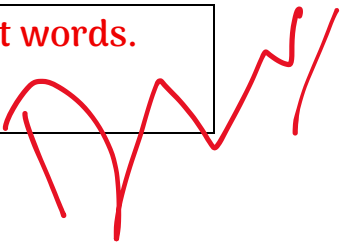
□ “Hobbes, so frequently portrayed as the greatest absolutist is perhaps the greatest individualist in the history of political thought” - *Wayper*

○

<u>H doesn't talk about vague things like public good or general good</u>	H talks about individuals → who desire to live and enjoy protection for the means of life
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- Right to self-preservation → provided
- In case of endangered life → right to judge by own
- H doesn't think in terms of collective wills or common will.
- H's philosophy is pregnant with the strongest seeds of individualism
 -) But to keep in proper check → else will destruct themselves → destruction of civil society and give rise to anarchy → so to allay that possibilities, need of some formal supreme power → SOVEREIGN

Covenants without swords are but words.



- **Didn't allow Sovereign to use this absolute power for own selfish end**
→ power is to be exercised only over the right of self-preservation of his subjects → H was more concerned with individual than Sovereign

“He is perhaps the greatest individualist
in the history of political thought” - *Wayper*

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- ☒ Vaughn → very critical
 - ☒ Sabine → praised a lot

“Succeeding generations have usually disagreed with him, but it is no exaggeration to say that they have found in him a mine well worth their while to work for the riches of the ore that it yields.” - *Wayper*

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- ✧ Even Plato & Aristotle were "caged birds" of their age, but Hobbes to some extent was better → → **because for the first time gave a scientific idea of human behavior.**

