

HOBBS'S CONVENTIONALIST THEOLOGY, THE TRINITY, AND GOD AS AN ARTIFICIAL PERSON BY FICTION*

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ABSTRACT. *By the time Hobbes wrote Leviathan, he was a theist, but not in the sense presumed by either side of the present-day debate concerning the sincerity of his professed theism. On the one hand, Hobbes's expressed theology was neither merely deistic, nor confined to natural theology: the Hobbesian God is not merely a first mover, but a person who counsels, commands, and threatens. On the other hand, the Hobbesian God's existence depends on being constructed artificially by human convention. The Hobbesian God is not a natural person; he exists as a person only insofar as he is by fiction represented. Like the state and pagan gods, he is an artificial person by fiction. The upshot is that Hobbes was a sincere theist and that his seventeenth-century critics were right to think that, in their sense, he was an atheist: he did not steadfastly believe in an independently existing deity who precedes human convention. Hobbes was agnostic on this question. He nevertheless believed that God is brought into being as an artificial person. This 'personal theology' not only involved a heretical interpretation of the Trinity, it also came to play a significant role in his moral and political philosophy.*

God was omnipresent in seventeenth-century thought. No comprehensive philosopher could evade him, and Hobbes was no exception. Yet many of Hobbes's religious contemporaries believed that his philosophical system, despite being sprinkled with theistic pronouncements, rules out God's existence. He denied the charge, of course, but Hobbes's irritated critics contended that his professed theism was no more than subterfuge, and they sought to smoke him out to expose the bankruptcy of his entire system.¹ This debate about

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¹ Samuel I. Mintz, *The hunting of Leviathan* (Cambridge, 1969); Jon Parkin, *Taming the Leviathan: the reception of the political and religious ideas of Thomas Hobbes in England, 1640–1700*

the sincerity of Hobbes's theism, and more generally the role of God in his philosophical system, has been restaged in the past century, albeit with a different valence. Commentators in one camp – often with an eye to nominating Hobbes for the prize of Founding Father of modern, secular philosophy – have portrayed Hobbes as a not-so-closeted atheist whose God-talk is either ironic or serves merely instrumental, political purposes,² while commentators in the second camp have pleaded his sincerity by portraying him as a kind of early modern advocate of natural theology, a Socinian, or even a Calvinist, and have argued that God's existence serves an essential function in his philosophical system as a whole.³

(Cambridge, 2007). References to Hobbes's works (chapter.paragraph: pages) are as follows: EW=William Molesworth, ed., *The English works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury* (11 vols., London, 1839–45). OL=William Molesworth, ed., *Opera philosophica quae latine scripsit omnia* (5 vols., London, 1839–45). EL=J. C. A. Gaskin, ed., *The elements of law, natural and politic: part I, Human nature, part II, De corpore politico, with Three lives* (Oxford, 1994). DCv=Howard Warrender, ed., *De cive: the English version* (Oxford, 1983). AW=Thomas White's *De mundo examinatus* (London, 1976) (page numbers after '/' are to Jean Jacquot and Harold Whitmore Jones, eds., *Critique du De mundo de Thomas White* (Paris, 1973)). L and LL=Noel Malcolm, ed., *Leviathan: the English and Latin texts* (Oxford, 2012). DC=De corpore in EW I (page numbers after '/' are to OL I). 6L=Six lessons in EW VII. DH=Thomas Hobbes, *Man and citizen* (*De homine and De cive*), ed. Bernard Gert (Indianapolis, IN, 1991) (pages after '/' are to OL II). AB=*An answer to a book published by Dr. Bramhall, late bishop of Derry; called The catching of Leviathan. Together with An historical narration concerning heresie, and the punishment thereof* (London, 1682) (pages after '/' are to EW IV). HNH=*An historical narration concerning heresie, and the punishment thereof* (London, 1680) (pages after '/' are to EW IV). HE=Patricia Springborg, Patricia Stablein and Paul Wilson, eds., *Historia ecclesiastica* (Paris, 2008).

² For Hobbes the atheist, see Raymond Polin, *Politique et philosophie chez Thomas Hobbes* (Paris, 1953); Leo Strauss, *What is political philosophy? And other studies* (Chicago, IL, 1959), ch. 7; Edwin Curley, "I durst not write so boldly" or, how to read Hobbes' theological-political treatise', in Daniela Bostrenghi, ed., *Hobbes e spinoza, scienza e politica* (Naples, 1988), pp. 595–621; Edwin Curley, 'Calvin and Hobbes, or, Hobbes as an orthodox Christian', *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 34 (1996), pp. 257–71; Douglas Jesseph, 'Hobbes's atheism', *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, 26 (2002), pp. 140–66; Patricia Springborg, 'Hobbes's challenge to Descartes, Bramhall and Boyle: a corporeal God', *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 20 (2012), pp. 903–34. For the view that God is irrelevant for Hobbes's moral and political philosophy, see David Gauthier, *The logic of Leviathan: the moral and political theory of Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford, 1969). For the view that God plays a merely instrumental, Machiavellian role in Hobbes, see, e.g., Jeffrey R. Collins, *The allegiance of Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford, 2005).

³ For Hobbes the theist, see K. C. Brown, 'Hobbes's grounds for belief in a deity', *Philosophy*, 37 (1962), pp. 336–44; Willis B. Glover, 'God and Thomas Hobbes', in K. C. Brown, ed., *Hobbes studies* (Oxford, 1965), pp. 141–68; R. W. Hepburn, 'Hobbes on the knowledge of God', in Maurice Cranston and Richard S. Peters, eds., *Hobbes and Rousseau: a collection of critical essays* (Garden City, NY, 1972), pp. 85–108; Peter Geach, 'The religion of Thomas Hobbes', *Religious Studies*, 17 (1981), pp. 549–58; A. P. Martinich, *The two gods of Leviathan* (Cambridge, 1992); Robert Arp, 'The *quinque viae* of Thomas Hobbes', *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 16 (1999), pp. 367–94. For the argument that Hobbes must be a traditional theist, on the grounds that otherwise his philosophy could not explain the obligatory character of covenants, see A. E. Taylor, 'The ethical doctrine of Hobbes', in Brown, ed., *Hobbes studies*, pp. 35–55; Howard Warrender, *The political philosophy of Hobbes: his theory of obligation* (Oxford, 1957). The Taylor–Warrender view has few contemporary supporters; see Edwin

Interpreting Hobbes's theological pronouncements is considerably complicated by two facts. First, Hobbes's expressed theology was neither merely deistic, nor confined to natural theology: the God appearing in his writings is not only a natural first mover or first cause – the God of *philosophy* – but is also a *historical* God, a person who counsels, commands, and threatens human beings through reasoning but also through scripture and earthly representatives.⁴ Second, Hobbes almost certainly would have professed to believe in God regardless of whether he actually did believe or not. This is not necessarily (or merely) because, if Hobbes were an atheist, he would have feared persecution for sincerely expressing his views.⁵ Hobbes's expressed political and, indeed, theological views were provocative enough – as Hobbes himself was well aware – and they caused him on several occasions to fear for his life.⁶ Rather, Hobbes understood his own moral and political philosophy to obligate him, as an Englishman, publicly to profess his belief in God regardless of his inner convictions: subjects are obligated publicly to adhere to their sovereign's public theology, and Hobbes's sovereign required his subjects to profess belief in God.⁷

In a companion piece to this article,⁸ I argue that Hobbes in his early writings was agnostic about God's existence. His writings prior to *Leviathan* (1651) assume that to know God's existence requires first coming to know the existence of a first mover or first cause – the philosophical God – after which one could come to have faith that the God of history is the very same God. But in Hobbes's view, the existence of the God of philosophy could neither be demonstrated nor proved, and hence could not be an object of knowledge. Reasoning about God's existence, moreover, undermines any stable belief either way: it leads one constantly to vacillate between thinking that God does exist and that he does not, and hence undermines faith in the historical God as well.

My thesis here is that, by the time he wrote *Leviathan*, Hobbes was a theist, but not in the sense presumed by either side of the present-day debate. It has been

Curley, 'Reflections on Hobbes: recent work in his moral and political philosophy', *Journal of Philosophical Research*, 15 (1989–90), pp. 169–250.

⁴ On this distinction, see Glover, 'God and Thomas Hobbes'; Arrigo Pacchi, 'Hobbes and the problem of God', in G. A. J. Rogers and Alan Ryan, eds., *Perspectives on Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 171–87; George Wright, *Religion, politics and Thomas Hobbes* (Dordrecht, 2006).

⁵ As suggested, for example, by Leo Strauss, *Natural right and history* (Chicago, IL, 1950), p. 199 n. 43; Curley, "I durst not write so boldly", p. 512.

⁶ For this kind of rejoinder to atheistic readings, see Glover, 'God and Thomas Hobbes', pp. 147–8; Mintz, *The hunting of Leviathan*, p. 44; Martinich, *The two gods of Leviathan*, pp. 30–2. For discussion of Hobbes's belief that his writings had endangered his life, see Philip Milton, 'Hobbes, heresy and Lord Arlington', *History of Political Thought*, 14 (1993), pp. 501–46.

⁷ This forms a part of what Hoekstra calls Hobbes's 'doctrine of doctrines'. Kinch Hoekstra, 'The *de facto* turn in Hobbes's political philosophy', in Tom Sorell and Luc Foisneau, eds., *Leviathan after 350 years* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 33–73.

⁸ Arash Abizadeh, 'Hobbes's agnostic theology before *Leviathan*' (forthcoming).

widely noted that Hobbes articulated a theory of personhood and representation for the first time in chapter 16 of *Leviathan*. I argue that this celebrated innovation marks a crucial development in – and is partly motivated by – not merely his political philosophy but also his theology.⁹ It enabled Hobbes to become a theist, albeit in a highly unorthodox sense: on its basis he could now firmly, without doubt, *know* that the historical God exists, and this precisely in a way that dovetails with having faith in the sovereign authorities who declare his existence. And once the existence of the historical God is known, the door is open for one to suppose and even to have faith that the material substrate of God's historical person is a natural first cause, i.e., the God of philosophy. Yet the existence of the historical God – the person capable of acting in the world – wholly depends, according to Hobbes's mature theology, on being constructed artificially by human convention. The Hobbesian God is not a natural person and does not exist by nature; he exists as a person only insofar as he is by fiction represented. Like the state and the pagan gods, he is an artificial person by fiction. He is a historical God not just in the sense that he acts in history, but that he only exists in history.

The dual upshot is that in his later writings Hobbes was a sincere theist *and* that his seventeenth-century critics were right. More precisely, they were right to think that, in their sense, he was an atheist: he did not steadfastly believe in an independently existing deity who precedes human convention. Hobbes remained agnostic on this question. But he nevertheless believed that God is brought into being as an artificial person, and his existence came to play a significant role in Hobbes's moral and political philosophy.

I

Hobbes's writings from *Leviathan* onwards confirm the broad outlines of his earlier account of the epistemological status and meaning of theological language. The *Leviathan* once again insists that

the nature of God is incomprehensible; that is to say, we understand nothing of *what he is*, but only *that he is*; and therefore the Attributes we give him, are not to tell one another, *what he is*, nor to signify our opinion of his Nature, but our desire to honor him with such names as we conceive most honorable amongst our selves.¹⁰

⁹ Gauthier has argued that Hobbes developed this new apparatus to address problems in his earlier theory of sovereignty. Gauthier, *Logic of Leviathan*, chs. 3–4; Yves Charles Zarka, *La décision métaphysique de Hobbes: conditions de la politique* (Paris, 1999), ch. 6. Skinner argues Hobbes was appropriating the language used by parliamentarians during the English civil wars in order to discredit their anti-royalist conclusions. Quentin Skinner, 'Hobbes on representation', *European Journal of Philosophy*, 13 (2005), pp. 155–84. Garsten suggests its function for Hobbes was to unite his theory of sovereignty with his much-expanded account of ecclesiology and theology. Bryan Garsten, 'Religion and representation in Hobbes', in Ian Shapiro, ed., *Leviathan, or the matter, forme, & power of a common-wealth ecclesiasticall and civill* (New Haven, CT, 2010), pp. 519–46, at p. 522.

¹⁰ L 34.4: 614.

Hobbes thus reiterated his earlier distinction¹¹ between uttering a *proposition*, which signifies a conception that such-and-such is the case, and uttering an *oblation*, which signifies a desire to honour or revere something: 'in the Attributes which we give to God, we are not to consider the signification of Philosophicall Truth; but the signification of Pious Intention, to do him the greatest Honour we are able'.¹² For example, since we cannot have any 'Idea, or conception' of God, when we say that he is '*Infinite*' we 'signifie onely, that we are not able to conceive' his 'ends, and bounds', so that 'the Name of *God* is used, not to make us conceive him...but that we may honour him'.¹³ Similarly, to attribute to God supernatural powers is not intelligibly to assert a proposition – such truth claims are straightforwardly unintelligible – but to utter oblations or to express one's obedience to the constituted authorities.

Since a number of recent commentators have made much of Hobbes's claim, alluded to as early as 1640 in *Elements of law* and made publicly explicit from 1688 onwards, that God is corporeal, it is important to see that Hobbes viewed such claims as oblations as well.¹⁴ Hobbes made it clear that, since we cannot understand anything of God's nature, whether we should call him incorporeal or corporeal is solely a question of what, amongst us, is the best way to honour him. As he put it in the English *Leviathan*, in deciding whether to call God 'Incorporeall' we must 'consider not what Attribute expresseth best his Nature, which is Incomprehensible; but what best expresseth our desire to honour Him'.¹⁵ And here we face somewhat contradictory imperatives. On the one hand, in order to honour God, 'it is manifest, we ought to attribute to him *Existence*. For no man can have the will to honour that, which he thinks not to have any Beeing.'¹⁶ But since no one 'can conceive anything, but he must conceive it in some place; and indued with some determinate magnitude',¹⁷ to conceive that something exists is to conceive it as corporeal. Indeed, the '*Vniverse*' of all existing things is composed of bodies – 'there is no reall part thereof that is not also *Body*' – so that '*Substance* and *Body*, signifie the same thing', and expressions such as '*Substance incorporeall*' are strictly speaking absurd.¹⁸ This implies that to say that God exists is to suppose he is corporeal. On the other hand, 'to attribute Figure to him, is not Honour; for all Figure is Finite...Nor to say he is this, or that Place: for

¹¹ AW 35.16: 434/395–6; cf. EL 11.3: 65.

¹² L 31.33: 568. The terminological distinction between propositions and oblations appears in AW 35.16: 434/3–396.

¹³ L 3.12: 46. For other attributes, see Thomas Holden, 'Hobbes's first cause', *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 53 (2015), pp. 647–67.

¹⁴ EL 11.4: 65–6; LL Appendix 1.4: 1144; 3.6: 1228; AB 33/308, 36–7/310, 40/313; HNH 7–8/393.

¹⁵ L 46.15: 1078.

¹⁶ L 31.14: 564.

¹⁷ L 3.12: 46.

¹⁸ L 34.2: 610; cf. 46.15: 1076.

whatsoever is in *Place*, is bounded, and Finite.’¹⁹ Since calling God ‘body’ would signify both honour and dishonour, Hobbes concluded that, because the question of what kind of ‘Spirit’ God is lies ‘above our understanding’,²⁰ the best approach for signifying our desire to honour him would be to say that God’s nature is incomprehensible (rather than corporeal or incorporeal).

Hobbes’s position becomes especially clear in his criticisms of the scholastic penchant for calling God incorporeal. Since to assert the existence of a ‘*Spirit Incorporeall*’ is to ‘put together words of contradictory signification’, ‘men that by their own meditation arrive to the acknowledgement of one Infinite, Omnipotent, and Eternall God’ are left with two options. Because saying God is body would be to suppose he is limited, such inquirers might end up calling him incorporeal; but in that case they must do so *purely* as an oblation, and not ‘with intention to make the Divine Nature understood; but *Piously*, to honour him with attributes, of significations, as remote as they can from the grossnesse of Bodies Visible’. However, although calling God incorporeal might honour him in one way, in another way it dishonours him, since to call anything incorporeal is to suppose its non-existence. Thus, Hobbes showed a marked preference for avoiding calling God incorporeal or corporeal altogether: he preferred that inquirers ‘choose rather to confesse that he is Incomprehensible’, which is to utter a proposition signifying one’s own incapacity to conceive God, as well as to utter an oblation honouring God.²¹ It is true that, in his even later writings, Hobbes hardened his view against calling God ‘spirit incorporeal’ and came to countenance the oblation ‘God is body’, but it is an evident mistake to assume, as many commentators have done,²² that in claiming that God is corporeal Hobbes was at any point uttering a genuine proposition.²³

Hobbes also reiterated his thesis that we cannot strictly know that the philosophical God exists. On the one hand, scientific knowledge, the ‘knowledge of Consequence’, is obtained by starting with initial definitions and reasoning syllogistically from them in verbal discourse to derive conclusions; it cannot consist in knowing that some particular thing does or does not exist. On the other hand, ‘knowledge of Fact’, such as the knowledge that some particular thing exists in nature, is obtained directly by sensory perception – ‘it is originally Sense; and ever after, Memory’.²⁴ But we can have no conception, much less sensory perception, of God. Thus, when Hobbes, drawing on his blind-man

¹⁹ L 31.19: 564; 31.22: 566.

²⁰ L 34.5: 614.

²¹ L 12.7: 168. L 34 as a whole argues for this preference. See also 31.28: 566.

²² E.g. Curley, “‘I durst not write so boldly’”; Jesseph, ‘Hobbes’s atheism’; Geoffrey Gorham, ‘The theological foundation of Hobbesian physics: a defence of corporeal God’, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 21 (2013), pp. 240–61.

²³ Here I am in agreement with Cees Leijenhorst, ‘Hobbes’ corporeal deity’, *Rivista di storia della filosofia*, 59 (2004), pp. 73–95.

²⁴ L 7.3–4: 98.

analogy, rehearsed once more the cosmological argument, he again did so not as a demonstration or even proof of the philosophical God's existence, but as a description of how an inquirer into the chain of causes will become inclined to *believe* there is a God:

Curiosity, or love of the knowledge of causes, draws a man from consideration of the effect, to seek the cause; and again, the cause of that cause; till of necessity he must come to this *thought* at last, that there is some cause, whereof there is no former cause, but is eternall; which is it men call God. So that it is impossible to make any profound enquiry into naturall causes, without being *enclined thereby to believe* there is one God Eternall.²⁵

Hobbes's formulation in *De corpore* (1655) even more clearly denies to the cosmological argument the status of either proof or demonstration. The inquirer following the chain of antecedent causes, Hobbes claimed, will simply have to give up: he 'will not be able to proceed eternally, but wearied will at last give over, *without knowing* (*nescius*) whether it were possible for him to proceed to an end or not'. Hobbes concluded by repeating *Anti-White's* (1642/3) condemnation of those who claim to have demonstrated (*demonstrasse*) that the world has a beginning and, therefore, a first cause; such a question cannot be determined by philosophy, but is to be settled by law.²⁶

This much is therefore continuous with Hobbes's earlier writings. What is new in his later writings is that, having for the first time in *Leviathan* developed a theory of personhood, Hobbes now had a way to know that God exists, without having to demonstrate or prove the existence of a first cause. This is because the Hobbesian God is not a natural but an artificial person.

II

Hobbes's account of personhood is premised on a distinction between self, intentional agent, rational agent or author, and person.²⁷ A *self*, by definition, is any individuated thing numerically distinct from other things.²⁸ The category includes natural bodies, but also artificial bodies such as a *civitas* or commonwealth.²⁹ An intentional *agent* is a self capable of 'Voluntary motion' or 'voluntary actions' mediated by 'thought' or 'the Imagination' and consequent to 'deliberation' and 'Willing'. Not just human beings, but also other animals can be

²⁵ L 11.25: 160, my emphasis; cf. 12.6: 166.

²⁶ DC 26.1: 412–13/335–6, my emphasis; cf. DC 1.8: 10; AW 26.2: 305/308–9.

²⁷ Hobbes wrote of an individuated *corpus*, a *corpus animatum sentiens*, a *corpus animatum rationale*, and a *persona*, respectively. DC 1.3: 3–4/4–5; 2.14: 21–22/23–4; L 16. Beyond 'author' and 'person', the English labels are mine.

²⁸ Hobbes treated the question of self-identity or individuation in AW 12.1–6: 137–43; DC 11.7.

²⁹ Hobbes explicitly included the *civitas* in his discussion in DC 11.7: 136. See L 22.9: 352 for the expression 'artificiall, and fictitious Bodies'.

agents: they think, imagine, desire, and hence deliberate, will, and act voluntarily.³⁰

There are, however, at least two significant differences between humans and beasts. The first is that adult humans are normally *rational agents*.³¹ Although some beasts might be capable of non-linguistic reasoning,³² a human is capable of linguistic and hence propositional reasoning: he is able not only to calculate, but ‘can by words reduce the consequences he finds to general Rules’.³³ An adult language user can reason *inferentially* from premises to derive conclusions, on the basis of taking some considerations to be reasons.³⁴ Moreover, only linguistic, rational agents can have normative *reasons* to act and so be responsible for their actions. Hobbes’s term of art for an agent with normative reasons for action is an ‘*Owner*’ or ‘*Author*’: a rational agent ‘owneth’ or is the ‘*Author*’ of his voluntary motions in the sense that he is normatively responsible for them.³⁵ Being a rational agent is a necessary and sufficient condition for being an owner or author with reasons.

The second significant difference between human and beast is that adult humans are normally their own *natural person*. Hobbes first introduced his definition of personhood at the beginning of chapter 16 of *Leviathan*:

A PERSON, is he, *whose words or actions are considered, either as his own, or as representing the words or actions of an other man, or of any other thing to whom they are attributed, whether Truly or by Fiction.* / When they are considered as his owne, then is he called a *Naturall Person*: And when they are considered as representing the words and actions of an other, then is he a *Feigned or Artificiall person*.³⁶

Although this formulation identifies a person with one who *represents* someone or something, other passages in *Leviathan* identify a person with one who is *represented*. A commonwealth, for example, is supposed to be ‘made *One Person*’ artificially in virtue of being ‘by one man, or one Person, Represented’.³⁷ Hobbes wrote of God in the same way – as a person in virtue of being represented³⁸ – and in other works, his explicit definition sometimes equates person with representee.³⁹

³⁰ L 6.1: 78; 6.5.1–4: 92–4. The discussion of voluntary motion in L 6 concerns animals in general, and Hobbes’s synonym for voluntary motion is ‘*Animall motion*’ (L 6.1: 78).

³¹ L 4.8: 52; DC 2.14: 21–2/24.

³² The kind described in DC 1.3: 3–4. See also L 5.5: 68.

³³ L 5.6: 68.

³⁴ L 5.17: 72; 5.2: 64. See Arash Abizadeh, ‘Hobbes on mind: practical deliberation, reasoning, and language’, *Journal of the History of Philosophy* (forthcoming).

³⁵ L 16.4: 244.

³⁶ L 16.1–2: 244.

³⁷ L 16.13: 248.

³⁸ L 41.9: 772; 42.3: 776–8.

³⁹ E.g. ‘*a person is he to whom the words and actions of men are attributed, either his own or another’s: if his own, the person is natural; if another’s, it is artificial (fictitia)*’. DH 15.1: 130/83.

The reason why Hobbes could alternate between these two formulations – which he clearly took to express the same underlying theory of personhood⁴⁰ – is that on his account a self can ‘be’ a person in two distinct senses. Speaking loosely, one can say that someone or something *is* a person, but it is more precise to say that the self in question either *bears* and *represents* a person or bears the *name* of and is *represented* via the person (or both).⁴¹ Either of these more precise formulations counts as metaphorically ‘being’ a person for Hobbes because he modelled his conception of personhood on theatrical representation. A *persona* is like the artificial ‘Mask or Visard’ that actors wear ‘on the Stage’ and that they ‘*Personate, ... Act, or Represent*’ for an audience through their words and actions. Thus, even natural personhood – despite the label – is an artificial construct, like the mask that actors wear and personate to an audience.⁴² To be a representer, one must be ‘considered’ to be the representer by a particular audience; to be a representee, some actions must be ‘attributed’ to one by a particular audience.

It follows that an adult human *is* only one natural person, but in two distinct senses of ‘is’: natural persons simultaneously ‘beare’ or ‘represent’, and are ‘represented’ by, their own person to others. In the case of artificial persons, in which the representer is a self distinct from the representee, the former and latter are both the same artificial person, albeit in different senses of ‘is’. A king, who is his own natural person, is also an artificial person in virtue of representing the commonwealth, but he is the same artificial person *qua* representer as the commonwealth is *qua* representee. The king is the state, just as, in Hobbes’s telling, Jesus was God in the sense that he bore God’s person.

⁴⁰ In chapter 42 of *Leviathan*, Hobbes referred back to his initial formulation in chapter 16 by saying that ‘a Person, (as I have shewn before, chapt. 13. [sic]) is he that is Represented’. L 42.3: 776. Quentin Skinner, ‘Hobbes and the purely artificial person of the state’, *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 7 (1999), pp. 1–29, has tried to account for the apparent discrepancy by hypothesizing a shift in Hobbes’s thinking, from the ‘representer’ formulation in L 16 to the ‘representee’ formulation in DH. The hypothesis is belied, however, by the fact that both usages occur in L 16 itself, and that the representer view appears in works post-dating DH (e.g. LL 16: 245; AB 37/310). For criticism, see David Runciman, ‘What kind of person is Hobbes’s state? A reply to Skinner’, *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 8 (2000), pp. 268–78. Skinner amends his view in Quentin Skinner, *Visions of politics, III: Hobbes and civil science* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 190, but comes close to advocating a position according to which the representer and representee are two distinct persons. See also Alexandre Matheron, ‘Hobbes, la trinité et les caprices de la représentation’, in Yves Charles Zarka and Jean Bernhardt, eds., *Thomas Hobbes: philosophie première, théorie de la science et politique* (Paris, 1990), pp. 381–90.

⁴¹ L 16.3: 244. Hobbes explicitly treated the metaphorical use of ‘is’ in his attack on the deceitful ‘Conjuration’ that Christian clerics perform in ‘the Sacrament of the Lords Supper’: ‘The words, *This is my Body*, are equivalent to these, *This signifies, or represents my Body*; and it is an ordinary figure of Speech: but to take it literally, is an abuse’. L 44.11: 966–8.

⁴² L 16.3: 244. For the intrinsically theatrical component of personhood, see Mónica Brito Vieira, *The elements of representation in Hobbes: aesthetics, theatre, law, and theology in the construction of Hobbes’s theory of the state* (Leiden, 2009), especially pp. 82–4.

Although the audience's beliefs that someone represents or is represented by another are necessary for the construction of personhood, they are not sufficient. Personhood is not merely constructed but is also a *normative* status: one must not only be 'considered' to own or represent the words and actions in question, but must do so 'by Authority...from him whose right it is'. Personhood requires that one be duly *authorized* by the owner of the person's actions to represent or be represented.⁴³ To be the owner of actions is distinct from their having been naturally caused by, or having resulted from, one's will. It is to be their *author*: 'For that which in speaking of goods and possessions, is called an *Owner*...speaking of Actions, is called *Author*.'⁴⁴ Being an action's cause is a natural property; being attributed the action is a constructed, artificial property dependent on beliefs; but being its author is the normative property of having reasons to do or omit it and hence to be responsible for it.

Thus, a person is an artificial construct defined in terms of four roles: (1) the 'Actor' or 'Representer', who bears or represents the person in virtue of being 'considered as representing' it via words and actions resulting from the will of the body constituting his self; (2) the *representee*, which bears the name of and is 'represented' by the person, in virtue of having the actor's words and actions imputed or 'attributed' to it; (3) the *audience*, which comprises those who 'consider' someone the representer, who 'attribute' words and actions to the representee, and to whom the person is represented via these words and actions; and (4) the 'Author' or 'Owner' of these words and actions, who bears normative responsibility for them in virtue of having authorized the relation of representation.

A '*Natural Person*' exists for an audience only when the same self whose will results in voluntary actions is simultaneously the actor or *representer*, the *representee*, and the owner or *author* of those actions.⁴⁵ An owner may be the author of actions in two distinct ways: he may directly *author* them, insofar as he both directly wills and is responsible for them, and/or he may *authorize* them, by commissioning or licensing whoever is their direct voluntary cause 'to beare his Person' and to 'act in his name' by representing his person via those actions to the audience.⁴⁶ The bearer of a natural person not only *authors* the actions of which he is the natural cause, but also *authorizes* his own self to represent his person to an audience. He owns and is responsible for the very actions through which he seeks to represent himself.

It is the final, normative element of personhood that explains why only rational agents can be (bear) natural persons. Recall that being considered to represent someone is insufficient for bearing a person because one must be

⁴³ Michael J. Green, 'Authorization and political authority in Hobbes', *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 53 (2015), pp. 25–47, at p. 35.

⁴⁴ L 16.4: 244.

⁴⁵ L 16.1–4: 244.

⁴⁶ L 16.3: 244.

duly authorized to do so. Even if an audience were to 'consider' a child or animal to represent itself via its voluntary actions, or to 'attribute' the creature's voluntary actions to itself, it would not thereby become a natural person for that audience. To be a natural person one must also be an *author*, and only rational agents can author and authorize actions and be normatively responsible for them. Children and animals cannot be natural persons.

III

Whereas a natural person exists for an audience when the same actor is simultaneously representer, representee, and author, an artificial person arises when the representer and representee are distinct selves. Although nothing lacking rational agency can be a natural person, Hobbes insisted that practically anything can be an artificial person. This is because there are two types of representation, which Hobbes distinguished again by reference to the fourth, normative relation constitutive of personhood.

The first type of representation, which Hobbes took up in paragraph 4 of the sixteenth chapter and treated for the next four paragraphs (4–8), is *true representation*: representers '*Truly*' represent someone when the representers' actions are authorized or '*Owne*d by those whom they represent'. In such cases, the representer is the 'Actor', and the representee is the 'Author' of the actions, so that the representative 'Actor acteth by Authority' of the represented.⁴⁷ The implication is that only persons capable of authoring and authorizing actions – only rational agents – can be represented in the first, true sense. Only a rational agent is capable of authoring and hence owning his voluntary actions, and of authorizing and hence owning the actions of a representer: he can either represent himself, or be represented by another self. A natural rational agent can be – or, more precisely, his self *qua* agent can bear the name of – both a natural and an artificial person.

The second type of representation, which Hobbes took up in paragraph 9, is *representation by fiction*. Representation is '*by Fiction*' when the representee is itself incapable of having authorized the representer's actions, but when the representer's actions are nevertheless attributed to it on the authority of some third party with dominion over the potential representee. Something incapable of being an author can be an artificial person, but only by fiction, and can never also be a natural person. Being fictional in this sense does not negate the normative status of personhood, however: the actions of such persons are still 'owned' or authored; the fiction consists in the fact that the actions are attributed to the representee, but the person who owns and hence is responsible for the artificial person's actions is *another* person, namely the one who duly authorized the representation by fiction. Thus, if a child's master authorizes a 'Guardian' to bear and represent the child's person, then, as long as the

⁴⁷ L 16.4: 244.

guardian acts within the confines of his commissioned authority, the master, not the child or guardian, is responsible for the actions the guardian undertakes *qua* representer, even though the actions are attributed to the child *qua* artificial person.⁴⁸

It is at the beginning of paragraph 9 that Hobbes declared that practically anything can be represented by fiction: 'There are few things, that are incapable of being represented by Fiction.' He then methodically proceeded, in the span of five consecutive paragraphs, to furnish five subcategories of things that can be represented only in this way. The first three, respectively listed in paragraphs 9 through 11, are: (1) inanimate things, such as buildings or bridges, (2) animate but irrational things, such as 'Children, Fooles, and Mad-men', and (3) imaginary things or 'meer Figment[s] of the brain', such as the pagan gods. The fifth type of artificial person by fiction, introduced in paragraph 13, is (5) a 'multitude of men' joined together, such as a unified state or commonwealth. Hobbes's readers have widely noted these subcategories as examples of artificial persons by fiction. What has not been recognized, however, is the full significance of listing the fourth subcategory, namely (4) the 'true God' of Christianity, between these others – and this, in a section of chapter 16 dedicated to representation *by fiction*. But once it is noted, the significance of paragraph 12's location in this section is unmistakable.⁴⁹

The point that Hobbes was making dangerously clear, without explicitly saying so, is that God is an artificial person by fiction as well. The obvious if rather startling implication is that God is no author: he cannot act, except through a representer. This in turn implies that God, like the pagan gods, is incapable of covenanting with others except via the intermediary of a representer – a conclusion that Hobbes twice drew explicitly in *Leviathan*.⁵⁰ The even more startling implication is that God is incapable of authorizing his own representer. It is true that Hobbes spared the Christian God the indignity of being explicitly called incapable of authorship: not necessarily because doing so would be dangerous – Hobbes wrote plenty of dangerous things – but because doing so would dishonour God. Indeed, at times Hobbes even wrote as if God himself had authorized the biblical prophets to bear his person, via

⁴⁸ L 16.10: 248; 16.5–6: 246.

⁴⁹ L 16.9–13: 246–8. The following paragraph draws on Arash Abizadeh, 'Leviathan as mythology: the representation of Hobbesian sovereignty', in S.A. Lloyd, ed., *Hobbes today: insights for the twenty-first century* (Cambridge, 2013), pp. 113–52, at pp. 138–9. Another scholar who explores the significance of the twelfth paragraph's location is Garsten, 'Religion and representation in Hobbes', p. 529, but Garsten takes it merely to imply that God, between Saul's kingship and the re-establishment of God's kingdom on earth upon Christ's return, is an 'absent' or 'silent' actor.

⁵⁰ L 14.23: 210; 18.3: 266. For discussion of Hobbes's 'mediation doctrine', see Edwin Curley, 'The covenant with God in Hobbes's *Leviathan*', in Sorell and Foisneau, eds., *Leviathan after 350 years*, pp. 199–216. In my view, Curley (p. 202) is mistaken to treat the covenant with Abraham as an exception to Hobbes's mediation doctrine; see Abizadeh, 'Leviathan as mythology'.

supernatural visions and dreams in which he spoke to them.⁵¹ But in this twelfth paragraph of *Leviathan's* sixteenth chapter, he strongly implied that God, like any other artificial person by fiction, could do no such thing. In his discussion of each of the first three subcategories of artificial person by fiction, Hobbes established a prosaic rhythm joining together two phrases in succession from one paragraph to the next: 'Inanimate things...may be personated', but 'things Inanimate, cannot be Authors'; animate irrational bodies 'may be Personated', but they 'can be no Authors'; purely imaginary beings 'may be Personated', but they 'cannot be Authors'. The 'true God may be Personated', but... This time Hobbes did not explicitly follow the phrase 'may be Personated' with 'but can be no author', but in its fourth iteration he did not need to: the latter phrase audibly trails the former like a phantom limb reverberating to the rhythm already set in motion by Hobbes's prose.⁵² The rhythm is picked up again in the next two paragraphs, where Hobbes made clear that a multitude may be personated, but itself can be no author.⁵³ In other words, Hobbes made this point about God by deploying the rhetorical technique of conveying meaning by omission.⁵⁴ Had he wanted to say that God, unlike all the other examples of artificial persons by fiction between which he had sandwiched him, can be an author, he would have had to assert it explicitly and explain the exception. Indeed, given the dangers involved in implying that God cannot be an author, he would have had every reason to make his point explicit. That he left the truth unsaid was to avoid adding insult to injury, that is, to avoid dishonouring God.⁵⁵ Conversely, as we have seen, talk of God's powers, including his supernatural ones, consists in oblations or outward profession.

⁵¹ He wrote, for example, 'The Person...whom Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and the Prophets beleaved, was God himself, that spake unto them supernaturally', and wrote of them whom 'God hath authorised [in a supernaturall way] to declare' divine positive laws. L 43.6: 932; 26.39: 442-4.

⁵² L 16.9-12: 246-8.

⁵³ Because 'the Multitude naturally is not *One*, but *Many*; they cannot be understood for one; but many Authors', so that the unified multitude's representer is authorized not by itself as a whole but individually by 'every one of that Multitude in particular'. L 16.13-14: 250-2.

⁵⁴ Another instance in *Leviathan* in which Hobbes expressed himself by establishing a prosaic rhythm, only to leave his point unsaid, appears in chapter 47. After seven short consecutive paragraphs, each comparing priests to fairies, Hobbes deployed the figure of aposiopesis to magnify the sting of his eighth barb: 'The *Fairies* marry not; but there be amongst them *Incubi*, that have copulation with flesh and bloud. The *Priests* also marry not.' L 47.30: 1122. See Quentin Skinner, *Reason and rhetoric in the philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 419. The chapter 16 example is not, strictly speaking, an aposiopesis, if by that figure we understand a *sentence* that stops suddenly to leave its point implied. But in other respects, the literary device Hobbes used in the two instances is the same.

⁵⁵ Some readers may wonder whether, by omitting the explicit claim that God can be no author, Hobbes meant to imply that, unlike other artificial persons by fiction, God *can* be an author. The problem with such a reading of the omission is that, unlike the one I have given, it is completely unmotivated: Hobbes would have had no reason for passing in silence a view that God can be an author. To the contrary.

Thus, for Hobbes to say that God authorized his own representers via supernatural means, or could act in his own person, would be either to utter an oblation – not a proposition describing God’s intrinsic capacities⁵⁶ – or merely to utter a profession when obligated to do so under the sovereign’s command. But as a philosophical matter, Hobbes asserted that we never have any epistemic reason to believe that God has spoken supernaturally to anyone: although Hobbes was willing to praise God as one who ‘can speak to a man, by Dreams, Visions, Voice, and Inspiration’, even God himself, Hobbes quietly observed, ‘obliges no man to beleeeve he hath so done to him that pretends it’. This is true even if the sovereign himself claims supernatural inspiration: ‘he may oblige me to obedience, so, as not by act or word to declare I beleeeve him not; but not to think any otherwise then my reason perswades me’.⁵⁷ Noting that ‘Visions, and Dreams, whether naturall or supernaturall, are but Phantasmes’, Hobbes insisted that characterizing them as supernatural ‘is not intelligible’. The only propositional meaning such utterances could have is naturalistic: for someone ‘To say he speaks by supernaturall Inspiration, is to say he finds an ardent desire to speak...for which he can alledge no naturall and sufficient reason.’ Hobbes delivered his philosophical verdict on the matter, in a passage that scandalized his Anglican critics, by launching a frontal attack on those ‘that pretend Divine Inspiration, to be a supernaturall entring of the Holy Ghost into a man, and not an acquisition of Gods graces, by doctrine, and study’.⁵⁸

Moreover, just as Hobbes had asserted that the authority to personate pagan gods ‘proceeded from the State’, he let it be understood that the same is true of the Christian God.⁵⁹ On Hobbes’s thoroughly Erastian theory, the sovereign not only has the authority to *interpret* God’s words, he is also the one who decides what the actual words are in the first place: words count as revealed scripture only insofar as the sovereign says they do.⁶⁰ Significantly, even when Hobbes characterized God as the ‘author’ of scripture, he did so in the third person, writing of what people *believe* (‘it is believed on all hands, that the first and original *Author* of them is God’), and went on to say that the real

⁵⁶ Cf. the discussion of God as the ‘author’ of nature in Holden, ‘Hobbes’s first cause’.

⁵⁷ L 32.5–6: 578–80.

⁵⁸ L 45.31: 1042; 36.14: 668; 32.6: 580; 45.25: 1036. See Karl Schuhmann, ‘Phantasms and idols: true philosophy and wrong religion in Hobbes’, *Rivista di storia della filosofia*, 59 (2004), pp. 15–31. For the scandal, see EW IV: 334. I take up Hobbes’s treatment of God’s covenants with Abraham and Moses in particular (L 35.4–5: 636; 40.1–6: 736–40) in Abizadeh, ‘Leviathan as mythology’, pp. 142–8.

⁵⁹ See Vieira, *Elements of representation*, p. 226.

⁶⁰ L 16.11: 248; 33.1: 586; 33.25: 608; 40.4: 738; 40.7: 742; 42: 33; 810; 42.80: 866. See also DCv 16.16: 213–14; HE 395. The claim that the sovereign decides the content of scripture belies Pocock’s assertion that while the Hobbesian sovereign is the ‘interpreter of God’s word’, he is not its ‘author’, and that ‘The authority by which the sovereign interprets the prophetic word is clearly distinct from the authority by which the word is uttered.’ J. G. A. Pocock, *Politics, language, and time: essays on political thought and history* (Chicago, IL, 1989), pp. 166–8.

question is who *authorized* a given text to count as the word of God – the answer being, of course, the sovereign.⁶¹

If the English *Leviathan* left any reasonable doubt about Hobbes's intention, he would fully dissipate it a few years later in *De homine*, where he would not only reiterate his view that God is an artificial person by fiction, but flatly declare that the authority for the fiction lies in the seat of sovereign power: 'since the will of God is not known save through the commonwealth (*civitatem*)...it needs be that his person be created (*fiat*) by the will of the commonwealth'.⁶²

IV

In *Leviathan*, Hobbes proudly applied this new 'personal theology' to the Christian Trinity – first in the same paragraph of chapter 16 in which he had implied that God is an artificial person by fiction, and then again in the book's third part, with a full treatment in chapter 42.⁶³ Hobbes argued that the Trinitarian doctrine that God is one substance but three persons is best understood in relation to the three instances in which 'the Person of God' has been borne and represented in biblical history: first by 'Moses, and the High Priests' of the Israelites, who 'were Gods Representative in the Old Testament', and who represented him as 'God the Father'; secondly by 'our Saviour himselfe as Man, during his abode on earth', who represented God as 'his Sonne'; and thirdly by 'the Holy Ghost, that is to say, the Apostles, and their successors, in the Office of Preaching, and Teaching, that had received the Holy Spirit', and who 'have Represented him ever since'. Thus 'God, who has been Represented (that is, Personated) thrice, may properly enough be said to be three Persons', for 'it is consequent to plurality of Representers, that there bee a plurality of Persons, though of one and the same Substance'.⁶⁴

It goes without saying that Hobbes's startling interpretation is highly unorthodox. Four comments are in order. First, Hobbes here reiterated that God is not a natural person, but is a person only insofar as he is represented by some other natural person or by a succession of natural persons who are themselves institutionally unified as an artificial person. This is the basic premise of Hobbes's

⁶¹ L 33.21: 604; 33.1: 586.

⁶² DH 15.3: 85/132, translation modified. Hobbes also here wrote that 'it is required that the will of him that is represented be the author of the actions performed by those who represent him', which appears (a) to attribute authorship to God and (b) to rule out the possibility of representation by fiction. Both appearances are dissipated by what Hobbes wrote immediately after this clause: he immediately stated that (a) it is the *commonwealth*, not God, who creates (and hence authors) God's artificial person and that (b) 'Even an inanimate thing can be a person' when 'caretakers constituted by the commonwealth bear its person, so that it hath no will except that of the commonwealth'. DH 15.3-4: 85/132, translation modified.

⁶³ Hobbes alluded to the Trinity in L 16.12: 248; 33.20: 602; 41.9: 772. In L 42.3: 776-8, he explicitly named the Trinity and gave his full interpretation.

⁶⁴ L 42.3: 776; 41.9: 772.

interpretation. Thus, the personation of God as the Father required the natural person of Moses and his successors, who were united over time as bearers of a single kingly commonwealth, to represent him artificially; according to Hobbes, they were authorized not by God but by the Israelites themselves to represent God to the Israelites, in the same act by which they were authorized to be the Israelites' civil sovereign.⁶⁵ The personation of God as the Son in turn required the natural person of Jesus to represent God artificially while walking the earth. And the personation of God as the Holy Spirit required that Christian ecclesiastical institutions represent him via clerical representatives – the Apostles and their successors.

Second, consequent to his basic premise, Hobbes completely historicized the Trinity. Its three persons do not exist eternally, but come into being artificially in virtue of temporally existing persons who represent God in history. Hobbes's interpretation was straightforwardly heretical in this respect, as Bramhall gleefully pointed out in his *The catching of Leviathan*, discerning correctly that on Hobbes's interpretation 'there was a time when there was no Trinity', so that if we accept Hobbes's interpretation, 'we must blot these words out of our creed, *The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal*'.⁶⁶ Hobbes's heresy went even further than the kind of historicism that Thomas Edwards had called out in his 1646 *Gangraena*: the 166th item in Edwards's sweeping '*Catalogue of the Errours, Heresies, Blasphemies*' supposedly eating away at English society is the teaching 'That God the Father did reign under the Law, God the Sonne under the Gospel, and now God the Father and God the Sonne are making over the Kingdom to God the holy Ghost.'⁶⁷ Hobbes's historicism concerns not just when a person of the Trinity reigns, but also when it comes into being.

It is true that Hobbes was not vulnerable to a potentially even more damning objection, namely, that his historicization of the Trinity suggests that, ever since the prophetic kingdom of God ended with Saul, God the Father has no longer been extant as a person, and that once Jesus no longer walked the earth God the Son also perished as a person. Had such an objection been levelled against Hobbes, he could have parried it: because on his account a chain of multiple re-representations is possible, it remains possible for the authorized representatives of the Christian church not only directly to represent God as Holy Spirit, but also mediately to represent to their followers God the Father and God the Son. The authorized church, in other words, not only represents the person of God the Holy Ghost, but could also re-represent the person of God the Father and his Son to all Christians – just as ministers who represent the

⁶⁵ L 40.6: 740.

⁶⁶ Quoted in AB 43/315.

⁶⁷ Thomas Edwards, *The first and second part of gangraena: or, A catalogue and discovery of many of the errors, heresies, blasphemies and pernicious practices of the sectaries of this time, vented and acted in England in these four last years* (London, 1646), pp. 15, 30.

sovereign, who himself represents the state, mediately represent the state to the sovereign's subjects.⁶⁸ But even if Hobbes could have responded to this hypothetical objection, he clearly had no basis on which to respond to the objection Bramhall actually levelled against him: again, the basic premise of Hobbesian theology is that the person of God is a temporally bound artificial person by fiction, not an eternally existing natural person.

Third, Hobbes's interpretation of the Trinity forsakes any *special* claim to divinity on behalf of Jesus.⁶⁹ We can see this by asking whether, on Hobbes's account, Moses is supposed to be – contrary to orthodox doctrine – one of the three persons of the Trinity. Hobbes could have, in conformity with orthodoxy, easily denied this: for although Moses represented or bore the person of God, it is God the Father, rather than Moses the natural person, who is one of the three persons of the Trinity, and the only sense in which Moses could be said to 'be' God is in the loose, metaphorical sense that he personates God. Yet the ability of Hobbes's account to conform to orthodoxy in this respect merely highlights the fact that, in characterizing both Moses and Jesus as bearing the person of God in the same way, Hobbes's interpretation of the Trinity excludes any special claim to divinity for Jesus. On the one hand, if the man who walked the earth named Jesus literally is God – if the second person of the Trinity is not just personated by but literally is that man – then Moses too must literally be God and hence the first person of the Trinity. On the other hand, if saying that Moses personated God is not to say that he literally *is* God, then the way is also barred for saying that Jesus is God in anything more than the metaphorical sense in which Moses 'is' God.⁷⁰

Indeed, as many contemporary readers of *Leviathan* have astutely observed, there is nothing special about *any* of the three persons of the Trinity on Hobbes's account: God has also been represented by every duly authorized sovereign, according to Hobbes, and can therefore be said to have had as many persons as there have been sovereigns – indeed, as many persons as sovereigns themselves have had representatives. There is nothing that in principle distinguishes these persons of God theologically from the three persons of the Christian Trinity. As Alexander Ross put it in his *Leviathan drawn out with a*

⁶⁸ Hobbes did not say this, but the response would have been readily available to him had this hypothetical objection been pressed against him. In fact, Hobbes had noted that although 'the *person* of God the Father' had been directly represented by 'whosoever had the Sovereignty of the Common-wealth amongst the Jews', that person did not acquire 'the *name* of Father, till such time as...his Son Jesus Christ' appeared, which presumably implies not only that the person of the Father continued to exist, but that he was also mediately represented as Father by Jesus himself. L 40.14: 758, my emphasis. Cf. L 41.9: 772.

⁶⁹ For discussion, see D. H. J. Warner, 'Hobbes's interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity', *Journal of Religious History*, 5 (1969), pp. 299–313.

⁷⁰ For discussion of whether Hobbes's account makes Moses a person of the Trinity, see Matheron, 'Hobbes, la trinité et les caprices de la représentation'; Franck Lessay, 'Le vocabulaire de la personne', in Yves Charles Zarka, ed., *Hobbes et son vocabulaire* (Paris, 1992), pp. 155–86.

hook (1653), published shortly after *Leviathan* appeared, ‘if personating, or representing makes the persons in the Trinity,...there must be then as many persons, as there have been personatings or representations’, and since God has been represented by ‘innumerable’ kings, instead of ‘the Trinity’ it should be ‘called a Legion’ by Hobbes.⁷¹ And when Bramhall raised the same objection in *Catching*, arguing that on Hobbes’s account ‘God Almighty hath as many *Persons*, as there have been Sovereign Princes in the World’, Hobbes nonchalantly responded in his *An answer* by asking, ‘Why not? For I never said that all those Kings were that God; and yet God giveth that name to the Kings of the earth.’⁷² The upshot is that when Hobbes elsewhere expressed agreement with the claim that Jesus is God, he did so in the same representational sense that he would have done if he had said a king is God.⁷³ That he did say the former but not the latter is merely a matter either of uttering an oblation or – if uttered propositionally – of verbally professing conformity to orthodox creed as a Christian. It does not reflect any fundamental theological difference in ontological status between Jesus and other representers of God.⁷⁴

Hobbes himself made essentially the same point as Ross and Bramhall in *De homine*, where he not only set the persons of the Trinity on an equal plane with the person of God as represented by a civil sovereign, but also stated his view – already implicit in *Leviathan* – that the third person of the Trinity is borne in *each* commonwealth by its sovereign:

all kings and supreme governors of any kind of commonwealths whatsoever bear the person of God, if they acknowledge God’s dominion. In particular, first it was Moses and then Christ that bore the person of God reigning, and now, after the Holy Ghost descended visibly on the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, it is the Church, that is, the supreme governor of the Church in every commonwealth.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Alexander Ross, *Leviathan drawn out with a hook, or, Animadversions upon Mr. Hobbs his Leviathan* (London, 1653), p. 54.

⁷² Bramhall quoted in AB 43/315; AB 31–2/306. The same objection appeared in Thomas Tenison, *The creed of Mr. Hobbes examined; in a feigned conference between him and a student in divinity* (London, 1670), pp. 40–1.

⁷³ See, for example, L 36.14: 668: ‘our Saviour; who was both God that spake, and the Prophet to whom he spake’.

⁷⁴ The same holds for Hobbes’s profession that ‘the Godhead [as St Paul speaketh *Col. 2. 9.*] dwelleth bodily’ only in Christ. It also holds for his profession of the ‘onely Necessary Article of Christian Faith’. To profess ‘the beleef of this Article *Jesus is the Christ*’ is just to profess that Jesus was ‘the King of the Jews, promised in the Old Testament’, and ‘shall reign eternally’ after the day of resurrection over those ‘nations as should beleefe in him’ (L 36.13: 668; 43.19: 948; 36.20: 676–8; 43.18: 948; 43.11: 938). It is ultimately to express an intention or *desire* to obey Jesus as king ‘in the world to come’, i.e., once the current political order has ended: ‘the intent of beleieving that Jesus is the Christ’ is that, upon ‘the second coming of Christ’, one ‘intendeth then to obey him’ (L 42.34: 810; 43.23: 954). The Christian profession of faith is an oblation.

⁷⁵ DH 15.3: 85/132, translation modified.

The 'supreme governor of the Church in every commonwealth' is, of course, the civil sovereign himself, which Hobbes made clear when he immediately asserted that God's person must 'be created (*fiat*) by the will of the commonwealth'. In this, he was simply reiterating the thoroughgoing Erastianism he had expressed in *Leviathan*. In chapter 42 of his English text, Hobbes had flatly asserted not only that the sovereign is the head of the church, but also that 'in every Christian Common-wealth, the Civill Sovereign is the Supreme Pastor', so that the authority of the church – including, by implication, its authority to represent the third person of the Trinity – wholly depends on having been authorized by the sovereign.⁷⁶ In other words, ecclesiastical authorities represent the Holy Ghost only as representers of the sovereign. Hobbes's Erastianism fully penetrated his conception of the Trinity.

Fourth, Hobbes's contemporaries often reacted to his account by accusing him either of the Anti-Trinitarian heresy of modalism (or Sabellianism) – which portrays each person of the Trinity as a mere aspect, mode, or historical manifestation of a single divine essence and hence denies any ontological distinction between the three persons themselves – or of the Anti-Trinitarian heresy of subordinationism – which recognizes the divinity of the Father, but not the (full) divinity of the Son and Holy Spirit. Thus, Ross accused Hobbes of 'making the three Persons of the Trinity rather names than substances', and John Whitehall charged that Hobbes 'makes the three Persons in the Trinity, but three Names to express one only Person of God' and so 'absolutely denies...the personal existence of the two last Persons in the Trinity'.⁷⁷ Indeed, it has been argued by modern scholars that Hobbes's account ultimately oscillates between modalism and subordinationism.⁷⁸ Such a diagnosis, however, fundamentally misconstrues Hobbes's account of the Trinity. As we have seen, the basic premise of Hobbes's account is that there is *no* entity whose divinity obtains ontologically prior to the relation of representation, and which could therefore constitute the 'true' Godhead of which the Son or the Holy Spirit are 'mere' representations. Hobbes's basic premise was that divinity is a status historically constructed via representation; it does not exist prior to or independently of that relation. What is heretical about Hobbes's account of the Trinity is not just that he reduced the persons of the *Trinity* to 'names' or relations of representation, but that he reduced *divinity* as such to a relation of representation. This is why Hobbes was much more radical – and heretical – than the Socinians. The latter held that Jesus could be God only in a nominal and not essential sense, but Hobbes had portrayed even God the Father as an artificial person by fiction.

⁷⁶ L 42.70: 852. On Hobbes's thoroughgoing Erastianism, see Collins, *Allegiance of Thomas Hobbes*.

⁷⁷ Ross, *Leviathan drawn out with a hook*, dedication To the Reader; John Whitehall, *The Leviathan found out: Or the answer to Mr. Hobbes's Leviathan, in that which my Lord of Clarendon hath past over* (London, 1679), pp. 130–1.

⁷⁸ Matheron, 'Hobbes, la trinité et les caprices de la représentation'.

V

Hobbes understood perfectly well that his basic premise – which he would not and could not state explicitly – was heretical. Yet he did not feel himself obligated when writing the English *Leviathan* to refrain from stating his unorthodox interpretation of the Trinity because, as he put it, at the time of writing there was no longer a constituted sovereign in England who obligated conformity to any specific creed: Hobbes was free to publish his theological views within the confines of whatever reason dictates is necessary for honouring God.⁷⁹ But by the time of the Restoration in 1660, Hobbes did see himself as once again obligated to profess the Anglican creed to which his newly constituted sovereign had given official sanction. Hobbes's awareness that the real issue was his basic premise becomes crystal clear in the light of his response, in the post-Restoration period, to the charge of heresy frequently levelled against his English *Leviathan*: even if his contemporaries had not precisely spotted the problem's source in his basic premise, it was this premise that he finessed when in 1668, to avoid the charge of heresy, he purported to retract his interpretation of the Trinity in his Latin *Leviathan*.

Hobbes set the stage for the supposed retraction by quoting, in the first chapter of the Appendix to his Latin translation, the Anglican catechism that faithful English subjects were once again obligated to profess: “‘First, I learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me and all the world. Secondly, in his son Jesus Christ, who hath redeemed me and all mankind. Thirdly, in the Holy Ghost, who hath sanctified me and all the elect people of God.’” He then immediately glossed this as equivalent in meaning to the profession ‘that God created all things in his own person (*in Persona propria*); in the person of his Son he redeemed mankind; and in the person of the Holy Spirit he sanctified the Church’.⁸⁰ The significance of Hobbes's reformulation does not lie in the mere fact that he linked the catechism to the Trinity by using the language of personhood. Its significance lies in the fact that Hobbes was drawing on his own technical vocabulary to gainsay the heretical core of his theology: to say that one acts *in persona propria* is of course to say that one is a *natural person* – that one represents one's own self. At no point had Hobbes used such language for God in the English *Leviathan*: he introduced it in the Latin edition precisely in order to profess conformity to the Anglican catechism.

Having introduced this language in the first chapter of the Appendix, Hobbes then proceeded to deploy it in the third chapter, where he purported to retract his earlier interpretation of the Trinity. Referring to the paragraph in the English *Leviathan*'s chapter 16 in which he had originally implied that God is

⁷⁹ L 38.5: 708; Review & Conclusion.14: 1139. Cf. L 38.2: 700. On Hobbes's views on religious toleration, see Arash Abizadeh, ‘Publicity, privacy, and religious toleration in Hobbes's *Leviathan*’, *Modern Intellectual History*, 10 (2013), pp. 259–89.

⁸⁰ LL Appendix 1.83: 1178–80. Hobbes's Latin wording of the catechism roughly translates the order of Confirmation in the 1559 Book of Common Prayer.

an artificial person by fiction, Hobbes began staging his retraction by seemingly confessing that the problem with his 1651 account is that it mistakenly makes Moses a person of the Trinity. Character B says, on behalf of Hobbes, that his purpose was pious, but the explanation mistaken. For he seems to make Moses a person in the Trinity, on the grounds that he too did in some way bear the person of God (as do all Christian kings). This was gross carelessness. If he had said that God created the world in his own person (*in Persona propria*), redeemed mankind in the person of the Son, and sanctified the Church in the person of the Holy Spirit, he would not have said anything other than what is in *the catechism published by the Church*. Or if he had said that God established a Church for himself (through the ministry of Moses) in his own person (*in Persona propria*), redeemed that Church in the person of the Son, and sanctified it in the person the Holy Spirit, he would not have been in error.⁸¹

I have already indicated why the issue of Moses's inclusion as a person of the Trinity is a red herring. As contemporary scholars have noticed, Moses's relation to the Trinity remains precisely the same in the Latin *Leviathan* as in the English original: in both accounts, Moses represents the first person of the Trinity through his ministry.⁸² The real issue – the basic premise that Hobbes was ostensibly retracting here – is the assumption that God is an artificially constructed person by fiction and not a natural person. I take it that the contradictory notion to which Hobbes resorted – the notion of God acting '(through the ministry of Moses) in his own person' – is a symptom of this underlying issue. The notion is contradictory because on Hobbes's account to act through another is to be artificially represented by an actor – which is precisely *not* to act in one's own person *qua* natural person. Hobbes was trying to square the circle: orthodoxy required that God act in his own person, whereas his personal theology required that God act through a representer. He was attempting to superimpose an orthodox profession onto his own heretical premise that God is not a natural person.

Hobbes finessed precisely the same point in his Latin redaction of the offending twelfth paragraph in chapter 16 where he had implied that God is an artificial person by fiction and had first applied his personal theology to the Trinity. Hobbes here reiterated in Latin his original claim that the true God may be personated (*'Etiam Dei veri Persona, geritur, & gest est'*). But whereas the English follows with 'As he was; first, by *Moses*,...Secondly, by the Son of man, his own Son...And thirdly, by the Holy Ghost, or Comforter, speaking and working in

⁸¹ LL Appendix 3.12: 1232, my emphasis.

⁸² Nothing Hobbes said in the Latin *Leviathan* substantively changes the relation of Moses to the Trinity: if in the English *Leviathan* Moses is not literally a person of the Trinity, in the Latin *Leviathan* Moses still 'is' a person of the Trinity in the metaphorical sense that he represents the person of God to the Israelites. See Matheron, 'Hobbes, la trinité et les caprices de la représentation', p. 389; Lessay, 'Le vocabulaire de la personne', p. 183.

the Apostles', the Latin incorporates the changes Hobbes had flagged in the Appendix. It follows instead with:

For he created the world in his own person (*in propria Personâ*). In the redemption of the human race, Jesus Christ personated God. In the sanctification of the elect, the Holy Spirit personated the same God; which is what we are taught *in the public catechism* [which catechism Hobbes again proceeded to quote].⁸³

The upshot is that none of the three passages of the Latin *Leviathan* in which God is said to act *in propria persona* indicate that Hobbes had now actually come to think that God is a natural person.⁸⁴ In each of these three instances, Hobbes explicitly flagged what he was doing: he was merely *professing* what, according to the Book of Common Prayer, he was obligated by his sovereign to profess – on pain of heresy. Even with respect to the doctrine of the Trinity itself, Hobbes in the Appendix professed it only then to question 'the credibility of those who formulated it', as Paul Lim has put it.⁸⁵ After castigating the bishops at the Council of Nicaea for their hubris 'in wanting to explain' the mystery of the Trinity, he lamented the 'great article' of *homoousion* – the anti-subordinationist article of the Trinity according to which Christ is 'of one substance with the Father' – for having 'brought so many disturbances, banishments, and murders into the ancient Church'. When Hobbes rhetorically asked, 'what is it to explain a mystery, if not to destroy it...?', adding that 'when faith is turned into knowledge, it perishes, so that only hope and charity remain', he was implicitly condemning the creed proclaimed as orthodox by the Council.⁸⁶

This verdict is confirmed by Hobbes's more detailed treatment of the Council of Nicaea in his *Historia ecclesiastica*, a poetic dialogue staged between 'Primus' and 'Secundus' stemming from the same period and likely completed by 1671.⁸⁷ The *Historia* prefaces Hobbes's treatment with an examination of the roots of violent theological disputation in the ancient church. Those roots lie, according to Hobbes, amongst the disciples of competing Greek philosophical schools or 'sects' who had converted to Christianity and who, because of their apparent learning, had taken positions of leadership in the church.⁸⁸ Yet these ambitious and 'good-for-nothing (*nebulo*)' men were philosophers 'in name only' and, trained in 'harsh debate' and 'foul invective', each sought glory in leading 'a new sect' within the community of Christians.⁸⁹ The Emperor Constantine was compelled to convene the Nicaean Council in

⁸³ LL 16: 249, translation in n. 26, my emphasis.

⁸⁴ Vieira takes these passages to reflect the view that 'God is...a natural person, or an author.' Vieira, *Elements of representation*, p. 220. Hobbes offered the same wording in English in AB 44/316, but again did so by citing 'the words of our Catechism'.

⁸⁵ Paul C. H. Lim, *Mystery unveiled: the crisis of the Trinity in early modern England* (Oxford, 2012), p. 224.

⁸⁶ LL Appendix 1.15–17: 1150. See Lim, *Mystery unveiled*.

⁸⁷ Patricia Springborg, 'Hobbes's *Historia ecclesiastica*: introduction', in HE.

⁸⁸ HE 349–57.

⁸⁹ HE 353–61.

order to settle one such theological dispute, between the subordinationist Arius and anti-subordinationist Alexander, which had broken out into civil violence amongst their followers.⁹⁰ The outcome of the Council was to condemn Arian subordinationism as heretical; the Nicene creed required professing that 'Jesus was God, begotten and one with the Father' and 'of the same substance (*homoousios*) as the unbegotten Father'.⁹¹ Yet the creed failed to quench the Arian controversy because, according to Hobbes, it is essentially meaningless and so incomprehensible: it attempts 'to expound the word of God using the language and philosophical method of the Greeks', which amount to 'new words signifying nothing, and foreign to the holy Scriptures'.⁹²

Hobbes frankly declared his own willingness outwardly to profess this entirely meaningless creed if authoritatively commanded to do so: he had Secundus say that, although the anti-subordinationist creed proclaimed by the Nicaean Council 'exceeds our grasp, and also that of angels', nevertheless, 'If ordered, I am able not to contradict it.' Yet because the creed is meaningless, for Hobbes internally to *assent* to it could only amount to having *faith* on the basis of trusting the wisdom, on the relevant issues, of those who promote the creed: 'I am able to believe (*Possum Credere*)', Secundus says, 'if the one commanding himself imparts faith [or trust: *si dederit qui jubet ipse fidem*]'.⁹³ Yet Hobbes gave every reason to distrust those who promulgated the article of *homoousios*: not only did the ecumenical councils infect Christian theology with meaningless Greek terms – which itself undermines faith – the councils were dominated by the very same disputatious and ambitious philosophical charlatans who had forced the emperor to convene them in the first place.⁹⁴ Hobbes's verdict is clear: 'It was not right that the Fathers tried to put into words mysteries which their own minds could not comprehend.'⁹⁵

In the Latin *Leviathan*, Hobbes deployed the same stratagem – of outwardly professing conformity to orthodox doctrine while nevertheless arguing the contrary – on the question of whether one should call God corporeal or not. In the first chapter of the Appendix, character B notes that 'in the first of the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion published by the Church of England in 1562, is it expressly said, "God is without body and without parts." So it must not be denied', to which A tersely responds that 'It will not be denied' – immediately after B had also warned that 'the penalty decreed for those who do deny it is excommunication'. But A then proceeds to say that he cannot reconcile

⁹⁰ HE 365.

⁹¹ HE 377–9.

⁹² HE 373–5.

⁹³ HE 375, translation altered. Springborg's translation of *fidem* as 'creed' is misleading here, since it loses the connection to the specific propositional attitude of faith that Hobbes was invoking.

⁹⁴ 'Thunderstruck by the strange speech of the philosophers, plain-spoken men were not able to contradict them.' HE 357.

⁹⁵ HE 383.

calling God greatest (*Maximum*) or great (*Magnum*) without also calling him body (*Corpus*).⁹⁶ And then, the Appendix's third chapter observes that, in denying 'that there are any *incorporeal substances*' in the English *Leviathan*, Hobbes had indeed been implicitly affirming that '*Deum esse Corpus*', an affirmation he again went on to defend by suggesting that anyone who affirms that 'God is great (*Magnus est Deus*)' is thereby committed to affirming God's corporeality, because 'greatness (*magnitudinem*) without body is impossible to understand'.⁹⁷

Not only did Hobbes tell us, each time he wrote that God acts *in propria persona*, that his language was meant outwardly to profess what he was obligated to profess – without thereby signifying internal assent – the profession in chapter 16 is again placed in the middle of a list of five subcategories of what in the English *Leviathan* he had called representation by fiction. It is true that in his Latin translation Hobbes passed over in silence the distinction between representing another 'truly' versus 'by Fiction'. As in *De homine*, the only distinction explicitly made in the Latin edition of *Leviathan* is between bearing one's own person *qua* natural person ('*Persona Propria, sive Naturalis*'), and bearing someone else's person.⁹⁸ It might therefore seem that the list of five examples of representation by fiction in paragraphs 9 to 14 of the English *Leviathan* are refigured in the Latin edition merely as a list of things that may be personated. In fact, however, the category of representation by fiction implicitly persists, as it did in *De homine*, in the Latin *Leviathan*.⁹⁹ Hobbes invoked it when introducing his list of five subcategories. The section begins in Latin, as it did in English, with the observation that 'There are few things of which there cannot be persons (*Paucae res sunt, quarum non possunt esse Personae*).' Hobbes then implicitly repeated – albeit without using the expression 'representation by fiction' – the substantive point that he was now going to list things that may be represented but which are not themselves authors (and hence cannot authorize their own representation) because they lack understanding or intellect. Almost anything can be personated, Hobbes wrote in Latin, because although the representing 'person is, by nature, something that understands (*intelligit*), this is not always necessarily true of a thing whose person is borne'.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ LL Appendix 1.95–6: 1186.

⁹⁷ LL Appendix 3.6: 1228, translation modified.

⁹⁸ LL 16: 245.

⁹⁹ In *De homine*, Hobbes called 'fictitia' both types of artificial person (those borne via true representation and via representation by fiction). But he implicitly recognized the distinct category of representation by fiction, without naming it, when he declared that 'Even an inanimate thing can be a person.' DH 15.3–4: 85/132. It is therefore a mistake to say, as Simendic does, that in *De homine* and the Latin *Leviathan* Hobbes 'had done away with the rather confusing distinction between acting truly and acting by fiction'. Marko Simendic, 'Thomas Hobbes's person as *persona* and "intelligent substance"', *Intellectual History Review*, 22 (2012), pp. 147–62, at p. 152. Any interpretation unable to make sense of this central distinction fails to account for the basic premise of Hobbes's mature theology.

¹⁰⁰ LL 16: 247, translation in n. 19.

Even as Hobbes was supposedly retracting his interpretation of the Trinity in the Appendix, he reaffirmed and defended it by drawing on this same distinction – between the representer who is a rational agent and a representee which may lack an intellect. The traditional definition of a person current in the seventeenth century stemmed from Boethius, who had defined a person as a singular ‘intelligent substance’. Hobbes rejected this Boethian definition in both editions of *Leviathan*, drawing instead on Cicero – a pre-Boethian, indeed pre-Christian, Latin source – in order to define personhood theatrically in terms of masks and representation, as we have seen.¹⁰¹ Hobbes argued that his definition of the person as a ‘mask’ borne, rather than as the single substance to which personhood may be attributed or who may bear or represent it, is necessary for a proper interpretation of the Trinity. For if a person is defined as an individual substance, then to say that God is three persons is to succumb to tri-theism. In expressing the doctrine of the Trinity,

if we use the term ‘hypostatis’ instead of ‘person’, as the Greek Fathers do, we shall – since ‘hypostasis’ and ‘substance’ mean the same thing – make three divine substances, that is, three Gods, instead of three persons. Bellarmino and almost all the other Doctors define a ‘person’ as an intelligent first substance...But what are those three first substances, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, if not three divine substances? That, however is contrary to the Faith. Bellarmino did not understand the force of the Latin term ‘person’...its proper meaning is a man’s face, whether a natural face or an artificial one (a mask), or even a representative face.¹⁰²

It is true that later that year in *An answer*, Hobbes seemed to reverse course and deploy the Boethian definition: a person, he wrote, ‘signifies an intelligent Substance, that acteth any thing in his own or anothers Name, or by his own or anothers Authority’. But here, Hobbes was focusing on the person *qua* representer, not *qua* representee, and he went on to gainsay the definition by saying that, if used as a definition of person *qua* representee, it would imply that ‘the three Persons in the Trinity are three divine Substances, that is, three Gods’.¹⁰³

VI

The upshot of Hobbes’s personal theology is that, just as we can *know* that the state exists, so too can we know that the historical God exists. For the state and God alike are human creations: it is *we* ourselves who authorize their representers and thereby bring them into being. Personhood is a normative and artificially constructed status, such that the ‘existence’ of a person amounts to someone having been duly authorized to represent it and an audience taking it to be so represented. Our God-talk therefore does not describe an already

¹⁰¹ See Gianni Paganini, ‘Hobbes, Valla and the Trinity’, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 11 (2003), pp. 183–218; Vieira, *Elements of representation*, pp. 209–11.

¹⁰² LL Appendix 1.83; 1180; see also LL Appendix 1.109; 1188.

¹⁰³ AB 37–8/310–11.

existing natural entity; it constitutes a performative use of language by which we artificially conjure into being the very thing our language seemingly only describes. And it is here that the philosophical God may come into its own: for in the construction of the Hobbesian God, its artificial personality is superimposed onto the ‘first cause’ in the chain of natural causes – just as the state’s personality is superimposed on the natural bodies of the subjects who provide its ‘Matter’.¹⁰⁴ The inanimate first cause is thus represented as the corporeal entity whose person is borne by God’s historical representers. Hobbes remained agnostic on the question of whether this first cause exists: although we cannot independently demonstrate or prove that it exists, no philosopher is in a position to know that the proposition that it exists is false either; as I argue in this article’s companion piece, according to Hobbes we may, without evident error, suppose, think, or have faith that the first cause exists – even though, because we cannot know that a first cause exists, the attempt philosophically to *demonstrate* it, far from shoring up belief, would undermine faith in the philosophical God.¹⁰⁵ By contrast, we can know that God the historical person exists: our knowledge here is a species of *maker’s knowledge*, which Hobbes assumed to be self-evident, certain knowledge of our own creations.¹⁰⁶ And because this knowledge does not require trying to demonstrate something unknowable or to clarify a theological mystery, and because it does not directly concern the philosophical God, it need not undermine faith in the philosophical God. We can know one thing – that the historical God exists – and have faith in or suppose another – that the historical God is also a first cause. Hence rather than first proving and so knowing the existence of the God of philosophy, and then having faith that he also acts as a historical God, Hobbes’s mature theology allowed him first to know the existence of the historical God, which he could then suppose or have faith is also the philosophical God.

The existence of the historical God came to play an important role in Hobbes’s moral and political philosophy because ultimately it is the civil sovereign who bears the person of God: the construction of *supreme* civil authority requires not just that the sovereign be the supreme representer of the commonwealth, but that he also be the supreme representer of the being whom we acknowledge and worship as most supreme as such. The construction of the state and of God through representation by fiction, in other words, must be simultaneous and in relation to the very same sovereign representer. This is what distinguishes the Christian God from pagan gods: both are, like the state, artificial persons by fiction, but the Christian God is constructed as a supreme God, the positing of which is – unlike pagan gods – inherent to the construction of sovereignty. Hobbes’s Erastianism was not just ecclesiastical,

¹⁰⁴ L Intro.2: 18.

¹⁰⁵ AW 26.6: 307/310; cf. EL 25.9: 149–50; DCv 18.4: 255.

¹⁰⁶ 6L 183–4; DH 10.2: 39. On the maker’s knowledge tradition, see Antonio Pérez-Ramos, *Francis Bacon’s idea of science and the maker’s knowledge tradition* (Oxford, 1988).

but also theological: the sovereign who represents the mortal god of Leviathan is intrinsically also the supreme representer of the supreme being. If he were not, then his earthly sovereignty would be defenceless against earthly appeals to the rival authority of gods potentially more terrifying than him.