5-2024

A Comparison of Neo-Hobbesian Social Contract Theory and Anthropological Accounts of Socio-Political Complexity

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Comparison of Neo-Hobbesian Social Contract Theory and Anthropological Accounts of Socio-Political Complexity

A thesis presented in candidacy for Departmental Honors in

Philosophy

from

The College of William and Mary in Virginia

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5/8/24

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Acknowledgements

First, I would like to thank the entire William and Mary Philosophy Department. They helped me discover my passion for philosophy and without that this thesis would never have been written. With this in mind, my major advisor, Professor Lemos deserves special credit.

I would like to thank my advisor, Professor Freiman, who agreed to be my advisor despite leaving W&M. I appreciated his feedback and his encouragement throughout this long process, even as my final thesis diverged from his specific area of interest.

Thanks to my committee who endeavored to read a less refined version than what is presented here. Special thanks to Professor Davies, who helped acquaint me with many of the authors who I cite in this thesis. Also special thanks to Professor Brown, who was generous enough to provide me with grammatical corrections as he found them.

I also want to thank my family for being understanding while I worked on this project over breaks instead of spending my time with them. Finally, and most significantly, I want to thank Lida, who provided me with copious feedback as my editor-in-chief. If any grammatical issues remain in this thesis, they would be tenfold without her diligent help.

Abstract

Social contract theory continues to be a leading theoretical framework in political philosophy. It argues that an individual's moral and political obligations are generated by, and dependent upon, an agreement or contract between that individual and the other individuals within their society. Notable scholars who have championed this theory include Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Rawls, and Gauthier. This thesis focuses on reviewing the descriptive aspects of Hobbes' social contract theory, by revising an already revised account provided by Gregory Kavka. Once this revision is complete, it will be argued that the descriptive aspects of Hobbes' account of social contract are in line with, and thus bolstered by, the anthropological evidence of today. The views of three anthropology scholars will be discussed at length: Ara Norenzayan, Joseph Henrich, and Peter Turchin. With this new perspective, this thesis will compare and contrast Hobbes' account with that of Locke, critiquing the latter for not being compatible with the anthropological accounts. Finally, this thesis will consider further research questions that this account may generate.

Introduction:

The overarching goal of this thesis is to fully explicate what a modern Hobbesian account of the descriptive aspects of social contract theory would look like. To achieve this goal, this thesis will spend considerable time discussing leading theories within the field of anthropology as to why sociopolitical complexity occurs and increases over time, and what effects it has on society. This thesis will attempt to explain that Hobbesian theory is generally compatible with the anthropology of today. This thesis is not attempting to make claims that the normative aspects of Hobbesian theory are correct or even in line with anthropology. Moreover, it is not claiming that the normative aspects of Hobbesian theory are more or less right than those of his competitors.

This thesis will also not engage in argument from first principles or formal argumentation as is common in philosophy literature. Instead, I will employ tactics similar to a literature review, where I will lay out positions and information and then piece together what is the most coherent and reasonable conclusion.

This thesis will consist of six parts, each with its own goal and topic. Part #1 will focus on Hobbes' view of human nature and where it needs correcting before introducing the

anthropological account. Part #2 will focus on the state of nature that Hobbes describes and how the people in this state of nature will act given their environment. Part #3 will discuss how Hobbes envisions mankind leaving the state of nature, with significant refinement from Gregory Kavka. Part #4 will be the largest section of this thesis and will cover three important scholars in the subfield of anthropology who focus on socio-political complexity. At each stage in this section, we will revisit Hobbesian theory and engage in comparison. Part #5 will briefly explain the original Lockean position, offering some critiques in light of the anthropological accounts discussed. Finally, Part #6 will conclude the thesis, addressing some potential objections, discussing how we might further improve Hobbesian theory, and offering future avenues for research.

Part #1: Human Nature

Traditional Hobbesian Theory is associated, almost inextricably, with Psychological Egoism. In this section, I will briefly describe and confirm the rejection of Psychological Egoism as it pertains to human nature. I will then explain how one might alter Hobbes' theories to accommodate a milder form of egoism. This is *predominant egoism*, coined by Gregory Kavka.[1] Using this new form of egoism, I, with additional references to Kavka, will explain how we can retain the substance of Hobbes' arguments about human nature, while avoiding underpinning it with a false theory. In later parts of this thesis, I will introduce anthropological evidence which will further confirm the view of human nature previously presented.

Section 1.a: Human Nature Broadly

There are a few core traits that a theory of human nature must possess. First, it must be a descriptive theory, explaining how and to some extent why people act the way that they do. I am not interested in prescriptive theories that attempt to explain how people *ought* to act. Second, it should select traits that nearly all humans possess, and that do not vary significantly across cultures or physical geography. Third, the traits selected need not be exhaustive of all of the traits possessed by humans, nor would every human necessarily need all of the traits that it selects. Kavka himself notes that to keep the list useful the list of traits cannot be too general on account

[1] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 2, pp. 64-80.

of including traits possessed by only some humans, and not too specific by excluding common traits due to "abnormal" humans.[2] Finally, it is important to consider what a theory will be used for when selecting traits. A medical theory of human nature would select for very different traits than a theory of human nature aimed at underpinning a normative moral theory, specifically about government. The latter is what Hobbes is aiming to create, thus the traits in this theory of human nature are specific to it.

With this established, we now move to traditional Hobbesian Theory. Hobbes follows a long tradition of distinguishing humans from "beast" by noting our rational abilities. These include, but are not limited to, capacity for language and semiotics, understanding propositions, and an inherent curiosity.[3] This curiosity makes us interested in causality, and makes us concerned with more than merely the present moment. It makes us forward looking.[4] Kavka pulls six traits of humans from Hobbes, they are presented in his book, but quoted below for the convenience of the reader:[5]

1. Egoism:
    a. Individuals are primarily concerned with their own well-being and act accordingly.
2. Death-aversion:
    a. Individuals are strongly averse to their own death and act accordingly.
3. Concern for Reputation:
    a. Individuals care about their reputation, about what others think of them, and they act accordingly
4. Forwardlookingness:
    a. Individuals care about their future, as well as present well-being, and act accordingly.
5. Conflicting Desires:
    a. Satisfaction of one's personal desire often interferes with, or precludes, satisfaction of another person's. This may result from material scarcity, opposed claims to the same particular objects, incompatible ideals or values, competing aspirations for domination or preeminence, and so on.

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[2] Ibid, chapt. 5, p. 29.

[3] *Leviathan*, chapt. 2, p. 11; chapt. 3, p. 16, pp.13-14; chapt. 4, p. 18, p. 28; chapt. 5, p. 33; chapt. 6, pp. 44-45' chapt. 12, p. 94

[4] Ibid, chapt. 12,pp. 94-95; chapt. 6, pp.44-45

[5] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 2, pp. 33-34.

6. Rough Equality:
    a. People are fairly equal in their intellectual and bodily power. They are equal enough, in any case, that each is vulnerable to death at the hands of others.

I will not comment on Egoism yet, as that will be the focus of subsequent sections. However, I will briefly defend the other traits that Kavka pulls out from Hobbes. Death-aversion is something that seems very intuitive and firmly rooted in our minds. This is evident from introspection, if nothing else. Additionally, in the article, *Fear of the dead, fear of death: is it biological or psychological?*, it is clear that accepting that death-aversion is a universal human trait offers anthropologists, psychologists, and biologists significant explanatory power in addressing outcomes they see in their research.[6] Additionally, if one were to think simply in rudimentary Darwinian terms, death-aversion falls in line with the goal of best perpetuating your genetics, at least until the point at which you are no longer able to pass them on.[7]

Next is concern for reputation. Again introspection should tell us that we, each and every one of us, do feel a concern for our reputation and how we are perceived by others. In the article, *Who Cares for Reputation? Individual Differences and Concern for Reputation*, there is an investigation into the differences between individuals and their concern for their reputations. Their conclusion, interestingly, pointed out that there does seem to be some variation across different people, but that all people do still care for their reputation. This is for two reasons. The first is the instrumental benefit that it allows them, which will be discussed in future sections.[8] There may, however, be a scenario in which there is no instrumental value to having a good reputation. While this is highly unlikely, it is still possible. This brings us to the second reason, which is in fact intrinsic. Having a good reputation, or being perceived by others positively, has a correlation with self-image and fulfillment.[9] This seems to be an internal psychological feature of all people. Thus, there are both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons for having concern for our reputation.

The next assertion is that humans have the ability to be forward-looking and consider their future well-being when making decisions about the present. While introspectively we each

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[6] *Fear of the dead, fear of death: is it biological or psychological?*, pp 334-335
[7] *Castration anxiety and the fear of death*, p. 374
[8] *Who Cares for Reputation? Individual Differences and Concern for Reputation*, p. 164, p.172
[9] Ibid, pp. 166-167

can attest to this ability and its involvement in our decision making, there is a field of research in developmental psychology that notes that part of becoming an adult, and being a fully developed human, is gaining this ability.[10] In a paper in 1982 and another two years later in 1984, Dr. Sandham and Dr. Hicks studied the development of children and adolescents and their ability to comprehend and utilize forethought, specifically dealing with remote future events. Their research shows that until late adolescents, children tend to lack this ability that adults have. This points out that to be an adult human one must have this ability in order to be fully developed. Moreover, the 2016 book, Homo Prospectus, explores just how deeply ingrained forwardlookingness is in humans. The conclusion was that it is so deeply ingrained that our species ought not to be called *homo-sapien* (wise), but instead homo-prospectus (forward-looking).

Conflicting desires are evident to anyone who has experienced life. I will not be trying to prove this, but I will clarify. Kavka and Hobbes are not claiming that people are incapable of cooperation and that desires can never overlap or be shared amongst people. Ultimately, the claim here is that each individual is unique and psychologically distinct, that people do not share a hive mind.[11]

The rough equality of humans seems reasonable enough, but there are those who feel that Hobbes is too extreme in his characterization of human equality, both physically and intellectually.[12] Kavka, to his credit, refines Hobbes' original theory of equality into a milder form. People are just equal enough so that they are vulnerable to each other. A weak man may not be able to beat a strong man in an outright fight, but give the weak man a club, a surprise attack, or let him poison the strong man's water, and he is likely to prevail. The same goes for intelligence and strategy. No human is out of the reach of other human's violence.[13]

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[10] *Forethought Development in Children and Adolescents*, p. 78; *A Factor-Analytic Study of Items to Measure Forethought Development in Children and Adolescents*, pp. 109-112

[11] *A Beginner's Guide to Group Minds*, pp. 301-302. The Group Mind Thesis (GMT), while present in the literature, generally does not make the claim of a hive mind that would invalidate the claims by Hobbes. Instead the majority of GMT scholarship is making a claim about group functions and shared traits amongst individuals.

[12] *Thomas Hobbes's Counterfeit Equality*.This critique seems to be more directed toward misinterpreting Hobbes' conception of equality as moral in some way. However, there is some objection to the extent to which Hobbes is truly endorsing equality of people.

[13] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 2, p. 34

Section 1.b: Psychological Egoism

The first trait, Egoism, is where the majority of tension arises in relation to Hobbes' theory of human nature. This section will discuss what we mean by Egoism. Egoism, as it pertains to Hobbes, is directly linked to Psychological Egoism, which can be defined most generally as: *all human actions stem from self-interest.*[14] [15] There are two divisions in Psychological Egoism that I want to briefly discuss. The first is Maximizing vs Nonmaximizing and the second is Broad vs Narrow.

Maximizing Egoism, as the name suggests, argues that an agent will take the action which will *best* promote their self-interest. Notably the inclusion of the adjective *best* implies that agents will engage in a sort of *benefit calculus* in order to determine their every move. Nonmaximizing Egoism argues that an agent will take actions where the "ultimate aim" is some benefit to the agent. In this conception the agent may act in a variety of ways, but always with the ultimate aim of self-benefit. Maximizing Egoism paints people as purely rational, almost computer-like, agents, whereas Nonmaximizing Egoism describes a more organic and perhaps impulsive agent. One example that supports Nonmaximizing Egoism is the actions of children, who often act in selfish and self-beneficial ways, but are certainly not engaging in a clear and precise *benefit calculus*. Thus, of the two forms, Nonmaximizing Egoism is more plausible. One, because it is less restrictive in choosing the *best* action, and two, because it more aptly describes scenarios of self-interest that Maximizing Egoism fails to address.

The second distinction within Psychological Egoism which I will address is that between Broad and Narrow Egoism. Narrow Egoism is the view that ultimate desires of an agent must be "self-directed."[16] This means that the ultimate desires, or the objects, of a Narrow Egoism must be either *self-confined* or *self-centered*. These are terms attributed to C. D Broad.[17] A *self-confined* desire would be one capable of existing if the agent were the only thing in existence, the desire for happiness for example. A *self-centered* desire could be anything where the agent is "primarily" concerned with themselves, and understands other people or things to be objects in relation to the agent. An example of a *self-centered* desire would be a desire for wealth or fame.

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[14] Ibid, chapt. 2, p. 35-38. Kavka has a brief and useful discussion on what types of egoism he and I are not considering in this discussion.

[15] Ethical Theory: An Anthology, chapt. 19, p. 167

[16] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 2, p. 42

[17] *Egoism as a Theory of Human Motivation,* p. 105-14.

Broad places both of these types of desires under *self-regarding* desires. Broad Egoism has to do with what Broad refers to as *egoistic motive-stimulants*, which are certain relations to the agent which cause the agent to be concerned with things that are not primarily pertaining to them, but still are objects of their desire.[18] An important trait of these *egoistic motive-stimulants* is that if the relation were not to exist the desire would greatly decrease or even cease to exist. Broad lays out four types of these relations: kinship, ownership, love/friendship, and joint association. These types of desires are deemed *self-relational* by Broad. In the context of a desire for someone to recover from a surgery, in the order listed above, a brother, a dog, a spouse, and a teammate would cover all four *egoistic motive-stimulants*. Broad Egoism includes these *self-relational* desires in addition to *self-regarding* ones.

Broad endorses Broad Egoism, seemingly in a charitable move to give Psychological Egoism the best chance at weathering his (Broad's) refutation of their position.[19] However, this is a mistake by Broad, albeit from his generosity, as Broad Egoism blurs the line between Egoism and non-Egoistic theories. Self-relational desires allow for psychological egoism to encompass desires that are oftentimes the trademark of non-egoistic theories, most notably altruistic desires.[20] It is for the reasons discussed in this section that when discussing Psychological Egoism in relationship to Hobbes, I will be discussing Nonmaximizing, Narrow Psychological Egoism. Therefore, ultimate desires such as self-destruction, moral rightness, and altruism, are considered non-egoistic.

Section 1.c: Rejecting Psychological Egoism

Before beginning this section, it should be noted that there is extensive debate on whether Hobbes and Hobbes' theories are essentially tied to Psychological Egoism. The general consensus is that it is entirely unclear. I do not feel the need to discuss that debate in this paper.[21] From that general consensus, we may reject Psychological Egoism while keeping Hobbes' theories, albeit amending them somewhat.

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[18] Ibid, p. 109

[19] Ibid, p. 111

[20] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 2, pp. 43-44. Kavka notes that if one were to interpret Broad Egoism literally, there are certain people of particular religious or humanistic backgrounds, who could claim that everything they do is in accordance with Psychological Egoism on the grounds that they love all of humanity.

[21] Ibid. chapt. 2, pp. 44-51. Kavka discusses this problem at length with references to other Hobbesian scholars in section 2-3. Regardless, I don't feel the need to address it in this thesis.

Psychological Egoism is a flawed theory of human nature on mainly descriptive grounds. Given that it is a descriptive theory, the best way to go about refuting it must be through counterexample. In this vein, we have two avenues by which to travel. First, we can observe the actions of others and their testimony to their ultimate desires which led them to commit certain actions. Second, we can look introspectively into our own motivation and desires, discerning from that the accuracy of Psychological Egoism.

Take a case of a mother tending to her sick child.[22] Imagine that the disease the child has contracted is both deadly and contagious. If the mother knows these facts and still tends to the needs of her child, attempting to lessen their pain in their final days, then we can say that it is likely that Psychological Egoism is false, as the mother's actions constitute some form of altruism. However, a Psychological Egoist may respond that the mother's actions are not altruistic, instead they are selfish as they act either to minimize future guilt, or in an attempt to have the child live for selfish reasons, like supporting the mother when she is too old to support herself. I am dubious of these claims for two reasons. The risk of death from contracting the disease seems a much greater harm to the mother than any future guilt that she might feel from failing to act. In this way, it is hard to see this act as anything but altruistic. Also, if the mother expects the child to take care of them when they are old and frail, the mother seems to be expecting the child to act altruistically.[23]

If the Psychological Egoist is still unconvinced, imagine we ask the mother to use her powers of introspection to determine why she tended to her child during their sickness. When asked, she replies something to the effect of either *it was the right thing to do* or *because I wanted my child to get better*. I would guess that if we asked this to a non-hypothetical person who had experienced this they would look at you dumbfounded, confused by the question, as if the answer were obvious. Both *it was the right thing to do* and *because I wanted my child to get better* are desires excluded from Psychological Egoism as they are the desires of moral rightness and altruism, respectively. At this point the Psychological Egoist is backed into a corner as this example seems to show a reason to reject Psychological Egoism on both observational and introspective grounds.

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[22] An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, App. 2.6, p. 166.

[23] It is conceivable that there may be scenarios that make the child inclined to help their old mother for selfish reasons, but these scenarios are generally in the minority of the reasons we care for the elderly.

However, one final move the Psychological Egoist could make is to appeal to the subconscious, arguing that the mother in this case is not aware of her true desires which motivated her actions. With this move we are ultimately thrust into the empirical grounds of psychology, biology, and sociology.[24]

A Psychological Egoist could make the claim that our genes and evolutionary biology are the source of all of our desires, and because evolutionary biology tells us that our genes are interested in being passed on, they are inherently selfish, thus supporting Psychological Egoism. This is possibly an example of the *Genetic Fallacy*, where something is dismissed simply because of its origin.[25] In this case, our altruistic desires are dismissed simply because they arise from our genes, which are selfish. To illustrate this, imagine the desire for water. This is a desire that is ruled by your genes, which desire to be propagated, but the desire is *for water*, and not simply to propagate your genes. To make this leap between biology and psychology requires significantly more argumentation than provided by the simple claim that our genes are inherently selfish.[26]

The most robust refutation of Psychological Egoism on biological grounds that I have found comes from philosopher Elliott Sober and biologist David Sloan Wilson in their book *Unto Others The Evolution and Psychology of Unselfish Behavior*. They conclude generally that "natural selection is unlikely to have given us purely egoistic motives."[27] In determining why a mechanism evolves, they pull out three reasons: availability, reliability, and energetic efficiency.[28] So, the mechanism must be *available* in the given biological pool, it must *reliably* produce outcomes so that individuals possessing it are more likely to pass on genes, and it must do so *efficiently* so as not to deplete the individual's own resources. They found that "pluralism was just as available as hedonism, it was more reliable, and hedonism provides no advantage in

[24] While these are not my areas of interest or the specific areas of this thesis, I will do my best to explain those fields' responses to the Psychological Egoist.
[25] *Philosopher at Large: An Intellectual Autobiography*, pp. 86–87, This fallacy is sometimes credited to Thomas Nagel, but its appearance by Mortimer Adler occurred about 10 years prior.
[26] *Ruling Passions*, chapt. 5, p. 147
[27] *Unto Others The Evolution and Psychology of Unselfish Behavior*, p. 12. It should be noted that their argument is mainly against psychological hedonism, but their insights extend to all forms of egoism.
[28] Ibid, pp. 305-8

terms of energetic efficiency."[29] One of the key disadvantages seen in psychological hedonism is that desires are "mediated," and thus less reliable. Take the example previously mentioned of a mother caring for her child. Under psychological hedonism the ultimate desire is pleasure gaining, thus the mother must believe that helping her child will gain her pleasure. Hence the ultimate *desire for pleasure* is mediated by *the belief that helping will provide pleasure* to reach the final *desire to help*. Whereas under a pluralistic interpretation the ultimate desire is simply *to help*. Importantly, the mediating beliefs must be true. If they are not, then after several interactions the instrumental desire *to help* will lose its value and parental care will cease to occur.

On sociological grounds there have been a number of experiments aimed at trying to evaluate Psychological Egoism. C. Daniel Batson is one of these experimenters.[30] He proposed the *empathy-altruism hypothesis*, which essentially argues that empathy induces in people an ultimate desire to increase the well-being of others rather than ourselves. If this hypothesis is true, then it would refute psychological egoism. However, it should be noted that a crucial part of a refutation to psychological egoism is to create an experiment that picks out the ultimate desire.[31] Assuming that the experiments that Batson is discussing are successful in doing this, they clearly demonstrate that oftentimes people's ultimate desires are to help others' well-being.[32]

Given that we have refuted psychological egoism through counter examples, both introspective and external, and empirically, biologically and psychologically, I now feel comfortable in rejecting it.

Section 1.d: Predominant Egoism

While it is clear, given the last section, that Psychological Egoism is not the theory of human nature that will properly fuel a Hobbesian theory, some element of egoism may still be necessary. Gregory Kavka provides an amended account of egoism which he dubs *Predominant Egoism*. In the most broad sense, this account posits that self-interested desires tend to supersede

[29] Ibid, p. 323. In the book, they define pluralism as the antithesis of psychological hedonism. But in the sense the all ultimate desire for psychological hedonism is pleasure gaining and pain avoidance, the other motivate they considered was pluralism, being both altruism and pleasure gaining to be ultimate desires, thus pluralistic

[30] *The Altruism Question: Toward a Social-Psychological Answer*, pp. 64-67. Batson's book describes the conditions of how an experiment like this should work and how those experiments cited achieved these goals.

[31] *Unto Others The Evolution and Psychology of Unselfish Behavior*, chapt. 6; *Altruism,* pp. 147-205

[32] *Evidence for Altruism: Toward a Pluralism of Prosocial Motives*, pp. 107–122.

and take priority over altruistic desires. Kavka provides us with four distinct and succinct propositions to better understand Predominant Egoism[33]:

1. For most people in most situations, the "altruistic gain/personal loss" ratio needed to reliably motivate self-sacrificing action is large
2. The number of people for whom altruism and other forms of non-self-interested motives normally override self-interested motives is small.
3. The number of situations, for the average person, in which non-self-interest motives override personal interest is small.
4. The scope of altruistic motives that are strong enough to normally override self-interest is, for most people, small, that is confined to concern for family, close friends, close associates, or particular groups or public projects to which the individual is devoted.

At first glance it is clear that these four propositions create a weaker claim than Psychological Egoism. Notably, proposition 1 explicitly acknowledges that altruistic actions do occur, albeit typically only in cases where the altruistic gain is much greater than the personal sacrifice. In propositions 2, 3, and 4 we see further clarifications of the original proposition. It is worth noting that proposition 4 makes reference to relationships that are very reminiscent of C. D. Broad's *egoistic motive-stimulants.*[34] Another point of clarification is that Predominant Egoism does not dispute that altruistic motives have weight in deliberative processes, but rather argues that they tend to get overridden. Moreover, it is not impossible for both altruistic and selfish motives to produce the same action. Furthermore, merely because a selfish action is taken does not necessarily mean that the altruistic motive failed to contribute to the deliberation process, or that the altruistic motive didn't delay or alter the selfish action in some way. One final note, which Kavka makes a special point to emphasize, is that Predominant Egoism does not make universal claims, and is thus not susceptible to counterexamples, like Psychological Egoism.[35]

Before continuing to objections to Predominant Egoism, there is one final point that Kavka makes, acknowledging an additional change needed to the theory. He writes, "Predominant Egoism, then, is the doctrine that self-interest tends to be overriding in people's motivational structure, at least until they have reached a stable and satisfactory level of well-

[33] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 2, pp. 64-65.
[34] Both egoistic motive stimulants and the relations in proposition 4 center heavily on relations of kinship or other group dynamics which will be discussed later in this thesis.
[35] Ibid, p. 66

being."[36] When considered critically, this clarification is both necessary and seemingly obvious. The better off someone is, the more it seems that they are willing to contribute altruistically. To borrow from economics, one might consider altruism a *superior good*, whereas income increases, demand for those superior goods also increases. Kavka likens it to Maslow's famous *Hierarchy of Needs*, where more basic needs, like security, must be fulfilled prior to other needs, like social affiliation and belonging.

Section 1.e. Defending Predominant Egoism and Addressing Objections

Appeals to a wide range of evidence can be used in defense of a descriptive theory describing something as broad as the motivations of humans. In principle, any field that contains insight into human behavior and motivation may be recruited as evidence. Kavka lists "common sense, introspection, history and anthropology, social behavior, and sociobiology" as fields that can be appealed to for evidence for Predominant Egoism.[37] I will discuss common sense, introspection, and sociobiology, and I will add economics to this list. The exclusion of history and anthropology are due to their long-winded nature.[38]

According to Kavka, common sense or general human experience tend to support Predominant Egoism. He notes that part of exiting childhood and entering adulthood is becoming able to recognize people's hidden and often selfish motives for their actions.[39] Moreover, when entering the adult world, you are certainly more often correct, not to mention better off, expecting people to act upon their own self-interest rather than expecting them to act in an altruistic manner. As Adam Smith writes in his highly influential book *The Wealth of Nations*, "it is not for the benevolence of the butcher, brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interests."[40]

Introspection is another tool that we may use to defend Predominant Egoism. If we assume that most people have similar motivation to ourselves, we can say that whatever we

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[36] Ibid, p. 66, There is some basis for this in the Hobbesian literature as well
See *Leviathan*, chapt. 5, p. 145, Hobbes talks about how a level of "sufficient security" may increase the altruistic tendencies of individuals.

[37] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 2, p. 68

[38] Though it could be argued that I will be accessing anthropologies' coherence with Predominant Egoism in many areas of Section #4.

[39] Ibid, p. 69

[40] *The Wealth of Nations*, chapt. 2, p. 18

discover about our own motivations likely holds true for most people. When I engage in introspection to determine my motivations for my actions, I find generally that the actions I engage in are self-interested. Why do I study for my exams? To get a good grade, which is in my self interest. Now admittedly, I might also do it out of respect for my professor, or perhaps because it is the right thing to do, but these can be contributing factors underneath the most primary. We can also accept accounts of introspection by others, assuming we can trust their testimony to be truthful. When Freud first started engaging in his introspective physiological research with patients, his most significant finding was determining that the two most fundamental human motivations were self-interest and the sexual.[41] While you may view many of Freud's theories with skepticism, the testimony of his patients ought not to suffer from those same misgivings, at least not to the same extent.

Not included in Kavka's original five areas of evidence, economics may provide evidence in support of Predominant Egoism. In economics, pure Psychological Egoism can be likened to the self-interest hypothesis, attributed to Adam Smith, which had long been a prevailing view in economics.[42] However, within the last few decades, work in behavioral economics and psychology have provided reasons for rejecting, or at least amending, this hypothesis in favor of new theories. Much of these new developments can be attributed to testing *other-regarding preferences,* like altruism, reciprocity, and fairness, in non-traditional markets.[43] Experiments with traditional markets that are perfectly competitive, among other traits, suppress *other-regarding preferences*. When experiments are done in markets that diverge from these idealistic assumptions *other-regarding preferences* emerge. They emerge to such an extent that economists describe them as "strongly" motivating a "substantial percentage of people."[44] This conception of human nature in economics is not entirely new. Serge-Christophe Kolm, a French economist, has argued that great economists of the past, including Smith and Pareto, have acknowledged mankind's propensity to act altruistically, but failed to acknowledge it in their economic theories. He coined this a sort of "schizophrenia" where mankind is purely egoist in the realm of economics but acts altruistically outside of economics.[45] While Kolm wrote much of

[41] *Instincts and Their Vicissitudes*, pp. 83-103
[42] *Collective Action*, pp. 14-15
[43] *Handbook of the Economics of Giving, Altruism and Reciprocity*, chapt. 8, p. 618
[44] Ibid, p. 616
[45] *Altruism and Efficiency*, p. 19-22

this critique prior to the new experiments in *other-regarding preferences*, he provides a rudimentary framework for how mankind is, and thus behavioral economics reflects, both altruistic and egoist. This consideration of economics can inform our understanding of Predominant Egoism by acknowledging that economists like Kolm have provided a framework for economics that looks strikingly similar, with self-interest acting predominantly, while new experimental outcomes have further bolstered its credibility.[46]

Sociobiology can explain to us the origins of altruism, but in that process of explanation, it outlines the limitations of altruism and the broad existence of self-interest. Kin selection is one of the ways in which altruism appears from an evolutionary origin. Kin selection is the phenomenon whereby kin will act altruistically toward other kin in an effort to maximize their kin's ability to spread their shared genes. While kin selection has had its critics,[47] by and large it is still considered a strong theory with massive explanatory power.[48] While kin selection is a possible evolutionary origin of altruistic behavior, the fact that it has such small fields of application is illustrative of the fact that human action is generally self-interested. Moreover, kin selection examples fall directly in line with proposition 4 of Predominant Egoism.

Oftentimes in debates like these, and in fact in regards to Psychological Egoism, there is concern over the falsifiability of these theories. With Predominant Egoism, the objection would likely take aim at the fact that the theory is vague in its wording. It uses words like *most, normally, large, small,* and *average*. Critics would argue that this makes it impossible to properly prove or disprove. First, as a descriptive theory, Predominant Egoism is in principle falsifiable. If one were to observe conditions where widespread altruism occurred in a manner not supported by Predominant Egoism, then the theory would be false. A critic may argue that it is unclear what manner of conditions would qualify to be unsupported because of the vagueness of the propositions. In response, one could add clearer, maybe even mathematical properties and thresholds to Predominant Egoism, but that would be a mistake, for the evidence we are using to support these claims is not the clear or mathematical kind. Moreover, it introduces the problems

[46] Ibid, p. 36

[47] *Kin Selection as the Key to Altruism: Its Rise and Fall*, pp. 159-166

[48] Trends in Ecology and Evolution, pp. 57-60, Within this is a direct discussion and response to the criticisms leveled by the previous citation.; *Current Biology*, pp. 438-442

associated with thresholds and other mathematical applications in philosophy.[49] Aristotle's quote about precision is relevant here, “for it is the mark of an educated man to look for precision in each class of things just so far as the nature of the subject admits”.[50] This is a reminder that when dealing with something as complex as human motivation, allowing for nuance is crucial.

Perhaps the strongest objection to Predominant Egoism comes from those who argue that human motivation is extremely plastic and malleable, able to be shaped by social factors of their upbringing. The clearest example of this objection comes from the Marxist position. The objection fundamentally claims that Predominant Egoism really only describes human motivation in specific societies which have systems like private property and other capitalist structures, thereby incentivizing actions of individual self-interest.[51] In a society that emphasizes more cooperative systems, motivation structures might be different.

In response to this objection, Kavka points out that if the Marxist is correct, then we ought to see societies in which socialist principles are dominant lack a substantial amount of self-interested action.[52] This is not the case, in fact much of the resources of the socialist state are employed to prevent self-interested action,almost as if they are fighting a battle against human nature. The Marxist could of course respond by stating that the self-interest seen in socialist countries is a product of prior self-interested cultures. However, in order for this to successfully refute Predominant Egoism, the Marxist must point to positive evidence of this, which we have already mentioned is not yet found. In order to refute the positive evidence presented on behalf of Predominant Egoism, the Marxist must present positive evidence of their own which undermines Predominant Egoism’s evidence.

This concludes my brief defense of Predominant Egoism. Accepting it is crucial for accepting further Neo-Hobbesian government theory, and the claims made after.

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[49] Here I am thinking about something like the sorites paradox, where the exact nature of the threshold is unclear to the observer. With Predominant Egoism it might be a concern that if added a proposition that said “if 75% of actions are decided by self-interest, then Predominant Egoism is correct”. What would we say if the real percentage came out to be 74%?

[50] *The Nicomachean Ethics*, bk. 1, line 25.

[51] *Impediments to Radical Egalitarianism*, p. 123

[52] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 2, pp. 75-77

Part #2: The State of Nature:

This next part of the thesis will contain an overview of Hobbes' state of nature, with the appropriate deviations where necessary. It follows the account provided by Kavka somewhat closely, as it is robust. Here, the thesis is focusing on understanding the descriptive account of what the state of nature would be like, so that later in this thesis we can contrast it with anthropological accounts.

Section 2.a: Introduction to Hobbes' State of Nature and the Agents within

Hobbes' state of nature was created with the intention of determining the origins of government and subsequently using that understanding to discern the functions of government. Additionally, this can be used to justify governments as well, but that is not the central focus of this thesis. This state of nature is not describing something that currently exists or has necessarily ever existed. Instead, the state of nature is hypothetical in two ways. First, it creates a counterfactual environment, in which all "social and political ties" between individuals cease to exist. Secondly, it creates hypothetical people for the environment, who are assumed to operate in certain ways. For this thesis, those ways will fall along lines consistent with Predominant Egoism. An important assumption that is clear from Hobbes is that people are rational. The level of sophistication between people can vary and this leads to some distinct types of agents in the state of nature. Kavka has grouped and defined them as follows[53]:

1. Inductive Planner: predicts the behavior of others by generalizing about their past behavior, or the past behavior of people like them, in similar situations.
2. Deductive Planner: predicts the behavior of others by attempting to place themselves in other agents' shoes and recapitulating other agents' reasoning.
3. Strategic Planner: while attempting to recapitulate other parties' reasoning and to deduce the outcomes of these reasonings, assumes that these parties are deductivists or other strategists.

These are some things to note about each of these types of planners. The deductive planner, or the deductivist, makes certain assumptions about other agents' motives, goals, and values in order to recapitulate the other agents' reasoning. However, the deductivist can only assume that these other agents are inductive planners, or inductivists. This limits the predictive power of the deductivist. The strategic planner, or strategist, rises from the deductivist, but is

[53] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 3, pp. 85-86

able to imagine the other agents as deductivists as well. This means that in some, or even many cases, the strategist's calculations about other agents' actions may result in indeterminacy and uncertainty.

Also an important distinction is between dominators and moderates in the state of nature. The dominators are those who desire power intrinsically, for its own sake. This is not to say that they do not also want it for instrumental reasons as well. One might adore power intrinsically, while also desiring it for the sake of conquest or domination. Moderates are those that only desire power instrumentally, and only for the goal of protecting themselves. Notably, moderates are capable of acting proactively, in ways that can seem offensive, with the end motive of self-defense through deterrence. Therefore, it is important to properly examine the motivation behind actions in this context.

Section 2.b. Defining State of Nature as State of War, and Hobbesian Discussion on Power

Conflict in Hobbes' state of nature can be summarized by the well known phrase "a war of all against all."[54] A central aspect of the state of nature is the lack of a "common power to keep them (agents) in awe," meaning that there is no central power to compel agents to keep their agreements with one another, nor to punish violence.[55] Notably, in this definition, to be in a *state of nature* is to have certain relational properties to other agents. Namely that there is no other entity that compels those agents. This means that, for example, agents A, B, and C may not be in a state of nature because agent D compels them all to keep their agreements. However, agent A may be in a state of nature with agent E if agent D does not compel agreement keeping. In Hobbes' state of nature, he is envisioning an environment where no two agents have this relational property.[56]

Notably, Hobbes' state of nature is inextricable from a state of war, though Hobbes' state of war is not necessarily constant physical violence.[57] Nevertheless, those looking to support

[54] *Leviathan*, chapt. 8, p. 8
[55] Ibid, chapt. 13, p. 113
[56] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 3, p. 89
[57] This point is clarified by Kavka, and I tend to agree with his analysis. It is not that the parties in the state of nature are necessarily constantly fighting, but that they are always in a cold war type of setting as a baseline. This is reasonable, as we could not expect individuals to truly be constantly fighting. There would be no time for foraging for food or sleeping.

Hobbes' view do need to make the case that a state of nature, as previously described, must result in significant physical violence.

Power, as defined by Hobbes, is a person's "present means; to obtain some future apparent good." While this is a very broad definition, Hobbes only breaks these powers into two, exhaustive categories. Agents have natural powers, being their physical prowess and mental capacities. They also have instrumental powers which are things external to their bodies which allow them to gain additional power.[58] An example of instrumental power could be the power afforded to someone very wealthy by their money or the power afforded a gladiator by his sword. These are clearer examples, but even a friendship that proves advantageous for an agent is considered an instrumental power. Importantly, instrumental powers are inflationary in nature. Genghis Khan's armies terrified much of Eurasia in the 12th and 13th centuries, but stack those armies up against Napoleon's Grande Armée and they would surely lose. While the Khan's armies still have the same absolute power as they held previously, the power of others, the Grande Armée, has grown, and thus in relative terms they were weaker. The converse is also true, but wide scale deflationary events are very uncommon.

Kavka notes that the most significant use of an agent's powers is to take advantage of another agent. Thereby using their power for your ends, rather than their own. He points out that by doing this an agent can effectively double their power and, with increased scale, could do it many fold.[59] This clearly illustrates the fact that instrumental powers are general self-reinforcing; gaining some wealth opens up opportunities to gain even more wealth. Gaining control over one person means that both you and that other person can coerce two additional people. With Kavka pointing this out, he suggests naming Hobbes' instrumental powers as social powers, given that they really allow an agent to influence other agents rather than to fundamentally increase their natural powers. Kavka defines social powers as "means of influencing others to aid in the attainment of one's ends."[60] Kavka notes that social powers are not necessarily exclusive of bodily powers, as many mental bodily powers might also be social powers if utilized that way. I personally am unsure if the distinction of social powers as a term is particularly significant, but the fact that it specifies the realm of interest, social interaction, may be more clear.

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[58] Leviathan, chapt. 10, p. 74
[59] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 3, p. 94
[60] Ibid

The importance of understanding power in the Hobbesian context cannot be understated as it fuels a great deal of Hobbes' work. As he writes, "I put forth a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death."[61] Given that Hobbes clearly believes that people seek power perpetually and restlessly, one can see how understanding what people seek might be useful. Now that we understand the *what* of power, we must turn to the *why* of power.

Section 2.c: Anticipatory Violence and the Descent into War of All

In order for Hobbes' state of nature to actualize, there needs to be substantial actual violence, given the motives that we have already discussed. For this we need to establish another proposition: that anticipatory violence is an advantageous decision, all things considered. To establish this we recall from 2.a. the three types of reasoning, inductivist, deductivist, and strategist, as well as the two types of individuals, dominators and moderates, within Hobbes' state of nature.

We will start with the moderate, who is not predisposed to attack others. Imagine that John is a moderate and there are two other individuals as well, Mary and Tom. We will go through all three of his possible reasonings for action to show how anticipatory violence is advantageous. First, if John is to think inductively, then he might attack Mary anticipatorily either to remove her as a future threat or to use her power, as discussed in 2.b., against or as a deterrent to Tom. Second, if John is to think deductively, he is able to reason that both Mary and Tom have reason to anticipatorily attack him as well. Their reason being that they may want to use his power to bolster their own or remove him as a potential threat. Notably, this is the case for mere moderates, not dominators. Finally, if John reasons as a strategist then he is able to understand that Tom and Mary, and all moderates, have reason to attack him and all other moderates based simply on the fact that he and other moderates have the same reason to attack them. This realization that other moderates have similar motives and reasoning urges John, and moderates more generally, to enact anticipatory violence before others can enact it.

At this point, this argument requires that the vast majority of people be moderates and strategists. This is a somewhat important claim, because while there is evidence that the most

[61] *Leviathan*, chapt. 11, pp. 85-86

reasonable course of action for all types of moderates is anticipatory violence, the strategist is uniquely positioned to engage in anticipatory violence given that he *knows* the other moderates' reasoning as well. Additionally, the idea that strategists are able to recognize all other people as strategists is important as well. Consider humanities' ability to mentalize.[62] Given the psychological and introspective evidence we have for this being a universal human trait, most people being strategists seems reasonable.[63] Being able to mentalize is directly tied to being able to understand and recapitulate someone's reasoning or motives. Moreover, by being able to recapitulate someone's reasoning, you are implied to be able to identify that they use the same reasoning as you. Thus strategists know that other people are also strategists.

While anticipatory violence is advantageous, it does not guarantee victory to the attacker as defensive force is significant and likely deadly. One might question why a person would expose themselves to potentially deadly force. Instead, a person might simply lie low, attempting to avoid deadly force altogether. An astute observer may realize that if this is a possibility, that there can be a rational choice between anticipatory violence and laying low, then the moderate strategist's reasoning will lead down a path of indeterminacy.[64] Let us use John, Tom, and Mary again. Suppose for a moment that John is trying to decide what to do, engage in anticipatory violence, or lay low. Being a moderate, he will only attack for defensive, or deterrent reasons. John, being a strategist, will make this decision on the basis of his understanding of others' recapitulation of his reasoning. However, Tom and Mary, both being moderate strategists, will reason in the exact same way. Therefore, neither can make a decision without the other making one. We have an indeterminate result and a reflexive relationship.[65]

The problem now before us is that we cannot determine whether people would lie low or engage in anticipatory violence. Hobbes makes, what seems like a somewhat arbitrary assumption, that people are always prone to violence. I will not do that. However, Hobbes, knowingly or not, provides the modern philosopher with a solution to this problem: the

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[62] *What is Mentalization? The Concept and its Foundations in Developmental Research*

[63] *Keeping Culture in Mind: A Systematic Review and Initial Conceptualization of Mentalizing from a Cross-Cultural Perspective*, These researchers found some variation in the way in which people mentalize across cultures. From my understanding of this source, it seems clear that all people mentalize, but some cultures may mentalize in different conceptual ways. These differences do not seem significant enough to detract from the position that all people mentalize.

[64] *Consequences of Utilitarianism: a Study in Normative Ethics and Legal Theory*, chapt. 2

[65] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 3, p. 102-107

dominator. If only strategic moderates were in a population, the result could be either total peace or total war, but once dominators are introduced total war is the clear outcome. Once even a small number of dominators are introduced, moderates will reason that they may be attacked by a dominator if they lie low, and thus they must increase their power. Moreover, as a strategist, they will be able to recapitulate other moderates' reasoning in the exact same way, giving them another reason to act anticipatorily.[66]

Kavka notes that given the introduction of dominators, not all moderates need necessarily be strategists anymore, though I would contend that most still are for the aforementioned relationship between mentalizing and being a strategist. For this paper, I will continue as if the vast majority of humanity are strategists.[67]

Section 2.d: Group Formation

In Section 2.b. the focus was on individuals and their choices, whether to engage in anticipatory violence or to lay low. This section will address the possibility that neither of these options yield as desirable an outcome for individuals. Instead, forming a defensive group would yield better outcomes. Hobbes seems to acknowledge this, however he argues that anything short of the creation of a fully fledged commonwealth does not provide "sufficient security" to individuals.[68] In his original analysis, Hobbes makes certain mistakes. This section will hope to correct those and focus on the limitation of group cooperation in the state of nature.

The circumstances by which group cooperation occurs are varied. The most plausible and likely given anthropological evidence is kin bonds, but others include "conquest, submission, tacit and explicit agreements." Kavka, in his analysis and for the sake of simplicity, discusses group cooperation in the context of a "defensive cooperative," which is defined roughly as an explicit agreement between individuals by which they are bound to defend each other's property and lives, should they come under attack.[69] The major challenge with these defensive cooperatives is compliance. Hobbes said that these agreements based on mutual trust and the promise of future cooperation will not stand in the state of nature because there is no third party

[66] Ibid, The four reasons laid out on page 105 provide an excellent insight into anticipatory violence. Hobbes describes these reasons very similarly, see; *Philosophical Rudiments*, preface, p. xvi.
[67] Ibid, chapt. 3, pp. 107-125, Kavka addresses objections to these positions.
[68] Ibid, chapt 4, p. 126
[69] Ibid, p. 127

present to enforce compliance. He points out that in the event that an individual is called upon to perform this defensive violence on behalf of others, they have no assurance, other than trust, that the individual who they are protecting will protect them in the future, and thus it would be irrational for them to help in the first place.[70]

To explore this further, Kavka adapts a simplified game theory analysis that most would recognize from a prisoner's dilemma problem. This defensive cooperative contains two individuals. From the tables he presents, the reader can see that the best outcome for both individuals is that they both keep their word and engage in defensive violence on the other's behalf. However, both of their dominant strategies are to break the cooperative, not coming to each other's aid. If this were the only possible way to analyze the defensive cooperative, then it would robustly show that the defensive cooperative will almost always fail.[71] However, this is an analysis of the short term and not the long term consequences of breaking a defensive cooperative.

Establishing a longer time frame in this analysis alters the results. We had previously established that people are concerned with their reputation. There are many reasons, but in the context of defensive cooperatives your reputation, particularly your trustworthiness, is crucially important. Since defensive cooperatives are based on mutual trust, if someone has a reputation for breaking their promises they would likely not be included into a defensive cooperative. By refusing to aid someone within your defensive cooperative, you may benefit in the short term, but by damaging your credibility, you make it very unlikely that you will benefit from cooperative agreements in the future. The empirical evidence seems to support this as well. When faced with a prisoner's dilemma, or something similar, the more interactions that the subjects of an experiment are aware of in their future, the more likely they are to cooperate with each other.[72]

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[70] Leviathan, chapt. 14, pp. 124-125

[71] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 4, p. 128-129

[72] *Prisoner's Dilemma*, pp. 63-66. See also; *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 4, p. 129-134, Kavka spends considerable time noting that if one were to take certain premises to be true, absolute human rationality amongst others, then defensive cooperatives would certainly be implausible. However, he notes that these premises are unrealistic. Notably, he says that if we were perfectly rational, like a computer, we might be unable to be trusting enough to enter into a defensive cooperative, but if we were too irrational, we would be unable to set aside the short term gains of not keeping our promises at the expense of our long term well-being.

To explain some further terminology, consider that each party in a defensive cooperative has two junctions at which it could break the agreement. One junction is the moment another party in the defensive cooperative is attacked, choosing not to come to their aid. Call this a defensive violation, whereby one of the parties is taking defensive action to avoid potential injury. The other junction is after aid has been provided to you by another party in the defensive cooperative, that other party is attacked. If you were to choose not to come to the aid of that party, failing to reciprocate aid, that would be an offensive violation. Returning to our previous discussion on reputation and trustworthiness, offensive violations would be severely damaging to one's reputation because within them is a failure to reciprocate.[73] Thus, making you less likely to be able to join defensive cooperatives in the future, making offensive violations a costly choice to make. In the state of nature, the costs of not being in a defensive cooperative, or conquering other's power, are likely life threatening, thus illustrating the costs.

This disincentive to commit offensive violations changes slightly the rationality of the first party keeping their agreement and not committing a defensive violation. Since the costs of failing to reciprocate are higher, it makes it more likely that reciprocation will occur, thus the potential payout of the first party keeping their agreement is higher. Still, defensive violations will negatively affect reputation as well. Therefore, a summary conclusion about the rationality of keeping defensive cooperative agreements in the state of nature is that if there is a strong likelihood of violations becoming known to other parties, and the subsequent payouts are large enough, even first parties could plausibly consistently keep their agreements.[74]

For most of this section, there has been the underlying assumption that the only thing that matters to these parties is their personal wellbeing. As we have previously established, people are not purely egoistic, but rather they are predominantly egoistic. Suppose you had a prisoner's dilemma between two kin and a prisoner's dilemma between tangential acquaintances. In the former, the likelihood of choosing cooperation is much higher than the latter. This is because kin value each other's wellbeing in addition to their own. Suppose they only value it at about a quarter the rate that they value their own wellbeing. In many cases this may be enough to change the dominant choice to keeping an agreement rather than breaking it. To clarify, in the kin case,

[73] *Strong Reciprocity and the Roots of Human Morality*, pp. 241–253

[74] I want to note the nuance of this assertion. Any stronger claim about the rationality of keeping or breaking defensive cooperative agreements does not seem possible, at least to me.

keeping the agreement yields benefit to you and to your kin (at ¼ the rate), but breaking the agreement yields benefit to you but harm to your kin (at ¼ the rate). These additional benefits of keeping agreements and additional negatives of breaking agreements likely explain how small tribal, mostly kin based, defensive cooperatives occurred throughout human history.[75]

In summary, while defensive cooperatives and group formation are possible in the state of nature, they are generally unlikely, especially beyond a small, kin-based scale. Moreover, once they occur they are precarious at best.

Section 2.e: Definition of the State

In order to properly discuss how the state is a better alternative to defensive cooperatives and individualist anarchy, we must agree upon a definition of the state. In this section I will do that. Max Weber's, German sociologist, defines the as that which "claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory."[76] This definition, while digging at the heart of the Hobbesian idea of the state, needs some refinement. Firstly, the state is a sub-group within a larger group which does not merely *claim* the legitimate use of violence, it *has* the legitimate use of violence.[77] Additionally, the state need not have a complete monopoly on violence.[78] Instead the state must be dominant in its power, meaning that it has enough power to control or defeat internal threats or competitors, as well as discourage external threats from interfering with it. Moreover, it must be powerful enough to enact and enforce its laws and regulations within its territory, as well as punish those who break them. This is important because a state that is able to do this makes it so its citizens do not have to resort to anticipatory violence or other artifacts of the state of nature.[79]

A caveat to the above description of the state is that opposing political parties could be seen as internal threats and competitors. It is not the intention of this definition to exclude states which hold elections. Ceding power to another subgroup through established internal procedures,

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[75] This should be reminiscent of C. D. Broad's egoistic-motive stimulates as well as the fourth proposition of predominant egoism.

[76] *Politics as a Vocation*,

[77] Ignore for a moment the normative implications of the word "legitimate". I included it for continuities' sake with Weber's quote. For the moment, the legitimacy of the state is not our primary concern. We are interested in the more basic, non-normative, evaluations of what defines a state.

[78] *Community, Anarchy, and Liberty*, p. 5, It seems as if no state can truly have a monopoly on violence as violence is used by criminal organizations in every state.

[79] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 4, p. 158-59

elections or succession, does not detract from the power of a state but rather exercises said power. Along these lines, if an internal political entity opposed the current state and attempted to take power through irregular procedure, and the current state was unable to forcibly prevent that opposing political entity from taking power, then they are not a fully fledged state.

There is further clarification necessary regarding the state. First, fulfilling the criteria of statehood may come in degrees. Some states may be able to enforce internal laws, but lack the ability to effectively deter outside threats. This reflects the realistic nuance of states that currently exist in the world.

Second, Kavka notes the problem of persecuted minorities, by pointing out that we do not typically consider a state to lose its statehood if it contains persecuted minorities. For example, African Americans in southern states during Jim Crow or Jews in Nazi Germany were both victims of significant violence that the state failed to prevent, or might have helped perpetrate. In response, Kavka points out that in failing to sufficiently carry out its primary functions, protection and security, those states failed to be states *in relation to* those persecuted groups. Because those groups suffer violence because the state chooses to ignore or even perpetuate that violence rather than being unable to prevent it, the state remains a state.[80]

In summary, the state, as defined here, has three main objectives. They are to deter external threats, settle internal disputes, and provide an environment where citizens do not feel the need to engage in "self-help" action which could result in escalated violence. Notably, settling internal disputes includes challenges to its own authority. These objectives require the state to provide, at a minimum, an external military force, an internal policing force and subsequent justice system, and finally some sort of administrative system to both select rules and delegate enforcement.[81] These objectives are likely impossible on a large scale without the state holding a permanent, or effectively permanent, territory in which to base operations. This is our final requirement for a state, that it has a relatively static designated territory.

The state that Kavka, and I, are defining is not the exact same as the original Hobbesian state. Hobbes seems to argue that for the state to be a state it must be a locus of unlimited power. As outlined in this section, the state's power need not be limitless. Hobbes argues that to prevent

[80] Ibid, pp. 159-160
[81] Ibid, p. 165

civil war, the state must possess a high concentration of power.[82] In realistic terms he is referring to an absolute sovereign, a king or monarch of some kind. He believes that a sovereign of this kind is necessary and sufficient to prevent civil war, or the breakdown of the state more broadly.[83] Given what we have seen in history since then, the rise of constitutional democracies and the overthrow of monarchs, I feel comfortable rejecting both of these notions.

Section 2.f: Where Group Formation and Defensive Cooperatives Fail

Section 2.d. establishes that defensive cooperatives are possible, albeit precarious, but this section will show that they are insufficient to provide an adequate amount of security for those within them. This is because it is not possible for a defensive cooperative to grow to a sufficient size to provide that security without becoming a state. The subsequent parts of this thesis, Part #4, will use anthropological evidence to establish this point. By showing this, the necessity of the Hobbesian state becomes clear.

Imagine the state of nature is full of many small sized, kin-based, defensive cooperatives.[84] In this scenario, it seems likely that these groups are composed of individuals who vary between being moderates and dominators, as well as mostly all being strategists in nature. These groups will take on properties similar to their individuals. Whether being led by an individual leader, or by concert of many, some of these groups will take on the traits of dominators and others will take on the traits of moderates, and most will be strategists. Thus we have a state of nature exactly the same as what was discussed in Section 2.c., except instead of individuals, we have these groups. Groups are all vulnerable to each other, thus anticipatory violence will occur often in order to strengthen one group relative to other groups. However, with our discussion in Section 2.d. we have established another option for these groups: forming defensive cooperatives with other groups. If these groups are like individuals, this is perfectly reasonable. This would result in fewer effective groups over time. The decrease in group number can be attributed to the destruction of some groups or the formation of defensive cooperatives. Defensive cooperatives essentially merge the two groups into one for this discussion. Kavka notes that these factors mean that a state of nature amongst many small groups

[82] *Leviathan*, chapt. 17, pp. 157-158, chapt. 18, pp. 167-168
[83] Ibid, chapt. 19, pp. 178-179
[84] In this section I will use the term group to refer to defensive cooperatives, unless otherwise specified.

cannot be at equilibrium.[85] This line of reasoning also holds if the hypothetical state of nature starts as many groups of unequal size. What this demonstrates is that over time groups in the state of nature have a trend toward increasing in size.[86]

Given that this phenomenon seems both intuitively likely and empirically true, we must consider what this might mean for our discussion. The first question which comes to mind is: what stops groups from increasing in size infinitely, or at least until there's only one group? There are two types of reasons that Kavka points out but are rather obvious to the attentive reader. First, there are some scenarios in which simply having a larger number of combatants does not guarantee victory. This is especially true in scenarios with larger numbers. Moreover, some groups may aim to remain relatively small so as to thrive in areas in which big groups cannot, such as mountains, deserts, or archipelagoes.[87] In those scenarios, the work of deterrence is done by the geography rather than the numbers of the group. The second type of reason is logistical. Larger groups are more likely to have differing values and beliefs amongst members. Additionally, interactions between people that are not close personal relations or kin are more common, leading to enforcement problems.[88] However, to give a preview of what is to come, consider this assertion by Ara Norenzayan in his book, *Big Gods*, "Kin selection and reciprocity cannot produce stable levels of cooperation even in groups as small as 300."[89] Given these inefficiencies of scale, we can answer that groups will not group endlessly, instead they will limit their size to what is situational advantageous as well as logistically feasible.

These logistical challenges posed by increasing the size of groups are at the heart of why a mere kin-based defensive cooperative, which is small in size, fails to provide sufficient security for those within them. The state solves these problems by enabling groups to grow beyond a small size. This will be discussed further in Part #4 of this thesis.

Part #3: The Formation of the State

Putting aside logistical challenges and how they necessitate the state, in this section we will tackle the original Hobbesian and more contemporary Hobbesian accounts of how the state

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[85] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 4, pp. 161-162
[86] *Community, Anarchy, and Liberty*, p. 5, pp. 136-139
[87] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 4, pp. 162-163
[88] This is an important anthropological point that will be discussed at greater length later in Part #4 of this thesis.
[89] *Big Gods*, chapt. 7, p. 126

is founded. Broadly speaking, this will be a discussion of the hypothetical processes involved in founding the Hobbesian state, and how the state provides a better alternative to the state of nature.

Section 3.a: Founding through Institution, Coordination Problems and Two-Step Solution

States are founded, in Hobbes' view, through either acquisition or institution. Social contract through acquisition occurs when pledges of obedience to an already existing sovereign's rule of law are taken by a group of individuals. Social contract through institution occurs when many individuals or perhaps groups of individuals enter into agreement with each other, creating a third party common power over them all. In Kavka's project, he is most concerned with formation through institution, because he aims to create a normative theory that can answer questions about the state's justification.[90] I will also be focusing on formation through institution, but for different reasons. My project is most concerned with analyzing the extent to which Hobbesian principles and theory accurately map onto the descriptive accounts of how we arise from the state of nature and begin to form our states. Social contract through acquisition is less concerned with exiting the state of nature through social contract. Instead, it is generally more concerned with transfer of contracted parties as a result of conquest or acquisition. This would be an interesting question to explore, but is not the focus of this thesis.

To further clarify the social contract through institution, it is a bilateral agreement between all the parties involved. In fact, it seems like in Hobbes' view it is not a single agreement, but a series of agreements between each party.[91] These agreements are a surrender of some amount of self-rule, and they act to empower the subsequent sovereign power, whether it be a monarch or assembly, depending on the wishes of the individuals contracted.

Here, the reader ought to note that Hobbes seems to conceive of two stages to social contract through institution. The first is the entering into the bilateral agreements, and the second is the selecting of the sovereign power by those in the agreements. Kavka looks to explain Hobbes' view through game theory, specifically coordination problems. Important to understanding coordination problems is understanding that the downsides of failing to coordinate are much worse than coordinating on a less than optimal choice for each individual. In some

[90] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 5, p. 180
[91] *Leviathan*, chapt. 18 p. 160

cases, coordination problems may work themselves out, with parties naturally agreeing to select the same option, thus coordinating. This is the case if out of options A, B, and C, option C yields the greatest good for both parties. In this case option C would be the coordination point. In other cases, where options B and C possess equally good outcomes for both parties, parties may coordinate their efforts to choose which option to select, thus coordinating. Here, we would see two possible coordination points. In the third type of case, where option B provides party 1 with the greatest good, and option C provides party 2 with the greatest good, parties are at an impasse until one party is willing to take the less optimal option for themselves. Remember that failing to coordinate is much worse for both parties than choosing the less than optimal but still coordinating option.[92]

In the context of Hobbes' theory of social contract through institution, the third type of coordination problem is the one that will exist. Consider that the bilateral agreements between the parties have been created. With this step completed they now must select a sovereign power. At this point the third type of coordination problem arises. While each of the parties would like someone, or some collection of people, to be the sovereign, the fact that there is a sovereign, holding the state together and lifting the people out of the state of nature, is much more important than who specifically the sovereign will be.[93]

Hobbes thus suggests that in the interest of creating a state and arising from the state of nature, we first could agree to the coordination point, the establishment of a state and thus a sovereign. Then we could agree on the procedure by which we will arrive at this coordination point. Finally, we agree to support the outcome, given that it was arrived at in the agreed upon procedure. For example, a group of 1000 people may agree that they wish to establish a state with the sovereign being an assembly of 10 people. They agree that the procedure for selecting these people will be a majority vote. Finally, they all agree that as long as the procedure is followed they will accept the outcomes. It is important to note that the procedure that is chosen must be uncertain. This does not necessarily mean random, but the procedure must be uncertain enough so that participants will not be able to accurately predict the outcome. If they were able to do this then they would not agree to the procedure.

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[92] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 5, pp. 181-88

[93] *Leviathan*, chapt. 18 p. 170

One might push back, arguing that even if people agreed to accept the outcomes before the procedure, why should they honor that agreement if the specific outcome is poor for them? Here we need to consider, as we already have, the consequences of breaking one's word. Were one to go back on their promise of accepting the outcome, they would likely be shunned and prevented from engaging in further cooperation. In this specific case this would be especially serious, as they would be unable to engage in the bilateral agreement of the state and be kept outside of it, in the state of nature, now even more vulnerable as a state exists around them.

Additionally, one might consider that if enough people go back on their word then the entire bilateral agreement might fall apart. This is possible but faces several problems. First, each person must decide to do this, which is unlikely given that each person will realize their defection is inconsequential in the broader context. However, for the sake of argument imagine that we allow for coordination between fellow defectors. The alliance of defectors faces the exact same problems of compliance as other cooperative agreements. However, the payout for this cooperative agreement is much lower, as instead of leaving the state of nature, something clearly desirable, you are dashing those hopes and instead returning to the state of nature because the outcomes of the coordination problem were not to your liking. According to Hobbes' principles, this payout structure is not desirable to rational actors, and I tend to agree. Thus, the segregation of steps is a promising method in approaching coordination problems associated with choosing the sovereign.

Section 3.b: Parties in the Formation of the State

In order to more fully explain Kavka's enhancements of Hobbes' original two-step method, we need to make some further clarifications. It is important to remember that Hobbes and Kavka are engaging in a hypothetical. The scenario that they are exploring is not one that they claim has existed in the past, just that if people were cast into an environment where they needed to form a state from a state of nature, it would proceed thusly.

With that being said, we will turn to better understanding the parties, individuals or contractors, at play in this process. Kavka pulls three factors of the parties that are of "crucial importance". They are "knowledge, cognitive abilities, and motivational structures". The parties must all agree first on their goal, which is the establishment of a state. This will include agreement on what form that state will take. This will likely be relatively easy in comparison to

agreeing on the "rules of negotiation" as Kavka calls them. Kavka describes this much as one would describe creating the rules and regulations around a political arena, with rules of debate, proposals with subsequent rules for combination or conjoining of separate proposals, and even detailed amendment processes.[94]

How exactly these rules of negotiation play out will be dependent on those three aforementioned factors. We have already discussed human motivational structures. We are rational, forward-looking, and predominantly self-interested. These traits have all been discussed in previous sections, but Kavka provides us some additional insight as to why they are important in this process as well.[95] Predominant egoism, while being descriptively accurate, also allows for the simplification of recapitulating the hypothetical individuals' reasoning. Finally, forward-lookingness, while also descriptively accurate, also assists in supporting normative claims. Forward-lookingness of the individuals allows for strong justification of the subsequent normative theory, as they are more able to foresee the results of their decisions.[96]

Kavka then launches into a lengthy discussion about the knowledge that the hypothetical individuals must and must not have in order to best support the normative claims in his subsequent chapters. The important takeaways from it are that Kavka disallows each individuals' knowledge of their own social position, this is similar to their social powers previously discussed. Were they to have this information, it would likely make it impossible for agreements to be made between individuals or different social positions. Consider someone with extensive property wanting strong property rights, and someone with no property wanting extensive redistribution. This will remind many readers of Rawls' "veil of ignorance". However, in contrast to Rawls' "veil of ignorance" people *do* have knowledge of their own characteristics.[97] This, in Kavka's view, would assist with agreement on the social contract, as it would allow for each individual to know their "vital common interest" in reaching a coordination point.[98]

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[94] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 5, pp. 188-189

[95] Ibid, p. 190

[96] A reminder that Kavka is attempting to make a theory that can justify certain normative claims, thus the decisions made by the parties in this hypothetical must be rational.

[97] *Theory of Justice*, pp. 137, 155, 168-169; *Theory of Justice: Revised Edition*, pp. 118-123, For discussion on the Veil of Ignorance, see the latter citation.

[98] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, pp. 197-200. It is worth noting that three types of individuals will not likely agree to any coordination point. Those individuals are dominators, who simply love the state of nature and the fact it allows for conquest. Those individuals who are foolishly or accurately self-confident in their own abilities and shun off the need for a state. Last, those individuals who are extremely risk tolerant and do not find the risks of the

Relevant to this discussion is the difference between bargain and choice theories of social contract.[99] Because we have differed from Rawls and our contractors possess knowledge of their characteristics, choice theory will not yield a uniform result across all of our contractors. Instead, bargaining will take place, whereby tradeoff will be made and all contractors will have their say.[100]

Kavka notes that a problem of his approach is determining what the content of the proposal of the social contract might be. Considering how varied the possible outcomes are, he admits that this significantly diminishes the likelihood of uncovering "ideal" principles by which society should function. Instead he proposes that we find the principles which exist at the "intersection" of all of these possible disparate proposals. He views finding the principles at the "intersection" as the best way to determine the factors that best achieve Hobbes' most fundamental argument, which is an argument against anarchy.[101]

Kavka argues, and I agree, that disaster avoidance reasoning is a strong candidate for a mutual principle across all the possible proposals. This principle of reasoning is best described as choosing options that decrease the likelihood of any disastrous event occurring. This is contrasted by pure rational choice theory, which is best described as choosing options that maximize the expected value of something good happening, while minimizing the expected value of something bad happening. Disaster avoidance reasoning has notable advantages in the social contract context. It seems to have an advantage in situations where all options have potentially disastrous outcomes and the probability of disaster from each choice are uncertain, but the options can still be ranked ordinally in terms of relative disaster likelihood. More generally, this can be summarized as when a "agent faces a choice among potential disasters under uncertainty."[102] Kavka has an excellent example of this in his paper, *Deterrence, Utility, and Rational Choice*.[103] Hobbes, too, seems to endorse this type of reasoning for his contractors.

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state of nature intolerable. It is because of these individuals that Kavka rejects Hobbes' original conception of agreement of a coordination point as unanimous. Instead we opt for an overwhelming majority of individuals agreeing.

[99] *Contracts and Choices: Does Rawls Have a Social Contract Theory?*, pp. 315–338

[100] Kavka believes that this bargain conception of the social contract fits better with Hobbes' State's central function of disincentivizing conflict and making cooperation possible. I agree with him, as bargain central social contract theory seems to place cooperation and agreement more centrally, as Hobbes tends to.

[101] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, p. 200

[102] Ibid, pp. 201-203

[103] *Deterrence, Utility, and Rational Choice*, pp. 41–60

Within Hobbes' state of nature and subsequent state, this reasoning would be found to support the idea that individuals may suffer disastrously in a Hobbesian state, as they would in the state of nature. However, under that Hobbesian state suffering will occur less frequently and with less certainty. Disaster avoidance reasoning is not concerned with the badness of the suffering, or at least not once badness passes a certain threshold it is all the same, disastrous. Instead, disaster avoidance reasoning is concerned with the likelihood of avoiding disaster all together.[104]

What about the contractor's situation makes disaster avoidance reasoning the mutual principle? First, and crucially, consider the high levels of uncertainty at play in their situation. It is not possible for them to predict with confidence their level of wellbeing under different proposals.[105] Kavka notes that even while they know their personal characteristics, these are only weak indicators of how well they might fare under certain proposals. Consider someone who is intelligent and hard working, in a society where merit is the rule, but there is no social safety net. In this society many people would live lives not worth living. Would it be likely that an intelligent and hard working person lives a life not worth living in this society? No, but injury, disease, or pure bad luck may cast them into the lowest levels of the social strata. Considering the considerably high stakes here, people's lives, of which they have only one, in the new found state, disaster avoidance seems to be the prudent line of reasoning. This is especially true in the case of the formation of the state process, which is a one off negotiation which will have far reaching consequences. Where the process repeated annually, people would perhaps be more willing to accept greater risk.

Section 3.c: Content of the Agreement: Economic, Government, and Liberty

Now that we have considered the process, the parties and their reasoning, we now must turn to the content of the agreement itself. Kavka draws out three distinct categories that can

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[104] *Leviathan*, chapt. 18, pp. 169-170; chapt. 11, pp. 86-87. In the second citation Hobbes is discussing the rationale of rebellion, and points out that it is only reasonable once the disaster of the state of nature is surpassed by the badness of the current lot the rebellious population endures.

[105] *Can The Maximin Principle Serve as a Basis for Morality*, pp. 594-606. This is a rather important point. As noted by John Harsanyi, if this stops being the case, then disaster-avoidance principles can paralyze people in inaction in normal circumstances. Here the important point is that this circumstance is not normal, as no actor can accurately predict the outcomes.

guide us in understanding this content. They are economic welfare, government powers, and individual liberties.[106]

Section 3.c.1: Economic Content

Kavka argues that economic welfare will arise as a concern for the contractors in the process. More specifically, minimum acceptable economic welfare is their concern. This is the minimum level of economic welfare that a citizen of the soon to be state can expect to enjoy. This minimum would be guaranteed, though not entirely without stipulations. Some societies may include work requirements, but others may not. Similarly the form of this welfare will vary by society, some may use in-kind benefits, while others with more sophisticated administrative systems might use tax manipulation. Additionally, what qualifies as minimum will vary by society, just as what is a good life in some states is not a good life in other states. Kavka places two criteria on what minimum can generally be defined as. First, it allows individuals "to live out their physiological life spans" and second it allows individuals to "participate in normal social and economic activity in society."[107]

Put another way, this minimum acceptable economic welfare requirement for a new state is another way of describing an economic disaster insurance policy for each individual. Whereby, each individual is willing to take on the additional costs of supporting others, giving that they will be supported if the need arises. Disaster avoidance reasoning is doing quite a bit of work here. Kavka presents two reasons why the contractors would include this minimum economic welfare requirement into their proposal. First, as already mentioned, is the same reason that disaster avoidance reasoning is favored. People are predominantly self-interested and concerned that they are vulnerable to being destitute in this new state, regardless of if they know their characteristics and even if their characteristics are positive. Stemming from similar concerns, contractors may have kin who fall into the category of people with negative characteristics, thus they will want the minimum economic welfare requirement on their behalf. Moreover, their self-interest will also want the requirement for their poorly endowed kin, as if

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[106] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, p. 210

[107] Ibid, pp. 212-214. This twofold definition is designed to capture the commonality between individuals in different societies, basic physiological needs, and differences, needs specific to that societies economic and social environment. Kavka makes a point to acknowledge that some people suffering from certain illnesses or handicaps may be beyond the reasonable help of the state, hence the minimum acceptable economic welfare only applies to "most" persons, and those beyond the reasonable help of the state are a "special case".

their kin are unable to support themselves in this new state, and there is no minimum welfare requirement, the original individual will be tasked with supporting that kin themselves.[108] The second reason stems from the forwardlookingness of the contractors. They consider that without a minimum economic welfare, a portion of the population of the state will be in conditions not unlike the state of nature. They will not necessarily be in an active state of war, but they will be in conditions in which they will resort to self-help in the form of theft and violence. Taken to an extreme, this could result in armed rebellion and conflict. Hobbes himself makes note of this.[109]

In addition to minimum economic welfare, Kavka argues that two other general principles be included under economic concerns. The first is creating an economic system in which incentives exist to spur individual productivity. The second is including elements of meritocracy and equal opportunity, with special focus on those economically or socially disadvantaged within the economic system. Kavka argues that the contractors would implement these general principles. Considering first incentives. Contractors would recognize that shaping incentives in a way that maximizes productivity will create mutually beneficial outcomes for all members of that economy. This gain will be realized by those endowed with positive characteristics, as they are likely the ones directly benefiting, but it will also be realized by those poorly endowed, as societies with greater productivity tend to have larger and more robust social safety nets and higher minimum economic welfare. These same considerations appear in regard to meritocracy, where the best person ought to work the job, regardless of their race, gender, or creed. Considerations of equal opportunity stems from the same disaster avoidance reasoning that has been previously discussed, even those with positive characteristics may find themselves at the bottom of the social ladder and will desire the opportunity to climb.[110]

Section 3.c.2: Government Content

Now moving to government powers and organization. Both Hobbes and Locke acknowledge that there exist different forms of government along lines of limited power, and

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[108] Ibid, p. 218

[109] *Leviathan*, chapt. 15, p. 139; chapt. 11, pp. 86-87.

[110] Hobbes is very concerned with the harm that anarchy does to the individual. This harm comes in the form of making their lives miserable and short. Part of living a good life is having access to physical security as well as economic security. The contractors include economic welfare, along with physical security in the content of their proposal, because anarchy takes from man both physical and economic security, thus the state's purpose is to provide those.

divided power. A limited government has powers which are limited in some way. Kavka notes that constitutions are often employed to provide this limit. A divided government is a government where the power that it does have is divided between more than one individual or institution. So with this understanding, there exist five possible forms of government or lack thereof: the state of nature, undivided and unlimited government, divided and limited government, undivided and limited government, and divided and unlimited government. Hobbes endorses an undivided and unlimited government, or a monarchy, with a single sovereign who has unlimited power to act. Hobbes argues that the rational and self-interest sovereign will recognize that their personal wellbeing (power, wealth, and reputation), as well as the wellbeing of the state is tied to the wellbeing of the citizenry, and thus they will not abuse the citizenry. This is Hobbes' reasoning for why the contractors would select an unlimited and undivided governmental structure.[111] Kavka argues that Hobbes' argument in favor of undivided and unlimited government fails to be conclusive. He considers that aggregate wellbeing, measured in wealth, of a people does not have a perfectly monotonic (borrowing from econ) relationship with the wealth of a sovereign. They may be correlated, as in states with a wealthier populace *tend* to have sovereigns or governments that are wealthier and more powerful, but this is not always the case. Kavka notes that excessive military spending by a government is also indicative of a government's wealth and power, but not indicative of the citizenry's. Moreover, unlimited and undivided sovereigns may acknowledge that they require the buy-in of certain key members of the citizenry and specifically distribute benefits to those members while leaving the rest to suffer.[112] Kavka's final point is well taken and that an unlimited and undivided sovereign will be more prone to "shortsightedness and irrationality" appealing to the old adage *power corrupts*. This is doubly true when considered in economic terms of opportunity cost. The greater the power the ruler enjoys, the greater the opportunity costs of that ruler deciding not to use that power for self enrichment. While Kavka takes this as a given, much of the current psychological research supports this assumption.[113]

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[111] *Leviathan*. chapt. 18, p. 170; chapt. 19, p. 174

[112] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, pp. 224-228

[113] *Power Corrupts, but Control Does Not*, pp. 944–957; *On Power and its Corrupting Effects*; *Does power corrupt the mind?*. All three of these sources provide interesting insights into power's relationship to corrupting people's reasoning and actions.

Hobbes endorses the unlimited and undivided sovereign as the best option, but Kavka and most modern scholars, I would assume, endorse the limited and divided option of government. Hobbes' central problem with this option is that he thinks that it is unstable and will lead to civil war, which he saw in his own lifetime in England. Divided and limited government, in his view, places each sovereign or part of the government unable to insure internal and external peace. Moreover, it creates an inherent factionalization, which causes competing interests.[114] Kavka acknowledges these concerns, stating that while it is possible for divided and limited governments to devolve into civil war, it is not certain. In fact many factors seem to point toward the opposite, that these forms of government might be more stable. First one must consider the motivations of the officials with whom power resides. Consider that they have more to lose than most if the state were to devolve. This is of course because they currently occupy positions of power and privilege with their societies. For this reason they would work to "promote peace" and prevent civil war. A rejoinder to this might be surely if they value their status and power, then they will connive and scheme to gain undivided power and privilege. This forgets that Kavka has established that in this hypothetical all the contractors and subsequent citizens are disaster avoidant reasoners. Kavka's next point is reminiscent of the *checks and balances* mantra. He points out that with divided power, citizen's disputes with one locus of power might be arbitrated by another locus of power, allowing for citizens that are more appeased by their government. Kavka's general point here is that we can say that "on average" people will be most satisfied by a limited and divided government. The key here is that *more* people will be more satisfied with this type of government, considering that the government will be more responsive and more measured in its actions and reactions. Finally, he cites that recent history seems to support this claim of divided and limited government being more stable.[115]

Two other smaller points must be addressed in regard to government organization and power. First the question of *how does the government get its power?* Previously discussed, in the section on power, was the difference between social and natural powers in Hobbes' view. Kavka calls upon this distinction to answer the question. Because the contractors cannot give up their natural or physical powers to a sovereign or government, they give some of their social powers. This takes the form of lending the power of acknowledgment to the sovereign. In Hobbes' own

[114] *Leviathan*, chapt. 18, pp. 167-168
[115] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, p. 229-230

words "reputation is power."[116] When the contractors do this en masse, they create a shared expectation that each other contractor will adhere to the reputational power of the state. Thus the perception of power, based on the reputation, becomes very real power. There are eight powers that Hobbes conceives of the contractors forming state having: legislative, law enforcement, military, taxation, administrative, honorary, and censorship. Some quick notes on these powers. Law enforcement includes both policing and judicial issues, consider it more broadly internal conflict management. Military also includes general foreign relations, and can be considered external conflict management. Administrative, in Hobbes' view, is appointing inferior officers to conduct the state's business, though it could be broadened. Honorary is now archaic, as noted by Kavka.[117] Censorship, originally included by Hobbes, would likely not be included by the contractors that Kavka envisions on the grounds that such a power, if broadly exercised, would lead to suppression and eventual civil war as the desires of the citizenry were not met because they were never expressed.

The last concern is the selection of government officials. Kavka suggests that contractors would use the same two-step process mentioned in the previous section. First they would set out their procedure and then they would select their officials. Kavka suggests further that a majority vote would be the selected procedure, as it would work most consistently to maximize the number of people satisfied with the outcome of the result. Additionally, contractors would agree that this process of selecting officials ought to be repeated every few years, or at least have them subject to recall, because this would ensure that the link between the citizenry and the state is close and best avoids disastrous civil war.[118]

[116] *Leviathan*, chapt. 10, p. 74
[117] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, p. 225
[118] Ibid, pp. 230-231

Section 3.c.3: Liberties as Content

This is not a discussion of Hobbes' views of individual rights and liberties, rather this is a recapitulation of the contractor's negotiations regarding how the state might interact with individual liberties. Kavka pulls four general principles that the neo-hobbesian contractors would include in their government.[119] First, and most important principle is that the government must enforce natural laws.[120] Natural Laws for Hobbes are, most generally, rules, derived from reason, that drive man toward peace with his fellow man.[121] So the government must protect individuals from violence and theft and may curtail rights in order to do so. Second, contractors would create a state in which all individuals are equal or possess equal rights in relation to it. This has already been alluded to in the context of the economic content of the state. Third, Kavka generously interprets a sort of Millian harm principle, where the state ought not curtail conduct that does not pose harm to the wider citizenry.[122] Finally, a principle that freedom of economic relations may exist, with the understanding that taxation and regulation is required on economic minimum grounds and harm principle grounds. These seem, at least on their face, to be largely reasonable and disaster avoidant contractors would agree with each of these principles.

There are other liberties which the Hobbesian contractors also would recognize as needing specific mention and protection. Kavka refers to these generally as "political participation." This is a significant departure from Hobbes, who, as we have already discussed, favored undivided and unlimited government and political participation, beyond maybe the initial two step process, would be alien and destructive to him. In line with what was said in regard to majority voting, Kavka argues that these rights of political participation are paramount to preventing disaster in the form of civil war. They bring closer the citizenry and the state, making one more receptive to the other. Included in these political participation liberties are freedom of expression, religion, and obviously suffrage.[123]

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[119] Ibid, pp. 232-234

[120] *On Thomas Hobbes' Fallible Natural Law Theory*, pp. 175-190

[121] *Leviathan*, chapt. 14, p. 64. For Hobbes, like Locke, these natural laws seem to be something that mankind comes to via reason, but unlike Locke, they seem to be more practical and less morally charged. In my view, it seems like Hobbes would describe his natural laws as common sense, like "if I were to assault my neighbor they would assault me". Here, the rule "don't assault my neighbor" is found via reason by nearly all people, but isn't morally charged like Locke would describe.

[122] *On Liberty*, pp. 21-22

[123] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory*, pp. 333-335

This concludes the discussion on what content the neo-Hobbesian contractors would include in their new state. This includes economic minimum welfare, where every individual is guaranteed welfare better than what is probable in the state of nature. There is a system of divided and limited government, where officials are beholden to the public through some form of election. Finally, the state is charged with internal and external security, and individuals are free to act according to a harm principle. If these, along with the other stipulations discussed, obtain, then Kavka believes that he has constructed a "satisfactory state."[124] This concludes Kavka's explanation of what type of state individuals in a state of nature would agree to, because it alleviates security concerns, while guaranteeing that they are not worse off, suffering from tyranny and other abuses of a state.

Part #4: Anthropological Account

In this section we will consider anthropological accounts of topics like state formation, increased socio-political complexity, and cooperation problems as groups grow in size. The goal of Part #4 is twofold. First, to compare the anthropological accounts to Hobbes' and second to take what we can from anthropology and amend the neo-Hobbesian account, making it stronger. We will use anthropology to weigh the descriptive accuracy of the neo-Hobbesian account in comparison with other contemporary accounts of social contract, notably Locke's.

The growth of complexity and scale of human society has been enormous during the Holocene period. Anthropology, being the study of humankind, is interested in answering questions related to this trend. These answers come in the form of theories, which can be placed into two categories: functionalist and conflict. Functionalist theories argue that problems associated with growing scale, such as provisioning public goods, spurred on the growing size of human groups and the formation of social complexity in the form of states. Conflict theories argue that conflict, internal or external, are the driving force behind socio-political complexity. It should be noted that in recent literature, most theories attempt to combine aspects of these two theories.[125]

Briefly, consider where Hobbes falls between these two theories. It seems that primarily Hobbes will fall under conflict theory. He is most concerned with the state quelling internal

[124] Ibid, p. 336

[125] *The Sources of Social Power: A History of Power From the Beginning to A.D. 1760*

conflict between ingroup members, as well as enabling groups to outcompete one another on the stage of external conflict. However, there are traces of functionalist theories as well when we consider his concern for freeing man from the economic depravity that the state of nature imposes on him. Part of solving this, and related economic problems, lies in functionalist theories.

In this part, we will hear first from a theory that is functionalist, but with a specific focus on religion. Then, we will consider a more broadly functionalist perspective that focuses on markets and psychology. Finally, we will take up a recent article that examines which of the current popular theories is correct regarding the drivers of socio-political complexity. This article is broad ranging statistically analysis with ambition goals and is currently the most in-depth investigation of this topic from the field of anthropology.

Section 4.a: Ara Norenzayan's *Big Gods*

In Ara Norenzayan's book, *Big Gods*, he attempts to explain the rapid change in human society from small, kin-based, hunter-gatherer societies, to larger, kith-based, agricultural societies. He explains this through what he terms "Big Gods". These Big Gods are often omnipotent, omniscient, moralistic, and interventionist, or at least they exhibit something that comes close to these traits.[126] Societies with Big Gods are better suited for competition and survival against other societies without these Big Gods.[127] Immediately, one should be struck by the similarities in his project and Hobbes'. They both aim to explain how humanity exited a state of nature and formed complex and large-scale communities. Norenzayan is a psychologist by training, but does most of his research in the context of anthropology.

Norenzayan starts his book with eight principles of Big Gods. We need only concern ourselves with 4 of them: *watched people are nice people, trust people who trust in God, religious actions speak louder than words,* and *Big Gods for big groups.*[128] Like has been said already, Norenzayan cites anthropological evidence that indicates that humans were forming kith based societies and larger groups at the same time that these Big Gods emerged. He claims that

[126] *Big Gods*, chapt. 1, pp. 7-8
[127] Ibid, chapt 1, p. 11; *The Evolution of Religion*, pp. 18-30, See Also
[128] *Big Gods*, pp. xiii

these Big Gods precipitated, and enabled, the jump from kin to kith societies.[129] These Big Gods are a cultural adaptation, and Norenzayan makes an argument that this advantageous cultural adaptation created a distinct advantage for groups that possessed it.

First let us start with his initial discussion of *watched people are nice people*. He cites studies and experiments pointing to the fact that people who perceive that they are being watched tend to act more kindly.[130] One such study showed that merely placing two dots that simulate eyes in clear view of participants in a selfishness measuring game causes increased prosocial behavior.[131] Norensazyan's Big Gods are omniscient, and so they are constantly watching, thus people act more generously all the time. The Big Gods are also omnipotent and moralistic. This means that they have the capacity to punish and make certain prescriptions about what is good and bad. Norensazyan points out that most of these prescriptions are prosocial, but what this means is that prosocial behavior such as promise-keeping or rule-adherence were often moralized, and there was a fear of divine punishment for breaking them.[132]

Let us examine this a little more using analysis from Section 2.d. Imagine you have a defensive cooperative prisoner's dilemma between two strangers in the state of nature and another between two strangers who both believe in the same big god. In the former, the likelihood of choosing cooperation is much lower than the latter. If two strangers believe in the same big god, then in addition to the negative consequences to one's reputation from breaking the defensive cooperative, there is also a fear of divine punishment. This is effectively a deterrent from antisocial behavior.[133]

The fear of punishment by a third party has direct parallels to the Hobbesian state, where the state acts as an enforcer of internal prosocial policies which create an additional negative consequence of antisocial behavior. The principle *watched people are nice people* and its further explanations are a crucial similarity between the stories told by Norenzayan and Hobbes.

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[129] Ibid, pp. 5-7

[130] Ibid, pp. 20-23

[131] *Minimal Social Cues in the Dictator Game*, pp. 358-367. Something to consider here, may be the difference between kindness and generosity on one hand and adherence to rules and agreements on the other. While Norenzayan does not discuss this difference, it is relevant for how this relates to our understanding of the Hobbesian State. Increased kindness when people believe they are being observed may be motivated by unconscious or conscious reputation enhancing or by some sort of moralized belief, like *it is good to be kind*.

[132] *Big Gods*, chapt 1, pp. 7-8, chapt 2, pp. 27-29, chapt 3, pp. 47

[133] It is worth mentioning that both these people are likely strategists capable of understanding that the other *big god* follower likely feels the same.

The second principle from Norenzayan that pertains directly to our discussion is *trust people who trust in God.*[134] In chapter 5 of *Big Gods*, Norenzayan begins a discussion of how atheists are uniquely distrusted and viewed with an antipathy that exceeds other groups. Norenzayan argues that by not believing in any god, atheists are an anomaly whom people uniquely distrust. When compared to other groups that believers tend to view negatively, such as homosexuals, there was a distinct difference in the negative feeling.[135] For the homosexuals it was a feeling of disgust, while for the atheists it was a feeling of distrust. Moreover, it was demonstrated that the distrust of atheists of similar cultural backgrounds exceeds the distrust of religious people of ethnically or culturally different groups. Therefore,the reason why atheists are distrusted lies deeper than merely outgroup distrust.[136]

From this discussion we can see, in Norenzayan's words, "Freethinkers are seen as freeriders."[137] Imagine that a believer meets an atheist, and they are attempting to make a deal that requires a degree of trust, such as a defensive cooperative. The believer, knowing the atheist does not believe in divine punishment and being a strategist, can recapitulate the atheist's reasoning, meaning the believer will know that the atheist will not acknowledge the additional negative consequence, divine punishment, of breaking the defensive agreement. Additionally, this parallels the Hobbesian state, where two people both believing in, or trusting the power of the state can engage with each other more readily than one person who believes in the power of the state and another who does not.

Norenzayan's next principle is: *Religious actions speak louder than words.*[138] This principle arises from the consideration that nonbelievers could feign belief in order to gain the cooperative benefits of being a believer. This would place the nonbeliever in an advantageous position, wherein believer strategists would incorrectly recapitulate the nonbeliever's logic. However, there are oftentimes displays of religious conviction associated with religion, and those displays can be costly or generally harmful to the agent committing them, making it less likely for a nonbeliever to commit such an act. One extreme example would be acts of martyrdom.

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[134] Ibid, pp. xiii

[135] Ibid, chapt 5, pp. 77-80, Though the contrast between views toward homosexuality and atheism persists throughout the chapter.

[136] Ibid, pp. 83-86

[137] Ibid, p. 83

[138] Ibid, pp. xiii, p. 95

Norenzayan calls on anthropologist John Henrich and applies to his concept of "credibility-enhancing displays" or CREDs, highlighting three features of CREDs that promote prosocial behavior. First, CREDs increase the perceived believability of a given religion because of the display of conviction, thus spreading the religion. Second, because CREDs increase the believability and spread of a given religion, more people will commit CREDs, thus reinforcing the spread and believability of a given religion. Third, many of these CREDs are altruistic in nature, thus while they may be costly to the doer, if they are done at scale they increase the cooperation level in prosocial religious groups.[139] Signaling group allegiance, from one strategist to another, is an important and relevant consideration,especially in the context of trust.

The last principle that we must consider is *Big Gods for big groups*.[140] This principle is the culmination for Norenzayan and is the direct outcome of his investigation into the historical record of small societies developing into larger societies and the role that Big Gods seem to play. In order for a society to grow past small, hunter-gatherer size it must adopt prosocial mechanisms beyond merely altruism, kinship, and reciprocity. Because Norenzayan is able to cite so much historical and anthropological evidence regarding the correlation of Big Gods to these societal shifts, what is generally a correlational argument quickly makes a case for being more causal.[141] This, paired with the prosocial mechanisms that Big Gods provide allows Norenzayan to paint a clear picture of his view.

Norenzayan notes four patterns that emerge in the archaeological record. First, Big Gods go from rare to common. Second, morality and religion go from generally disconnected to generally intertwined. Third, CREDs become more organized and regular. Finally, supernatural punishment becomes more extreme, moving from things like forest fires to eternal damnation, and supernatural punishment is focused on norm violations.

To back up these claims, Norenzayan invokes quantitative analyses. Here, he aims to go beyond the stories that support his theory in isolated instances. He references research done by Franz Roes and Michel Raymond in which they show a clear correlation between the size and complexity of societies and the likelihood of the existence of a moralizing, omnipotent god.[142]

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[139] Ibid, chapt. 6, pp. 98-103

[140] Ibid, pp. xiii, p. 124

[141] Ibid, chapt. 7, pp. 127-129, The entire chapter focuses on this general issue, but the selected pages discuss the amount of evidence perhaps constituting a causal claim.

[142] *Belief in Moralizing Gods. Evolution and Human Behavior*, pp. 126-135

He also references John Snary's finding that there is a positive relationship between the existence of moralizing, omnipotent gods and water scarcity.[143] Norenzayan uses this finding to posit that these Big Gods arise in places in which they are needed, or that they are a prerequisite for successful societies in these places. In places with water scarcity, Big Gods are selected for, because they help enforce conservation norms. It is worth noting that these are merely correlational, but supportive of Norenzayan's position nonetheless. The final notable piece of evidence that Norenzayan uses here comes from Harvey Whitehouse and Quentin Atkinson. Whitehouse makes a distinction between two types of religious ritual. The first is doctrinal and the second is imagistic. Doctrinal rituals are frequent, not psychologically intensive, and managed closely by religious authorities. Imagistic rituals are infrequent and psychologically intensive, with much less consistency of content than doctrinal rituals. Working with Atkinson, Whitehouse found, first, that the more that one type of ritual occurs in a society the less that the other will occur. Doctrinal rituals are associated with societies that possess a greater reliance on agriculture and religions with Big Gods. This provides evidence that doctrinal rituals are more prosocial, likely because of great reliability and predictability in transmitting and controlling the cultural dogma of a society.[144]

All of Norenzayan's principles and discussion thus far culminate in his conclusion that:

> over time and as groups gain in size, morality and religion move from disconnected to increasingly intertwined. As groups expand, Big Gods emerge, who demand sincere commitment, micromanage humans round the clock, punish transgressions, and reward good behavior. Elaborate, repetitious rituals that coordinate and validate the group's supernatural outlook also become more common.[145]

But what does this mean for our discussion of Hobbesian Theory, and, more specifically, for group dynamic and formation in that context? Has Norenzayan created a decisive theory against which there is no room for refutation? Is it even in opposition to the account given in this thesis thus far? These questions will be answered in the next section.

Section 4.a.1: Response and Reconciliation of Norenzayan

Norenzayan provides us with an anthropological theory of significant explanatory power. At the onset of the previous section we were asking questions about how societies transition

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[143] *The Natural Environment's Impact upon Religious Ethics: A Cross-Cultural Study*, pp. 85-96

[144] *The cultural morphospace of ritual form: Examining modes of religiosity cross-culturally. Evolution and Human Behavior*, pp. 50–62

[145] *Big Gods*, chapt. 7, p. 131

from kin to kith based and what enables them to make that leap. The Hobbesian answer rests on the Hobbesian state and, on the surface, this is in conflict with the account that Norenzayan gives us, which is Big Gods. In this section I will attempt to reconcile these two views and explain how the Norenzayan account provides additional credence to the Hobbesian answer.

Firstly, let us acknowledge the inherent similarities between the two entities: the Hobbesian state and Big Gods. Both act as third party observers with the essential functions of monitoring the interactions between ingroup members and punishing those who engage in anti-social actions, such as lying, stealing, or violence. Additionally, while the State is not technically omnipotent, in relative terms to those within the ingroup, it is essentially omnipotent. Similarly, while the Hobbesian state is not omniscient, it is perceived as omniscient enough to effectively deter anti-social actions, so, as with omnipotence, in relative terms its knowledge of states of affairs could be synonymous with that of a big god. Next, let us consider how they are different. Big Gods are moralistic, while the state may not necessarily be. Big Gods are tied to an ingroup specifically, unlike states which are tied to a geographic location as well as an ingroup. Big Gods also enforce ingroup dogma through CREDs and Doctrinal ritual. States must deter external threats as well as internal, whereas this is not an essential feature of Big Gods.

How consequential are the differences between Big Gods and the Hobbesian state? Let us consider the first and likely most important difference between the two: the moralizing nature of Big Gods. Big Gods are concerned with judging human action in a fundamentally moral manner, at least this is the account that Norenzayan provides us. This raises the question of what exactly about the Big Gods makes them moralizing? From my reading of Norenzayan, he is arguing that these Big Gods make declarations of normative values to their ingroup. Consider declarations such as it is *good to be kind* or *it is bad to lie*. It is not clear that there is anything more to Norenzayan's claim of moralizing gods. Now, does the Hobbesian state engage in this sort of declaration of normative values to its subjects? When considered explicitly, the answer seems to be no. However, when considered implicitly, it is more complex. When a group of individuals or a number of small groups join together, they set out a number of laws that must be adhered to by the populace and enforced by the state. What are the criteria for these laws? They are generally prosocial in nature and adherence to them yields good consequences insofar as the state and the subjects of the state or concerned. Here, there is an implicit viewing of the state's laws as good. Consider that the goal of those creating the state is prosocial outcomes that are born out of a

well-functioning state. The state's laws are rationally good, or instrumentally good, insofar as they achieve the desired outcome.

To explore this further, we will employ a more philosophical discussion of goodness. In the Big Gods' case, goodness seems to be intrinsic, meaning that the declaration *it is bad to lie* means that lying is bad in and of itself. With the Hobbesian state. we see a goodness that is instrumental, meaning that the laws are good only insofar as they achieve the state's fundamental goals.[146] These goals allow for the state and the ingroup of the state to cooperate and outcompete outgroups that may arise. Now, consider the origins of the Big Gods according to Norenzayan. Since he is using an anthropological and cultural evolutionary approach, he argues that these gods arise by chance and enable their societies to outcompete rival societies because of their prosocial normative declarations.[147] When considering his approach, as a researcher, it seems as if the Big Gods themselves are instrumentally good. Consider the perspective of a researcher, who does not themselves believe in the Big Gods. If one were to take that approach, they would see the Big Gods as instrumentally good, assuming they believe that human cooperation and prosocial behavior is good. Moreover, they would likely see the act of viewing Big Gods as intrinsically good by worshippers as an instrumental good for that belief's contribution to that society's well being.

However, this may miss the significance of what the Big Gods' moralizing means. The important issue here is that their followers believe that they have the power to moralize. It is not important that you could view the Abrahamic God's moralizing as instrumental good as a nonbeliever or from a cultural evolutionary approach, but the believers of the Abrahamic God will see this moralizing as divine, resulting in perceived intrinsic goodness.

I believe what we ought to take from this discussion of the difference between Big Gods and the Hobbesian state, in terms of moralizing, comes down to the importance of the nature of the correspondence between the individuals and the larger entity. Big Gods, contained within their definition, imply the fact that their followers will necessarily believe in their moralizing powers as absolute. Hobbesian states, on the other hand, do not imply, by definition, the specific

[146] The fundamental goals of a state are to deter external threats, settle internal disputes, and provide an environment where citizens do not feel the need to engage in "self-help" action which could result in escalated violence.
[147] Here "chance" refers to the random mutations that might occur in cultural evolution. While this chance is random, the mutations only take hold if they are advantageous, like in the big gods' case.

belief which their citizens will hold regarding their moralizing.[148] While the difference between intrinsic and instrumental goodness seems large, the instrumental goodness described here would likely be as powerful a motivator as the instrumental goodness found in social norms today such as meal times, clothing requirements, and burping being considered rude. These are important to our everyday lives and dictate a great deal of what we do. Now, consider certain laws like speed limits and drug prohibitions. Culturally, if you break these laws, you've done something instrumentally wrong.[149] This wrongness is conceived of strikingly closely to the wrongness of theft, which I assume is intrinsically wrong. Finally, there are many laws which overlap with intrinsic goodness or badness. Murder is an excellent example. Here, the law is instrumentally good, but indistinguishable from the intrinsic goodness of the Big God's prohibition. From the perspective of the follower or citizen, the line between intrinsic and instrumental goodness is blurred.[150]

Further clarification is needed here. Norenzayan does discuss how sometimes the specific absurdity, in terms of content, of a normative declaration can contribute to its significance. This is an excellent point and does accurately point out the limits of the similarity between explicit and implicit normative claims. The explicit normative claims are able to more easily moralize that which implicit normative claims would be hard pressed to.[151] A Big God is more able to make this normative claim and have it perceived as moral than a state making a national day of rest and having it perceived as moral.[152]

The next difference worthy of discussion is the claim that Big Gods, and religions more generally, engage in CREDs and doctrinal rituals, which differentiate them from the Hobbesian state. In addressing these two points, I should explain that I will not be arguing that Hobbesian states necessarily engage in overtly religious acts or promote such acts. The question before us is, are there similar enough practices within the Hobbesian state? While doctrinal rituals do not

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[148] To this end, it seems most likely that a Hobbesian states' moralizing will be viewed as instrumental toward its larger goals.

[149] This may be a contentious point for some. They may argue that breaking of these laws would be intrinsically bad as it violates some more fundamental moral law, but this debate would distract from the intended illustrative point.

[150] In fact, oftentimes a degree in philosophy is required to parse out these issues.

[151] Consider the prohibition of working on the Sabbath as an example of a moralized issue.

[152] A state may make a national holiday that is a day of rest, an independence day for example. The state may also be able to enforce a national holiday like this, making it so no business may force its employees to work on this day. However, failing to adhere to these rules would likely not be viewed as a moral wrong, rather it would simply be a bad decision because the state may throw you in jail.

occur in the Hobbesian state, this is not a sufficient investigation to conclude they lack similarity. Additionally, it is not a goal of this discussion to show that the Hobbesian state *must* engage in these practices, just that it *can*, and is perhaps likely to. Doctrinal rituals, like Catholic mass, are habitual, not psychologically demanding, and enforce or spread dogma. Consider the pledge of allegiance in the United States. Is this a doctrinal ritual in a secular context? It is certainly habitual. It is not psychologically demanding.[153] It also spreads and maintains a certain kind of dogma. Not a religious dogma, but a dogma about the United States as a state. The pledge of allegiance belongs to set practices that a state might have. Let's call these doctrinal-adjacent rituals. Most rituals that belong to this group are annual, such as national holidays, but this still seems habitual enough to qualify.[154] Here the important understanding is that states can possess doctrinal rituals just like a religion with a Big God.

For CREDs it is more difficult to draw comparisons between Big Gods and Hobbesian states. For one, a central component of CREDs is that because they are often costly, they provide credence to belief in the Big God that the CRED is being performed for. Martyrdom was a previous example, and self-flagellation might be another extreme one. States exist physically, or at least their power is observable and consistent, so belief in them is not a concern. Therefore, CREDs in the context of the Hobbesian state are better defined as actions that demonstrate and promote the belief in the state to perform its core functions, while being costly to the doer. Is there a similar enough practice within Hobbesian states? There are two ways to answer this question. The first is to find practices with similar properties, costly action that demonstrates and promotes belief, and the second is to find practices which have functionally similar outcomes, promoting prosocial behavior.

We will address the similar properties approach first. Are there actions performed by the ingroup of a state that demonstrate and spread the belief that a state can perform its core functions, and possess some amount of costliness to the performer? The first action that comes to mind is reporting a territorial dispute to a judicial system. This action signals your belief that the state can resolve the conflict, thus perhaps spreading that belief. Additionally, there is a risk of losing something in the judicial arbitration process.[155]

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[153] I seem to remember reciting it some morning while barely conscious.

[154] Like 4th of July, Memorial Day, etc.

[155] In the arbitration process your side of the case could be found less convincing than the other party and thus you lose the disputed territory.

Some actions might fulfill both criteria of similar properties and functions. Consider paying taxes. Presumably when you pay taxes you are signaling a belief to others that you believe the state will be able to effectively redistribute that wealth to ensure an economic minimum welfare and organize and fund an army to fulfill its core mission.[156] Furthermore, taxes are directly costly to you. Giving alms to the poor may be an example of a CRED which is analogous with taxation. Taxation also seemingly fulfills the function of promoting prosocial feelings amongst the ingroup. Taxpayers will naturally view other taxpayers as part of their ingroup. This shared status could certainly lead to prosocial behavior.[157] Another action that might satisfy both the criteria of similar properties and functions is contracts with strangers. The act of entering into contract with a total stranger implies acknowledgment of the state's power to enforce contractual obligations. The act also can be seen as prosocial, allowing for cooperation and mutual trust building.

Coming away from this discussion on CREDs and doctrinal rituals, there are a few things to keep in mind. First, CREDs for a Big God religion are different from CREDs for a state, with the latter being actions that demonstrate and promote the belief in the state to perform its core functions while being costly to the doer. Second, given an understanding of the aforementioned difference, doctrinal rituals and CREDs seem to exist in states or at the very least very similar actions occur. Finally, in the context of Hobbesian states it seems that to engage with the state is to acknowledge it and proliferate belief in its ability to carry out its core functions.

Finally, there are two differences between both Big Gods and states that are due to their inherent properties. They are that states are tied to geography and also must deter external threats as well as internal. The fact that states are defined by a geographic area of control and their citizens while a Big God, or their subsequent religion, are defined by their worshippers is a difference of kinds.[158] The question is: does this make the two incompatible or does it perhaps point toward a compatibility? I would argue that these differences actually show the limitations of Big Gods in building large scale kith based societies. A state needs a mostly stationary area of

[156] Or maybe you simply pay your taxes out of fear of punishment by the state, thus acknowledging its ability to enforce its regulations.
[157] Oftentimes political rhetoric will make use of this ingroup/outgroup distinction to either form comradery or spur outsiders.
[158] Here I am describing natural kinds. Both states and Big Gods are natural kinds that have different and unique properties.

influence so that it can effectively deal with the logistical challenges of its core responsibilities. It must erect a judicial system and it must fund an army to repel external threats, which requires borders to know both what to defend as well as whom to tax in order to fund said army. These logistical challenges are the cornerstone of how a state fulfills its core roles and creates a kith based society.

Now consider a kith based society enabled by Big Gods. Does this society have a judicial system, a way to deter outside threats, and manner of funding those projects? It seems as if it must. Thus, when we are imaging a kith based society enabled by Big Gods we are really imaging a state which also just so happens to be theocratic. Nowhere is there a necessary conflict between a Hobbesian state also being theocratic or a Big God religion also being intertwined with a state. In fact, the differences that I have been discussing thus far in this part have all turned out to be more nuanced differences than originally thought. These along with the similarities between Big Gods and the Hobbesian state further push us to a conclusion that if Big Gods is the dominant theory of increasing socio-political complexity, the two ought to be intertwined conceptually.

Norenzayan himself has discussion on the existence of "effective secular institutions" in both Chapter 5 and Chapter 10.[159] In Chapter 5, he discusses the fact that distrust of atheists significantly decreases as effective secular institutions arise, such as a secular judicial system. I want to consider why this might be. Take a theocracy, where instead of an "effective secular institution" we have an *effective religious institution*. This would be a theocracy with a strong judicial system that was deeply intertwined with the state religion. Would zealous followers of the state religion have reason to fear the atheists among them? The answer is presumably no, because were the atheists to break any rule, regardless of the atheist's belief in the greater normative claim, they are apprehended and justice is served. The atheist would act out of fear of punishment. This thought experiment is aimed at pointing out that Norenzayan's claim about effective secular institutions may very well extend to effective religious institutions as well.

In Chapter 10, titled *Cooperation without God*, Norenzayan tries to account for the modern day where many societies exist mostly secularly. Up until this chapter, one could argue that Norenzayan's theory yields an absurd conclusion, that a large kith-based society without Big

[159] Big Gods, chapt. 5 pp. 87-93, chapt. 10, The entirety of chapter 10 is dedicated to this topic.

Gods is impossible. These secular societies have "an elaborate set of norms and institutions" that encourage cooperation and punish miscreants.[160] Among these norms and institutions Norenzayan puts independent courts at the top of the list. He also notes that by trusting these institutions, you can trust those who also trust those same institutions. This is reminiscent of the points previously made about trusting those who believe in God. As already discussed, trust in a Hobbesian state is homologous to belief in a Big God. This widespread trust can lead to a decrease in transaction costs which yields greater mutual benefits to participants. Norenzayan argues that this creates a "virtuous cycle of trust and cooperation."[161] I agree with this view, though maybe without the baggage associated with the term virtuous.[162]

In further discussing the role that trust plays in secular societies, Norenzayan notes that when surveying the countries of the modern world, the more secular a country is, the higher the level of trust amongst its citizenry is. He also notes that these are countries where citizens are most reliant on their government. This is intuitive. Consider a state with very weak rule of law, where the state is not totally able to enforce its core missions. We would expect to see less trust under these conditions. Conversely, a state with strong rule of law promotes more trust amongst the citizenry and reliance on said state. Norenzayan and Azim Shariff investigated if words that are associated with strong secular institutions, like *judge*, would promote generosity between strangers. They found that this was in fact the case, just like religious words promote generosity, so do words like *judge* and *police.*[163]

There is evidence to suggest that government and religion are conceived of similarly within the mind and thus often compete for limited space. This is to say that as government becomes more relevant, religion becomes less relevant. Norenzayan cites three potential reasons for this, all of which I have already discussed. They are the ability to promote cooperation, provide stability and protection that individuals are not able to provide themselves, and provide relief to physical, material suffering.[164] To this end, states with strong social welfare systems show a particularly low level of religiosity. Research done by psychologists suggests that

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[160] Ibid, chapt. 10, p. 170

[161] Ibid, p. 171

[162] I think what Norenzayan means here by "virtuous" is really something like "prosocial", but in the philosophical context virtue and "virtuous" have more normatively loaded meanings.

[163] *God is watching you: Priming god concepts increases prosocial behavior in an anonymous economic game,* pp. 803–809

[164] *Sacred and Secular: Religion and Politics*,

people's internal psychological need to feel in control may be fulfilled by both government and religion.[165] When people feel out of control, including powerlessness, they turn to an external entity that can provide that feeling. All of this evidence suggests that not only do states and gods have similar properties and have similar effects, but they also inhabit and activate similar areas of our psychology.

In summary of this section, there are a few key takeaways that support my original contention that Norenzayan's account provides additional credence to the Hobbesian state as an answer to large, kith, group cooperation. First, it cannot be disputed that both Big Gods and Hobbesian states provide individuals strong reasons to cooperate with each other, beyond kin-based relationships. Second, both approach the problem of cooperation from a competitive/evolutionary perspective, where groups make adaptations to outcompete other groups. Third, the differences between the two, noted in this section, are not substantial enough to detract from similar effects, approaches, and mechanisms that both possess. Nor do these differences put the two in direct contradiction. Fourth, Big Gods do something which the Hobbesian state cannot do, at least explicitly, without them. That is to make explicit moral declarations. Conversely, Big Gods must employ hallmarks of the Hobbesian state, thus creating one, in order to succeed in large scale cooperation. That is the ability to create administrative hierarchies, deter external threats, and enforce doctrine during internal disputes. Fifth, both seem to be conceptualized by people in similar manner; so similar that they activate the same types of psychological responses and are substitutes for each other.

With this understanding, it is clear that the Hobbesian state is compatible with Norenzayan's Big Gods. Moreover, these theories reinforce each other, at least to the degrees discussed in this section.

Section 4.a.2: Clarification and Addressing Objections

In the previous section, I made many claims and arguments relating to the Big Gods and the Hobbesian state. In this section I wish to make some clarification and face certain objections.

The ordinal relationship between the Hobbesian state and Big Gods is unclear. Norenzayan believes that secular societies are an "outgrowth" of prosocial religions, as they

[165] *Randomness, attributions of arousal, and belief in God*, pp. 216–218; *Divergent effects of activating thoughts of god on self-regulation*, pp. 4–21.

serve similar functions in enabling large-scale cooperation.[166] He argues that monotheism enables atheism by empowering the rejection of false gods or pantheons of gods as well as abstracting the gods from the material world. Additionally, he cites Scott Atran who posited that the concepts of individual free choice and collective humanity arose from universal monotheisms.[167] While these points are interesting, they don't account for the nuance needed when discussing the issue of human development, specifically the rise in large scale cooperation.

The claim that secular societies are necessarily an outgrowth of prosocial, big god, religions, is fraught when considering the other statements made by Norenzayan in this book. Consider the acknowledgment that is made in chapter 10, that Big Gods and governments occupy the same niche in people's psychology. Consider also the acknowledgment that given strong institutions, distrust of atheists dissipates. In these acknowledgments Norenzayan is recognizing what I have been arguing. One, that government and big gods seem to be intertwined in function according to the distrust of atheist point. Two, that government and Big Gods seem to be intertwined in foundation according to the psychological niche point. Moreover, it seems like to be a Big God religion and to successfully promote cooperation, there is a prerequisite of having nearly all the central traits of a Hobbesian state, particularly the administrative hallmarks. In this way it looks like the Big Gods religion cannot exist without the Hobbesian state underpinning it. It is not clear to me if this is the case for the Hobbesian state, on its face, I do not see any way that the Hobbesian state relies on the Big Gods, that it cannot solve itself.[168] This does raise a question about catalyzation, or what starts the process of forming the Hobbesian state or the Big God religions. This is answered by both myself and Norenzayan the same: it is a cultural evolution process of adaptive behavior and belief. I think I should end this discussion with an assertion that neither of our solutions can concretely claim to precede the other, though Big Gods require a Hobbesian state, while the converse is not true.[169]

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[166] Big Gods, chapt. 10, p. 173

[167] *Sam Harris's Guide to Nearly Everything [Review of The Moral Landscape: How Science Can Determine Human Values, by S. Harris]*, pp. 57-68

[168] One candidate for reliance might be moralized beliefs, but I am unsure how strong this argument would be. For one, it is unclear to me if moralized beliefs are necessary for a Hobbesian state, and two, it is unclear to me how significant the functional difference is between moralized beliefs and socially accepted beliefs.

[169] In fairness to Norenzayan, he does not have the luxury of writing his book, knowing my position. In fact, I ought not to presume that he knew much of Hobbesian Theory either. Given this, it is possible that upon understanding my position, it is possible he could agree with my position generally. In chapter 10 especially, he is discussing secular governments specifically. The Hobbesian state is not inherently secular or non secular. I am unsure how this might

One set of objections against my position in the previous section may attempt to undermine the presuppositions that I make. There are three that I will defend here. They are the state's omnipotence, the state's omniscience, and the assumption that in order for a Big God society to function they must have administrative infrastructure.

I consider the Hobbesian state omnipotent, in relative terms, to those within its ingroup and to any individual. The Hobbesian state is not omnipotent the same way a big god is, such a claim would be ridiculous. Instead, the claim is that as far as the relevant parties, those being incentivized to cooperate, are concerned the state is omnipotent. Consider looking down a perfectly straight highway. You can only see some 20 miles due to the curvature of the earth. What does it matter if the road is 21 miles long or infinitely long? To you, someone looking at it, it does not matter.

The state's omniscience follows similar reasoning. The state, in order to qualify as a state, must be able to effectively deter "self-help" action by individuals and resolve internal disputes. By being able to do this, there is an implied level of knowledge or ability to be aware of the goings on within its area of influence. To be clear, this is not omniscience. However, it functions similarly. Consider how it might work in the everyday lives of a person within the state. A person would obviously be aware of the state watching them when officers of the state were present, like law enforcement or officers of the court. Additionally, individuals would be policed by each other. An individual wouldn't break laws with other individuals present out of fear of being reported to the state or its officers. Thus in all but the sanctum of your home, you are essentially watched by either the state or an individual who will report you to the state. This is sufficient, at least conceptually, to support the point made by Norenzayan, that watched people are nice people. Notably the costs of going against the state are severe. In the Hobbesian state, to break the law is to become external to the group, losing all cooperative benefits and being thrust back into the state of nature. As an individual against many groups, your chances are not good. Admittedly, this state does not have the same omniscient qualities as a big god, but what it lacks in observation power it makes up for with the severity and reality of its punishments.

The assumption that in order for a Big God society to function they must have administrative infrastructure will be defended next. The primary competitive advantage provided

affect his response, but I suspect that this makes the Hobbesian state more compatible with his Bog Gods, so much so that his position on the ordinal relationship between the two may not hold in his mind.

by the Big Gods is the ability to build large scale cooperative societies. These large scale cooperative societies necessarily need administrative infrastructure. Building this administrative infrastructure is where the cooperation occurs. From this point we should understand that at the very least Norenzayan's Big Gods necessitate administrative infrastructure. Consider doctrinal rituals. They are routine and rehearsed, consisting of a clear and repeated dogma. In order to put on these rituals there must be some structure across the religion that maintains the consistency of them. Moreover, these rituals occur in large groups, like the catholic mass, and will need to occur in a space sufficiently large. Consider the logistical challenges of building a church for example. In building and funding collective spaces, there would surely be an administrative infrastructure directing the proceedings. Finally, consider the importance of self defense and organizing such a defense. In chapters 8 & 9 Norenzayan discusses the existence of inter-religious conflicts. He identifies three reasons religions may contribute to violence. First, by building a solidified ingroup, they create distrust of outgroups. Second, the cooperation seen within religions could exacerbate the severity of conflict. Third, because religions make certain values sacred, they close off avenues for compromise.[170] With these in mind, we can imagine how inter-religious conflict could arise on the basis of religion. We can see how religions directly contribute to conflict with external forces. Conflict with external forces requires the creation of an army or some defense force. Groups with a more organized force will outcompete other groups. This is another example of how creating a Big Gods society necessitates the creation of an administrative infrastructure, a hallmark of a Hobbesian state.

Section 4.b: Henrich and the Broad Functionalist Account

First we will start by discussing a set of experiments done by Joseph Henrich, the American anthropologist cited by Norazayan for CREDs. Henrich attempts to explain the rise, and effect, of markets on the creation of formal institutions from both a psychological and historical perspective.

He, along with his team, employed variations of the Ultimatum Game to garner differences in tendencies across cultures. The Ultimatum Game involves a proposer and a receiver. The proposer will be given an amount of money, in this case $100. The proposer then

[170] Big Gods, chapt. 9, p. 160

proposes a split of the $100 to the receiver. If the receiver accepts, then both the proposer and the receiver will receive money according to the prosper's proposal. If the receiver declines the proposal, both parties will end the game with nothing. These games were one-shot, so there was no repeated interaction or expectation of repeated interaction between the parties. From the onset, it is clear that the receiver should accept any offer greater than 0, because they will not receive anything if they decline. However, in societies with greater amounts of market interactions, proposers were more likely to make offers closer to a 50/50 split, and receivers were more likely to decline deals that were anything worse than a 50/50 split. In an iteration of the experiment in Los Angeles, the average proposal was $48, and offers of less than $40 were often rejected. These findings were not replicated by societies with extremely limited market interactions, like remote tribal societies. In fact for these societies the average offer was 26% of the amount available, and only one offer was rejected even though many were 10% or below. This difference was significant and consistent with additional research performed.[171]

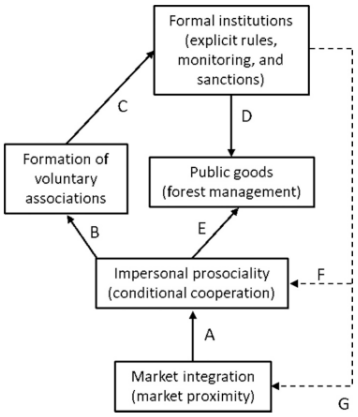
Henrich then tries to tackle why exactly this difference exists. More specifically, he is exploring why people in societies with greater market interaction exhibit "stronger inclinations toward impersonal fairness." Notably, those who professed an adherence to certain moralizing religions exhibited more fair offers. This accounted for a difference of about 6-10%, so a faction of the total difference. Henrich asserts that to have well working impersonal markets, cultures must develop market norms which enable "trust, fairness, and cooperation with strangers and anonymous others."[172] Henrich discussed, as we already have, that in a world that lacks kin-based institutions, reputation is incredibly important. It is especially important in circumstances where people depend on a kith based market economy for their survival. Reputation as a promise-keeper and a fair judge are important generally, but it is crucial that your reputation is that of a promise-keeper and fair judge in the context of interactions with strangers. If these norms and understandings are widespread, then strangers can interact with strangers, both receiving mutual benefits. Henrich points out that these market norms are neither unconditional nor altruistic, but instead done out of a self interest. This is due to the larger potential payoffs of committing to the group norms, which arise from the willingness of societies to commit to norm

[171] *The Weirdest People*, chapt. 9, pp. 291-294; See also *Markets, Religion, Community Size, and the Evolution of Fairness and Punishment,* pp. 1480-1484
[172] *The Weirdest People*, p. 295

enforcement, punishing those who violate the norms, and the benefits that exist for individuals in societies with market norms. Henrich admits that this is a "peculiar standard" in the context of human history, where kin-relationships and tribalism are the norm , but nonetheless this correlation exists.[173]

Henrich then must look for a causal relationship between exposure to markets and greater levels of impersonal prosociality. He is asking, "do markets alter people's motivations—via the internalization of market norms—so that they are more prosocial with strangers and anonymous partners?"[174] Using a study done by economist Devesh Rustagi of the Oromo people in the north of Ethiopia allowed him to answer this question.[175] In methods similar to, but more complex than the Ultimatum game, the Oromo were surveyed for conditional cooperation with anonymous strangers. Conditional cooperation refers to the extent to which participants increase or decrease their level of input in response to a partner increasing or decreasing their level of input. Those that perfectly parody their partners are perfectly conditionally cooperative. These results were then contrasted with the distance to the nearest market for each of the 53 Oromo communities. This data demonstrated that exposure to markets does have a positive causal relationship to greater levels of conditional cooperation and thus impersonal prosociality. The closer to a market the Oromo community was, the higher they scored on the conditional cooperation metric. What Henrich is able to take from this experiment is that crucial causal connection, which allows him to make the claim that the internalized market norms affect our psychology, making it more effective at creating organizations based on formalized agreements and rules. Henrich gives us his key insights in the form of figure 9.4, which is below[176]:

[173] Ibid, p. 296
[174] Ibid, p. 296
[175] *Conditional Cooperation and Costly Monitoring Explain Success in Forest Commons Management*, pp. 961-965; See Also, *Leader Punishment and Cooperation in Groups: Experimental Field Evidence from Commons Management in Ethiopia*, pp 747-783
[176] *The Weirdest People*, p. 301



Here we can see that what starts as exposure to markets and market norms allows for a conditional cooperation. From conditional cooperation, we observe that voluntary associations can be made and public goods can be provided, at least rudimentarily. Finally, voluntary associations become formal institutions, with laws, monitoring, and sanctioning. This last step should remind the reader of the Hobbesian state, with its formal administrative and judicial systems, as well as its implied monitoring powers. Finally, the dotted line, G, suggests that there is perhaps a positive feedback loop here. Where living in a society with strong formal institutions can contribute to one's predisposition for impersonal prosociality. This should be reminiscent of my and Norenzayan's discussion of effective secular institutions and how they can promote prosociality amongst a population that believes in, and acts accordingly, their effectiveness.

Henrich then shifts his focus from market norms to something else relevant to creating an impersonal market. He recalls a town in the Chilean Andes. People in this town made their economic decisions not on purely economic terms. Instead of buying from the shop with the lowest price for each respective good, the residents of this town bought from kin, people they were on better terms with, or people they knew better. So their economic decisions were not based on *impersonal* commerce, pure economics, but instead on *interpersonal* commerce. Henrich makes two further claims from this realization. First, in primitive societies without a hobbesian state or similar entity, the lack of any interpersonal relationships will prevent economic exchange from occurring, as it is too risky. Second, if the network of interpersonal relations is too complex, impersonal commerce cannot occur, because interpersonal commerce "strangles" it.[177] Thus, creating strong impersonal markets that will persist requires decreasing

[177] Ibid, p. 304

interpersonal relationships among buyers and sellers and cultivating market norms of honesty and fairness between strangers.

Henrich then paints a picture of economics in a state of nature very similar to the one envisioned by Hobbes. If you were to go to a neighboring tribe with the intention of trading your fish for their sheep, what would prevent them from simply killing you and seizing your sheep? Would they trust you not to have poisoned the fish that you would trade? These problems are immense for primitive societies, but Henrich admits that trade between groups did occur. This trade mainly occurred along interpersonal relationships of kin, marriage among others, that crossed group lines. According to anthropology, when non-kin relationships began to arise there were very specific customs associated with it. For the Oromo for example trade happened at temporary markets that formed in between tribal territories. These markets have taboos against violence, nonetheless merchants would almost always travel with tribal protection out of fear of being robbed going to or going from the market.

Henrich makes a historical claim that prior to the rise of Christendom in Europe, most large trading networks were maintained on the basis of interpersonal commerce, often kin ties. He cites a fascinating example from Assur in ancient Mesopotamia, where large extended families would function like logistics companies by sending members of their family to live in far flung cities and towns.[178] The next step in moving past this according to Henrich is the increase in urbanization that occurred, for a variety of reasons including Christendom, in Europe around 1000 CE. This urbanization enabled and promoted the creation of civil codes or laws, like the Magdeburg Laws. These were a civil charter full of laws which were copied by other towns and localities throughout Germany. Henrich tells a story of different localities competing with each other to attract rural tradesmen and workers to move to their localities. This competition occurs through the localities offering different competing packages of rights and incentives. The laws and codes of these localities are included in these packages, as well as the prosperity, especially economic, of the localities. This process may give us an insight into how a Hobbesian state might form initially and grow in size. Each state advertises the benefits of joining into their cooperative agreement and through a process of out competing its rivals a Hobbesian state grows larger and dominates them.[179]

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[178] The Clan and the Corporation: Sustaining Cooperation in China and Europe, pp. 1-35

[179] *The Weirdest People*, pp. 309-321

Another interesting outcome of this urbanization and civil chartering was the pronounced decreased emphasis on tribal and kinship ties. One of the first laws in the Magdeburg codes was one absolving fathers for the crimes of their sons if six other men could vouch that they were not involved. Henrich believes that this is part of a wider shift toward a more individualistic psychology that developed around this time, which reduced ingroup favoritism and tribalism.

Returning to the meat of Henrich's consideration, economics and the development of impersonal markets, this urbanization meant an increase in markets. Citing data from Gary Ricardson, 90% of Englishmen in the 14th century were within a three hour, or 6 mile, journey to the nearest market.[180] This drastic increase in the market exposure, as illustrated with the Oromo, would have spurred on conditional cooperation and willingness to engage in voluntary agreements and eventually formal institutions. In many of these places, the informal social norms gave way to a *lex mercatoria,* or merchant law. Which is a more formal and institutionalized set of rules and expectations for merchants. Here again, it is worth noting that as impersonal market interactions rose, the importance of a merchant's reputation rose as well.

To summarize what can be taken from Henrich's account, we should consider three stages. Stage one is the rise of commerce that is mainly predicated on interpersonal relationships. Stage two is the trimming of those interpersonal relationships, either through common identities or necessity, and the rise in prosocial market norms. Stage three is the shift into impersonal markets which, through prosocial cultural psychology changes, promote the creation of formal institutions that enforce and create further prosocial norms.

Section 4.b.1: Aligning Henrich's Findings with Hobbesian Theory

Henrich's research on markets is more difficult to compare and contrast with the already presented Hobbesian account than Norenzayan. This is in part due to the more narrow nature of research in the previous section. I will pull out what I think are tensions between the Hobbesian account and Henrich's research. I will then attempt to ease concerns over those tensions, arguing for compatibility, as was done with Norenzayan's perspective.

The first tension from Henrich's work is to consider if economics and markets as the driver or motivators of increasing socio-political complexity, eventually forming governments, is

[180] Guilds, laws, and markets for manufactured merchandise in late-medieval England, pp. 1-25

compatible with Hobbes' account of the state of nature and state formation. To reiterate the Hobbesian position, the state of nature is a violent place with some small, mainly kin based, groups. Eventually, out of shared self-interest, mainly regarding security, groups form more sociopolitically complex societies which necessitate institutions like government. Here we must consider whether economics and markets fall under the category of self-interest broadly, and we must also consider the extent that they overlap with security concerns.

I would argue that the practice of economics and the desire/creation of markets does squarely fall under the umbrella of self interest. Consider the basic principle of voluntary exchange in economics. I will exchange my value, good or money, for your value, good or money, if and only if the value of the thing I am trading is less valuable to me than the thing I am receiving from you. Moreover, the same is true for you. In this way, economics and the markets that empower its practice, certainly fall within the realm of self-interest. It also might be worth considering Hobbes' conception of power, particularly instrumental/social powers. This was discussed in Section 2.b., but has relevance here. Hobbes defines power most generally as "present means; to obtain some future apparent good"and instrumental powers are things like wealth or material possessions[181]. I believe it is fair to think that Hobbes might consider economics as the transfer of instrumental powers between people. Consider how voluntary exchange works in principle, substituting in power for value. I will exchange my good/money for your good/money if and only if the thing I am trading affords me less power than the thing I am receiving from you. Admittedly this is somewhat reductive considering our economics of today when things are bought and sold to satisfy desires other than power, but in a state of nature, where the primary concern for every individual is the survival of themselves and their kin, I believe this substitution is fair.

This ties directly into the consideration of security concerns. That is to say that in viewing economics as an avenue for small groups to increase their power through trade, we are acknowledging the fact that security concerns could conceivably encourage markets to be established. One might respond with the question, would it not be more secure or safer for a group to shun others in the state of nature? This is an excellent point, but it forgets that power is inflationary in the Hobbesian account, meaning if, for example, one of the tribes of the Oromo

[181] Leviathan, chapt. 10, p. 74

shunned the markets, they would slowly fall behind in terms of instrumental power, putting them at risk of being conquered or driven from their land. The best current analogy I can think of is a bull market in investment, where some people feel as if they must buy into the market, even if it is a dangerous proposition, for fear of losing out on potential gains and falling behind.

Finally, while considering the functionalist economic claims of Henrich's theory, we ought to keep in mind the point made at the end of section 3.c.1. Which was that part of the harm that the state of nature does to man is taking from him the fruits of his labor. While this point is mainly in regard to the security concerns of losing the product of one's labor to theft or conquest, it could also be extended to the fact that lack of markets in the state of nature prevent man from reaching the wellbeing that well working markets tend to enable.

The next tension we ought to consider is the claims that Henrich makes in regards to human psychology. Hobbes lived in a time when the exploration of human nature was done through anecdotal observation, so squaring his perspective of human nature with modern anthropology is important. First, does Henrich's finding that through exposure to markets, people become more likely to act prosocially counter any of Hobbes' claims about human nature? This is a difficult question to answer. Hobbes seems to imagine human psychology to be rather static in regard to certain mechanisms, including altruism and prosocial behavior. So Henrich's findings may undermine what Hobbes believed about human nature's immutability. However, does the claim undermine any of the specific content of Hobbes' account of human nature? We've discussed predominant egoism, death-aversion, concern for reputation, forwardlookingness, conflicting desires, rough equality, disaster avoidant reasoning. Henrich's finding seems most in conflict with predominant egoism, which for the convenience of the reader can be best summarized as s*elf-interested desires tend to supersede and take priority over altruistic desires*. Henrich's data suggests that in societies with strong market norms people when the Ultimatum Game is played the average proposal was $48. This does in fact still demonstrate that people are predominantly egoistic, in the sense that self-interest does tend to supersede altruism. This is shown by the fact that individuals will still tend to give more to themselves than to others.

However, the $48 number is close to a 50/50, and we should admit that the Hobbesian account must explain this proximity. I believe that the Hobbesian account can example this along similar lines to Henrich's explanation. Henrich is testing people in LA who are certainly

conditioned with extensive market norms, perhaps more than really anyone else in the world, to act more prosocially. This can explain the closeness to 50/50. The extreme extent of market norms and exposure in LA is certainly due in part to the strong presence of government, a Hobbesian state. This brings us to line (G) on Henrich's figure. There is a positive feedback of the strength of government institutions and the strength of the market norms, thus it goes to reason that a place like LA, with a strong government and strong market norms, would chip away at our predominantly egoistic tendencies. Moreover, once we become accustomed to acting in a way consistent with the social norms, we will continue to act that way habitually and nonconsciously. This raises further questions. Why do we still need the Hobbesian state after we get to perfect and total saturation of market norms to a point where 50/50 is always offered.

To answer the question, we ought to consider the rejection of the Marxist position in Section 1.e. In this section it was asserted that in order to make a serious argument against predominant egoism on the grounds that it only accurately describes human nature in certain capitalist societies that promote self interest, the burden is on the Marxist to provide positivistic evidence supporting alternative types of societies. Applied here, I would point out that the question assumes that reaching a perfect 50/50 split offer all the time is possible, which is contrary to the vast majority of introspective consideration, and psychological research. These sources both tell us that we are at least somewhat selfish, if only because of death avoidance at the very least. However, one might think that the meat of this question is really that it is questioning why do we still need a Hobbesian state even at a 52/48 split, could it gradually increase without a Hobbesian state?

Here, I can raise three reasons for the need of the Hobbesian state in this case. The first is the problem of scale. A large scale society cannot effectively police market norms across all of the market interactions without a large administrative body that is responsible for adjudicating internal conflict. This is because in large scale societies people are often effectively anonymous. To illustrate this consider LA. How many people that you have economic interaction with, do you know outside of your economic interactions with them? Very few. Continuing this line of thought, imagine we dissolved all forms of government in LA. With there being no universal enforcer of the market norms trust among individuals would suffer. It seems most likely in this scenario that we would see a devolution into a kin based market system. Second, Henrich makes the point with line (G) that in fact formal punishing institutions aid in promoting this increase in

prosocial behavior by formalizing market norms through laws and subsequent enforcement. Here my point is that to ask if the 52/48 split could grow closer to 50/50 without a Hobbesian state is to disregard the fact that in getting to the 52/48 split the Hobbesian state was instrumental. Third and finally, if we accept that human psychology is malleable and shaped by social and cultural environments, then we ought to consider what changing the social and cultural environment might do to our psychologies. If one were to dissolve the state, it seems most likely that this new environment, being synonymous with a state of nature or something similar to what the Oromo people experience, would yield psychological results similar to the Oromo people's over time. This is an interesting puzzle of human psychology, but it does not give us a reason to think we could act as if we had a state, while not actually having a state.

One final note on Henrich's position. Consider the story that Henrich tells in his graphic, how markets are this causal mechanism that seem to create a need for formal institutions. I would not go so far as to claim that these markets are a causal mechanism that *necessitate* formal institutions. However, it seems that in order for market norms to grow past Oromo and into what was seen in medieval Europe and beyond, formal institutions, like the Hobbesian state are necessary, at least in Henrich's view.

Section 4.c: Peter Turchin and the Statistical Analysis

Peter Turchin is a historian who provides us with an explicit counter weight to Ara Norenzayan's Big Gods account. He specializes in mathematical modeling in the historical context. Through a process of data collection and subsequent analysis of the large-scale human societies of the past ten thousand years, Turchin and his colleagues have found that agriculture is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for increasing societal complexity. Additionally, they found that the strongest drivers of increasing societal complexity was interpolity, or external, conflict, rather than intrapolity conflict and functionalist theories like Norenzayan's Big Gods, and Henrich's economic account.

First, we need to acknowledge the nature of Turchin's rejection of Norenzayan's account. Turchin concedes that the dependent variable of interest in both his and Norenzayan's research is socio-political complexity (SPC). However Norenzayan, as we have discussed, points to moralizing supernatural punishment (MSP) as his explanatory or causal variable. Norenzayan seeks to explain SPC by appealing to changes in MSP. For context, SPC is composed of sub

variables like number of members, number of institutions, and the degree of interconnectivity and interdependence between the sub variables. Turchin acknowledges, in fact his research shows, that there is a correlation between SPC and MSP, but disagrees about the causal relationship that Norenzayan draws[182]. Turchin explains this correlation by arguing that both MSP and SPC respond to similar other variables, in his view: agriculture and warfare.

Now that we understand the grounds for Turchin's rejection of MSP as the causal factor, we will begin to understand his alternative explanation. This will start with a condensed explanation of his methodologies. I want to note that this is complex statistical talk, but it is important to understand how he is coming to his conclusions and the complexity and depth of the science he is employing. Turchin uses the mathematics of a nonlinear dynamical system to model the process of cultural macroevolution of politics (2). One way this manifests is in difference equations, which track changes in cultural characteristics of a polity given changes in different types of variables. This approach accounts for variables that both engage in dynamic feedback and are entirely exogenous. Models similar to this, Ornstein-Uhlenbeck, have been used to model microevolution in biology[183]. These nonlinear dynamical models are attractive to Turchin because they allow researchers to track the "descent with modification" phenomenon in the evolutionary process. Descent with modification refers to the process of evolution, and is getting at the key concepts that define it. Descent, as in the descending nature of a family tree and biologically passing on genetic information. Modification, as in, the common ancestor of two different species is not the same as those species, as changes have occurred. Some modifications have occurred over the descent of the species from their common ancestor. This is, in principle, why Turchin is using these nonlinear dynamical models to track in regard to societal complexity. Observations, or societies in the research, are the species. Their variables' values are a product of not just the causal factors, modifications, but also the societies' variables' past values, descent[184].

It is also important to note the causality problem that over plagues this sort of retrospective analytical and statistical work. Turchin acknowledges that causality is a

[182] *Disentangling the Evolutionary Drivers of Social Complexity: A Comprehensive Test of Hypotheses*, p. 3
[183] *Modeling Stabilizing Selection: Expanding the Ornstein–Uhlenbeck model of Adaptive Evolution*, pp. 2369–2383
[184] *Disentangling the Evolutionary Drivers of Social Complexity: A Comprehensive Test of Hypotheses*, p. 2

"notoriously difficult statistical and philosophical problem"[185]. He argues that because his approach is based on dynamic regression (DR), not directed acyclic graphs (DAG), it is more apt to the task of determining causality. This is because DAGs lack an inherent time dimension to them and are thus acyclic[186]. This means that they cannot be utilized to investigate mutual causality, something which the DR approach can investigate. Additionally, Turchin and his colleague's project is specifically in testing 17 different hypotheses for a relationship with an increase in social and political complexity and then selecting the best fitting model. A DR approach is better for this, while a DAG approach would be better if they were interested in only quantifying the effect of 1 variable on another in a finite time frame. With the DR Turchin can identify four distinct causal relationships. They are:

1. X causes Y (with no feedback from Y back to X)
2. Y causes X (with no feedback from Y back to X)
3. X causes Y, and Y causes X (displaying mutual causation)
4. Z causes both X and Y (No direct causal relationship between X and Y, but they are correlated because they are both share a relationship to Z)

Now, we must understand the variables in play in this analysis. The response or dependent variable in this analysis is social complexity, which is a composite variable. It contains measures of scale, hierarchy, and government. Scale is defined as the polity's territory, general population, and population of the largest settlement. Hierarchy is defined as the average number of levels amongst settlement specific, administrative, and military organizations. Government, or government sophistication is determined by 11 different measures such as prevalence of professionals (officers and bureaucrats), specialized government buildings, formal legal code, professional lawyers and judges. The predictor variables are, broadly speaking, agricultural development, functionalist theories (mainly economic), internal conflict, external conflict, and religion. Agricultural development was measured by accessing both agricultural productivity and years since that society adopted agricultural practices. There were twelve measures for functionalist theories, including presence of water supply systems, food storage, roads, markets, etc. All of these measures were functionalist in the sense that they solve problems associated with the provision of public goods. Internal conflict was measured by multiple proxies, notably social stratification and other oligarchical tendencies. External conflict

[185] *Causality and Modern Science*
[186] *Causality: Models, Reasoning and Inference*

was measured by level and variation of military technologies, spending on said technologies, and general preparedness to engage in external conflict[187]. Notably, the concern of Turchin and his team was not the intensity, or amount of death, that external conflict caused, it was the amount of energy that successful and large polities would spend on innovation and upkeep in order to avoid/deter and prepare for war. This approach to defining the variable, better examines how external conflict would drive socio political complexity. The data used to define these variables came from many sources, but is all coalesced in the Seshat Databank, which is a large databank focused on issues of non-biological human evolution, which Turchin helps run[188].

These variables were intentionally crafted in a way to test the major hypotheses that aim to explain the rise of sociopolitical complexity. With this in mind the hypotheses that were tested and compared against the DR model are:

1. Productivity of Agriculture (A)
2. Antiquity of Agriculture (A)
3. Provision of Public Goods (F)
4. Hydraulic Society (F)
5. Urbanization (F)
6. Trade (F)
7. Economic Exchange (F)
8. Information System (F)
9. Scalar Stress (S)
10. Territorial Expansion (S)
11. Social Stratification (Ci)
12. Iron Law of Oligarchy (Ci)
13. Cereal Crops (Ci)
14. Big Gods (R)
15. Social Control (R)
16. Warfare Intensity (Ce)
17. Military Revolution (Ce)

To clarify, these hypotheses were each taken as a null hypothesis, where each would be assumed to explain the rise in socio-political complexity. Then an alternative hypothesis would be that they did not explain the rise in socio-political complexity. Depending on the outcome of the DR, Turchin and his team either rejected the null hypothesis, demonstrating that the hypothesis did

[187] *Disentangling the Evolutionary Drivers of Social Complexity: A Comprehensive Test of Hypotheses*, p. 3
[188] https://seshat-db.com/; See Also https://peterturchin.com/cliodynamics-history-as-science/seshat-the-global-history-databank/

not have causal power, or failed to reject the null hypothesis, demonstrating that the hypothesis did have causal power. It is important to remember that each hypothesis was tested against three different metrics of socio-political complexity, *scale, hierarchy, government*, meaning a hypothesis might causally explain one metric but not another, or explain both, but to differing confidence intervals. Additionally, the variables each below to a hypothesis class, which is just a grouping of similar hypotheses[189].

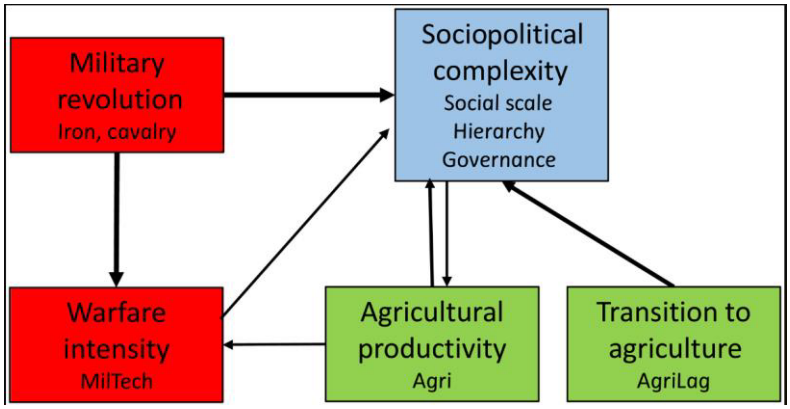
The notable results were that hypotheses (1), (2), (16), and (17), had the strongest reasons to fail to reject the null hypothesis in all three categories tested, meaning that they had a positive causal effect on the increase in socio-political complexity in all three categories. (1) and (2) are both of the agricultural hypotheses. (1) had a statistically significant causal relationship with the *scale* metric to a $P < 0.05$ level, and a statistically significant causal relationship with the *hierarchy* and *government* metrics to a $P < 0.01$ level. (2) had a statistically significant causal relationship with the *scale* and *hierarchy* metrics to a $P < 0.001$ level, and a did not have a statistically significant causal relationship with the *government* metric at a $P < 0.05$ level or better, but it did have a positive causal effect. Next are hypotheses (16) and (17), which are both of the conflict-external hypotheses. Warfare intensity had a statistically significant causal relationship with the *hierarchy* and *government* metrics to a $P < 0.01$ level, but only had a positive, but not statistically significant causal relationship with *scale*, at least not at the $P < 0.05$ level or better. Finally, military revolution had the most robust causal relationship, as it was statistically significant for all three metrics at a $P < 0.000001$ level. Also worth noting, some hypotheses had positive causal relationships with different metrics of sociopolitical complexity, but not at a $P < 0.05$ level or better. Those hypotheses were (8) as it related to *hierarchy* and *government*, (11) as it related to *scale*, and (15) as it related to *hierarchy*[190].

Clearly the key takeaway here is that hypotheses (1),(2), (16), and (17) possess the most significant causal relationships to socio-political complexity. The exact extent of this relationship can be measured by the R^2 statistic. R^2 is a statistic that can be translated into common speech as, (insert percentage) of the change in Y_i is explained by changes in X_1, X_2, and X_3. So when

[189] (A) is agriculture, (F) is functional, (S) is social scale, (Ci) is conflict internal, (R) is religion, (Ce) is conflict external. These can be observed to the right of each variable listed above.

[190] *Disentangling the Evolutionary Drivers of Social Complexity: A Comprehensive Test of Hypotheses*, p. 4, Table 1 provides all of the data discussed in the preceding paragraph. Hypothesis numbers from this thesis correspond with those in the cited paper.

researchers combined the predictor variables in hypotheses (1),(2), (16), and (17), the R^2 values of response variables were: 0.91 for *scale*, 0.9 for *hierarchy*, and 0.88 for *government*[191]. This means that according to the DR run by Turchin agriculture and external conflict account for the vast majority of the causal explanation of socio-political complexity. Turchin and his team present the graphic below to summarize the finding of the DR[192].



Note that the strength of the relationship is indicated in the thickness of the lines. Turchin admits that this is an "unexpectedly simple web of causation", with truly only two hypothesis types and four hypotheses total, being involved[193]. Notably, most of the relationships are unidirectional. This is notable, as it does not seem that the major response variables, *scale, hierarchy, and government*, have much in the way of causal feedback to the predictor variables, with the exception of agricultural productivity.

Section 4.c.1: Importance of Turchin's Account and Alignment with the Hobbesian State

Turchin and his team do discuss some anecdotal examples of evidence that supports this research in history, but the discussion is rather sparse, as the team is clearly more concerned with the meat of their paper, the statistical analysis. So unlike with Henrich or Norenzayan, Turchin does not engage in much storytelling or explanation about the finding and their significance. I will do my best to highlight some key takeaways from this paper, especially as they relate to the larger view of this thesis.

[191] Ibid, p. 5, Figure 1 is a graphic depiction of the results from Table 1, but only for hypothesis (1),(2), (16), and (17). The first row is only the military technology hypotheses ((16) and (17)). The second row is only the agricultural hypotheses ((1) and (2)). The third is the combined results, which is what we are most interested in.
[192] Ibid, p. 6
[193] Ibid, p. 7

It is important to consider that this work by Turchin and his team may not perfectly map on to the language used by a Hobbesian theory or any theory of philosophy for that matter. Nonetheless, it can still contribute significantly to this discussion. Take for example the three sub variables within the DV of socio-political complexity. They are *scale*, *hierarchy,* and *government*. Hobbes, in his discussion of the state of nature and social contract might allude to somethings like *scale* and *hierarchy*, but certainly not as technically Turchin. Government, which Turchin defines with a long list of sub variables, including professionals and government specific building, for Hobbes this boils down to third party enforcers. However disparate their definitions, the case for overlap between Turchin's DV and Hobbes' state are present and apparent in my view. The real question is how well the most explanatorily powerful hypotheses, (1),(2), (16), and (17), can map onto Hobbesian Theory.

First, the most important, or relevant, finding by Turchin to this thesis is the strong causal relationship his team found between external conflict and the growth of socio-political complexity. Let us reiterate how Turchin defined the two IV in hypotheses (16) and (17). (16), which will henceforth be referred to as MilTech, primarily aimed to use military technology as a proxy for interstate conflict. The logic of this decision flows in a manner reminiscent of Hobbes. When State #1 develops a new military technology they make all armed conflict with them deadlier. In Hobbesian terms, that state has increased their power. This means that the existential risk, or risk of annihilation, to state #2 is greater. This greater risk prompts state #2 to more centrally and effectively organize themself, as a means of defensive deterrence, which results in an administratively larger, militarily more powerful state. Thus state #2 has increased their power as a reaction to state #1's original increase in power. This illustrates what Hobbes points out, the inflationary nature of power as it relates to individuals, and now states, in the state of nature. The iconic example of this in recent memory is the nuclear arms races of the 20th century[194].

Turchin tries to put this hypothesis in more explicit cultural evolutionary terms by appealing to the Cultural Multilevel Selection Theory (CMLS), which states that evolutionary forces work at more than merely the individual level. He argues that with MilTech, his team was

[194] It is important to note here that Turchin and his team are not interested in the level of actual violence, but instead the cooperative expense spent on new military technologies. This is because it is entirely possible that very little actual violence might occur, but significant expenses may be incurred through preparation for violence. The Cold War example persists here.

able to express this theory. Applied here, at the society or group level, it would mean that selective pressures of survival forced competition between groups for scarce resources. This competition took the form of either wars of annihilation or fears of annihilation. This imposed selection for "larger populations and effective centralized and internally specialized institutions—states"[195]. This would also make it disadvantageous for groups to have traits of disorganization, internal conflict, decentralization[196] [197] [198].

Hypothesis (17) will now be referred to as IronCav. This variable's central concern is the innovations of cavalry and iron metallurgy, and the subsequent consequences of both. This was added as a hypothesis after the initial success of hypothesis (16), MilTech. The contributions of this hypothesis to our thesis are very similar to MilTech. The domestication of horses and the subsequent development of cavalry, especially mounted archers and raiders, in the Pontic-Caspian Steppe started a cascading effect of the raising the intensity of warfare[199] [200]. This, because of the same Hobbesian mechanisms and power and competition mentioned for MilTech, initiated military innovation. This subsequent military innovation was not limited to states developing cavalry of their own. Instead, most of the innovation centered around creating deterrents to cavalry raiders attacking settlements. Here, we could make a case that by responding to cavalry raiders by better preparing defenses for centralized settlements, as opposed to simply developing cavalry of their own, those states are acting in the way exemplifies Hobbes' theories. While developing cavalry requires a certain amount of centralization and administrative coordination, the creation of defensive measures, centered around settlements, certainly requires, and in fact encourages greater centralization. Iron metallurgy, like the other variables in hypotheses (16) and (17), also impacted innovation in military technologies. The analysis suggests that increases in the efficiency of iron metallurgy, and iron's relative abundance, were the main drivers of its contributions[201]. Turchin's analysis suggests that these two sub variables,

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[195] Ibid, p. 3, p. 12

[196] *A Theory for Formation of Large Empires*, chapt. 4, pp. 191–217

[197] *Chiefdoms at the Threshold: The Competitive Origins of the Primary State*, pp. 22–37

[198] *Collaborative and Competitive Strategies in the Variability and Resiliency of Large-Scale Societies in Mesoamerica*, pp. 7–19

[199] Ultrasociety: How 10, 000 Years of War Made Humans the Greatest Cooperators on Earth

[200] *A Theory for Formation of Large Empires*, chapt. 4, pp. 191–217

[201] *Disentangling the Evolutionary Drivers of Social Complexity: A Comprehensive Test of Hypotheses*, p. 7, Figure 4. A/B shows visually the effect of the joint IronCav variable on socio-political complexity. Part A is the actually observed data, while Part B is the predicted data from the relevant regression equation. Notically, they are similar.

iron metallurgy and calvary, played an important role in each other's development. This introduced some concerns about collinearity, but this was mitigated by some complex statistical work[202].

The next two hypotheses to further examine are (1)(2). Hypothesis (1) was referred to as Agri and was productivity of agriculture. Hypothesis (2) was referred to as AgriLag and was the antiquity of agriculture. It is noted that researchers took into account the fact that increasing agricultural productivity was a gradual process, not merely a binary variable, and that a lag time exists between agriculture's appearance and sociopolitical complexity. Turchin does not engage in much hypothesizing as to why Agri and AgriLag were successful in explaining social political complexity. He does mention that some scholars have suggested that agriculture transitioned human groups to a productive type of economy, which necessitated the creation of states or chiefdoms[203]. I would suggest that the advent of agriculture also necessitated other events. Notably, the cultivation of crops requires the cultivation of land and stationary presence by those engaging in that cultivation. The same is true of many types of herding, albeit over a much larger area, and there are exceptions in the form of nomadic herdsmen. Another important consideration here is that agriculture more generally creates value. Value that is coveted by those who lack and thus those who possess it must protect it.

This squares well with the Hobbesian account. Consider first the stationary requirements of agriculture. One of the central requirements of a State is a clear geographic area under which its authority applies. Hence, I find it intuitively compelling that the advent of agriculture, which demanded stationary living by practitioners, contributed to the development of that State. Next consider the creation of value from agriculture and the rise of a productive type economy. In the Hobbesian state of nature, small kin-based bands compete against one another for scarce resources. With the rise of agriculture, these tribes would look to steal precious food stores from other tribes. This is emblematic of the competitive state of nature that Hobbes envisions and is shown in the figure in the previous section by the casual line between Agri and MilTech. On a final note about the productive economy arising from agriculture, again consider the figure in the

[202] Ibid, p. 13, Turchina and his team's creation of the synthetic variable, IronCav, was done to address collinearity concerns. By combining the two effects, cavalry and iron metallurgy, collinearity can be avoided. This combination took the form of IronCav taking "the maximum value for societies with both mounted warfare and iron weapons, intermediate value for societies having one characteristic and not the other, and minimum value for societies with neither characteristic."

[203] Archaeological Assessment Reveals Earth's Early Transformation through Land Use, pp. 897–902

previous section, where the socio-political complexity further galvanized agricultural productivity. I would contend that this is evidence of the State's role as deterrent third party enforcer, which further incentivizes, and thus enables, the increase in agricultural productivity. Considering all of the agricultural hypotheses, the Hobbesian state can be pointed to in the stationary nature of agriculture, in the competition that arises from agricultural productivity, and in the third party enforcer necessary for a productive type economy to reach scale.

This concludes the discussion of Turchin's research and how it connects to the Hobbesian account. Of all the anthropological accounts we have discussed, it fits the most closely with what Hobbes seems to envision. This is most notably evident in the strong causal relationship between the dependent variables and hypotheses (16) and (17), MilTech and IronCav.

Section 4.d: Closing Thoughts on the Anthropological Insights

We have now finished our consideration of the anthropological evidence regarding state formation and must take stock. Norenzayan gave us an account that was tied to his Big Gods and the importance of religion. Henrich presented a more nuanced discussion that revolved mostly around economics and social norms, which necessitate the state in some way. Finally, we considered Turchin's account which attributed state formation to external conflict and agriculture. This section will briefly explain what we can and should take from each of these accounts, and which one may ultimately be the strongest.

Henrich's account is fairly nuanced and lacks the clear declarations of the other two. However, what we take from his account is nonetheless important. Consider the discussion of fairness in the context of the ultimatum game. From this it seems like our psychology is somewhat malleable, so to account for our theory of human nature, we must hone in on human's state of nature psychology, in order to create a proper Hobbesian account. Also useful, was his investigation into conditional cooperation and how it arises from access to markets. This paired with the Turchin consideration of agriculture and productive type economies gives us insight into how cooperation on a large scale might occur. Finally, his final note on common identities and trimming the interpersonal relationships is worth considering[204].

[204] I would be remiss in my evaluation of Henrich if I did not mention that he is a prolific writer and has a more holistic and complex view of both human nature and socio-political complexity that I was not able to touch on in this thesis. For more on this look at the entirety of his book *Weirdest People*, as well as *The Secret to Our Success*.

Norenzayan gives us the greatest amount of storytelling of the three. Central to his story is that *watched people are nice people*. This is critical in discussing human nature, especially in the state of nature. Note that this would be prior to access to markets as Henrich discusses how that might increase our impersonal fairness. *Watched people are nice people* is especially important to consider, as Norenzayan's Big Gods micromanage humanity, which is a similarity to the Hobbesian state, at least in comparison to a statue of nature. Interesting, but maybe not centrally important, the fact that governments and Big Gods are conceptualized in similar ways, psychologically, may allow us insight into the Hobbesian state. Finally, the in-group, out-group distinctions and competition discussed by Norenzayan, support the discussion by the other accounts.

Finally on to what is certainly the most methodologically robust account, Turchin's. The strength of Turchin's methodology is a strong reason for why I will consider it the most weighty of the accounts when it comes to contributing to our Hobbesian Theory. Luckily for Hobbes, his account is very much in line with Turchin's. From Turchin, we will take the understanding that socio-political complexity and the formation of the Hobbesian state is a product of primarily external conflict and secondarily agricultural production. Turchin gives us the most significant account of how humanity exited the state of nature.

Part #5: Comparing Hobbes' Account with Locke's

In this part I will be considering if the anthropology discussed best supports the Hobbesian claims about the state of nature and social contract theory. The Hobbesian account will be contrasted with the social contract theory of John Locke. These comparisons will mostly be centered around the descriptive claims made as presuppositions for the normative claims that the theorists make later on[205].

Section 5.a: Locke Explained

Locke came after Hobbes, and as such much of his theory is reminiscent of Hobbes, at least in terminology. However, unlike Hobbes, it is much more difficult to separate the descriptive claims about human nature and the state of nature from the normative claims of

[205] I should note that much of the account of Locke I am exploring is unamended by more recent philosophers and so in comparison to Hobbes, who is amended by Kavka and myself, Locke's account may seem a bit archaic.

Locke's political theory. In fairness to Locke, this is not due to his poor communication, but rather an intention of his theory. In this section, I will do my best to mainly focus on Locke's view of human nature and the state of nature, but in order to fully understand these views, normative considerations will be discussed. This issue will figure centrally in later sections where I will critique Locke.

Central to understanding Locke's political theory is understanding where it stands in relation to moral philosophy. According to some scholars, one of Locke's most significant distinctions from Hobbes is that his theory does not occur in a moral vacuum like Hobbes'.[206] Therefore, it is possible that Locke envisions political theory as an outgrowth of moral theory[207]. He considers that political theory consists of two halves. One is an account of the origins and nature of political society and political power.[208] For Locke this investigation will necessarily intersect with moral philosophy as any insight into the aforementioned topics will inevitably also force one to consider "the natural rights of men, the origins and foundations of society, and the duties resulting from thence."[209] The other half is the prudential, which is less significant in Locke's theory, and generally can be viewed as the "art of governing".[210] For Locke, the ultimate goal of his theory is to outline a moral position that corresponds to human history, all while maintaining the distinctness of both from each other.

Central to this goal is Locke's state of nature. Locke's state of nature differs drastically from Hobbes, both in its content and its properties. To remind the reader, Hobbes' state of nature is a state of war and a nasty place to be. Moreover, it is generally descriptive in nature, pulling from the nature of mankind as fuel for its descriptive claims. To explore Locke's view we need to acknowledge the nature of his state of nature as having law, natural law, and being a place of indeterminacy, and very possibly good lives for mankind.

Natural law fuels much of Locke's work. John Dunn suggests that Locke arrives at his concept of natural law when he considers the potentially "contaminating" influence of history

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[206] *The Political Theory of John Locke*, chapt. 7, pp. 79-83. Dunn refers to comparing the two thinkers, Locke and Hobbes, as an intellectual nightmare because of this significant difference. Dunn tends to think that Locke was largely ignoring the Hobbesian project which explains in large part his lack of commentary and confrontation with it.

[207] *On the Edge of Anarchy: Locke, Consent, and the Limits of Society*, p. 3

[208] *Locke's State of Nature: Historical Fact or Moral Fiction?*, p. 898

[209] As cited in *On the Edge of Anarchy: Locke, Consent, and the Limits of Society*, on footnote 5.

[210] Ibid, p. 899

and the differing fortunes of societies in using the language of morality and finding the content of moral precepts. Locke's reading of history suggests to him that there must be a reference point or criterion of human morality outside of history. The concept of natural law is the answer to this problem.[211] Natural law is essentially moral law and is composed of moral truths. It is what rules mankind in the absence of a "political society".[212] While Locke is a theist, natural law is different from divine law, in so far as it can be accessed purely through reason, without God needing to reveal it.[213] Locke's discussion of natural law, and mankind's innate sensitivity to it, is reminiscent of an intuitionism account of morality, where moral propositions may be immediately ruled true or false by rational consideration. Thus, the natural law for Locke is an ever present influence on the conduct of mankind.

Even without specifying natural law's content, natural law pushes us to reject Hobbes' characterization of the state of nature as a state of war. To put it crudely, Locke defines his state of nature as how mankind naturally is. With *naturally* meaning in the absence of a government. With natural law looming over mankind, Locke argues that in the state of nature we are not immediately, nor necessarily brought into conflict with our fellow man. Natural law rules us in the absence of government. He seems to acknowledge that some men may engage in violence, but this is either due to their misunderstanding, disregard, or inability to access the natural law. For Locke, man is both capable of existing in the state of nature in peace or in war. However, men that fail to live by the natural law "quite the principles of human nature" and become "wild beasts".[214] It doesn't seem as if Locke is arguing that mankind's motivations in the state of nature are simply motivated by adherence to the natural law, rather it seems like his actions are fenced in or guided by it. This continues to help us build a central distinction that helps illustrate Locke's man. For Locke, man is guided by law, even in the state of nature, whereas for Hobbes' man force and predominant self-interest governs in the state of nature and even once he has left it to a certain extent. Thus if the Lockean man is ruled by force or rules by force, they are not able to exit the state of nature and are in fact in a worse position than even a peaceful state of nature

[211] *The Political Theory of John Locke*, chapt. 9, p. 97
[212] *On the Edge of Anarchy: Locke, Consent, and the Limits of Society*, p. 25
[213] *The Political Theory of John Locke*, chapt. 9, p. 98-99
[214] *Second Treatise*, pars. 10, 11, 16, 172, 181

would provide. It is worth noting that *legitimate* uses of force are possible in Locke's view, they just generally are defensive and always derive their legitimacy from the natural law.[215]

This brings to the forefront another interesting uniqueness to Locke's theory. It seems that mankind, even in the state of nature, is in an association of a kind. That association is fundamentally tied to the fact that nature law applies to all mankind. This leads some, Ashcroft, to argue that when Locke describes the peaceful state of nature, he is not necessarily referring to a likely state of nature. Rather, he is really referring to the state of nature in which mankind acts in accordance with the natural laws of nature.[216] Ashcroft points to the fact that much of the chapter "Of the State of Nature" deals with what to do with those that break the natural law in the state of nature, thus implying that Locke acknowledges that some men may break the natural law.[217] However, most Locke scholarship tends to lean toward the interpretation that Locke intends to depict a state of nature that is likely. These scholars believe that under Locke's theory most people will feel the heavy weight of the natural law and act in accordance with it and that those few who deviate are dealt with accordingly. The manners by which Locke prescribes individuals to deal with those transgressors is similar to what Hobbes says about those outside the social contract. They are beasts and wild animals who can be dealt with accordingly.

While Locke attempts to address human nature with natural law, he also appeals to historical evidence as well. One unique consideration by Locke, is his concern with pointing out how social and historical conditions contribute to man's ability to act in accordance with natural law. Locke points out things like "barbarous habits", "evil customs", and when mankind is "brought up in vice". It seems like what Locke is admitting is that in "primitive conditions" mankind may act in ways contrary to the natural law. Ashcroft argues that Locke envisions his state of nature as developmental, not static.[218] The argument here seems to be that since the state of nature is developmental, merely pointing to an instance in which mankind acts differently to natural law, is not sufficient to reject Locke's argument. Others, like John Dunn, firmly assert that while Locke discusses historical evidence, his theory itself does not necessarily employ any empirical evidence.[219] As to appeal to empirical evidence would be to appeal to evidence

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[215] *Locke's State of Nature: Historical Fact or Moral Fiction?*, pp. 903-904
[216] Ibid, 906
[217] *Second Treatise*, pars. 6-13
[218] *Locke's State of Nature: Historical Fact or Moral Fiction?*, p. 908
[219] *The Political Theory of John Locke*, chapt. 9, p. 103

contaminated by the happenstance of history. An additional thread of consideration is the theistic elements in Locke which could incline a reader to believe that Locke may be pointing out that mankind possesses free will, instilled by God, to either succeed in adhering to the natural law, or to fail to adhere.

Locke spends a great deal of time addressing monarchy and why it seems to be a dominating form of government historically and how its rise is explainable in the context of his theory. This is explored through the lens of the paternal nature of the first governments and man's relationship to others in the state of nature. Locke frames the monarch of a state as a father figure.[220] Furthermore, he points out that there are three reasons why mankind was initially drawn toward monarchy. First, it was the fact that they are not yet aware of the "inconveniences of absolute power" and may also not be aware of their other options in forming a government.[221] The second point is that in early history, mankind was concerned with security concerns, and monarchy is well suited to address this issue. Finally, he points out that because mankind was used to be subject "to the rule of one man", because prior to government, or at least monarchy, the rule of the father in a family was custom.[222]

While Locke acknowledges this as true history, he seems to think that mankind came eventually to realize the "inconveniences of absolute power" and that relying on "custom, tradition, and utility" was a "poor foundation of government".[223] When man realizes these things, he reexamines government and political society. Locke's driving force and evidence for this examination is the changes associated with different types of property throughout history. Locke argues that these differences are best explained by dividing history into two periods. The first stage is described as "poor but virtuous" and a period of "innocence".[224] This characterization seems to stem from Locke's reasoning that man would not have "reason" to "trespasse" against the rights of their fellow man.[225] This is because they, and their fellow man, all lacked substantial property.[226] Locke envisions these men as mostly nomadic and hunter gatherers, thus they have

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[220] *Second Treatise*, pars. 74, 75, 76, 94, 107, 110, 111, 117
[221] This is a point reminiscent of what we said in Section 3.2.c about the effect of power to corrupt.
[222] Ibid, pars. 107, 110, 112
[223] *Locke's State of Nature: Historical Fact or Moral Fiction?*, p. 909
[224] *Second Treatise*, pars. 11
[225] Ibid, pars. 31, 51, 75, 108, 109
[226] Ibid, pars. 36, 37, 38

no significant possessions, and "land as such was not a real value".[227] Here in Locke's description, there also seems to be the implication that resources or land was in abundance, and that each man could be comfortable on his small piece.[228] Locke paints an idyllic picture of the first ages, Ashcroft notes this and further explains that this is especially apparent in Locke's observations about government in this period, where he calls it a "golden age" that preceded "ambition".[229] Locke argues that the governments of the first period would be most concerned with "defense against foreign invasions" rather than the creation and enforcement of internal laws.[230] Ashcroft summarizes Locke's view of man's society in the first stage as "a society with a subsistence standard of living where the form of government was simple, and the laws few".

The second period of history Locke differentiates from the first with the introduction of "ambition" and "luxury". Particularly the way that these cause the interests of monarchs or rulers to diverge from those of their subjects. This forces the reexamination that leads man to reject monarchy in favor of Locke's political society. When Locke talks about ambition and luxury, he seems to be discussing the introduction of money and the love for power and property. In the first period, a piece of land or property's value was dependent on its "usefulness to the life of man".[231] Whereas after the introduction of money, property takes on "imaginary value". This imaginary value, fueled by ambition, leads to conflict and disagreements between men. Thus, Locke appeals to the need of a "common superior" or a third party to judge and adjudicate these disagreements, with laws for said judges to rule by.[232] This increase in material wealth and impartial judges, in accordance with robust laws and divided political power, leads to the Lockean State.[233] Thus, the Lockean State solves the problems of the second period of human history. Ashcroft observes that the Locke sees the Lockean state seems to fundamentally be about "protection and encouragement to the honest industry of mankind".[234] Here, it is worth noting that there is an undercurrent of self-interest in establishing the Lockean state, as it allows for man to advance his "civil interests" which include "life, liberty, health…and the possession

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[227] *Locke's State of Nature: Historical Fact or Moral Fiction?*, p. 910
[228] *Second Treatise*, pars. 45, 36, 38, 107
[229] *Locke's State of Nature: Historical Fact or Moral Fiction?*, p. 910
[230] *Second Treatise*, pars. 107, 111, 162
[231] Ibid, par. 37, 101
[232] *Thoughts on Education*, secs. 105, 110
[233] *Locke's State of Nature: Historical Fact or Moral Fiction?*, p. 911
[234] *Second Treatise*, pars. 50, 120, 42

of (property)".[235] Also worth noting here is that mankind's nature hasn't changed between the first and second periods, but mankind's social circumstances have changed. Thus he has been affected by those social circumstances.

A final, and more complex note to finish our description of Locke's account has to do with his difference from Hobbes in defining a state. Locke agrees with Hobbes that consent is a necessary condition for a legitimate government, but while Hobbes seems to think it is a sufficient condition, Locke disagrees. This is evident from Locke's rejection of consent of the conquered.[236] Locke rejects monarchy for this reason. Locke believes that under monarchy man endures worse conditions than the state of nature and under natural law. He argues that since mankind is a rational being and "no rational creature (would) change his condition with an intention to be worse", no man could give his consent to be ruled by monarchy.[237] Ashcroft points out quickly that this is not a descriptive claim, instead Locke is proscribing that any *legitimate* government must in accordance with the natural law and have other traits of a political society that Locke describes[238]. Here, the important takeaway is that Locke's idea of legitimacy is interwoven with his very idea of the state, similarly to how his state of nature does not make a purely descriptive claim, but a normative one as well.

That concludes our discussion of Locke's account of the state of nature, natural law, and the descriptive accounts of government origins. Important takeaways from this are that man, in the state of nature, does not live a brutish life because all men live in accordance with the law of nature. These are moral laws, revealed by reason to all men, though their adherence to these laws may vary. While monarchy is the dominant form of government historically, mankind was forced to reevaluate this as monarchy failed to yield consequences better than the state of nature. Finally, with the advent of money, property, and imaginary value, mankind is forced to create governments with more substantial regulatory and judicial laws, to settle disputes.

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[235] *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, p. 10, p. 43
[236] *Second Treatise,* pars. 175, 176, 186
[237] Ibid, pars. 137, 91, 93, 135, 163
[238] *Locke's State of Nature: Historical Fact or Moral Fiction?*, p. 913

Section 5.a.1: Critique of Locke

Locke's account is difficult to reject because of the aforementioned interwoven normative and descriptive claims. In this section I will be discussing these issues sometimes together and sometimes separately. Broadly speaking, I will reject Locke's interpretation of the descriptive aspects of mankind. This will include his equivocation of natural law and human nature, the subsequent state of nature and his account of the history of government. I will also point out, as others have, that because Locke makes differentiation between government and legitimate government, it is not the case that a Lockean government and political society will necessarily never occur, but rather that the anthropological account of government, and human nature more generally, make it unlikely.[239] In this section, I will not be making a claim on if Locke's normative claims about government are right or wrong, just as I have not explicitly stated where normatively, Hobbes' account is right or wrong.

Let us first start by addressing the issue of the conflation of natural law and human nature. I should note that adjacent to this discussion is an interesting debate between moral naturalism and non-naturalism. However, I hope to address Locke, without provoking that debate. Locke claims that when left to our own devices in the state of nature mankind acts in accordance with natural law. There is some amount of opacity about the content of nature law, and so rejecting it as being human nature is difficult. However, I feel that it is fair to say that Locke likely envisions something akin to the content in religious circles at the time, as Locke's natural law derives its power from the superior to man, God.[240] To be even more charitable to Locke, let us only consider the moral content of *do not steal*, *do not murder,* and *do not lie.* While all of these are found in the ten commandments, we might generalize Locke's natural law to imply something like *a law not to conflict with your fellow man, unless he breaks the natural*

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[239] *On the Edge of Anarchy: Locke, Consent, and the Limits of Society*, This is not exactly Simmons' argument. He really is arguing that the current conception of what Locke meant by his philosophy is more profound than how he has been interpreted. We have failed to create a state worthy of Locke's principles and thus failed in creating limited government. However, I think one might be able to use these positions to suggest that the creation of a Lockean state is unlikely, and has failed to attain, because of Locke's misunderstanding of certain descriptive facts.

[240] *Essays on the Law of Nature*, pp. 79–133, as found in *Locke: Political Essays*. There are some that believe that Locke envisions natural law as losing all power if it were to lose its backing by the superior authority (God). This makes God's existence necessary for natural law to exist, thus it could be used to reject his conception of natural law on the grounds that his superior authority does not exist. I do not advance this argument, mainly as it curtails the interesting discussion that occurs when Locke is compared to Hobbes. Additionally, it is my intuition that other, more recent scholars have removed this element from Locke's philosophy, so I don't want to reject him on trivial, correctable grounds. For were Locke might suggest this, see: *Of Ethic in General*, pp. 297–304, as found in *Locke: Political Essays*

law first. The question now is, does man act in accordance with these principles? Even if we consider momentarily, we can immediately acknowledge that mankind does engage in actions that are contrary to these principles. Locke acknowledges this, citing that these men have either misunderstood or ignored the natural law.

Because Locke's natural law is normative as well as descriptive, we cannot reject it merely providing counter examples, like we did with psychological egoists.[241] Instead I will construct an argument that will attempt to appeal to the reasonableness of my audience. If there is widespread evidence that man fails to adhere to the natural law in the majority of cases, then perhaps we can pry apart Locke's natural law from human nature. If this is done, it may still be the case that Locke's natural law is normatively correct, as in *the right thing to do*, but if the majority of mankind fail to adhere to it, then surely it cannot be human nature to adhere. As an early empiricist, surely Locke would acknowledge this?

Locke points to two types of peoples who exist in a state of nature during his time. They are "princes", the leaders of states, and Native Americans, who live amongst each other in the nature of North America.[242] Considering these two groups as a microcosm of how humans interact under natural law could be helpful. Relating modern prevailing research on interstate conflict to states ruled by "princes" is difficult, as many states in the modern age are not ruled by monarchy or dictatorship. However, the key here is that these states exist without a "common superior" and either their prince, or elected officials, have access to the natural law. When looking at interstate conflict a few key findings emerge from the data.[243] [244] First, opportunism plays a significant role. When states are experiencing internal instability, like civil war, surrounding states will act opportunistically, and take advantage by instigating interstate conflict. Were we to again shrink this down to the micro scale of individuals or of small kin-based groups, this would be directly in line with the Hobbesian accounts previously discussed. So it seems that without a "common superior" "princes" act very much like individuals in Hobbes' state of nature, not Locke's.

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[241] *The Political Theory of John Locke*, chapt. 9, p. 102-104
[242] *The Historical Anthropology of John Locke*, pp. 663-665
[243] *Loss Aversion and Strategic Opportunism*, pp. 171-194
[244] *Crisis Bargaining in the Shadow of Third-Party Opportunism*, pp. 1-10

The people of the Americans, prior to European arrival, are harder to provide an analysis for. As William Batz notes in his *Historical Anthropology of John Locke,* Locke read accounts of the *New World* that used explicitly Edenic terms. Batz argues, to great effect, that the accounts of European explorers who used Edenic references and comparisons were likely very influential in Locke's own accounts. This is consistent with Locke's own description of the first period of mankind, before extensive property. Simply put, this first period is like the garden of Eden. Were the native peoples of the New World really living in an Edenic environment, at least in relation to their fellow man? The short answer is no, while the native peoples of the New World might have engaged in violence that was different from Europeans, they certainly engaged in widespread violence and conduct that would have been counter to Locke's natural law. One source we might consult for evidence are the very same European explorers that Locke cites. Batz cites these explorers, who include Acosta and Acuna, with stating that the people native to the amazon river basin were in a state of "continual war…making slaves of one another."[245] However, one might be concerned with the accuracy of these accounts, doubting that these European observers were able to grasp the true nature of life in the New World.[246]

We can turn to more recent anthropological and archaeological work to uncover the state of nature in the New World. When consulting these fields we find a resounding rejection of Locke's peaceful and Edenic New World, which supposedly housed his "Noble Savage".[247] Some examples of this rejection come from Richard Chacon and Ruben Mendoza, who state "Warfare was ubiquitous' every major culture area of native North America reviewed…produced evidence of armed conflict ritual violence".[248] More authors come to similar conclusions about specific areas of the New World. In an attempt to desensationalize accusations of cannibalism in the American Southwest, authors of one book did a wide scale review of the archaeological sites and data in the region. They cast doubts on the strength of the cannibalism claims of previous researchers, but stated that there was "no question that social violence occurred in the American Southwest". Moreover, violence ranged drastically. Evidence

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[245] *The Historical Anthropology of John Locke*, pp. 666-667

[246] Thought this criticism of the accuracy of European explorers in the *New World* would be a double edged sword, cutting into Locke's argument as well.

[247] While Rousseau was more explicit in these terms, I believe this term is generally fitting for how Locke characterizes those native to the Americans.

[248] *North American Indigenous Warfare and Ritual Violence*, pp. 4-9, Each chapter of this text covers a different region or topic. All of them contribute to the larger point laid out in the introduction.

of warfare, raiding, massacre, ritual sacrifice, and killing those accused of witchcraft all were found by the researchers.[249] Interestingly, evidence of slaves, or at the very least ill-treated underclasses, was present as well.[250] Lockean may have a difficult time addressing Locke's views on slavery, as we will discuss. Here, I bring up slaves only to point out that again Locke's naivety when discussing the natives of North America existing under the natural law and being naturally equal, while they at the same time either enslave each other or have a caste system. While many of the authors speculate about what the motivations for this violence was, they are wary of making generalized claims because of the immense "diversity" both in culture and circumstances.[251] [252] One common thread that arises from the literature is that resource scarcity, like drought, or population fluctuations and subsequent resource strain played a prominent role.[253] Here, we see a rejection of Locke's presupposition that in the state of nature man would have all he needs to survive, without "trespasse(ing)" against his fellow man.

From this discussion of both the native peoples of the New World and "princes" and their states, we can clearly see that the two groups the Locke cites as being in his state of nature generally fail to adhere to the natural law. Additionally, there are other issues with Locke's state of nature and natural law. Consider Locke's own positions on slavery. While there is some disagreement amongst scholars as to how damaging his position is, his position on slavery is that it is permissible as a form of punishment for breaking the natural law. That is to say that a victim may enslave an aggressor as a form of punishment.[254] This is a generous interpretation, some argue that Locke was simply a racist, believing that Africans failed to qualify as people.[255] Regardless, it seems the case that Locke is misapplying the natural law in the case of slavery. While a specific case of misunderstanding the natural law does not allow us to reject the notion of the natural law entirely, one must question that if the man arguing that he has identified the natural law and its interaction with human nature is unable to accurately interpret it, then surely

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[249] *Social Violence in the Prehispanic American Southwest*, pp. 1-6,

[250] Ibid, p. 3, p. 91, p. 117, It is presumed that these slaves generally were generated from warring and raiding outgroups, thus bolstering the argument that violence was prevalent.

[251] *Ritualized Violence in the Prehistoric American Southwest*,

[252] *The Social Costs of War*, p. 4

[253] *Indigenous People, Indigenous Violence*, pp. 95-115

[254] *"So Vile and Miserable an Estate": The Problem of Slavery in Locke's Political Thought*, pp. 263-289

[255] *The Liberal Politics of John Locke*, I I9n. *Essence, Accident, and Race*, pp. 81-96.

the act of misinterpretation is widespread. It seems to be sufficiently widespread enough to render the idea that mankind's nature is to adhere unreasonable.

Something that may shed light on this tension between Locke's and Hobbes' accounts of human nature is Henrich's social norms. In Henrich's book the *Weirdest People*, he explores some of our most fundamental natures. Functioning centrally in this work is culture and its derivations, one of which is social norms and how they may affect us. Locke tells us a story of story of an Edenic state of nature and human nature which can and is often corrupted by social circumstances which cause him to misinterpret the natural law either by accident, because of "evil customs", or intentionally, because of the corruption of money, property, and imaginary value. On the contrary, Hobbes tells us that mankind in the state of nature is purely self-interested. However, we have downgraded to predominantly self-interested and introduced *egoistic motive-stimulants* to account for human altruism toward others. Henrich's social norms tell us that, contrary to Locke's account, as humans exit the state of nature we tend to act more kindly toward each other, and in fact more in line with what Locke describes as the natural law.[256] All of this evidence is presented with the acknowledgement that it is not a decisive refutation of Locke's intertwining of the natural law and human nature, but rather that a reasonable reader will feel the weight of this evidence and reject Locke's conception.

We will turn our discussion toward Locke's history of government and how the trapping of his day contributes to his account, ultimately for the worse. In Locke's story of government, human kind transitions from period one to period two due to the advent of property and money. While commerce more generally may have contributed to social norms and cooperation, as demonstrated by Henrich, Turchin's work tells us that external conflict drove government from a "form of government" that "was simple, and the laws few" to one where there was a "multiplicity of laws".[257] [258]Locke does note the importance of protection from invasion in reference to the tendency toward monarchy. However, the account by Turchin implies that external conflict figured centrally in propelling socio-political complexity beyond just monarchy.

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[256] This might refute Locke in two ways. One is that human nature may be more malleable than simply being in accordance with the Natural Law. Second, and more significantly, Locke tells us that the exiting of the edenic state of nature, introducing civilization, tends to increase our need for government because we can no longer merely live in accordance with the Natural Law. This seems to run counter to what Henrich is implying, that the more socio-politically complex our societies become, the more in line with Locke's Natural Law we seem to be.

[257] *Locke's State of Nature: Historical Fact or Moral Fiction?*, p. 910

[258] *The Political Theory of John Locke*, chapt. 8, p. 83

Additionally, one might point toward the agricultural hypotheses presented by Turchin and argue that those might be evidence of the effect of property on socio-political complexity. While I tend to think that commerce more generally, and a productive style economy figure more prominently than property specifically, this is still a point well taken. Considering the resources Locke had at his disposal and the time period that he was writing, he should be commended for how close his account comes to modern accounts. However, if we are given the choice between whose account we ought to take, Turchin and other modern analytic accounts outweigh Locke's.

To conclude our rejection of Locke I want to make a nuanced point. While Locke is clearly wrong on descriptive grounds of human nature and his state of nature is in contradiction with the descriptive account of man's primitive origins, it is possible that his normative claims are correct, or at least close to correct. Furthermore, it is even possible that the creation of a Lockean state might be achieved one day, in spite of the barriers that exist, like not acknowledging human nature in the descriptive state of nature. While this section attacks the descriptive accounts of Locke's theory, some Locke scholars have pointed out that there is a mismatch between a true Lockean state and the states that currently exist today.[259] While these Lockean scholars might disagree, I would argue that this is evidence of the mismatch that exists between Locke's accounts of human nature and other descriptive aspects of his theory and reality.

Part #6: Final Discussion, Addressing Objections, Further Research, and Conclusion

This will be the final part of this thesis and will contain a variety of sections, with the aim of tying up loose ends, addressing possible objections, providing final insights, and discussing areas for further research.

Section 6.a: Potential Alteration to Hobbesian Theory given the Anthropological Account

This section will discuss pieces from the anthropological account that could be included into the descriptive aspects of Hobbesian in order to make it more robust and accurate. I will not

[259] *On the Edge of Anarchy: Locke, Consent, and the Limits of Society,* Footnote (211, beginning of this section) discusses Simmons' position. I want to add here that I think that it is an illuminating position to consider in the context of Locke and our modern and historical accounts of socio-political complexity.

be necessarily describing *how* one would integrate these into Hobbesian theory. Rather I will express *what* it is that could be added.

First is the concept of productivity, particularly agricultural, as a prerequisite for social contract. This has been alluded to in previous sections of this thesis. I want to make this more explicit with the knowledge that anthropologists have provided. Within all three anthropological accounts, there is an undercurrent of concern for the productive capacity of a group before it can grow. This should be intuitive considering that as a society grows it must be more productive to support the specialization of a workforce. If someone is to be a full-time administrator or enforcer, some agricultural worker, or collection of workers, must be producing enough food to feed these full time nonagricultural workers. Using agriculture as an example here is particularly illustrative. Norenzayan makes a point that doctrinal rituals were more common amongst agriculturally adept societies, this in part must be due to the ability of such societies to support full time priesthoods.[260] Henrich and all his discussion about the influence of markets and social norms, also can be placed in this framework. As fewer individuals are needed to forage for food, because of increased agricultural productivity, they can become craftsmen and create things of value that require commerce.[261] Turchin makes the point that while agriculture is a necessary condition for sociopolitical complexity, it is not sufficient. This point is well taken and is noted throughout the statistical analysis.[262] However, it seems to me that Hobbesian Theory may under appreciate the importance of productivity.

Kavka notes that some objectors to the social contract, as he laid out, argue that it would be impossible to create such a state if there was an "insufficiency of resources".[263] He discusses one approach, used by Rawls, to place the different contents of the social contract in an ordinal ranking of priority. This way the most important would be satisfied first, while less important may not be satisfied at all.[264] Kavka dismisses this as not feasible and instead states that the best response to the objection is that Hobbesian Theory only applies to those societies with enough resources to fulfill all the content of the social contract. He continues, explaining how the

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[260] *Big Gods*, chapt. 7, pp. 119-124
[261] *The Weirdest People*, chapt. 3, pp. 94-129
[262] *Disentangling the Evolutionary Drivers of Social Complexity: A Comprehensive Test of Hypotheses*, p. 6
[263] *Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory,* chapt. 3, pp. 237-238
[264] *Theory of Justice*, secs. 8, 11, 46. Kavka seems to think that this approach would like those items lower in this ordinal ranking would fail to be achieved given the limited resources of the state being directed toward those higher in the ranking.

specifics of the content vary from society to society, and could potentially be very very minimal, as was discussed with economic minimum welfare.[265] While he is certainly alluding to productivity here, with the assistance of the anthropologists we can provide a more robust and specific account of the importance of productivity as a necessary condition for social contract.

Second, in 2.d there is significant discussion about group formation in the state of nature. The conclusion of that section was that defensive cooperatives and group formation, while possible, are unlikely to go beyond the small, kin-based, scale, and once they occur they are extremely precarious. When considering anthropology, especially from Norenzayan and Henrich, much is made of prosocial mechanisms that are employed by groups of individuals to enforce social norms, to mitigate violence, and to promote cohesion. With Norenzayan it is explicitly clear, as his major contention is that the Big Gods operate in this way. With Henrich it is mostly contained in his term "market norms", but it is certainly present in other areas mentioned and also a major vein throughout his larger body of work.[266]

The more interesting point that can be taken from both these scholars and social anthropology more broadly is that there are strong natural forces which assist with the creation and maintenance of small scale groups and potentially even states. Norenzayan discusses CREDs and other mechanisms that contribute to prosociality even without a formalized state. Similarly Henrich's "market norms" seem to function as a mechanism that exhibits continuity between small kin-based communities and larger formal states. In light of this we may be justified in rejecting the original conclusion of Section 2.d. However, even if we were justified in rejecting the conclusion in 2.d, I am skeptical that we could reject the bulk of the discussion leading up to it. This larger revelation about innate prosocial mechanisms raises two further questions, whose answers might force us to change our accounts in political philosophy. First, we, as philosophers, may need to further consult anthropology to parse out *where*, on the continuum of size and

[265] While Kavka dismisses the idea of ordinal ranking, it is unclear to me how substantial the difference between ordinal ranking and extremely low administration of the content of the social contract would be. Consider an ancient city-state with limited resources, but not so limited as they are unable to provide a meal a day to destitute citizens. This city-state is also able to provide physical security, both deterring invasion and combating crime. However, imagine that this city-state is unable to provide any form of equality of opportunity through education, not because it is on the bottom of the list of priorities, but because the costs of providing education are incidentally, prohibitively high. The outcome here is no different than if the city-state had ordinally ranked its social contract content and placed providing education at the bottom. Kavka seems to imply that this state would not qualify as a satisfactory state. To remind the reader, a satisfactory state is a state which possesses all of the social contract content that Kavka has argued that contractors would want.

[266] See three of his relevant books, *The Secret of Our Success*; *Why Humans Cooperate*; *The Weirdest People*

sophistication, and *how* exactly the state takes up the mantle of those more primitive natural forces. That is to say that we must work to understand them and account for them in our theories. The second question may be one that only anthropologists can uncover. It is a concern about the exact nature of the continuity and significance of these mechanisms in the transitions between primitive and non-primitive social groups. It matters for political theory if these mechanisms persist or if they dissipate with time.

Section 6.b: Addressing Potential Objections

While I do not anticipate what I have articulated in this thesis invoking strong objections, as more than anything I am presenting a case for what might be an additional avenue of investigation, I do foresee certain concerns and objections.

The first objection I want to address is the accurate assertion that generally when social contract theorists, from Hobbes and Locke to the philosophers of today, talk about the state of nature and social contract more generally, they are referring to a hypothetical. Part two of the objection would be to say that since the social contract theorist is engaging in an explicitly hypothetical thought experiment, the anthropological accounts of what actually happened in humanity's past are of no importance.

My first response to this are likely widely held views amongst philosophers today. It is to point out that even the early and most eminent social contract theorists consult the history, anthropology, and psychology of their day in order to build the underlying assumptions that their theory will employ. Hobbes discusses the nature of man in a pseudo-psychological manner and Locke consults the vague history of mankind which resembles a study of anthropology. Simply because the thought experiment is a hypothetical does not mean that it is not based on some level of empirical reality, at least as far as the underlying assumptions are concerned. However, like I already mentioned this response is unlikely to be controversial and likely misses the real objection.

I think a more poignant objection could be something along the lines of: The comparison of Hobbesian and Lockean Theory to anthropological accounts is not fully possible and comparing hypothetical theory with actual history and anthropology doesn't force us to alter our hypotheticals. Here, the concern about comparison is key. It is one thing to consider how the empirical fields might determine our premises and our arguments, but it is a separate process to

compare the empirical fields and our hypothetical theories. The objection labels this comparison as fruitless as we needn't necessarily change our hypothetical theories. Just because something has happened a certain way need not make it necessarily happen this way. I think this objection unfortunately conflates history and anthropology. History is the study of past events and people, while anthropology is the study of humanity and social anthropology is the study of human societies and culture. It may be true that studying history might yield few results in both constructing our hypotheticals' premises as it is really only a review of what has happened to happen. I, unlike Hegel and others, don't see history as having a necessary arc and driving force. By contrast anthropology is a systematic review of humanity across time and space, attempting to pull out the commonalities that exist amongst humans and human societies. To put it simply, it is a science, unlike history, and thus it provides us with a different kind of evidence. Returning to the original objection, it may be true that there may be instances where anthropology can only present to us one culture that refutes a hypothetical theory. When operating like this it is functioning like history. However, in other scenarios, where it provides a systematic and empirically sound analysis of something that refutes a hypothetical theory, so much the worse for the hypothetical theory. It is my hope that the anthropological evidence presented in this thesis is viewed by the reader as the latter form of anthropology.[267]

A brief aside before moving to the next objection. One of the major criticisms of social contract theory is its hypothetical nature.[268] Those who are proponents of social contract theory may be able to use this less hypothetical approach to attempt to address those criticisms.[269]

The next objection will likely come from any of the more empirically inclined readers of my thesis. It is that what I have presented here is too small a sample of anthropological literature. That this small sample of only three researchers can't possibly represent effectively the diverse perspectives within the field. I am inclined to agree with this sentiment to some extent. Given the limited resources at my disposal, mainly time, I was unable to survey the entire field. Indeed, in

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[267] *Political Liberalism*, p. 19, pp. 29-30. Rawls makes a similar point. While his original position, like Hobbes' and Kavka's amended account, places certain restrictions on the persons in the hypothetical, he still needs to discuss *what* a person in this hypothetical would be like.

[268] *The Original Position*, pp. 16-53

[269] As mentioned briefly in the introduction, it is my hope that future social contract theorists will adopt an approach more similar to mine, utilizing more robust anthropological accounts, to explain social contact theory and perhaps the moral implications. This may require a different sort of moral/political obligation than we past philosophers have tried to generate.

the case of Henrich specifically, I was not even able to survey a great deal of his other work. However, I was careful in choosing the three anthropology accounts that I included in an attempt to make up for this shortcoming.

While it has already been explained that Norenzayan's account is not necessarily opposed to mine, his account was included because it provides a seemingly different theory. It identifies and recognizes many of the same problems that I, Hobbes, and social contract theorists have identified, but points toward Big Gods. Norenzayan's account is so powerful in this thesis because while he comes to a different final conclusion, his work is littered with similarities. The strong similarities provide me with some confidence that this thesis is on the right track. Moreover, Turchin's piece provides this thesis with a robust sample and survey account of the field. In many ways I want to liken it to a meta-analysis, though technically it is not. Regardless, what it provides me and this thesis is something similar. It allows me to look at only one source and yet evaluate a great deal of competing theories and findings in a methodologically rigorous manner. Finally, Henrich was included because forcing on that section of his research allowed us to briefly discuss economic motivations, social norms, and the potential malleability of human nature. He has a much more expansive body of work which, had I more time, I would have included in this project.

Locke defenders could object to my treatment of Locke in this thesis. The objection would likely claim that I unfairly placed Locke into a competition with Hobbes where his work is naturally less suited. To remind the reader, Locke's work does not take place in an ethical vacuum, whereas Hobbes' does, at least the descriptive aspects certainly do.[270] Because much of this thesis is looking through an anthropological lens, an ethical vacuum, Locke's work will not fare well. I briefly touched on this in the Locke section, but I agree with this analysis, but it does not cheapen or weaken the weight of this thesis. Just because the terms of a process or methodology disadvantage one theory or another, does not itself detract from the process or methodology. For example, it is not the case that the scientific method is a flawed methodology simply because the scientific method disadvantages the Great Chain of Being Theory in comparison to evolutionary theory. Perhaps really this objection might be directed toward my attempt at approaching social contract theory by appealing to anthropology and inducing an

[270] The Political Theory of John Locke, chapt. 7, p. 79

ethical vacuum. If that is the case, I would reiterate my position that it is not that entire work of social contract theory can be done in an ethical vacuum, but that we ought to explore the descriptive account of other fields as rigorously as possible in order to fuel accurate accounts of social contract once the ethical considerations are introduced.[271]

Section 6.c: Areas for Further Research

Before I get to my final conclusion I wanted to note the future work that this thesis might empower. The thesis presented above is only a half of what I had originally planned for this project. I had originally planned to write many additional sections outlining the ramifications and entailments of the current thesis. Because I was unable to do this in the time allotted for this project, many of the future areas of research correspond to my initial intentions for this thesis.

First among those is the problem of political obligation. A central problem in political philosophy, it was my intention to discuss what an anthropologically informed Hobbesian Theory would yield as an answer. My intuition is that this type of theory would fail to generate a strong case for political obligation, but would provide us with an interesting number of non-moral reasons to engage and cede our autonomy to the state. Because of the centrality of this problem in the field, this is a strong candidate for further research.

Another consideration I had when starting this project was how exactly our current governments and state can be characterized, in moral terms, given that they can arise from the seemingly nonmoral mechanisms of anthropology. In other words, are states or governments moral agents? The question I am trying to answer here is not what moral relationships we ought to have with the government or the state. Rather can we apply moral judgements upon the state in the same ways we would a person. The answer is unclear to me, but I felt it was raised by my reading of anthropology.[272]

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[271] The introduction of ethics is clearly necessary for the generation of political obligation, the goal of social contract theory. However, nearly as much, if not more, ink has been spilled debating the descriptive aspects of social contract theory as the normative aspects, and rightly so. The descriptive aspects provide us the very ground that our normative claims must rest on.

[272] Here I am not suggesting that *people* don't have a moral obligation to the government or in the political sphere. Instead, I am questioning whether we ought to talk about *governments* and *states* as being moral agents and there being a right thing, morally, for the state to do in a given situation. The alternative to this is that states and governments can only be evaluated in instrumental or teleological terms. For example, it is good for a state to do X iff the state doing X will achieve one of its functions.

Building on the last question, consider the question: what is the moral criteria of government action? One might first question if there is a moral criteria, but assuming one finds that we can speak about government and the state in those terms, what moral theory ought to be selected? It seems plausible to me that the theory that ought to be selected will be dependent on the actual reasons for the creation of a particular state or government. However, it might still be possible to generalize this with anthropology. It seems like most states were created for maximizing the utility of the people within them, hence a utilitarian public policy ethos might be preferable for most states. This suggestion is not fully fleshed out, but is certainly a question raised by this thesis.

One final word on the topic of further research. My thesis only looked at Hobbesian Theory in detail and Locke more briefly. I think more modern attempts at social contract theory might benefit from a critical analysis of their descriptive claims by an anthropological account. Here I am considering scholars like Rawls, Gauthier, and Petit.

Section 6.d: Conclusion

At the onset of this thesis I put forward claims regarding the level of compatibility of Hobbesian Theory with the anthropological accounts of today. Here, at the end of this thesis, I hope that it is clear to see that with some alterations, Hobbes' Theory aligns with anthropology. Some of those notable alterations where we diverged from Hobbes include downgrading psychological egoism to predominant egoism, clarifying the types of actors in the state of nature, and rejecting the assumption that all people are necessarily prone to violence. Much of the discussion of the anthropological account provides us with areas to refine our Hobbesian theory, but not reasons for us to reject it. Consider the potential malleability of human nature presented by Henrich or the importance of productivity alluded to by Turchin as examples of this. From these and the other pieces presented I feel this thesis provides a strong account for Hobbesian Theory being generally compatible with the most recent work in anthropology.

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