

The science of the preservation of the State: Hobbes and the question of dissolution and maintenance of modern political state

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Abstract: The question of dissolution and maintenance of the state is an aspect of Hobbes's political philosophy that has not yet received a survey to the same extent and importance usually attributed to other issues pertaining to his political writings. I emphasize in this study the English philosopher's concern to show that the science of conserving States has the same value and scientific philosophical caliber than the science of building States. The tripartite division of this study aims to investigate first the causes and the characters associated with the dissolution of the state, then the precepts and processes related to the maintenance of the State and, finally, the acts of hostilities (treason and espionage, for example) that need be known and combated by the sovereign representative because someone else affronts and contradicts the security imperative *salus populi suprema lex* (safety of the people is the supreme law) and the principles of reason that sustain *in totum* the Hobbesian public architectonic.

Keywords: Will, Passion, Fear, Contract

DIVISION (abstract)

(1) Risk of State dissolution and the return to the state of nature

The risk of State dissolution is the main risk in the representative sovereign being unable to represent the citizens and the single political will, due to the implosion of its unifying steeples, to be diluted in a multiplicity of private wills whose tragic end

is the return of the people to the condition of crowd. This occurs when every man's passions (passions of war) find a proper environment for the development of its *naturally* conflictive character and the wills of each person resume being oriented by private judgments in which the criteria for actions (e.g., good, bad) is subjectively established by each individual from the ineffectiveness of the civil law as objective criterion of conduct.

(2) The safety imperative and the science of conservation

The conservation or maintenance of a political state is linked to the representative sovereign's (ruler) ability of fulfilling the requisites of his office and providing for its fulfillment, thus avoiding the risk of dissolution and the resulting return to the state of nature. The political power is *consensually* afforded to him — differently from naturalistic political theories — as a necessary *means* (search mechanism) to guarantee the realization of the safety imperative — i.e., the safety of the people — as the supreme *finality* of modern political architectonics.

(3) Espionage and the safety imperative

The issue of the necessity of espionage is initially presented by Hobbes in the Chapter XIII of *De Cive*. The Article 7 of this chapter has as its title: "Discoverers are necessary for the People's defense". Once the People's safety (*salus populi*) is determined as the supreme law of a sovereign ruler, this safety imperative says that those in charge of the public power *must* employ a series of measures to adequate their actions to such a noble purpose. Internal and external public enemies must be constantly watched to avoid the dissemination of rebellion and the seeds of war in the national as well as in the international plane.