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ON FREEDOM IN HOBBES'S PHILOSOPHY

In the mechanistic view of the world and man that Hobbes presents to his readers, freedom plays a unique and by no means obvious role. It may even seem surprising that it appears in such a philosophical system, which holds that everything has its causes and that the essence of philosophy lies equally in investigating causes and the effects arising from them. This philosophy also deals with the study of bodies and should focus only on their creation, destruction, and preservation if it wants to maintain them as a proper object of interest. Where, then, is there room for freedom? To whom or what should it be attributed? What should we understand by this concept when we apply it to humans? Or are people not free?

Hobbes vividly depicts humans in all the circumstances of life. His vivid imagination allowed him to capture human nature with great ease and expertise, drawing conclusions for all human actions and interpersonal relationships. From the nature of the individual, he infers the kind of society that can be formed with others, the form of government that will be best for them, and the laws to which everyone should be subject. Human nature thus both sets the boundaries of our knowledge and dictates our behaviour, whether natural or socialized, i.e., corrected by others, by society, or by the state. In any case, it originates from the primary motives of human activity: avoiding pain and seeking pleasure. Aversion and appetite. Movement away from an object and movement towards it. These two simple motions are manifest in hundreds of ways in our feelings and emotions. The latter are manifestations of these movements, but within this philosophical concept,

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they are nothing more than a specific type of motion, this time around the heart rather than just inside the head.[1]

In the mechanistically understood process of cognition, the ideas appearing in the mind are a reaction to an external stimulus. Quantity here changes into quality. The body turns into an object. The bodies existing outside the knowing subject are extended and remain in motion. However, we know nothing more about them. They are given to us through various ideas. The body mechanically affects the proper bodily organ, and owing to the resistance posed by the latter, the resulting image is treated as external to us, as something independent of us. Moreover, in this process, we are entirely determined. We cannot control perceptions: their form and shape do not depend on us. Similarly, the feelings these perceptions arouse do not rely on us either. They also constitute a mechanical reaction caused by the same motion that just now produced the ideas. There is no manifestation of freedom here. There is no place for it in such a vision of the sensory cognition process, at least at its lowest level. Different experiences may occur in other people, but physical determinants will strictly dictate them. The question is whether, with the transition to the realm of imagination, with its engagement in cognition, we will gain some degree of freedom of action. Can we escape the influence of bodies? Is the generally considered creative capacity of fantasy capable of free creation?

In Hobbes's philosophy, imagination occupies a significant place. Within the structures of the subject's cognition, it plays a fundamental role. This is primarily because, for the English philosopher, reason itself is nothing but computation.[2] Thus, various types of addition and subtraction count every-

[1] See the following excerpt: "In the eighth section of the second chapter is shewed, how conceptions or apparitions are nothing really, but motion in some internal substance of the head; which motion not stopping there, but proceeding to the heart, of necessity must there either help or hinder that motion which is called vital; when it helpeth, it is called DELIGHT, contentment, or pleasure, which is nothing really but motion about the heart, as conception is nothing but motion within the head; and the objects that cause it are called pleasant or delightful, or by some name equivalent." Thomas HOBBES, *The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic: To which Are Subjoined Selected Extracts from Unprinted Mss. of Thomas Hobbes* (London: Elibron Classics, 2007), I, 7, 1, p. 28.

[2] "By RATIOCINATION, I mean computation. Now to compute, is either to collect the sum of many things that are added together, or to know what remains when one thing is taken out of another. Ratiocination, therefore, is the same with addition and substraction; and if any man add multiplication and division, I will not be against it, seeing multiplication is nothing but addition of equals one to another, and division nothing but a substraction of equals one from another, as often as is possible. So that all ratiocination is comprehended in these two operations of the mind, addition and substraction." Thomas HOBBES, *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of*

thing that falls under the senses. Reason operates not only on numbers, but also on shapes, distances, sizes, colours, smells, textures of objects, and sounds. In Hobbes's philosophy, reason is, in essence, imagination. Computation is carried out on concepts. In Hobbes's philosophy, these have a threefold nature: sensations, imaginations, or notions in the narrow sense of the word. The first two types are sensory and constitute a way of interacting with the phenomena of things. The third type is more intelligible, partially detached from sensory perception, though still dependent on it. An example is the chiliagon (a thousand-sided polygon), whose essence we understand by referring to the idea of a side and a thousand, which we cannot visualize. Even without sensory apprehension of this geometric figure, we can efficiently use its concept. The condition is the language user's agreement to substitute the arbitrarily established name "chiliagon" with specific sensory experience content and knowledge concerning the skill of using the artificially associated names. Of course, knowledge of a side, a thousand, and a geometric figure will be helpful here. Hobbes does not elaborate on this type of concept in more detail. However, it can be said that in the case of the first two, we are talking about a kind of perception of objects, while in the third, we are talking about their understanding or conceiving.

Therefore, in computation, not only simple sensory perceptions are considered, but also more complex creations of the imagination, such as our own or others' imagined power, the feelings and emotions depicted on human faces and in violent facial expressions, and the names we use as signs to remember the meanings they represent and to facilitate reasoning processes. Discourse of mind transformed into discourse of tongue becomes a sequence of signs through which we communicate our attempt to comprehend the world or influence it to others. This kind of computation also involves such signs. We take them into account in our calculations. And here again, arises the question: do we, with articulated speech or the use of general concepts, detach ourselves from what is concrete and sensory, thereby gaining freedom in our contemplation or type of reasoning?

In *Elements of Law*, Hobbes states that imagination is a slowly fading sensation.[3] However, this does not merely mean the fading of imagination relative to sensation or the loss of expressive force with which the latter is

Malmesbury, vol. 1, *Elements of Philosophy […]*, ed. William Molesworth (London, 1839), I, 1, 2, p. 3.

[3] "… imagination being (to define it) conception remaining, and by little and little decaying from and after the act of sense"—HOBBES, *The Elements of Law*, I, 3, 1, p. 8.

usually given to us. In the philosopher's view of the world, all bodies remain in constant motion until something stops them. This also applies to imaginations. They are entirely formed from sensations, but being a type of movement in the bodily organs and brain, they remain there as movements for longer. They persist and resonate, repeatedly evoking the image corresponding to the original sensation. Other external stimuli, through their constant influx to the mind, suppress the awareness of this image, displacing it from the centre of our attention with new images. However, this original image remains there in the form of movement. Any attempt to recall it involves recreating this movement. Are such attempts at recreating, recalling something from memory, imagining something past, free acts? Can we arbitrarily initiate this process, or must something drive us to do so? To what extent are we free to imagine anything? And to what extent must we resort to language to communicate to ourselves that we want to imagine something?

It seems that as the amount of past experiences increases, the material on which imagination operates becomes richer, allowing for abstraction from the concreteness of a given situation. But is a choice which is limited to past experiences indeed a free choice? Hobbes does not question the freedom with which we create new complex ideas from simple ones through imagination, but he does not explain what this freedom consists of and where its source lies. Sometimes, experience teaches us how to achieve a particular good, often in different ways, based on other means. What then guides us in selecting these means to our end? It seems that here, finally, will should find its application. After all, we have a sense of influence over the final decision and the outcome of the ongoing deliberation. And for Hobbes, that is precisely what will is: the last element of deliberation, the final concept that appears in the entire sequence of thought-images that emerge as we hesitate.[4]

[4] See the following excerpt from *The Elements of Law*: "Deliberation therefore requireth in the action deliberated two conditions: one, that it be future; the other, that there be hope of doing it, or possibility of not doing it. For appetite and fear are expectations of the future; and there is no expectation of good without hope; nor of evil without possibility. Of necessaries therefore there is no deliberation. In deliberation the last appetite, as also the last fear, is called WILL (viz.) the last appetite will to do; the last fear will not to do, or will to omit. It is all one therefore to say will and last will: for though a man express his present inclination and appetite concerning the disposing of his goods, by word or writing; yet shall it not be accounted his will, because he hath liberty still to dispose of them otherwise; but when death taketh away that liberty, then it is his will." HOBBES, *The Elements of Law*, I, 12, 2, p. 61n. And another excerpt from *Leviathan*: "In *deliberation*, the last appetite, or aversion, immediately adhering to the action, or to the omission thereof, is that we call the WILL; the act, not the faculty, of willing. And beasts that have *deliberation* must necessarily also have *will*. The definition of the *will*, given commonly by the

Thus, will is not an additional ability or power of a person. It does not possess any freedom. There is no such thing as free will. Will itself is merely the final concept that has gained precedence for some reason. What determines it? Appetite and fear. How do we weigh the reasons for choosing one path to our goal over another? We assess the likelihood of success and the profitability of the efforts undertaken. It turns out that will is the result of prudence and cold calculation. Is calculation at play once again? It must consider all sensory stimuli and the individual's disposition to justify the final will fully. However, necessity cannot be derived from experience, so we are ultimately doomed to probability, and we can only estimate the chances of success of our endeavours with more or less probability. The means chosen to achieve the goal are never 100% certain either, as we evaluate them on the basis of our personal experience. Something makes us inclined to choose one path over another to a given goal. Experience informs us about the practicality of each. Our will is determined by their utility and the imagined chances of the entire endeavour's success. The imagination of our power. For example, although the need to quench thirst is irremovable, meaning we cannot free ourselves from it, the way to quench it depends on us, on our experience, assessment of the entire situation and possible means, calculation of gains and losses, a specific balance of desire, fear, and hope for success. Therefore, freedom appears to be linked to deliberate actions aimed at achieving some good. The desire to acquire something and the hopes associated with it, as well as the desire to avoid something and the accompanying fear, are the two motives of our actions and the principles of choice. As we read in *De Corpore*:

> Appetite, therefore, and aversion are simply so called as long as they follow not deliberation. But if deliberation have gone, then the last act of it, if it be appetite, is called *will*; if aversion, *unwillingness*. So that the same thing is called both will and appetite; but the consideration of them, namely, before and after deliberation, is divers. Nor is that which is done within a man whilst he willeth any thing, different from that which is done in other living creatures, whilst, delibera-

Schools, that it is a *rational appetite*, is not good. For if it were, then could there be no voluntary act against reason. For a *voluntary act* is that which proceedeth from the *will*, and no other. But if instead of a rational appetite, we shall say an appetite resulting from a precedent deliberation, then the definition is the same that I have given here. *Will*, therefore, *is the last appetite in deliberating*." HOBBES, *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmsbury*, ed. William Molesworth, vol. 3, *Leviathan or The Matter, Form, and Power of a Common-Wealth Ecclesiastical and Civil* (London, 1839), I, 6, p. 48ff.

> tion having preceded, they have appetite. Neither is the freedom of willing or not willing, greater in man, than in other living creatures. For where there is appetite, the entire cause of appetite hath preceded; and, consequently, the act of appetite could not choose but follow, that is, hath of necessity followed (as is shown in chapter IX, article 5). And therefore such a liberty as is free from necessity, is not to be found in the will either of men or beasts. But if by liberty we understand the faculty or power, not of willing, but of doing what they will, then certainly that liberty is to be allowed to both, and both may equally have it, whensoever it is to be had.[5]

Thus, we can say that although we remain determined regarding desires, we have freedom regarding how to satisfy them. As beings that harbour desires, we cannot help but want to satisfy them.

Such a conception of freedom represents a rather specific attempt to link it with the necessity of human actions determined by the circumstances conditioning them, characteristic of Hobbes's entire philosophy. It may seem all the more surprising that in *De Cive*, Hobbes, defining freedom, states that it "is nothing else but *an absence of the lets and hindrances of motion*,"[6] thus defining it in terms of physical barriers to possible movement, or more precisely, by emphasizing their absence. Nothing here is said about the freedom of human will, yet it seems that a certain degree of freedom is granted to man, both in the state of nature and in the situation where the state has already been established. This must, therefore, be a different kind of freedom. We know that although the human being emerging from the picture painted by Hobbes is guided by particular decisions, engages in deliberation, and performs specific actions, in all these activities, he is constrained by his nature, its emotional aspect, and finally the mechanical necessity of reactions to the surrounding world. If life, as Hobbes says, is a race, one cannot help but participate in it.[7] Abandoning it means death. Thus, competition remains our only option.

In the state of nature, competition is unrestricted. *Homo homini lupus est*. It is a war of all against all. At the same time, it is precisely during this period that we enjoy absolute freedom. The selfish nature of humans, which dominates over their more humane qualities, finds itself quite comfortable

[5] HOBBES, *Elements of Philosophy. The First Section, Concerning Body*, IV, 25, 13, p. 408ff.

[6] Thomas HOBBES, *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury*, vol. 2, *Philosophical Rudiments Concerning Government and Society […]*, ed. William Molesworth (London, 1841), II, 9, 5, p. 120.

[7] See HOBBES, *The Elements of Law*, I, 9, 21, p. 47ff.

here. Man, using his power, does everything to survive. There is no law, no morality,[8] no one defining what justice is, what property is, what is mine and yours; there is no good and evil other than our own, no arbitrators, and no rules—only immediate benefit and easy gain. In the state of nature, we can unite with others when we have a common goal. Interestingly, according to Hobbes, man is not a social being. He had to get used to living in a group. Something had to drive him to live in a society. Eventually, the state had to offer him something. The state of nature offered him unlimited freedom; man decided everything himself. He had the right to everything, just like everyone else. Whatever he did not obtain himself, he could take from another whenever he wished. He could harm, deceive, and exploit another, but he could also negotiate, pact, and even associate with others. All people are equal here. And all suffer from anxiety over whether there will be a better tomorrow. The desire for survival that guides us through life is one thing, but the hope to guarantee that if one sows the seed and reaps the harvest, no one will take it away is another. How long did people realize they wanted to unite under a leadership that would guarantee this? People wanted certainty that someone would look after their interests, defend their rights against others, protect the country's borders, and establish laws that would be followed. Everyone was still to be equal. And now they would be safe and live in peace.

The transition from the state of nature to life in a state is accomplished through the hypothetical social contract, whereby each person relinquishes their natural right to everything,[9] provided that everyone else does the same. Without this condition, renouncing anything would expose us to danger or ridicule at best. In any case, the competition transferred from the state of

[8] One might wonder whether, if moral laws are divine laws, they are eternal and thus applicable even in the state of nature. Hobbes indeed claims this, but whether he genuinely believes it is a matter that is not to be resolved here. As far as possible, I try to avoid linking the topics discussed with theological issues in this article. According to Hobbes, philosophy does not concern itself with the latter. However, the fact remains that moral laws are also binding in the state of nature, only there is no sword hanging over our heads to compel us to obey them.

[9] In the *Elements of Law* we read: "And forasmuch as necessity of nature maketh men to will and desire *bonum sibi*, that which is good for themselves, and to avoid that which is hurtful; but most of all that terrible enemy of nature, death, from whom we expect both the loss of all power, and also the greatest of bodily pains in the losing; it is not against reason that a man doth all he can to preserve his own body and limbs, both from death and pain. And that which is not against reason, men call RIGHT, or *jus*, or blameless liberty of using our own natural power and ability. It is therefore a *right of nature*: that every man may preserve his own life and limbs, with all the power he hath." HOBBES, *Elements of Law*, I, 14, 6, p. 71. This right we never renounce. It remains with us in the state; we renounce only the right to everything else.

nature would cease to be fair, to say nothing of just. Justice only emerges now. Hobbes does not deny that, in the state of nature, there might be those who observe the rules of politeness and mutual respect; some might even make oaths, form pacts, and, most importantly, keep their agreements. However, the philosopher fears that not everyone is capable of such behaviour. In his view, humans are rather selfish creatures. They are driven by emotions and passions that spur them to action; they want to compete and win, to compare themselves and show off. They are proud, sometimes honourable, and can be envious, but fortunately, they are also merciful and kind. Above all, they measure the power of everyone around them. And their own. They calculate and reckon. Their success in life, social status, and all the signs of honour they care about depend on this. They want not only to survive, but also to live life in the best possible conditions.[10] As Hobbes states, "The passions that incline men to peace are fear of death; desire of such things as are necessary to commodious living; and a hope by their industry to obtain them. And reason suggesteth convenient articles of peace, upon which men may be drawn to agreement. These articles, are they, which otherwise are called the Laws of Nature."[11] The state can offer them security, and guarantee property and equality before the law. The state can also provide privileges and benefits—finally, a greater sense of power. The proposal is therefore tempting, but the cost seems not tiny: to renounce absolute freedom for peace and security, which are the only reasons for the existence of the state. With the establishment of statehood, law, *lex*, appears and interferes with human rights, *jus*. From now on, they will always be intertwined. There were no laws in the state of nature because there was no sovereign to establish them.[12] There was no one to enact and announce them, nor anyone to punish

[10] Life, as described, remains a race, but it takes place under different circumstances. Changing the rules of the game also changes the nature of the competition. By necessity, it is subject to correction by laws. These laws regulate our actions and behaviours. Not all means are permissible anymore, especially if we strive for mere wealth or the satisfaction of vanity. Our freedom of action ends where another's begins.

[11] HOBBES, *Leviathan*, I, 13, 14, p. 116.

[12] We can once again say that we can justifiably refer to human natural rights as laws since they have their author in God. Hobbes indeed maintains this view. As he states: "And forasmuch as law (to speak properly) is a command, and these dictates, as they proceed from nature, are not commands; they are not therefore called laws in respect of nature, but in respect of the author of nature, God Almighty." HOBBES, *Elements of Law*, I, 17, 12, p. 93. However, it should be noted that, ultimately, it is unclear how Hobbes conceives of this God in his philosophy. Is He to remain the first cause from the *Elements of Law* or the creator of moral laws from *Leviathan*? It seems they are two different gods. Moreover, Hobbes occasionally attributes the divine character of moral or natural laws to the fact that all of them are the products of reason, which we owe to

for breaking them and ensure that the punishment was carried out. Without the power to impose penalties, the sovereign, established by the social contract, will not be able to enforce compliance with the laws he sets. Only such a sovereign, with full authority, can guarantee all people peace and security. From now on, he enjoys freedom. And we, in fear of him, should adhere to his laws. Without the sword above our heads, we are not capable of righteousness.

In *Leviathan* Hobbes provides this definition of the right: "THE RIGHT OF NATURE, which writers commonly all *jus naturale*, is the liberty each man hath, to use his own power, as he will himself, for the preservation of his own nature; that is to say, of his own life; and consequently, of doing any thing, which in his own judgment, and reason, he shall conceive to be the aptest means thereunto."[13] This natural right is the ultimate source of almost all the freedom we can still exercise in the state. Another source is the need for legal regulations. What is not forbidden is not prohibited. The state cannot regulate all areas of human life, as it might seem. So, where the law does not reach, there is freedom. However, the first source seems more important, although the freedom associated with it has much smaller dimensions. "By LIBERTY, is understood, according to the proper signification of the word, the absence of external impediments: which impediments, may oft take away part of a man's power to do what he would; but cannot hinder him from using the power left him, according as his judgment, and reason shall dictate to him."[14] Therefore, even though in the state, man loses his absolute freedom and becomes a subject, and thus the property of his lord, he remains a natural right, from which he can always use in danger. What does this mean in practice, and what are the dangers involved?

God. Therefore, I do not see any particular reason why we should seriously consider Hobbes's statements about the role of God in establishing moral laws. Instead, let us maintain that these laws are products of reason and always aim for good. See: "But forasmuch as all men, carried away by the violence of their passion, and by evil customs, do those things which are commonly said to be against the law of nature; it is not the consent of passion, or consent in some error gotten by custom, that makes the law of nature. Reason is no less of the nature of man than passion, and is the same in all men, because all men agree in the will to be directed and governed in the way to that which they desire to attain, namely their own good, which is the work of reason. There can therefore be no other law of nature than reason, nor no other precepts of NATURAL LAW, than those which declare unto us the ways of peace, where the same may be obtained, and of defence where it may not." HOBBES, *Elements of Law*, I, 15, 1, p. 75.

[13] HOBBES, *Leviathan*, I, 14, 1, p. 116.

[14] HOBBES, I, 14, 2, p. 116.

Hobbes's sovereign exercises absolute power. Everything depends on him. He establishes laws, enforces them, wages wars, appoints judges, oversees administration, decides on taxes, education, and censorship, and has authority over clergy, scholars, and their teachings. He interprets scripture, identifies heresies, determines right and wrong, just and unjust, and rewards and punishes. All of this is made possible by our establishment of the state. We sanction his actions, leaving us in no position to dispute with him. In a confrontation with him, we are in a disadvantaged position. We would accuse him of something for which we would be responsible as his authorizers.

However, his power may have its limits. There may be circumstances (such as death without a successor, conquest, exile, or even abdication) where he can no longer fulfil his duty of maintaining peace in the state, protecting us, and upholding the law. In such cases, his legitimacy of power diminishes. The subjects, in turn, revert to the state of nature, where they can once again rely only on themselves. The war of all against all returns, but so does absolute freedom in undertaking relentless efforts and employing all means to survive. Legal regulations vanish, but freedom of action returns.

As subjects, we are subject to the laws established by the sovereign ruler. However, as I have mentioned, we still enjoy the right to exercise a certain degree of freedom. Hobbes states that "… RIGHT, consisteth in liberty to do, or to forbear; whereas LAW, determineth, and bindeth to one of them: so that law, and right, differ as much, as obligation, and liberty; which in one and the same matter are inconsistent."[15] Therefore, the law restricts our rights, or in other words, regulates our behaviour. And since no law has yet been invented that would determine our conscience, regulation of behaviour remains within the realm of law. This means that Hobbes reserves the freedom of private opinions for individuals, as long as they are not expressed, and freedom of religious, moral, and scientific beliefs, provided they are not shared with anyone else. If the sovereign decides on matters of religion, determining what constitutes heresy according to his guidelines in this matter—since no other criterion applies here—by maintaining the behaviours, rituals, and social postures he recommends, we submit to him only externally. This can happen in any issue where there is a conflict between *foro externo* and *foro interno*. Nothing obligates our conscience.

Our natural right, however, also manifests itself more overtly. Our freedom is not always exercised far from the sovereign's gaze or outside of the laws they established. It cannot solely rely on the silence of the law. Some-

[15] HOBBES, I, 14, 3, p. 117.

times, freedom even manifests itself contrary to the laws in force within the state, often in confrontation with the entire state apparatus. This natural right is, as mentioned, the liberty to use our power as we see fit to preserve our lives. Therefore, we can and indeed must exercise this right whenever someone threatens our lives, for instance, when the sovereign or subordinates command us to commit suicide, provide incriminating testimony against ourselves or loved ones, or even participate in a war. In all these cases, we can resist the ruler and the power apparatus without committing any injustice.[16] We are also not obligated to obey when told to refrain from eating or taking medicine, to stop breathing, or to refrain from any other actions that we believe would harm our health and pose a mortal threat. Here, we are free; we have the full right to exercise our natural freedom of action and inherent power: similarly, everywhere else where the sovereign cannot guarantee our safety and we must rely on ourselves. However, as it seems, this is a tiny part of our daily experience, in which much more freedom belongs to us in those spheres that the sovereign has not legally regulated. Among these, the most critical issues include how to live, where to work, how to nourish and educate children, what to buy and sell, and many similar matters.

In Hobbes's approach, freedom is therefore crucial in relation to the body, but it is only bodies that Hobbes wanted to deal with in philosophy. Artificial entities like spiritual substances were never considered, so no freedom or agency can be attributed to them. Freedom also is not an attribute of will because Hobbes did not conceive of will as an autonomous power or capability of humans, but merely as the last desire present in the mind. Therefore, freedom is associated with the absence of physical constraints and barriers that prevent movement. As Hobbes puts it, " a FREEMAN, *is he, that in those things, which by his strength and wit he is able to do, is not hindered to do what he has a will to*. But when the words *free*, and *liberty*, are applied to any thing but *bodies*, they are abused; for that which is not subject to motion, is not subject to impediment."[17] Hence, human freedom of action is inherently linked to necessity within oneself; although actions stem from

[16] In the case of participating in war, we are dealing with a specific situation where not everyone is suited for military service and not everyone can be expected to show appropriate courage. Cowardice often leads to a reluctance to participate. According to Hobbes, it is disgraceful, but not unjust, unlike when a professional soldier displays such cowardice. In the case of a conflict requiring participation from all subjects, there is no excuse for anyone's desertion. After all, wars are fought to preserve the state and the peace for which it was established. In such situations, fighting becomes a duty for everyone. See HOBBES, *Leviathan*, II, 21, 16, p. 205.

[17] HOBBES, *Leviathan*, II, 21, 2, 196n.

one's own will, that will is always dictated by some desire or inclination. Being able to do what one desires without encountering any physical obstacles is to enjoy freedom, as described by Hobbes.

A subject in any state, whether a monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy, differs from an enslaved person in only one aspect. Owing to their desire to remain a member of society and live within the state, subjects expect privileges and benefits that a slave cannot count on. There is no freedom beyond that which pertains to our bodies and unrestricted movement in any state. Anyone who asks and fights for another kind of freedom seeks power, privileges, and freedom that belong solely to sovereign authority. Hobbes sees no inconvenience in this situation for the citizens of the state. Achieved at a high cost, the state's laws regulate human life, rights, and behaviours, much as the banks of a river regulate its flow. The river remains free within its course, but flows with inevitable necessity. Similarly, according to Hobbes, people subjected to external legislation operate within the state by complying with the laws imposed upon them. They will find no freedom from these laws anywhere. Is the relinquishment of absolute freedom in the state of nature a high price to pay for anyone living in a state? According to the philosopher, there can only be one answer. No price is too high when it comes to living in peace, avoiding a constant sense of danger, and anxiety over whether there will be a better tomorrow and future rewards.

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Summary

This article aims to present Thomas Hobbes's views on freedom. I discuss how the philosopher understands freedom and the realm of human actions within which, according to him, it can manifest. In this context, I reconstruct both the state of nature, in which humans lived in less socialized times, and the state of polity, within which they have functioned since creating that artificial body known as the state. Hobbes's reference to the Latin terms *jus* and *lege*, meaning right and law and their consistent application in the philosopher's subsequent writings facilitates a more precise definition of the scope of human freedom and explains the differences in this matter between the subject and the sovereign. Ultimately, it is this relationship, subject–sovereign, that proves central to a clear and complete understanding of the issue of freedom. Therefore, I devote relatively the most space in the article to its discussion.

Keywords: Hobbes; freedom; right; law; state of nature; state of polity; artificial body; *Leviathan*; *Elements of Law*; *De Cive*; sovereign; subject

O WOLNOŚCI NA GRUNCIE FILOZOFII HOBBESA

Streszczenie

Niniejszy artykuł ma na celu przedstawienie poglądów Tomasza Hobbesa dotyczących wolności. Omawiam w nim sposób, w jaki filozof pojmuje wolność i dziedzinę ludzkich działań, w ramach których, jego zdaniem, może się ona przejawiać. Rekonstruuję przy tej okazji zarówno stan natury, w jakim przyszło człowiekowi żyć w mniej uspołecznionych czasach, jak i stan państwowości, w ramach którego funkcjonuje on od czasu stworzenia tego sztucznego ciała jakim jest państwo. Hobbesowskie odwołanie się do łacińskich terminów *jus* i *lege*, czyli uprawnienie i prawo, a także ich konsekwentne stosowanie w kolejnych pismach filozofa ułatwia dokładniejsze określenie zakresu przypisywanej człowiekowi wolności oraz wyjaśnia różnice, jakie w tej materii zachodzą pomiędzy poddanym a suwerenem. To ostatecznie ta relacja poddany–suweren okazuje się centralna dla jasnego i pełnego zrozumienia zagadnienia wolności. Dlatego też jej omówieniu poświęcam stosunkowo najwięcej miejsca w artykule.

Słowa kluczowe: Hobbes; wolność; uprawnienie; prawo; stan natury; stan państwowości; ciało sztuczne; *Lewiatan*; *Elementy prawa*; *De Cive*; suweren; poddany