

# **Hobbes' Corporeal God**

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## **John Scallan: Hobbes' Corporeal God**

### **Abstract**

This thesis focuses on Thomas Hobbes' conception of a corporeal God and its role within his overall philosophical system. I show that Hobbes' corporeal God was not a late development within his system but was something which was present from his early works. To this end, my aim is twofold. First, I offer a mainly literal and sincere interpretation of both Hobbes' ontology and his corporeal God. I establish that Hobbes' reliance upon God as motion – to account for all aspects of the natural world – is consistent with his explicit position that certain knowledge of the operations of the natural world is impossible. The central claim I make is that Hobbes sought to do more than merely find a way of preserving an abstract conception of God and, instead, wanted God to be an integral part of the universe. I argue that Hobbes achieved this by equating his corporeal God with motion: the constant effect of Hobbes' corporeal God-as-motion on extension is responsible for the manifestation of the natural world.

Secondly, I situate Hobbes' corporeal God within its contemporaneous context. I argue that while Hobbes' characterization of his ontological system is certainly unusual, its purpose was not. Hobbes was seeking to account for the activity of the natural world alongside a passive understanding of bodies. I illustrate the strong parallels as well as the important differences between Hobbes' system and that of Henry More, Ralph Cudworth and Margaret Cavendish. To this end, I argue that Hobbes' system can be understood as a form of partially extended substance-dualism. I argue that if we must classify Hobbes' position with a philosophical label then we should understand his ontological theory as a modified form of Stoicism.

### **Chronology of Hobbes' Works Cited**

1640-*Elements of Law, Natural and Politic* which includes *Human Nature* was produced in 1640 but was not published till 1650-1651.

1650-*Citizen* which is a translation of the 1647 second edition of the *De Cive*.

1651-*Leviathan*.

1654-*Of Liberty and Necessity*.

1656-*De Corpore* which is a translation of the 1655 Latin edition.

1656-*Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance*.

1656-*Six Lessons*.

1658-*De Homine* which was not translated into English until 1972 and then only partially.

1662-*Considerations Upon the Reputation, Loyalty, Manners, and Religion of Thomas Hobbes* but not published till 1680 and then posthumously.

1668-*An Historical Narration Concerning Heresy and the Punishment Therefore* written in the mid to late 1660s but not published till 1680 and then posthumously.

1668-*Dialogue of Common Law*.

1668-Latin edition of Hobbes' *Leviathan* and its Appendix.

1668-*An Answer to a Book Published by Dr Bramhall...called the "Catching of the Leviathan"* written in the mid to late 1660s, probably in 1668, shortly after the 1668 Appendix to his *Leviathan* but was not published till 1682 and then posthumously.

1678-*Decameron Physiologicum: Or Ten Dialogues of Natural Philosophy*.

### Note on Primary Materials Used

In this dissertation I will be engaging with Hobbes' writings in their likely chronological production dates rather than their date of publication.<sup>1</sup> When I reference one of Hobbes' writings I will state its definitive or likely year of production. If its publication date or English translation date is different I will place this date in a bracket. For example, I will reference Hobbes' *Human Nature* as Hobbes 1640 (1650-1651) *Human Nature* and his *De Corpore* as Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore*. Due to the different titles and versions of Hobbes' works, I should also make clear how I am referencing them. Hobbes produced two editions of his *De Cive*, both written in Latin: the first in 1642 and the second, which was a revised and expanded edition, in 1647. The second edition was translated into English and published in 1650 as *Philosophical Rudiments concerning Government and Society*. Molesworth references this text as *Citizen*. I will be referencing it as *Citizen* 1650 (1647). Due to the large amount that Hobbes wrote I have had to focus primarily on Hobbes' 1650 (1647) *Citizen*, 1651 *Leviathan*, 1654 *Of Liberty and Necessity*, 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity and Chance*, 1656 (1655) *De Corpore*, 1668 Appendix to his Latin *Leviathan*, 1668 (1682) *Answer* and his 1678 *Decameron Physiologicum*. These works contain Hobbes' most expressive treatment of his implicit and explicit 'corporeal God' thesis.

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<sup>1</sup> *De Cive* and *De Corpore* were both published in translation during Hobbes' life. Scholars disagree on whether Hobbes translated these works personally. Martinich does not think that Hobbes personally translated *De Cive*, while Höffe (translated by Walker) 2015 p 34-35) does. For more details on the dating and translation of Hobbes' works see Martinich 1997 p 20; p 55; p 119; Martinich 1999 p xv; p 119; Gorham 2013a p 241; p 248.



## Scope of Engagement with Hobbes' Corporeal God Writings

I will be engaging with Hobbes' implicit and explicit corporeal God writings produced between 1650 and 1678, while I recognize that Hobbes might have stated that God was corporeal as early as 1640 in a letter to Descartes. Since the letter has been lost and what little information about it we have comes from a hostile secondary source I will not be dealing with it, beyond briefly stating its alleged content.<sup>2</sup> Descartes rejected much of Hobbes' letter outright and stated that he would withhold comment on things which do not concern him:

*Omittam initium de anima et Deo corporeis, de spirito interno, et reliquis quae me non tangunt.*

Translated as:

I will omit the beginning part about the corporeal soul and God, about interior spirit and the remaining things, which do not pertain to me.<sup>3</sup>

When I am contextualizing Hobbes' approach to God within its contemporary setting, I want to draw a parallel between Hobbes' alleged point and Henry More's point in preserved letters to Descartes, also from 1640, about existence being tied to extension. It is important to note that More wrote to Descartes in the late 1640s, urging him to accept the idea that spirits are spatially extended for fear of erasing them from existence and arguing that God could not act on matter unless God touched matter.<sup>4</sup> Both writers appear to have feared that unless God was held to be extended, God would be unable to affect bodies and risked being eliminated from existence. I will argue that because Hobbes held that the universe comprises everything which exists, Hobbes' God had to exist within the universe and be extended.

I will be focusing on Hobbes' implicit corporeal God writings in his 1650 (1647) *Citizen*, 1651 *Leviathan*, 1654 *Of Liberty and Necessity*, 1656 (1655) *De Corpore*, 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty*, 1662 (1680) *Considerations*, 1668 (1680) *Historical Narration* and 1678 *Decameron Physiologicum*, as well as Hobbes' explicit corporeal God writings in his

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<sup>2</sup> This is based on the partial evidence of the interactions between Hobbes, Descartes and Mersenne during the 1640's in which Descartes dismissed Hobbes' mention (in a lost letter from Hobbes to Descartes) of "the corporeal soul and God" as an attention-grabbing strategy. For a broader examination of their interaction and possible influence of Hobbes and Descartes on each other see Martinich 1997 p 11-12; Martinich 1999 p 163-171; Overhoff 2000 p 528-529; Leijenhorst 2005 p 213-214; Gorham 2013b p 36.

<sup>3</sup> For the Latin quotation see Wright 2006 p 257; for the translation see Wright 2006 footnote 21 p 257. See also Wright 2006 p 257-259 including footnotes 18-22 p 257-259

<sup>4</sup> More 1825 Correspondence with Descartes in *Oeuvres de Descartes* ed. Cousin (Paris) tome 10 p 184 in Mintz 1962 p 90; Boylan 1980 p 397-399; Reid 2007 p 92; Agostini 2017 p 879.

1668 Appendix to his Latin *Leviathan* and his 1668 (1682) *Answer*. Throughout his engagement with the Bible within his writings, Hobbes indicated that God is corporeal. I will be engaging with Hobbes' treatment of scripture in a limited way. I will be focusing on aspects of Hobbes' interpretation of scriptural accounts which align with his account of God's activity and presence in his explicit corporeal God writings. While I will be exploring how to fit Hobbes' corporeal God into his understanding of the universe, I will not be exploring how Hobbes' corporeal God relates to his theory of fluids. Some scholars who engage with Hobbes' corporeal God assume that it was a genuine fluid body and attempt to show how it relates to the other fluids within his system.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, I interpret Hobbes' characterization of God as a fluid allegorically and instead maintain that his corporeal God should be understood as motion itself. As motion, Hobbes' corporeal God manifests the diversity of the natural world including whatever fluids exist.

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<sup>5</sup> Examples include Lange (1877), Jesseph (2002), Leijenhorst (2005), MacDonald Ross (2009). Both Lange (1877 p 290) and MacDonald Ross (2009 p 153) hold that Hobbes' all-embracing ether must be regarded as his God. Leijenhorst (2005) in contrast argues that Hobbes could not identify God with his subtle ether because the ether is a finite created body which can be conceived by human reason (p 219).

## Notes on the Edition of Primary Texts and Abbreviations Used

### *Leviathan*

Thomas Hobbes. *Leviathan with Selected Variants from the Latin Edition of 1668*. Edited by Edwin Curley (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1994). Citation by part, chapter, paragraph number and Curley's edition page number.

### Appendix to the *Leviathan*

George Wright's translation and commentary of it in his *Religion, Politics and Thomas Hobbes* (2006). I will also reference Edwin Curley's translation and commentary of it.<sup>6</sup>

### Molesworth editions

OL-Thomas Hobbes. *Opera philosophica quae latine scripsit omnia*. 5 vols. Edited by W. Molesworth (London, 1845). Cited by date (original likely production date followed by publication date if it is different), then volume and page number.

EW- Thomas Hobbes. *English Works*. 11 vols., edited by William Molesworth (London, 1839-1845). Cited by date (original likely production date followed by publication date if it is different), then volume and page number.

### Bramhall

Bramhall, J. *Works of John Bramhall*. Four Volumes (Oxford: John Henry Parker). Cited by date (original likely production date followed by publication date, if different), then volume and page number. I will be focusing on Volume IV: 1) *A Defense of True Liberty from antecedent and extrinsecal Necessity* (1655); 2) *Castigations of Mr. Hobbes and his Animadversions, &c.* (1657); and 3) *The Catching of the Leviathan* (1658). It is important to note that, despite the dates of these texts, the actual extended debate between Hobbes and Bramhall over free will and determinism is believed to have taken place in 1645.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Wright 2006 p 144-173; Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix C p 538-542; In particular I will be focusing on Chapter III which according to Wright's designation is 180 and Curley's is 6.

<sup>7</sup> Wright 2006 p 271; Wright 2006 footnote 66 p 271.

### **Henry More**

More produced three editions of his *Antidote Against Atheism*. The 1<sup>st</sup> edition was produced in 1653, the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition in 1655 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition in 1662. I will be focusing on More's 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of his *Antidote Against Atheism* in his *A Collection of Several Philosophical Writings*. I will reference it as More 1662 *Antidote*.

I will be referencing More's 1659 *Immortality of the Soul* also in his 1662 *Collection*. I will reference it as More 1659 (1662) *Immortality*.

I will also be referencing More's 1668 *Divine Dialogues, containing Disquisitions concerning the Attributes and Providence of God*, as More 1668 *Divine Dialogues*. (It is the 1743 reprint).

### **Ralph Cudworth**

Cudworth's *True Intellectual System* was finished in 1671 but was not published till 1678. I will reference it as Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* then volume, book, chapter and page number.

Cudworth's *A Treatise Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality* and *A Treatise of Freewill* were unfinished but materials intended for these works were published posthumously in 1731 and 1838. References to these works will be to Hutton's (1996) reprint. I will cite these works by original date of publication, original chapter divisions followed by the pagination of Hutton's edition.

### **Margaret Cavendish**

I will principally be focusing on Cavendish's 1664 *Philosophical Letters* and to a lesser extent her 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy*. Cavendish's *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* had two editions. The first edition was produced in 1666 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> was produced in 1668. I will be engaging with O'Neill's (2012) edition of Cavendish's 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy*.

I will reference Cavendish's works as 1664 *PL* cited by chapter and section number and her 1668 *Observations* by book number, chapter number and page number.

### **Note on the edition of Diogenes Laertius' *Lives* cited:**

I will be using Diogenes Laertius' *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* Volume I and II translated by R.D. Hicks, Fellow of Trinity College Cambridge. London: William Heinemann New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, MCMXXV-1995 edition.

I will reference it by book, chapter, paragraph and page number.

### **Explanatory Note on Terminology and Spelling**

Because Hobbes used masculine terminology when he referred to God and humans I will be doing the same. Similarly, I will follow Margaret Cavendish's use of feminine terminology to describe nature and matter.

All primary materials bar Margaret Cavendish's *Observations Upon Experimental Philosophy* have not been modernized in regards to capitalization, spelling and contractions.

## PREFACE

Since their original circulation, Hobbes' writings have garnered intense interest and reaction. The vast majority of contemporaneous interest was focused on Hobbes' political theories and his religious writings. As the years have progressed, the interest in Hobbes' religious writings diminished, but the interest in his political theories has continued to bloom. Today, the sheer breadth and depth of Hobbes scholarship is awe-inspiring. The breadth of this scholarship is possibly without parallel for the sheer diversity of different fields within which his writings are studied – philosophy, literature, political theory, history, the history of science, and religion and theology – as well as the amount of cross pollination across these different fields. I will not be exploring Hobbes' approach to politics or the relationship between religion and his political theory. But I will note here that the question regarding the role that religion plays in Hobbes' writings is probably the most polarizing issue within Hobbes scholarship. Broadly speaking, the 'secular interpretation' of Hobbes' writings disregards almost all of the religious elements in his writings, while, conversely, the 'religious interpretation' holds that God plays a central role in his thought.

These two types of interpretation are used to produce a multitude of different interpretations. The debate tends to be focused on Hobbes' political and moral writings. Some have read Hobbes as 'secularizing' aspects of theology for a political purpose;<sup>8</sup> some ignore Hobbes' religious writings altogether as being (supposedly) superfluous to his political philosophy. While this disagreement is concerned mainly with Hobbes' political philosophy, it also has implications for the interpretation of Hobbes' account of the natural world. In this respect, there are two vastly different interpretations possible. Should Hobbes be understood as an atheist depicting a world governed by senseless motion for no rhyme or reason? Or was Hobbes' account one in which the world is governed by God's will and which manifests God's purpose? Given that Hobbes appears to have equated God with motion, I will argue for the latter position. I will not be exploring whether or not Hobbes' God was necessary for his political and moral theory.<sup>9</sup> Instead, I will be arguing that God was central to Hobbes' natural philosophy.

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<sup>8</sup> Martinich (2002), Gillespie (2009) and Gelot (2011) present compelling arguments that Hobbes translated Protestant theological principles into political dogmas and created a secular form of Christianity within his political philosophy.

<sup>9</sup> Taylor (1938), Warrender (1957), Hood (1964) and Martinich (2002) all argue that Hobbes' theory of obligation requires an all-powerful deity as well as some form of afterlife. While Gauthier (1969)

Much work has been done over the past thirty years or so to fit Hobbes into a Christian framework. Different scholars have placed Hobbes' views within the context of different Christian denominations, including heretical forms of Christianity. But these attempts have largely ignored Hobbes' corporeal God writings. Indeed, scholars on both sides of the debate about the role of religion in Hobbes' work tend to ignore the corporeal God writings. Theistic interpreters tend to focus instead on his repeatedly stated commitment to a negative theology.<sup>10</sup> Atheistic interpreters tend to assume that a corporeal, infinite, God is obviously ridiculous and not worth attention. Although there has been some limited engagement, in the last two decades, with the corporeal God writings, I believe that they have still not received enough attention. As I will try to demonstrate, these writings appear to provide answers to important questions about Hobbes' ontology. I will be approaching Hobbes' writings as if I were using a scalpel. I will be delicately and narrowly cutting out the portions of Hobbes' works that either directly comprise his corporeal God writings or are directly related to them. I do this, not to present a caricature of Hobbes' position in order to support a certain interpretation, but because I am focusing on the specific issue of the corporeal God vis-à-vis Hobbes' ontology. I will be connecting the problems related to Hobbes' understanding of motion to his implicit and explicit corporeal God writings. It appears that Hobbes implicitly identified motion and God as one and the same thing.

In order to make this case, I will be extrapolating the meaning of Hobbes' statements that "*God is body/God is a body/God is a spirit corporeal*" and interpreting them in terms of his implicit identification of God and motion. To this end I will argue that we should understand Hobbes' use of the word "God", not as a non-image, but as a blank image. I will suggest that Hobbes superimposed on this blank image all of those aspects of his ontology which he could not account for, which was motion. Hobbes, I will suggest, divided the universe into two distinct extended substances, one of which was passive and the other which is active. Hobbes' active extended substance was his corporeal God, while his passive extended substance was simply extension. Nonetheless, Hobbes was an unusual extended substance dualist: for him, the corporeal God and extension have independent yet inseparable existences – but not in such a way that results in co-location or substance monism.

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argued that the Hobbes' fundamental argument can be made to work without assuming the existence of God.

<sup>10</sup> An example of this can be seen in the writings of Martinich who, despite heavily engaging with Hobbes' religious writings, has broadly left his corporeal God writings unexamined.

Hobbes claimed to have excluded God from his account of natural philosophy.<sup>11</sup> Most scholars take Hobbes' claim at face value, and then proceed to explore Hobbes' natural philosophy without referencing his use of God in this system. But Hobbes did reference God within his natural philosophy, and I will argue here that while this engagement was limited, it was essential to his natural philosophy: without God there appears to be no way of accounting for the existence of motion. The idea that Hobbes relied upon God to account for the origin of motion is not a new one. Mintz suggested that "[a]s a materialist, Hobbes believed that the universe is a great continuum of matter, devoid of spirit, created and set in motion by a material God."<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Pietarinen holds that Hobbes' God should be conceived as the first and eternal cause of all motion.<sup>13</sup> While I agree that Hobbes relied upon God to account for the origin of motion, I do not accept that Hobbes thought of his God in an Aristotelian fashion as both uncaused and unmoved.<sup>14</sup> I also disagree with Martinich who held that, despite God being the source of the world's motion, Hobbes was unable to account for what moves God.<sup>15</sup> As I will show, drawing on Hobbes' principles and his explicit statements about God, his corporeal God was not an unmoved mover which causes motion but was a perpetually moving mover which causes motion. I agree with Gillespie that all motion for Hobbes begins with God and that his God was a moving first mover.<sup>16</sup> I will be arguing, based on Hobbes' principles, that since motion produces nothing but motion and his God is perpetually moving; his corporeal God was motion.

While I disagree with Martinich that Hobbes' God was a body, I agree with him that Hobbes' God must be in contact with bodies: "Since all causality, even divine causality, happens by contact (either pushing or pulling), God must be in contact with other bodies."<sup>17</sup> I also agree with Martinich's characterization of God's presence within the universe: "Hobbes's God might be called immanent, since it exists within the universe, but it is not the least bit anthropomorphic."<sup>18</sup> I will argue that, *qua* motion, Hobbes' God is imminent throughout the plenum of extension which allows for God's contact with extension. Hobbes' God-as-motion is not morphic in any way: for Hobbes, shape and form are the

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<sup>11</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part I 1.8 EW I p 10.

<sup>12</sup> Mintz 1962 p 23.

<sup>13</sup> Pietarinen 2009 p 190.

<sup>14</sup> Mintz 1962 p 64; Pietarinen 2009 p 190.

<sup>15</sup> Martinich 1999 p 191-192.

<sup>16</sup> Gillespie 2009 p 229.

<sup>17</sup> Martinich 1999 p 192.

<sup>18</sup> Martinich 1997 p 56.



characteristics of bodies, not motion. The effect of Hobbes' God on extension gives the appearance of shape/figure – but this shape/figure belongs to extension, not to Hobbes' corporeal God. The fundamental idea of Hobbes' theory of reality is that the world consists of bodies in motion and this motion takes place according to the laws of mechanics.<sup>19</sup> While I agree with Martinich that Hobbes' physics was uncompromisingly materialistic, mechanistic and deterministic, I disagree with him that Hobbes held that the laws of motion were devised by God.<sup>20</sup> I will argue that, given Hobbes' principle that motion produces nothing but motion, and given God's role as the origin of motion, the laws of motion were not devised by God but were an outflow of God's activity.

I will challenge the assumption that Hobbes was a materialist and instead argue that he was a corporealist – specifically, a corporeal dualist. Hobbes defined bodies in terms of passive extension. But without an active corporeal substance, bodies would never be formed from this passive corporeal substance. So the manifestation of the natural world is caused by motion affecting passive corporeal substance; my argument here is that, for Hobbes, this active corporeal substance was God. This corporeal God, as perpetual motion, is responsible for life, sensation and thought. I will also challenge the assumption that Hobbes was a mechanist and instead argue that he was a vitalist who characterized the activity of motion in mechanical terms. I will argue for this position, despite Hobbes characterizing the activity of sensation in terms of the collision of matter in motion, because he was a plenist who rejected the transference of motion.

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<sup>19</sup> Sabine 1961 p 461; Raphael 2004 p 22.

<sup>20</sup> Martinich 1999 p 271.

## INTRODUCTION

Hobbes was born in 1588 CE and died in 1679 CE; his lifespan covered a period of great philosophical, scientific, political, religious and general intellectual change, both within England and in Continental Europe. Hobbes engaged with many of the most prominent and intellectually important figures during this period, like Bacon, Descartes, Gassendi and Mersenne. His corporeal God writings were produced within the context of a wide array of thought. The emergence of modern science transformed how individuals thought of God's relationship to the natural world. There was a shift away from transcendent conceptions of God towards immanent conceptions; God and God's attributes began to be employed within the theoretical explanations of the natural world. But there was disagreement over how and if God could be spatially and temporally within the world without being divisible: how could God constitute absolute space and time while remaining indivisible?<sup>21</sup> I will argue that Hobbes' corporeal God *qua* motion was taken to be responsible for the existence of space and time while remaining indivisible. I also want to stress that Hobbes' corporeal God writings should not be explored as if they were produced in isolation. I will principally be comparing and contrasting Hobbes' ontological approach to Henry More's (1614-1687), Ralph Cudworth's (1617-1688) and Margaret Cavendish's (1623-1673) respective approaches.<sup>22</sup> They were all operating within the same intellectual eco-system; nonetheless, there were important differences between them, such as whether vitalism was atheistic or not. More and Cudworth both held that vitalism amounted to a form of atheism.<sup>23</sup> Cavendish rejected More's view that God was incapable of giving matter active powers and held that More's position was atheistic.<sup>24</sup>

It is generally recognized that Hobbes influenced More's and Cavendish's writings. Hobbes' 1651 *Leviathan* does not seem to have made any significant impact on More's 1653 *Antidote* nor on its 1655 Appendix, but large parts of his 1659 *Immortality* were designed as

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<sup>21</sup> Gorham 2009.

<sup>22</sup> I will not be exploring the parallels and differences between Hobbes and Epicureanism within this dissertation. This is because the ontological approach of Hobbes and Epicureanism are quite different. Examples of differences include the existence of voids, attributing active powers to matter and disagreeing over matter's divisibility. Hobbes unlike Epicureanism rejected the existence of voids, attributed no active power to matter and held that matter was infinitely divisible.

<sup>23</sup> James 1999 p 230.

<sup>24</sup> Broad 2009b p 61-62.

direct responses to Hobbes' arguments.<sup>25</sup> Cavendish's positions were influenced by both Hobbes and More; her 1664 *Philosophical Letters* included a critical engagement with both More and Hobbes.<sup>26</sup> I will be suggesting that Hobbes was in turn influenced by More and Cavendish's respective writings. Since Cudworth's 1671 (1678) *TIS* was not published until after Hobbes published his *DP*, we can rule out any direct influence on Hobbes. Instead, I will be drawing out the parallels between Cudworth's *TIS* and Hobbes' corporeal God writings. Cudworth extensively criticised Hobbes in his *TIS* but he never referred to Hobbes by name; and while Cudworth understood Hobbes' positions he did not always quote Hobbes properly.<sup>27</sup> Cavendish appears to have been critically ignored by her contemporaries. Neither Cudworth nor More wrote to Cavendish. Hobbes, although polite in his response to Cavendish, did not produce a critical response to her writings.<sup>28</sup> Hobbes' patrons were the Cavendish family, both the Devonshire branch of the family and their cousins, Sir Charles Cavendish and Margaret's husband, William, Duke of Newcastle.<sup>29</sup> This could explain Hobbes' polite response.

### Cambridge Platonists

Both More and Cudworth belonged to the group of philosophers and theologians known as the Cambridge Platonists. The Cambridge Platonists played an important role in disseminating Descartes' philosophy, which they later opposed.<sup>30</sup> They used Platonic thought in an attempt to oppose contemporary materialistic and atheistic views and to expound a Christian philosophy.<sup>31</sup> I will be exploring the possibility that Hobbes should be understood as being engaged in a similar project to the Cambridge Platonists, namely that Hobbes was also attempting to oppose contemporary materialistic and atheistic views by expounding a "Christian" philosophy. Ostensibly, they were diametrically opposed to Hobbes: as Mintz has noted, "[t]he most systematic and rigorous refutation of Hobbist philosophy was made by the Cambridge Platonists Henry More and Ralph Cudworth."<sup>32</sup> But

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<sup>25</sup> Reid 2007 p 99; Parkin 2008 p 197-198.

<sup>26</sup> Hutton 1997 p 421-432; James 1999 p 222-223; O'Neill 2001 p xiii; Broad 2003 p 36; p 43; p 46; Wilkins 2016 p 858.

<sup>27</sup> Mintz 1962 p 95; Passmore 2013 p 3; p 11-12; Sellars 2011 p 126.

<sup>28</sup> O'Neill 2001 p xvii-xviii.

<sup>29</sup> For more on Hobbes' connection to the Cavendish's see Hutton 1997 p 422-423; p 429; James 1999 p 120; Martinich 1999 p 24; p 64; p 83; p 91; p 98-99; p 101; p 104; p 199; Gillespie 2009 p 214; Sempler 2012 p 343; Santi 2017 p 58.

<sup>30</sup> Webster 1969 p 359; Broad 2003 p 55-56.

<sup>31</sup> Copleston 1959 p 54.

<sup>32</sup> Mintz 1962 p 80.

despite their stated rejection of Hobbes' writings, there are many similarities between their respective ontological approaches.

The principal similarity is the shared position that the activity present within bodies is the result of an active substance affecting passive extension, rather than the activity present within a body belonging to the body itself. Hobbes was closer to More in this respect, because he, like More, equated existence with extension. Cudworth was unclear whether he thought that existence was bound to extension, but he probably did not. I will be arguing that Hobbes, like More, was an extended substance dualist. But Hobbes was a stricter dualist than More because within More's system there were numerous extended substances, from God, his spirit of nature, to individual spirits and bodies. In comparison, Hobbes' system is a "purer" form of substance dualism in which there are only two extended substances— his corporeal God and extension. There is also a strong parallel between Hobbes' reliance upon his corporeal God to account for the existence of the mind and Cudworth's claim that minds are copies of God's mind. As Sellars has noted, Cudworth, as an atomic theist, wanted to show in his *TIS* that the atomic, mechanical, view of nature was the natural complement of theism because inert matter requires a non-bodily intervention to account for its motion.<sup>33</sup> I will be exploring the possibility that Hobbes was also an atomic theist. Given the broad similarity between Hobbes' approach and More's and Cudworth's respective approaches, I will be raising the possibility that Hobbes like these writers should be understood as also expounding a Christian philosophy.

### Cavendish

James suggests that we should understand Cavendish's works as a response to the perceived deficiencies of mechanism,<sup>34</sup> while Wilkins suggested that Cavendish's natural philosophy was an antidote to some of the problems which she identified within vitalism.<sup>35</sup> Irrespective of the purpose of Cavendish's writings, it is generally agreed that Cavendish's materialism can be understood as a form of vitalist materialism,<sup>36</sup> and that her writings reveal a significant but unacknowledged intellectual debt to Hobbes.<sup>37</sup> I will be exploring the

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<sup>33</sup> Sellars 2011 p 126; p 128.

<sup>34</sup> James 1999 p 220.

<sup>35</sup> Wilkins 2016 p 861.

<sup>36</sup> Hutton 1997 p 422; James 1999 p 219; O'Neill 2001 p xix; Broad 2009b p 44; Wilkins 2016 p 863.

<sup>37</sup> Hutton 1997 p 422; O'Neill 2001 p xiii; Wilkins 2016 p 865; Sempler 2012 p 343.

possibility that Cavendish had a similar unacknowledged influence on Hobbes. Wilkins argues that Cavendish adopted Hobbesian arguments on the materiality of biblical spirits to reach a non-Hobbesian conclusion about the immateriality of God.<sup>38</sup> I will argue that this is because Hobbes and Cavendish disagreed on God's location. Hobbes held that all that existed is the universe, and so God, in order to exist, has to be 'inside' of the universe and corporeal. Cavendish held that God existed "outside" of the universe so could be immaterial and non-corporeal. I will argue that Cavendish's mature ontological approach provides a Rosetta stone to understanding Hobbes' ontological system. I will consider Cavendish's understanding of God and Nature, the relationship between God and Nature, her rejection of incorporeal substances within nature, her understanding of the transference of motion, her account of perception and change and her characterization of the activity of animate matter on inanimate matter; and I will compare and contrast her views with Hobbes' writings. We will find strong parallels but also some important differences. The principal difference is that Cavendish's God plays no role within her account of diversity, whereas Hobbes relied upon God to account for diversity.

#### Stoic influence

Both O'Neill and Gorham have argued that Cavendish was influenced by Stoicism.<sup>39</sup> Gorham has suggested that Cavendish and her Stoic circle during the 1660s pushed Hobbes towards accepting a self-moving God.<sup>40</sup> *Pace* Gorham, I will argue that Hobbes' corporeal God was implicitly present in his writings before the 1660s. As previously mentioned it is likely that Cavendish was influenced by Stoicism in her 1664 *PL* and 1668 *Observations*. O'Neill suggests that Cavendish avoided mentioning Stoicism because she feared that her critics would charge her with a lack of originality and claim that she had merely repeated the views of the Stoics.<sup>41</sup> It appears that Hobbes shared this concern: despite the strong parallels, Hobbes maintained that he had not been influenced by Stoic thought. Although it should be noted that Hobbes' only text which had an explicit Stoic character was his 1668 *Answer*. But in Hobbes' case this charge of lack of originality could have been intensified: he might have been accused of not only "copying" the Stoics, but also copying Cavendish. I will be engaging with Stoicism in a limited fashion in regards to its approach to God. I will

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<sup>38</sup> Wilkins 2016 p 869.

<sup>39</sup> O'Neill 2001 p xi-xxxii; footnote 2 p xvii; Gorham 2013b p 44-45.

<sup>40</sup> Gorham 2013b p 44.

<sup>41</sup> O'Neill 2001 p xv.

be taking a narrow focus on Stoic theology. I am not engaging with Stoicism's understanding of prayers or in the form that their religious practice took.<sup>42</sup> While I will be engaging with the deterministic aspect of Stoicism, I will be engaging in a limited way with its understanding of free will and moral responsibility.<sup>43</sup> I am focusing on the Stoic primary concept of God as the governing principle of the cosmos. I am interested in the purpose of the Stoic God and its interaction with the passive substance, rather than the terminology used by the Stoics to describe their God. I am focusing on the similarity between the role that God played within Stoic ontology and the role that Hobbes' God played within his ontology.

As Brooke and Sellars have both noted, at the start of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, ancient Stoicism was generally understood to be a form of theism, but by the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it was widely reckoned a variety of atheism, by critics and supporters alike.<sup>44</sup> This shift appears to have been driven by engagement with Stoic physics rather than its ethics.<sup>45</sup> Cudworth's *TIS* played a pivotal role within the English tradition in deciding whether Stoic physics allows Stoicism to be interpreted as a form of theism.<sup>46</sup> Stoicism appeared in Cudworth's *TIS* in two forms – one theistic, the other atheistic. He attributed 'imperfect theism' to early Stoics like Zeno and atheism to later Stoics like Boethus. I will be reading Hobbes' corporeal God in terms of this division, and considering whether it should be considered a form of theism or atheism, according to Cudworth's criteria. For Cudworth, the essence of atheism is the claim that consciousness is an emergent property.<sup>47</sup> I will be exploring whether or not Hobbes understands consciousness in this way. I will argue that Hobbes should be understood as an 'imperfect theist', like the early Stoics. Cudworth held that the early Stoics were not atheists but instead were "...ignorant, childish unskilful theists".<sup>48</sup> Cudworth considered the early Stoics like Zeno to be examples of spurious theism.<sup>49</sup> As indicated above, I want to suggest that, rather than being an atheist, Hobbes comes closer to what Cudworth considered an 'ignorant, childish and unskilful theist' committed to a 'spurious'

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<sup>42</sup> For more on Stoic understanding of prayers and the form of religious practice see Algra 2003 p 174-178.

<sup>43</sup> For more on the possibility of free will and moral responsible within Stoicism see Frede 2003.

<sup>44</sup> Brooke 2006 p 387; Sellars 2012 p 121.

<sup>45</sup> Sellars 2011 p 122.

<sup>46</sup> Brooke 2006 p 390; Sellars 2011 p 124.

<sup>47</sup> Sellars 2011 p 128.

<sup>48</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.30 p 136.

<sup>49</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.26 p 131-132; Sellars 2011 p 130.

form of theism. I will also explore the possibility that, despite Hobbes' similarities to Stoicism, it might be possible to understand his writings as a heretical form of Christianity.

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE CHALLENGE OF PRECONCEPTIONS AND UNCONCIOUS BIAS

#### 1.1 Introduction

Unconscious preconceptions and biases always pose a threat to the interpretation of any text. But in the case of Hobbes' writings the challenges posed by unconscious biases and preconceptions appear to be especially acute. There are particular problems regarding Hobbes' historical image, the changing meaning of the term 'atheism', and narrowly preconceived versions of Christian standards and norms. But these problems are primarily produced by Hobbes' texts themselves: there is broad disagreement over what meaning Hobbes was intending to convey and how his writings should be interpreted. This disagreement is not a new phenomenon: it is as old as Hobbes' writings. One of the key unconscious biases which must be challenged is Cartesianism.

#### 1.2 The Opacity of History

The assumption that Hobbes was an atheist can in part be explained by the role that his reception and legacy has played in history, as well as the changing meaning of the term itself. The reception and engagement with Hobbes' writings during and immediately after his lifetime is extraordinarily complicated, and tied to the political, religious and social context of the 17<sup>th</sup>C both within and outside of England.<sup>50</sup> Hobbes' reception was shaped in part by his embrace of ideas that were either outside of mainstream English thought or were presented in a controversial way. It also needs to be noted that Hobbes had an abrasive personality which no doubt contributed to his negative reception.<sup>51</sup> While today Hobbes' name is almost naturally associated with atheism, it is important to note that it took until three years after the publication of his most historically influential work, his 1651 *Leviathan*, for the first accusations of atheism to emerge.<sup>52</sup> Both Malcom and Parkin have suggested that the accusations of atheism seem to be directly related to the text's political influence.<sup>53</sup> Parkin argues that the charges of atheism were not based on what Hobbes

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<sup>50</sup> For an account of the historical context of Hobbes' writings and their reception see Martinich (1999 and 2002); Parkin (2008, 2014 and 2015).

<sup>51</sup> Rogers 1999 p 50.

<sup>52</sup> Parkin provides a detailed analysis of the charges of atheism levelled against Hobbes between 1654 and 1658 (Parkin 2008 p 152-153).

<sup>53</sup> Malcom 2002; Parkin 2015.



actually wrote but on the alleged consequences of his ideas.<sup>54</sup> Hobbes vigorously denied the charge of atheism and cited the lack of a single claim within his works which denied God's existence.<sup>55</sup> Hobbes denied that the term "atheist" properly applied to him: he called himself a faithful member of the Church of England.<sup>56</sup> Hobbes was by and large successful in defending himself; his critics either publically retracted or toned down their accusations.<sup>57</sup> However, by 1666 Hobbes' *Citizen* and *Leviathan* were both censured by the House of Commons for being a cause of atheism and blasphemy.<sup>58</sup> In the end Hobbes was forbidden to publish anything in England, so he published his future works in the Netherlands.<sup>59</sup> It has been suggested that, during this period, Hobbes destroyed his unpublished papers on theology, in case they might have been used against him.<sup>60</sup> While it is possible that this is the case, it is unlikely that Hobbes' position in these letters would have been that different to his surviving writings, considering the broad similarity between Hobbes' corporeal God writings from his 1650 (1647) *Citizen* to his 1678 *DP*.

It should be noted that few of the contemporary accusations of atheism directed towards Hobbes actually claimed that he denied the existence of God.<sup>61</sup> The idea that a person can be accused of atheism yet not be accused of denying God's existence appears rather strange to us today. But the term 'atheism' did not always have the same meaning, and we need to grasp the complicated nature of the term ["atheism"] within the 17<sup>th</sup>C English context in which Hobbes was operating. As Berman has detailed, it took until the 18<sup>th</sup>C for "atheism" to emerge in its modern form as the denial of the existence of God.<sup>62</sup> Before the 18<sup>th</sup>C it had far broader usage as a general term of abuse for individuals whose religious views were regarded as suspect or objectionable.<sup>63</sup> Gillespie argued that Hobbes' contemporaries who alleged he was an atheist tended to be sectarians who believed that those who disagreed with their particular dogmatic opinions were irreligious.<sup>64</sup> Wright similarly maintains that

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<sup>54</sup> Parkin 2008 p 152-153.

<sup>55</sup> For an example of Hobbes' denial of atheism see Hobbes 1656 *Six Lessons* EW VII p 350.

<sup>56</sup> Stephen 2012 p 144.

<sup>57</sup> Parkin 2015 p 294.

<sup>58</sup> Wright 2006 p 10; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 149.

<sup>59</sup> Raphael 2004 p 14.

<sup>60</sup> MacDonald Ross 2009 p 149.

<sup>61</sup> Malcolm 2002 p 477-480; Parkin 2008 p 133-134.

<sup>62</sup> Berman (1988).

<sup>63</sup> Religious views which were regarded as suspect could include views which belonged to a different Christian sect or to a person who denied a specific Christian creed rather than someone who denied the existence of God (Martinich 2002 p 19-22); Hepburn 1972 p 85; Stephen 2012 p 45.

<sup>64</sup> Gillespie 2009 p 227-228.

Hobbes' contemporaries, by levelling the charge of atheism, were often indulging in name-calling because they held that Hobbes' views tended to "irreligion".<sup>65</sup> Some of Hobbes' most disturbing ideas to his contemporaries, such as his determinism, were derived from Reformation writers;<sup>66</sup> it is ironic that Hobbes' reputation for atheism tends to rest on ideas that were closest to important developments in the history of Christian thought. Many of Hobbes' positions, including his critique of the Bible, were closer to the thought of modern Christian scholars, Reformation thinkers and later deists than most of their 17<sup>th</sup>C precursors.<sup>67</sup> Bearing all of the above in mind, the contemporaneous accusations of "atheism" towards Hobbes did not necessarily imply that his critics thought that he denied the existence of God. As Kenny has noted: "Historians disagree whether Hobbes' materialism involved a denial of the existence of God, or simply implied that God was a body of some infinite and invisible kind."<sup>68</sup> I will argue that Hobbes' God was an infinite and invisible kind of body because it is perpetual motion.

By the 18<sup>th</sup>C Hobbes' historical reputation had become fixed. "Hobbism" was used as the word for the native species of English atheism; it had also become identified with immortality, egoism, and a negative view of human nature, as well as unacceptable political ideas.<sup>69</sup> A similar example of the role that history has played in shaping presumptions and biases – which in turn cloud the interpretation of texts – can be seen in regards to the status of the Cambridge Platonists. While the Cambridge Platonists over the last few centuries have enjoyed a certain amount of respectability in the history of philosophy, they were not respectable in the late 17<sup>th</sup>C: for example, Cudworth was charged with heresy because of his defense of free will.<sup>70</sup> Both Berman and Jesseph maintain that because Hobbes' followers were atheists it is plausible that Hobbes himself was an atheist.<sup>71</sup> But since Hobbes' contemporary interpretation was so muddled, there is no reason to suppose that those who followed Hobbes understood him any better. I agree with Martinich as

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<sup>65</sup> Wright 2006 footnote 78 p 25-26.

<sup>66</sup> Glover 1960 p 276.

<sup>67</sup> Glover 1960 p 276; p 287; Martinich 2002 p 4; As Raphael (2004) noted Hobbes could always find scriptural precedent for his view that the Bible should be interpreted in accordance with his materialistic metaphysics (p 14).

<sup>68</sup> Kenny 2000 p 203; Roger similarity suggests that Hobbes' reputation for atheism may be mistakenly attributed to him (1999 p 350).

<sup>69</sup> Glover 1960 p 275; Mintz 1962 p 40; Martinich 1997 p 55; Parkin 2008 p 410.

<sup>70</sup> Martinich 1999 p 310.

<sup>71</sup> Berman 1988 p 48; Jesseph 2002 p 154.

regards the status of the charge of atheism: “His contemporaries said that he was an atheist as a way of maligning him; our contemporaries say it as a way of praising him.”<sup>72</sup>

### **1.3 Judgement by Presumed Christian Standards and Norms**

It appears that Hobbes’ approach to God and religious matters more generally are examined against the popularly-held standards and norms of Christianity, whether or not these positions are actually the norms and standards of Christianity. Hobbes rejected the use of Greek philosophy in order to explain the tenets of Christian belief; in essence, Hobbes sought to de-Hellenize Christianity.<sup>73</sup> For Hobbes, Aristotelianism had corrupted Christianity.<sup>74</sup> Hobbes’ criticism of the ‘Hellenistic’ aspects of Christianity was a not a new phenomenon, it is almost as old as Christianity itself. For example, Tertullian asked, famously, what Athens had to do with Jerusalem.<sup>75</sup> Part of the dispute between Hobbes and his critics such as Bramhall, Cudworth and More was because they embraced the Greek philosophy that had become bedded within Christian thought while Hobbes did not.<sup>76</sup> But, as will be established, despite Hobbes’ rejection of Hellenistic thought there are strong parallels between his ontological approach and Stoicism. Hobbes was deeply knowledgeable about Christianity. The depth of this knowledge included the early history of the Christian church, the theology of the early church fathers including the councils, and Reformation theology, as well as granular level knowledge of the Bible and its Apocrypha.<sup>77</sup> It has been argued that Hobbes’ contestable positions were often better grounded in Scripture than his opponents’ positions were.<sup>78</sup> As Martinich noted, there is a double standard in regards to Hobbes’ alleged irreligiousness; it is based upon adherence to doctrines that 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century Reformation leaders also held but which do not lead to similar accusations of irreligiosity.<sup>79</sup> Many of Hobbes’ positions which were used to support the claim that he was irreligious (such as holding that Moses was not the author of the Pentateuch) are today held by most Christian scholars.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Martinich 2002 p 9; in a similar vein Glover claimed that atheistic enlightenment thinkers claimed Hobbes as one of their own (1960 p 278).

<sup>73</sup> Wright 1999 p 397-401; Martinich 2002; Gillespie 2009; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 138; p 160.

<sup>74</sup> Martinich 2002 p 7.

<sup>75</sup> Wright 1999 p 397.

<sup>76</sup> Wright 1999 p 398-401.

<sup>77</sup> Martinich 2002 p 374.

<sup>78</sup> Gillespie 2009 p 247.

<sup>79</sup> Martinich 2002 p 3-4.

<sup>80</sup> Martinich 2002 p 345.

Hobbes claimed that the fundamental dogma of Christianity was “Jesus is the Christ”.<sup>81</sup> His approach to Christianity, in particular in his *Leviathan*, had elements in common with different contemporary Christian sects, but does not fit within any particular sect.<sup>82</sup> Many of Hobbes’ views about Christianity later became accepted into more mainstream versions of Christian thought, such as his view about ‘Jesus the Christ’ as the essence of Christianity, or that God is subject to time.<sup>83</sup> It has been argued that Hobbes was attempting to reconcile his materialism with Scripture.<sup>84</sup> Hobbes denied the possibility of an immortal soul which exists independently to the body; he also rejected the notion that a spirit was an un-extended substance. Hobbes’ rejection has Scriptural support:<sup>85</sup> the term “incorporeal substance” was not used in the Bible. Nor did the use of the word “spirit” in the Bible entail an immortal, unextended, substance: instead, Hobbes would suggest, spirits are mortal and have corporeal characteristics. Hobbes was committed to mortalism – the belief that when a person dies they are dead until their body is resurrected by God at Judgement Day.<sup>86</sup> Christian mortalism in the 17<sup>th</sup>C and today is now generally held to be a heretical view. But Hobbes’ position – that the early Christians embraced mortalism because they believed in the resurrection of the dead at Judgement day – again has Biblical and historical support.<sup>87</sup> Mortalism within Christian thought comes in at least two forms: soul death and soul sleep. With soul death, the material soul perishes with one’s body, while soul sleep maintains that one’s soul persists after the body’s death, but in a dreamless sleep, only to awaken again with the resurrection of the body.<sup>88</sup> Hobbes was committed to soul-death mortalism.

Hobbes’ views that the soul is material and mortal, that immortal souls are a pagan idea and that life after death is only possible through the resurrection, were also shared by certain Christian sects in the 17<sup>th</sup>C.<sup>89</sup> There is no consensus position in Hobbesian scholarship over what particular Christian sect Hobbes’ religious views fall under. But it is generally held

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<sup>81</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch xliii, 12, C p 402.

<sup>82</sup> McClure 2016 p 126.

<sup>83</sup> Martinich 1997 p 22-23.

<sup>84</sup> Overhoff 2000.

<sup>85</sup> Martinich 1997 p 56; Leijenhorst 2005 p 210; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 155.

<sup>86</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch iii, 19, C p 544.

<sup>87</sup> MacDonald Ross 2009 p 155.

<sup>88</sup> Dempsey 2016 p 455.

<sup>89</sup> An example of such a sect includes the heretical Socinians (Geach 1981 p 554); Geach (1981) argued that Hobbes not only grew up a social milieu in which Socinian ideas flourished but did in fact profess a version of Socinianism within his writings in particular his *Leviathan* (Geach 1981 p 552-553; For more on the similarities between Hobbes and Socinianism see Geach 1981 p 553-556).

that Hobbes' position had elements in common with Anglicanism and Calvinism.<sup>90</sup> There is also a parallel with Socinianism, which was deemed a heretical form of Christianity.<sup>91</sup> In England during the 17<sup>th</sup>C materialism was frequently combined with Socinianism.<sup>92</sup> Hobbes' negative portrayal of human nature and his embrace of strict determinism can be misinterpreted as being un-Christian, if certain Christian sects such as Calvinism are not taken into account. Hobbes' understanding of human nature has close affinities with Calvin's,<sup>93</sup> and Hobbes' embrace of determinism was consistent with Calvinism and its belief that God is the cause of everything – and that, as such, humans have no freewill and are merely manipulated by God's will.<sup>94</sup> A large portion of the dispute between Hobbes and his critics, such as More, Cudworth and Bramhall, was driven by their disagreement over the existence of free will. Where Hobbes denied the existence of free will, Bramhall, Cudworth and More did not. Hobbes disagreed with the Cambridge Platonists on whether moral law was binding on God or not. For the Cambridge Platonists moral law is binding even on God, while Hobbes defended the Biblical tradition that God is “beyond good and evil”.<sup>95</sup> Hobbes and Bramhall fundamentally differed in their understanding of God's activity and eternity: Hobbes argued in favour of the Biblical account of God who acts in history, understood eternity as infinite duration and argued for determinism, while Bramhall argued in favour of the scholastic conception of God as Pure Act, understood eternity as *nunc stans* (an everlasting now) and for free will.<sup>96</sup>

Hobbes had an instrumentalist and quasi-functionalist understanding of religion; he held that all religions are simply different ways of worshipping God and that their doctrines and

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<sup>90</sup> For an Anglican Hobbes see Johnson 1975 p 114-115; Schneider 1975 p 96; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 134-135; Höffe (translated by Walker) 2015 p 185. While for a Calvinist Hobbes see Martinich 2002 p 1; Gillespie 2009 p 247.

<sup>91</sup> Geach 1981 p 550-552.

<sup>92</sup> Wunderlich 2016 p 801-802; footnote 17 p 801.

<sup>93</sup> Glover 1960 p 276; Martinich 2002 p 4.

<sup>94</sup> Martinich 1997 p 108; Martinich 2002 p 3; Gillespie 2009 p 251-252.

<sup>95</sup> Glover 1960 p 292; Hobbes in his 1654 *Liberty and Necessity* declared that “This I know; God cannot sin, because his doing a think makes it just, and consequently, no sin; as also because whatsoever can sin, is subject to another's law, which God is not” (EW IV p 250).

<sup>96</sup> Glover 1960 p 291-292; Examples of Hobbes arguing for a God who acts in history include 1654 *Liberty and Necessity* EW IV p 271; 1656 *Questions* EW V p 343; 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 298-300. For more on the debate about free will and necessity between Hobbes and Bramhall see Martinich 1999 p 195-203; p 266-269; Wright 2006 note 19 p 6-7.

practices should be decided by whatever sovereign is in charge.<sup>97</sup> Nonetheless, while Hobbes took a basically conventionalist approach to religion, he maintained that Christians are required to believe that Jesus is the Christ no matter what their sovereign dictates.<sup>98</sup> While Hobbes held that religion in general is an ineradicable aspect of human nature, he thought that particular religions can be replaced.<sup>99</sup> Religions were shared systems of belief that rests on “faith” in those who proclaim the religion, rather than the religion itself.<sup>100</sup> This has the effect that a religion’s authority does not rest on something which is objectively true. Instead, its authority rests on faith in those who proclaim the religion. For Hobbes, belief in a religion decays when it is undermined by misconduct by its proponents or by when its proponents cause disbelief through contradictory or illogical proclamations or fail to support their claims by means of miracles.<sup>101</sup> Hobbes’ rejection of revelation and his instrumentalist understanding of religion may have been mistakenly taken as hidden declarations of atheism. This can be seen in the assumption that Hobbes was an atheist because of his understanding of the difference between superstition and true religion:

*Fear* of power invisible, feigned by the mind, or imagined from tales publicly allowed, RELIGION; not allowed, SUPERSTITION. And when the power imagined is truly such as we imagine, TRUE RELIGION.<sup>102</sup>

But Hobbes’ use of the verb “feigned” should not be taken in a negative sense: for him, it is the same thing as saying to imagine something.<sup>103</sup> The difference between religion and superstition for Hobbes depends on state authorization.<sup>104</sup> This means that, during Hobbes’ lifetime, in a country like France, Catholicism would be a religion while Anglicanism would be a superstition. Conversely, in England, Catholicism would be a form of superstition and Anglicanism would be a religion. Berman argues that, since God is inconceivable for

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<sup>97</sup> Glover 1960 p 289; Tuck 1989 p 78; Sabine 1961 p 473; Finn 2007 p 107; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 136; According to Gillespie (2009) Hobbes embraced Erastianism which requires theological doctrines that are commensurate with his political imperatives (p 247).

<sup>98</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part III Ch xliii, 12, C p 402; Martinich 1997 p 54; p 88-89; according to Johnson, Hobbes shared the contemporary moderate Anglican view that salvation involved believing a few simple clear doctrines so matters of religious practice were unimportant (1975 p 118). Hampsher-Monk argues that because Hobbes’ embraced Protestantism’s stress on the importance of inner conviction it made outwards forms of expression unimportant (1992 p 3).

<sup>99</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch xii, 23, C p 71.

<sup>100</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch xii, 24, C p 71.

<sup>101</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch xii, 25-28, C p 71-72.

<sup>102</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch vi, 36, C p 31.

<sup>103</sup> Johnson 1975 p 115.

<sup>104</sup> Curley 1992 p 524; Jesseph 2002 p 148; Raphael 2004 p 46; Finn 2007 p 124.

Hobbes, there is no way to imagine God, so nothing can count as true religion.<sup>105</sup> But while there may be no such thing as a ‘true religion’ for Hobbes, this is not the same as atheism: all religions may be false, but this does not rule out the existence of God. For Hobbes, God’s existence is not dependent on there being a true religion.

#### **1.4 The General Challenge of Interpretation**

Irrespective of the challenges posed by the aforementioned preconceptions that are brought by readers to Hobbes’ writings, there are also significant challenges caused by the construction and production of Hobbes’ writings, and by his writing style. Hobbes’ writings were the result of a process of serial composition; some works were revised multiple times during his lifetime.<sup>106</sup> These writings were not just produced over many decades but also in different languages. Some of these are known to have been translated into English by Hobbes, while others were not. There is also the problem that Hobbes did not publish all of his works: some were published within his lifetime but without his consent, while others were published after his death. This raises the following two questions. Did Hobbes consider his unpublished works unworthy of public attention? Or did these unpublished works contain Hobbes’ ‘real’ views which he felt he could not safely reveal during his lifetime? I believe that the works which were published during and after his lifetime are equally important. This is because there is a consistency in Hobbes’ approach to God throughout his writings. Connected to the construction problem is the issue that while Hobbes consistently implied that God was corporeal in his writings, it was only when he reached the age of eighty that he made this explicit, in the Appendix to his Latin edition of his *Leviathan* (1668). (Around this same time, he also produced his *Answer*, which described God as corporeal and detailed God’s activity in the universe.) But this statement, while apparently clear, also contains ambiguities as to what exactly Hobbes was claiming.

As both Cromartie and MacDonald Ross noted, by the time that Hobbes produced his corporeal God writings, *circa* 1668 and beyond, it was highly unlikely he would be punished for them.<sup>107</sup> Despite this, Hobbes’ *Answer* was not published until 1682; three years after his death in 1679. However, in 1678 at the age of ninety, Hobbes published his

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<sup>105</sup> Berman 1965 p 65-66.

<sup>106</sup> As Baumgold put it, “Hobbes studies have an amorphous subject because of his practice of serially composing multiple works with overlapping content and argument” (2008 p 828).

<sup>107</sup> Cromartie 2008 p 869-870; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 149.

*Decameron Physiologia*. While Hobbes' *DP* did not explicitly state that God corporeal, it did detail the activity and presence of his God within the universe which again implied that God is corporeal. I partially agree with Wright that Hobbes in his later life was willing to express what was likely his true views regarding the materiality of God, long suppressed for fear of social opprobrium and religious persecution.<sup>108</sup> Nonetheless, Hobbes consistently implied that God was corporeal – from his 1640 (1650-1651) *Human Nature* onwards. I will argue here that Hobbes retained a consistent commitment to the notion of a corporeal God; even this was not always made explicit. Hobbes' most explicit presentation of his corporeal God doctrine is found near the start of his writings (1650 (1647) *Citizen*) and then at the end of his writings (1668 Appendix, 1678 *Decameron* and his posthumously published 1668 (1682) *Answer*). While it must be acknowledged that Hobbes did not necessarily translate his *De Cive* into its English form, *Citizen*, the English version does contain a nearly complete version of his later explicit corporeal God writings.

The eisegesis problem in regards to the meaning of Hobbes' writings is driven principally by his writing style. It is also caused by disagreement over whether he wrote sincerely or ironically. Hobbes' writing style poses unique challenges for interpretation – they allow not just different but contradictory interpretations.<sup>109</sup> Many of Hobbes' contemporaries, even those sympathetic towards him, often noted that his arguments were hard to follow, obscure and ambiguous. An example of this can be seen by the fact that the early reception of Hobbes' 1651 *Leviathan* was centred on its readers trying to determine his political position.<sup>110</sup> There were certain benefits for Hobbes in using such a style: it allowed for his writings to be read by a wider audience than merely by one faction.<sup>111</sup> But such ambiguity also allowed Hobbes' opponents to draw out what they perceived to be the negative consequences of his arguments – not least, a perceived atheism. The ambiguity of Hobbes' positions has led to a vast array of different interpretations, as summarized by Martinich:

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<sup>108</sup> Wright 2006 p 301.

<sup>109</sup> For larger accounts of the difficulties in interpreting Hobbes' writings see Caton (1994), Baumgold (2008), Parkin (2008), Gelot (2011) and Rose (2013). An example of the difficulty in interpreting Hobbes' writings even taking history into account can be seen in the difference between Martinich (2002) and Collins (2009). They differ not only on their understanding of Hobbes' text, but also on the surrounding contextual facts and the weight of how these facts affect the meaning of his writings.

<sup>110</sup> See Parkin 2015 p 91-103. As Martinich (1997) noted Hobbes' *Leviathan* could be used to support all sorts of positions (p 15).

<sup>111</sup> Sommerville 1996 p 267; Parkin 2015 p 291.



We have seen him characterized as a democratic theorist and as an anti-democrat; as a proponent of religious toleration and freedom of conscience and as an enemy of them; as an atheist, theist, agnostic and Christian; and as an Anglican and as an Independent. He has been described as a rationalist in science and, alternatively, as an empiricist. His scientific theories have been judged to have no merit, and to be as plausible as those of his opponents, given the cultural context. He has been judged to be a competent and even talented mathematician, but also to be incompetent one.<sup>112</sup>

It seems that there are as many different versions of Hobbes as there are interpreters. Bearing this ambiguity in mind, I should stress that I am not pretending to provide the definitive interpretation; nonetheless, my claims are plausible and justifiable.

The more recent atheistic interpretation of Hobbes tend to use a Straussian framework, assuming that Hobbes was forced by his historical setting to conceal his atheism in a cloak of insincere professions of relative religious orthodoxy. In this vein, Berman argued that Hobbes was a crypto-atheist who camouflaged his real position with orthodox pronouncements.<sup>113</sup> For interpreters such as Curley, Hobbes' ambiguity was a deliberate attempt to sow doubt about the validity of religion to his more intellectually shrewd readers, while at the same time avoiding trouble with the authorities of his day for presenting such views directly.<sup>114</sup> However, there are significant problems with regards to using this interpretative approach. The first is that Hobbes' writings did not avoid trouble with the authorities of his day. The second is that Hobbes' religious positions were in most cases heterodoxical rather than orthodox. During Hobbes' lifetime heterodoxy was severely punished.<sup>115</sup> The danger of such heterodoxical positions are hard to reconcile with the argument that Hobbes was using his religious positions in order to provide himself cover for his atheism. I agree with Glover, Mintz and Gillespie that the most plausible explanation for Hobbes' discussion of controversial religious matters was because he took them seriously

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<sup>112</sup> Martinich 1997 p 128. For a summary of the vastly different interpretation of Hobbes which are possible in more detail see Raphael 2004 p 73-100.

<sup>113</sup> Berman 1988 p 65.

<sup>114</sup> Curley 1996 p 263.

<sup>115</sup> During Hobbes' youth heretics were burnt alive and a number of Bishops wanted to have him burnt as one (Geach 1981 p 552).

enough to risk the criticism they were bound to draw.<sup>116</sup> There appears to be little logic in holding that Hobbes professed unpopular heresies which placed him in danger in order to hide his atheism, so that he could keep himself safe. This suggests, in turn, that we should assume that Hobbes wrote sincerely – after all, he could have just avoided these topics altogether. But a further problem that emerges, in this respect, is how we can know for certain that Hobbes wrote ironically with regards to God and religious matters. While it is true that there are numerous apparent contradictions within Hobbes’ broadly religious writings, there are also numerous apparent contradictions in his ontological approach. Hobbes held that bodies are incapable of starting their own motion, that motion is non-transferrable, and that motion is a form of autokinesis. Hobbes also held that motion is change of place yet held that the universe is a plenum of extension and that no two bodies can occupy the same place. These positions appear to rule out the possibility of a body changing its place. This is without mentioning the difficulty of accounting for how passive extension moving from place to place can give rise to diversity (life, sensation and thought).

Now that I have set out some of the difficulties involved in the interpretation of Hobbes’ writings, I will outline the interpretative approach I will be using. I will be following Martinich by preferring a literal interpretation of Hobbes’ writings except where such an interpretation is illogical.<sup>117</sup> I agree with Glover who similarly noted that those who consider Hobbes to be an atheist are forced to assume that he did not mean what he wrote and that this is a dangerous method of interpretation.<sup>118</sup> I also agree with Wright that

It would be a failure of interpretation to see Hobbes or any thinker as a prism in which each interpreter may read his or her own predilections. And, the best check upon such fragmentation and dispersion of interpretation is careful attention to the text itself, hence the numerous quotations found in these pages.<sup>119</sup>

I will be approaching Hobbes’ writings assuming that he wrote both sincerely and literally. Nonetheless, there will be quite an amount of implicit and expansive interpretation of his texts. Hobbes quite often slipped his most radical ideas into his texts in such a way as to not draw attention to them. I will be arguing that it is easier to reconcile Hobbes’ apparent

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<sup>116</sup> Glover 1960 p 260; Mintz 1962 p 44; Gillespie 2009 p 247.

<sup>117</sup> Martinich 2002 p 43.

<sup>118</sup> Glover 1960 p 279.

<sup>119</sup> Wright 2006 p 310.

contradictions in relation to God when the distinction that he drew between literal and laudative talk about God is taken into account, then it is to solve the problem of motion alongside Hobbes' understanding of bodies without taking his corporeal God writings into account.

### 1.5 Specific Interpretative Challenges

Beyond the general issues indicated above, there are very specific issues regarding Hobbes' doctrine of a corporeal God. This is especially true with regards to the following statement: "*Affirmat quidem Deum esse corpus.*"<sup>120</sup> The importance of this statement, in Chapter III, *On Certain objections against Leviathan*, in Hobbes' Appendix to his 1668 *Leviathan*, cannot be overstated. It was the first time that Hobbes openly and explicitly asserted the corporeality of God. But, despite its importance, there is broad disagreement over what meaning Hobbes was intending to convey. The statement can be translated as either:

God is a body.

Or as:

God is body.

The disagreement over how this statement should be translated is not dependent on which side of the debate a scholar falls on in relation to the status of God's existence for Hobbes. There are both atheistic and theistic interpreters who translate this statement as "God is a body". But there are also atheistic and theistic interpreters who translate it as "God is body". Examples of the former include Glover, Walton, Martinich, and Leijenhorst;<sup>121</sup> the latter include Curley and Jesseph.<sup>122</sup> Wright, MacDonald Ross and Gorham recognize that both translations are possible and choose "God is body".<sup>123</sup> Wright and Gorham both argue that, despite his use of the phrase, he treated God's existence as something distinct to bodies. MacDonald Ross also recognizes this possibility but suggests that Hobbes was a pantheist. It is important to note that while Lange did not comment on the different possible

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<sup>120</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch iii, 179-180, W p 148; Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch iii, 5-6, C p 540.

<sup>121</sup> Glover 1960 p 277; Walton 1975 p 35; Martinich 1997 p 56; Leijenhorst 2005 p 208.

<sup>122</sup> While I recognize that there are elements of an undecided position in Curley's writings in regards to the status of God's existence for Hobbes he has a stronger inclination towards an atheistic interpretation.

<sup>123</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch iii, 179-180, W footnote 230 p 148; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 150; Gorham 2013a p 244.

interpretations of Hobbes' statement he also held that Hobbes treated God's existence as something to bodies.<sup>124</sup>

It is important to note that the dispute within Hobbes scholarship over how to understand Hobbes' statement is not merely between those who understand it as "God is body" and those who understand it as "God is a body". There are scholars who offer different interpretations. Mori, for example, understood Hobbes' statement that "God exists" as "God is an entity" – which he considered to be the entire content of Hobbes' rational theology.<sup>125</sup> Cromartie and Abizadeh both argued that for Hobbes God can be said to "exist", but that it is not possible to specify the mode of that existence: for Hobbes, everything we say in this regards is strictly honorific – including God's existence being corporeal.<sup>126</sup> Leijenhorst argued that because Hobbes' God is "part" of the universe, God is corporeal; however, Hobbes' God is a body which transcends our understanding, because God does not have any of the characteristics of normal bodies – including finitude.<sup>127</sup> As Jesseph has suggested, Hobbes cannot have held that God is a body because he understood a body as having a determinate location and an incomprehensible infinite body as an impossibility.<sup>128</sup> Meanwhile, Jesseph suggests that because of Hobbes' rejection of the pantheistic identification of God with the universe, Hobbes' God must be identified with a (proper) part of the universe. I agree with him that this identification seems necessary, but I disagree with him that this is impossible because of God's infinity.<sup>129</sup> Certainly, this would be impossible if Hobbes' God was a body; but Hobbes instead appears to have held – as I have already suggested – that God is motion. As motion Hobbes' God is an infinite boundless part of the universe. While I agree with Lange, Wright and Gorham that Hobbes treated God's existence as something distinct to bodies, I will (to reiterate) offer a different interpretation – namely, that "God is motion". Despite being extended, Hobbes' God *qua* motion has none of the characteristics of bodies, because it is infinite.

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<sup>124</sup> Lange 1877 p 290; Footnote 33 p 290.

<sup>125</sup> Mori 2012 p 206; Mori 2012 footnote 44 p 206 referencing Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch i, 4, C p 499.

<sup>126</sup> Cromartie 2008 p 871-872; p 878-879; Abizadeh 2017b p 919-920.

<sup>127</sup> Leijenhorst 2005 p 213.

<sup>128</sup> Jesseph 2002 p 144.

<sup>129</sup> Jesseph 2002 p 145.

## 1.6 The Fog of Cartesianism

It seems that so many commentators approach Hobbes' corporeal God writings with a Cartesian bias, assuming that God as well as spirits in general are unextended. This then leads individuals to assume that Hobbes' corporeal God was a hidden expression of atheism. While Hobbes' critics thought that the notion of a corporeal/extended God was atheistic, Hobbes thought the same about an unextended God.<sup>130</sup> Hobbes in his 1651 *Leviathan* was clear that he equated existence with extension:

And according to this acceptance of the word, *substance* and *body* signify the same thing; and therefore, *substance incorporeal* are words which, when they are used together, destroy one another, as if a man should say an *incorporeal body*.<sup>131</sup>

So Hobbes did not deny the existence of spirits; he instead denied that they are unextended. For him, the spirits mentioned in Scripture are corporeal substances because they have bodily characteristics such as locality and dimensionality.<sup>132</sup> They “have dimensions, and are, therefore, really bodies (though palpable, that is, that have some degree of opacity).<sup>133</sup> In his 1662 (1680) *Considerations*, Hobbes argued that the idea that spirits are un-extended is caused by a misunderstanding of Plato and Aristotle's respective positions. They held that spirits are corporeal because they are winds; Hobbes again held that spirits are invisible bodies.<sup>134</sup> Throughout his writings, Hobbes did not deny the existence of God nor spirits; but he consistently maintained that they are invisible material/corporeal substances.<sup>135</sup>

The idea that God is extended in some manner should not be assumed *a priori* to be atheistic. In ancient Judaism, the Sadducees held that God and human souls were material and the early Christian church father Tertullian (CE 160-220) stated quite explicitly that God was material.<sup>136</sup> Furthermore, the contemporary intellectual context within which Hobbes produced his corporeal God, as well as his understanding of spirits in general has to be taken into account. Henry More also embraced an extended God: within More's schema

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<sup>130</sup> Copleston 1959 p 8; Glover 1960 p 278; Johnson 1975 p 124; Martinich 1999 p 141; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 149.

<sup>131</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part III Ch xxxiv, 3, C p 262.

<sup>132</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part II Ch xxxiv, 15, C p 265-266; Hobbes made the same point in his earlier 1640 *Human Nature* Ch 11.5 EW IV p 61-62.

<sup>133</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part IV Ch xlvi, 15, C p 459.

<sup>134</sup> Hobbes 1662 (1680) *Considerations* EW IV p 426-429.

<sup>135</sup> Glover 1960 p 277; Wright 2006 p 148.

<sup>136</sup> MacDonald Ross 2009 p 149.

extension was not a property exclusively of bodies but of existence; More allowed God and finite minds to be spatial without being bodies.<sup>137</sup> It appears that Hobbes similarly held that God and finite minds were extended without being bodies, because he held that they are motion. More wanted God to be able to interact with the world, so he held that God must have physical existence in order to have direct contact with the physical world.<sup>138</sup> The idea that God must have physical existence in order to both preserve God's existence and allow for interaction with matter also appears to have been true for Hobbes.

More, in his writings before 1668, accepted holenmerism; a holenmerically conceived substance cannot in reality or in thought be divided because it maintains that the whole is contained in each part.<sup>139</sup> In his later writings, More rejected holenmerism and employed similar arguments to those that Hobbes had used in his *Leviathan* to reject the same doctrine. While Hobbes' ridicule of holenmerism is interpreted as a sign of his hidden atheism, the same position is not accredited to More. More in his writings post 1668, including his *Divine Dialogues*, held that spirits are "intellectually", "notionally" or "logically" divisible into parts but are not "physically" divisible.<sup>140</sup> It appears that Hobbes, like More, held that God is "logically" divisible but not physically divisible in his 1668 (1682) *Answer*.<sup>141</sup> Despite More holding that God is extended and has "parts", his professed belief in God's existence is undoubted. Yet, as Martinich has noted, assuming the generally held view that only matter is extended, More was as logically committed to atheism as Hobbes!<sup>142</sup> It appears that for both More and Hobbes, God exists in such a manner as to completely surround bodies yet remain distinct from them. More implicitly identified God with absolute space, while Hobbes implicitly identified God with motion. It is also important to note that even Cudworth, who heavily criticised Hobbes, was open to the possibility that spirits were extended. With this in mind we should suspend, or at least question, the assumption that Hobbes' denial of God being unextended was tantamount to denying the existence of God.

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<sup>137</sup> Broad 2009b p 57; Gorham 2013a p 256; Wilkins 2016 p 865.

<sup>138</sup> Boylan 1980 p 397-398; Reid 2007 p 92; Agostini 2017 p 879.

<sup>139</sup> Slowik 2019 p 235.

<sup>140</sup> Reid 2007 p 100; Blank 2013 p 857-858.

<sup>141</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 302.

<sup>142</sup> Martinich 1999 p 300.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE UNEXPLAINED FEATURES OF HOBBS' ONTOLOGY AND THE CORPOREAL GOD AS THE SOLUTION

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter engages with Hobbes' ontological system and certain tensions and problems that seem to arise because this ontology does not reference Hobbes' corporeal God. These issues are all rooted within Hobbes' understanding of the nature of bodies and motion. The core difficulty in Hobbes' system is accounting for the origin of motion and causation. Hobbes appears to have relied upon motion to account for the origin of motion. There is also the problem of Hobbes' understanding of motion being change of place: Hobbes' principles appear to rule out the possibility of a body changing its place. Despite Hobbes holding that motion was change of place, he held that motion is the only power in his system. Since Hobbes held that bodies are merely extended in nature and motion is merely local motion, the universe should be homogenous, with no diversity (life, sensation or thought). All that should exist is locally moving extension. Despite Hobbes' definition of motion he consistently implied motion is responsible for life, sensation and thought, but extension in motion is not sufficient for these qualities to be manifested. Instead the manifestation of life, sensation and thought requires specific configurations of extension in motion. Hobbes, despite repeatedly explicitly ruling out the possibility of the self-motion of bodies appears, to have attributed autokinesis powers to bodies. This is because Hobbes attributed endeavours to both inanimate and animate bodies. It appears that Hobbes relied upon motion to account for the all active features manifested within bodies. I will then explore Hobbes' explicit and implicit corporeal God writings in order to suggest that they offer a solution to the problem of motion which in turn accounts for diversity. I do this because Hobbes appears to have implicitly held that God is motion.

#### 2.2 Accounting for the Origin of Motion

Given Hobbes' understanding of bodies and existence, there appears to have been no way for him to account for the origin of neither motion or causation. In the *Leviathan* he outlined his understanding of bodies and existence:

The word *body*, in the most general acceptation, signifieth that which filleth or occupieth some certain room or imagined place, and dependeth not on the imagination, but is a real part of that we call the *universe*. For the *universe*, being

the aggregate of all bodies, there is no real part thereof that is not also *body*, nor anything properly a *body* that is not also part of (that aggregate of all *bodies*) the *universe*.<sup>143</sup>

So, for Hobbes the universe is comprised of extended bodies which exist externally to the mind. These bodies cannot start or stop their own motion because nothing can change itself:

That when a thing lies still, unless somewhat else stir it, it will lie still for ever, is a truth that no man doubts of. But that when a thing is in motion, it will eternally be in motion, unless somewhat else stay it, though the reason be the same (namely, that nothing can change itself)...<sup>144</sup>

For this same reason, Hobbes accepted the perpetual motion of a body without the interference of another body to stop it; such interference would slow a moving body over time.<sup>145</sup> But if the universe is comprised of bodies and bodies cannot start their own motion, what accounts for the origin of motion?

In the 1656 (1655) *De Corpore*, Hobbes defines a body as “...that, which having no dependence upon our thought, is coincident or coextended with some part of space.”<sup>146</sup> He elaborates on this by suggesting the fundamental characteristics: “...there are certain accidents which can never perish except the body perish also; for no body can be conceived to be without extension, or without figure.”<sup>147</sup> As we see, there is no mention of motion here. Indeed, Hobbes not only repeats his position that it is impossible for a body to initiate its own motion,<sup>148</sup> but goes even further and explicitly claims that the idea that bodies have the power to move themselves was scholastic nonsense:

For as for those that say anything may be moved or produced by *itself*, by *species*, by *its own power*, by *substantial forms*, by *incorporeal substances*, by *instinct*, by *anti-peristasis*, by *antipathy*, *sympathy*, *occult quality*, and other empty words of schoolmen, their saying so is to no purpose.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part III Ch xxxiv, 2, C p 261-262.

<sup>144</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch ii, 1, C p 7-8.

<sup>145</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch ii, 2, C p 8.

<sup>146</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 8.1 EW I p 102.

<sup>147</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 8.3 EW I p 104.

<sup>148</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 8.19 EW I p 115.

<sup>149</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 30.15 EW I p 531.



Hobbes repeated his acceptance of the perpetual motion of a body in motion without the inference of another body to stop it.<sup>150</sup> Hobbes was clear that all active power consists of motion.<sup>151</sup> And in the 1678 *DP*, we find that Hobbes repeated his position that nothing can begin, change or put an end to its own motion.<sup>152</sup> In short, we consistently run into the same problem of accounting for the origin of motion. Hobbes' universe is comprised of bodies; but these bodies are incapable of moving themselves.

Hobbes also faced the problem of accounting for causation. He rejected the transference of motion between bodies. According to the *De Corpore*:

There can be no cause of motion, except in a body contiguous and moved. For let there be any two bodies which are not contiguous, and betwixt which the intermediate space is empty, or, if filled, filled with another body which is at rest; and let one of the propounded bodies be supposed to be at rest; I say it shall always be at rest.<sup>153</sup>

This position appears to be clear enough. For Hobbes, a hand (body A) causes a pen (body B) to move when the hand comes into contact with the pen. Yet it also appears to be problematic for Hobbes to accept this: because he held that it was not possible for motion to leave a body. Motion is an accident and an accident cannot depart from its subject:

For example, when the hand, being moved, moves the pen, motion does not go out of the hand into the pen; for so the writing might be continued though the hand stood still; but a new motion is generated in the pen, and is the pen's motion.<sup>154</sup>

But if the motion from the hand is not transferred into the pen, what causes the pen's motion? What generates the new motion in the pen? The pen cannot be the source of its own motion since a body cannot move itself. But neither can the hand be responsible for the movement of the pen: since the motion of the hand cannot be transferred into the pen. Since motion cannot enter the pen and the pen cannot generate motion, there appears to be sheer deadlock. According to Hobbes' account the hand is not transferring motion into the pen through contact. So why is contact necessary for the pen to move? Why did Hobbes hold

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<sup>150</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 8.19 EW I p 115-116.

<sup>151</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 10.6 EW I p 131.

<sup>152</sup> Hobbes 1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 85; p 89.

<sup>153</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 9.7 EW I p 124.

<sup>154</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 8.21 EW I p 117.

that motion requires contact between bodies if nothing is transferred between the bodies involved? In a traditional understanding of motion, once a body is placed into motion, this motion is then transferred to another body. But with Hobbes' account, even if a body is placed into motion, this motion is not subsequently transferred. This makes the problem of motion significantly more complicated within Hobbes' writings.

This problem can also be illustrated by Hobbes' account of cause and effect in *De Corpore*:

A BODY is said to work upon or *act*, that is to say, *do* something to another body, when it either generates or destroys some accident in it: and the body in which an accident is generated or destroyed is said to *suffer*, that is, to have something *done* to it by another body; as when one body by putting forwards another body generates motion in it, it is called the AGENT; and the body in which motion is so generated, is called the PATIENT; so fire that warms the hand is the *agent*, and the hand, which is warmed, is the *patient*. That accident, which is generated in the patient, is called the EFFECT.<sup>155</sup>

In Hobbes' example, the fire as the agent causes the hand, which is the patient, to generate the sensation of warmth, which is the effect. But how is this possible? The warmth of the fire is motion and, if motion is not transferable, the hand should never experience the sensation of warmth: nothing is being transferred from the fire to the hand. How can the fire generate an accident in the hand since all active power consists of motion and motion is non-transferable?

For Hobbes, sensation appears to have been a form of autokinesis, despite his repeated ruling out of self-motion. But this form of autokinesis is partial: it still requires contact between the bodies involved, despite motion itself being non-transferrable. Hobbes not only had to account for the origin of motion in a single act, he also had to account for the origin of motion each time a body moves. Based on points made in *Leviathan*, *De Corpore* and *DP*, it seems that, for Hobbes, something other than bodies must be responsible for the origin of motion and for the movement of bodies in causation. This substance responsible for motion must be corporeal in nature, because it exists within the universe and must be in

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<sup>155</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 9.1 EW I p 120.

contact with bodies. Given, though, that “motion produceth nothing but motion”,<sup>156</sup> and also that “motion cannot be understood to have any other cause besides motion”.<sup>157</sup> It seems that this other corporeal substance which is responsible for the existence of motion is in fact – motion itself!

### 2.3 Motion as Change of Place

To explore this confused picture more fully, we can turn to Hobbes’ understanding of what motion entails and compare this with his understanding of the universe. In the *Leviathan*, Hobbes defined motion as “change of place.”<sup>158</sup> But, as we have seen, Hobbes also held that the universe was a plenum.<sup>159</sup> How, then, can motion be change of place? For if the universe is a plenum, there is nowhere ‘empty’ for a body to move into. Hobbes made no mention of a void outside of the universe: all that exists is the universe, and the universe is a plenum. In *DP*, Hobbes was clear that he rejected co-location, whereby two bodies can be in the one place, or the penetration of bodies by other bodies.<sup>160</sup> Hobbes in his 1678 *DP* was clear that the cause of motion is external and that movement is change of place:

A third axiom shall be this: whatsoever body being at rest is afterwards moved, hath for its immediate movement some other body which is in motion and toucheth it. For, since nothing can move itself, the movement must be external. And because motion is change of place, the movement must put it from its place, which it cannot do till it touch it.<sup>161</sup>

Hobbes’ definition of motion within his *De Corpore* was that “Motion is a continual relinquishing of one place, and acquiring of another...”<sup>162</sup> And his understanding of motion as change of place is even more challenging within the context of his *De Corpore*, where he explicitly stated that:

First in this, that body keeps always the same *magnitude*, both when it is at rest, and when it is moved; but when it is moved, it does not keep the same *place*.  
Secondly in this, that *place* is a phantasm of any body of such and such quantity

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<sup>156</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch i, 4, C p 7.

<sup>157</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part I 6.5 EW I p 69-70.

<sup>158</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part IV Ch xlvi, 21, C p 461.

<sup>159</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part III Ch xxxiv, 2, C p 261-262; 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV XXVI.1 EW I p 410; 1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 89.

<sup>160</sup> Hobbes 1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 85.

<sup>161</sup> Hobbes 1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 86.

<sup>162</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 8.10 EW I p 109.

and figure; but *magnitude* is the peculiar accident of every body; for one body may at several times have several places, but has always one and the same magnitude. Thirdly in this, that *place* is nothing out of the mind, nor *magnitude* any thing within it. And lastly, *place* is feigned extension, but *magnitude* true extension; and a placed body is not extension, but a thing extended.<sup>163</sup>

But if motion is the continual relinquishing of one place and the acquiring of another, and place does not exist independently to the mind, does this not indicate that motion, like place, only exists in the mind? Hobbes also held that motion cannot be conceived without time.<sup>164</sup> Yet for Hobbes time, like place, is only a phantasm in the mind.<sup>165</sup> So, for Hobbes, motion is the continual relinquishing of one place and the acquiring of another and motion cannot be conceived without time. But both time and place only exist in the mind. This raises the possibility that motion itself might be mind-dependent. The same problem of motion being change of place and place only existing in the mind is present within Hobbes' 1678 *DP*.<sup>166</sup>

As previously mentioned, Hobbes in *De Corpore* held that a body is coincident or co-extended with some part of space.<sup>167</sup> But this raises the question: what did Hobbes understand space to be? Hobbes offered the following definition of space:

SPACE is the phantasm of a thing existing without the mind simply; that is to say, that phantasm, in which we consider no other accident, but only that it appears without us.<sup>168</sup>

Hobbes held that extension is the same thing as magnitude and that magnitude is real space:

The *extension* of a body, is the same thing with the *magnitude* of it, or that which some call *real space*. But this *magnitude* does not depend upon our cogitation, as imaginary space doth; for this is an effect of our imagination, but *magnitude* is the cause of it; this is an accident of the mind, that of a body existing out of the mind.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 8.4 EW p 105.

<sup>164</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 8.10 EW I p 109-110.

<sup>165</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 7.3 EW I p 94.

<sup>166</sup> Hobbes 1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 83-86.

<sup>167</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 8.1 EW I p 102.

<sup>168</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 7.2 EW I p 94.

<sup>169</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 8.4 EW I p 105.

Despite Hobbes' language appearing to commit him to the existence of objective space, it does not. For Hobbes, space only exists subjectively; space is an abstraction formed in the imagination from our experience of body.<sup>170</sup> Mintz offers the following useful characterization of Hobbes' position to do with space:

...although body certainly exists outside our minds, the space which body occupies is a pure mental construction. Space is thus a "phantasm", a mental abstraction, an imaginary extension—the system of coordinates or external locations which the mind constructs out of its experience of real extended things.<sup>171</sup>

I agree with Martinich that Hobbes had to hold that space is imaginary: if space were something, then it would have to be a body; but if it were a body then nothing could be in space because it is impossible for two bodies to be in the same place.<sup>172</sup>

Furthermore, if space is imaginary, what generates the mental abstraction that is space? Or to put it another way, what generates the illusion of space? As has been previously established Hobbes also held that place and time were phantasms, illusions of the mind. Since space, place and time are illusions of the mind, maybe the appearance of the change of place is also a mental abstraction. If change of place was an illusion generated by the mind, this would explain how it is possible to change place despite the universe being a plenum. Bodies do not actually move in the sense of changing place; instead, the mind projects the illusion of change of place as it does for space. While this might be a plausible solution, there are still problems. For example: Hobbes held that the mind was passive; but if the mind is passive, how can it generate the illusion of space, place, time or change of place? For that matter, what is responsible for the existence for the mind? I will deal with the problem of accounting for the existence of the mind and its active features when I examine Hobbes' account of endeavours. But, before doing so, I turn to the issue of diversity; this – hopefully – will provide fuller context.

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<sup>170</sup> Copleston 1959 p 24; Mintz 1962 p 92-94; Tuck 1989 p 44; Martinich 1997 p 103-104; Martinich 1999 p 188; Gillespie 2009 footnote 67 p 345.

<sup>171</sup> Mintz 1962 p 92.

<sup>172</sup> Martinich 1997 p 103; Martinich 1999 p 188.

## 2.4 Accounting for Diversity

As previously established Hobbes held that bodies are merely extended and that motion is merely local motion. But if this is the case, then all that should exist within Hobbes' universe is locally moving passive extension – and so this universe should be homogenous. Diversity seems to require something more than locally moving passive extension. Hobbes in his *De Corpore* was clear that motion consists of nothing more than pushing.<sup>173</sup> Despite this, Hobbes, also implied, in his account of sensation, that motion has sensible qualities: motion is the universal cause of all things and is responsible for diversity; all change is the motion of the parts of bodies and that the appearance of change is within the mind of the perceiver.<sup>174</sup> As he states, in *De Corpore*:

When we say a living creature, a tree, or any other specified body is *generated* or *destroyed*, it is not to be so understood as if there were made a body of that which is not-body, or not a body of a body, but of a living creature not a living creature, of a tree not a tree, &c. that is, that those accidents for which we call one thing a living creature, another thing a tree, and another by some other name, are generated and destroyed; and that thereof the same names are not to be given to them now, which were given them before. But that magnitude for which we give to any thing the name of body is neither generated nor destroyed.<sup>175</sup>

But it is manifest, that all other accidents besides magnitude or extension may be generated and destroyed; as when a white thing is made black, the whiteness that was in it perisheth, and the blackness that was not in it is now generated; and therefore bodies, and the accidents under which they appear diversely, have this difference, that bodies are things, and not generated; accidents are generated, and not things.<sup>176</sup>

It is important to note the distinction that Hobbes drew between accidents and bodies in his account of change: bodies are things which are not generated, while accidents are not things but are generated. So, according to Hobbes' account of change, extension is neither generated nor destroyed and change merely involves the gaining and loss of various

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<sup>173</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part III 22.12 EW I p 343-344.

<sup>174</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part I 6.5 EW I p 69-70; *De Corpore* Part II 9.9 EW I p 126.

<sup>175</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 8.20 EW I p 116.

<sup>176</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 8.20 EW I p 116-117.

accidents.<sup>177</sup> This means that the extension of the plenum does not change: instead, change is the result of motion in either the perceiver or in the body being perceived affecting extension differently;<sup>178</sup> this includes the appearance of qualitative change such as something existing or being destroyed.<sup>179</sup> How, though, can Hobbes explain the appearance of design that we experience? Why is Hobbes' universe not just comprised of a random assortment of sensible qualities? What is responsible for the appearance of design? Since motion appears to be responsible for sensible qualities, then it must also be responsible for the appearance of design: for Hobbes, motion produces nothing but motion. It seems, then, that Hobbes implicitly held that motion had sensible qualities and regulated itself to give the appearance of design and diversity present in sensation.

But what is responsible for the gaining and loss of various accidents since bodies are incapable of changing their own motion and motion is not transferred between bodies? Since motion produces nothing but motion, motion must be responsible for the gaining and loss of accidents, which in turn produces the diversity and design present in sensation. Hobbes' account of change appears to provide a solution to the problem of how bodies can change their place despite the universe being a plenum. The appearance of the spatial movement of bodies is caused by motion affecting extension differently. Bodies do not actually move; instead, motion affecting extension differently gives the appearance that bodies have moved. Indeed, the 1678 *DP* was clear that motion is responsible for diversity: if the world was absolutely at rest then it would be an undifferentiated plenum of extension.<sup>180</sup>

## 2.5 Accounting for Inanimate and Animate Endeavours

As has been established, Hobbes was clear that bodies do not have the power to initiate their own motion. Despite this steadfast rejection of the self-motion of bodies, Hobbes' concept of endeavours appears to contradict this position. I will be focusing on Hobbes' concept of animate endeavours in the 1651 *Leviathan*. But I will first broach Hobbes' concept of inanimate endeavours in his 1656 (1655) *De Corpore*. Here Hobbes states that:

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<sup>177</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 8.20 EW I p 116-117.

<sup>178</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 9.9 EW I p 126.

<sup>179</sup> Lange 1877 p 286-287; Martinich 1997 p 87; Finn 2004 p 111.

<sup>180</sup> Hobbes 1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 83.

...I define ENDEAVOUR *to be motion made in less space and time than can be given; that is, less than can be determined or assigned by exposition or number; that is, motion made throughout the length of a point, and in an instant or point of time.*<sup>181</sup>

Before he outlined this account of inanimate endeavours, Hobbes reiterated his previously outlined understanding of motion: that whatever is at rest will always be at rest and whatever is moved will always be moved at the same speed unless it is affected by another moving contiguous body.<sup>182</sup> Hobbes held that endeavours exist in bodies and that certain bodies have the power to restore themselves because of their endeavours:

*...a body, which is pressed and not wholly removed, is said to RESTORE itself, when, the pressing body being taken away, the parts which were moved do, by reason of the internal constitution of the pressed body, return every one into its own place. And this we may observe in springs, in blown bladders, and in many other bodies, whose parts yield more or less to the endeavour which the pressing body makes at the first arrival; but afterwards, when the pressing body is removed, they do, by some force within them, restore themselves, and give their whole body the same figure it had before.*<sup>183</sup>

But how can bodies restore themselves to their previous figure if they cannot cause their own motion? To illustrate this point, take the example Hobbes gave of a spring. A standard account suggests that a spring restores itself to its previous figure when the compressing force has been removed. This also appears to be the case for Hobbes, based on the above quotation. But Hobbes held that bodies cannot start their own motion. This suggests that once the compressing force has been removed, the spring should remain in its compressed state until another body causes it to move another way, given that bodies are incapable of starting their own motion. So something other than the spring must be responsible for its restoration to its original figure.

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<sup>181</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part III 15.2 EW I p 206.

<sup>182</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part III 15.1 EW I p 203-206.

<sup>183</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part III 15.2 EW I p 211-212.



The same problem seems to hold for the active features of an inanimate body such as resistance.<sup>184</sup> Something other than bodies must be responsible for the active features within bodies. Hobbes' illustration of how a cross-bow restores itself appears to provide a clue as to what is responsible for the restoration of a body's figure after it has been compressed:

Therefore, when the lath of a cross-bow bent doth, as soon as it is at liberty, restore itself, though to him that judges by sense, both it and all its parts seem to be at rest; yet he, that judging by reason doth not account for the taking away of impediment for an efficient cause, nor conceives that without an efficient cause any thing can pass from rest to motion will conclude that the parts were already in motion before they began to restore themselves.<sup>185</sup>

The restoration of a body to original figure appears to be caused by motion. The point is reiterated in the 1678 *DP* which, despite rejecting the self-motion of bodies, also attributed active features to inanimate bodies such as resistance and the restoration of figure.<sup>186</sup> It appears, then, that Hobbes held that motion is responsible for inanimate endeavours.

There is a difficulty in accounting for the existence of life, sensation and thought within Hobbes' ontological system as well as the endeavours involved in these processes. As has been previously established, Hobbes held that bodies are merely extended in nature and motion is change of place. Yet Hobbes appears to have held that certain forms of extension in motion are alive, sensitive and rational: despite holding that all extension is in motion, he did not hold that all extension is alive, sensitive nor rational.

In the *Leviathan*, Hobbes stated: "For seeing life is but a motion of limbs, the beginning whereof is in some principal part within..."<sup>187</sup> But since limbs are mere extension and motion is change of place, how can extension changing its place result in life? According to Hobbes' understanding of life there are two sorts of motions peculiar to animals, vital motion and voluntary motion.<sup>188</sup> Vital motion was Hobbes' terminology for the bio-mechanics of life. It begins in generation and continues without interruption until death. But what is responsible for the presence of vital motion? What is the relationship between vital

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<sup>184</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part III 15.2 EW I p 211.

<sup>185</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part III 22.18 EW I p 348.

<sup>186</sup> Hobbes 1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 87; Ch. VII EW VII p 135.

<sup>187</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Introduction 1, C p 3-4.

<sup>188</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch vi, 1, C p 27-28.

motion and Hobbes' normal understanding of motion? Hobbes introduced the concept of vital motion without accounting for its origin or explaining why vital motion is different to local motion. Hobbes then introduced "voluntary motion" which he described thus:

These small beginnings of motion within the body of man, before they appear in walking, speaking, striking, and other visible actions, are commonly called ENDEAVOUR.<sup>189</sup>

Endeavours move towards or against whatever causes them.<sup>190</sup> It appears that bodies are incapable of producing endeavours, because they are incapable of starting their own motion. So what produces animate endeavours? Given Hobbes' view that motion produces nothing but motion, motion must be responsible for animate endeavours and for vital motion – despite Hobbes' definition of motion being 'change of place'.

Nonetheless, extension in motion is insufficient for life or animate endeavours: Hobbes did not hold that all bodies are alive. It appears, then, that extension in motion in a particular configuration is required for the appearance of life. This is why extension in motion in the form of a cat is alive, while extension in motion in the form of a rock is not. But what is responsible for the configurations of extension such as a cat which allows for the appearance of life (which itself appears to be an aspect of motion)? How is the configuration of extension into an individualized form even possible, given that the universe is a plenum? Hobbes, in *De Corpore*, held that individuation is the result of motion:

Also, if the name be given for such form as is the beginning of motion, then, as long as that motion remains, it will be the same *individual* thing; as that man will be always the same, whose actions and thoughts proceed all from the same beginning of motion, namely, that which was in his generation...<sup>191</sup>

Hobbes seems to have held that motion is responsible for individualization and life.

According to Hobbes' account of sensation in the *Leviathan*, sensation is the result of an external body pressing the sense organs either directly or indirectly; this pressure is then

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<sup>189</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch vi, 1, C p 27-28.

<sup>190</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch vi, 2, C p 28.

<sup>191</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 11.7 EW I p 137-138.

transmitted to the brain and heart where an endeavour, a counter-pressure, is produced.<sup>192</sup> But what causes the counter-pressure involved? Even accepting that external bodies can press on the senses, there should be no counter-pressure produced, given that bodies are incapable of self-motion. Since bodies are incapable of self-motion the heart and brain appear to be incapable of generating the counter-pressure involved in sensation, and without this counter pressure there is no sensation. Given Hobbes' position that motion produces nothing but motion, motion appears to be responsible for the counter-pressure involved in sensation. As both Martinich and Stephen have recognized, Hobbes held that phenomenal qualities are motion – yet he did not explain how motion could have sensible qualities.<sup>193</sup> It appears that, for Hobbes, extension in motion was not sufficient for sensation. Sensation, like life, requires extension to be in a specific configuration in order for it to be present. In his *De Corpore*, for example, Hobbes was clear that sensation was not made by reaction alone but instead requires particular sense organs which are capable of retaining motions.<sup>194</sup> Inanimate bodies do not possess sense because they cannot retain the motions of an external body.

Hobbes held that sensation and thought are bound together; I will focus on his account of thought and mental activities in the *Leviathan*, where he states that all thoughts are derived from sensation and that thoughts are: "...a *representation* or *appearance*, of some quality or other accident, of a body without us, which is commonly called an *object*."<sup>195</sup> But what are these representations being represented to? Since extension is passive and motion is local motion, how can locally moving extension result in the presence of the mind and its corresponding activities? Here, I will bracket the problem of accounting for the existence of the mind. Instead, I will be focusing on the challenge posed by Hobbes' understanding of bodies to his account of how mental activities function. Hobbes held that to have an idea is to possess an image-like mental item which represents or purports to represent some external object encountered in perception or derived from sensation. As McIntyre has noted, Hobbes subscribed to a version of the copy principle and was a conception empiricist.<sup>196</sup> Bracketing the problem of how to account for the existence of this copy principle, and

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<sup>192</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch i, 4, C p 6.

<sup>193</sup> Martinich 1999 p 128; p 130; p 271; Stephen 2012 p 111-112.

<sup>194</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 26.5 EW I p 393.

<sup>195</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch i, 1-2, C p 6; For Hobbes there was no difference between how our thoughts are caused whether awake or asleep (Tuck 1989 p 46).

<sup>196</sup> McIntyre 2016 p 558.

accepting that it exists, how does it function? What mechanism is responsible for switching it on and off? It cannot be bodies since, for Hobbes, bodies cannot start nor stop their own motion. To illustrate this difficulty, imagine that principle functions like a photo copier. Just as a photo-copier copies images of external objects, so Hobbes' copy principle takes copies of external objects. But bearing in mind Hobbes' understanding of bodies, what switches on the copy principle?

This problem seems to hold for all of Hobbes' accounts of mental activities. According to him, there are two sorts of mental discourse: that which is "*unguided, without design*", which is inconstant and undirected; and that which is "*regulated*" by some desire and design.<sup>197</sup> Hobbes held that design is nothing but the seeking out of the causes of some effect or of the effects of some cause.<sup>198</sup> But what regulates our thoughts? Again, assuming for the moment that this regulating process exists, how can it function, given that bodies cannot start or stop their own motion? For Hobbes, bodies appear to be incapable of regulating thoughts: there is no difference between the mental processes of memory and the imagination.<sup>199</sup> Even accepting this, what produces memory and imagination? How do they function, given that bodies cannot start or stop their own motion? The recalling of a memory or the construction of an imaginary entity are both active processes. But, for Hobbes, a body cannot start to recall or imagine something because it cannot start its own motion. By the same token, if a body is recalling or imagining something there appears to be no way for it to stop these processes. As Hobbes states:

When a man *reasoneth*, he does nothing else but conceive a sum total, from *addition* of parcels; or conceive a remainder, from *subtraction* of one sum from another...<sup>200</sup>

Again, we could ask about the initial production of reason. However, accepting that reason exists, how can it function, given that bodies cannot start nor stop their motion? Addition and subtraction are active processes over and above sensation. Based on Hobbes' understanding of bodies, it appears that bodies cannot start calculating; but if they are calculating, they do not appear to be able to stop!

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<sup>197</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iii, 3-5, C p 12-13.

<sup>198</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iii, 5, C p 13.

<sup>199</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch ii, 3-4, C p 8-9.

<sup>200</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch v, 1, C p 22.

Hobbes held that reason is tied to speech.<sup>201</sup> Humans are not born with reason as they are with sense and memory, nor is reason gained through experience only. Instead, it is attained by industry, first by the imposing of names and then the creation of syllogisms.<sup>202</sup> I will be touching on Hobbes' understanding of names and speech in a limited way. According to Hobbes names have two purposes: 1) to serve as marks which are for internal remembrance; or 2) as signs which are for external communication.<sup>203</sup> For Hobbes, names serve as arbitrary marks to recall our thoughts. They represent our ideas, which are produced by our experiences: they do not directly represent our experiences. But where do names come from? How are names attached to sensation? How can a body attach a name to a sensation since it cannot start its own motion? It is important to note that for Hobbes not all names represent things which actually exist. An example of this is the word "nothing": the word does not represent something which actually exists.<sup>204</sup> But since ideas are caused by sensation and names represent our ideas, how can we have names for things which do not exist? Once names are understood it is then possible to combine these names into speech.<sup>205</sup> But what combines names into speech? The combining of names is an active process which a body appears to be incapable of doing. As Hobbes writes: "The general use of speech is to transfer our mental discourse into verbal, or the train of our thoughts into a train of words..."<sup>206</sup> But what translates our thoughts into words? How can we begin to speak or stop speaking, given that bodies are incapable of starting or stopping their motion? Hobbes states:

When a man, upon the hearing of any speech, hath those thoughts which the words of that speech, and their connexion, were ordained and constituted to signify, then he is said to be understand it, *understanding* being nothing else but conception caused by speech.<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch v, 18, C p 26.

<sup>202</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch v, 17, C p 25.

<sup>203</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iv, 3, C p 16-17; Hobbes divided names into two types those which are singular and those which are universal; proper names correspond to individual things while universal names are common to many things (Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iv, 6-7, C p 17). Universals for Hobbes are the product of thought operating through language, they do not actually exist (Copleston 1959 p 15; Mintz 1962 p 23).

<sup>204</sup> Copleston 1959 p 15; Martinich 1997 p 99.

<sup>205</sup> According to Hobbes speech was humanity's greatest intervention because it makes everything else possible (1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iv, 3, C p 16-17).

<sup>206</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iv, 3, C p 16-17.

<sup>207</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iv, 22, C p 21.

For Hobbes, understanding the word “cat” involves recovering the idea for cat and matching it with the word cat. But how can an idea be recovered, since it is not possible for a body to start its own motion? For that matter, what matches a thought to the word that is heard? How does matching occur if a body cannot start its own motion? If bodies are responsible for mental activities then, for Hobbes, there should be no active features of any kind. There should not be anything producing a “copy principle”, recovering ideas, or anything to label or manipulate our thoughts. It seems that Hobbes relied upon motion to account for the existence of mental activities: he held that motion produces nothing but motion and that thoughts as well as sensations are motion. Motion seems to be responsible for the existence of mental activity, including its active features, as well as for the existence of words. As with life and sensation, motion alone is not sufficient for thought: despite holding that all bodies are in motion, Hobbes did not hold that all bodies possess thought. For Hobbes, it seems, thought, like life and sensation, requires extension to be in a specific configuration in order for it to be present.

As previously established, Hobbes implicitly held that motion is responsible for individuation, life, sensation and thought, as well the active processes involved in life, sensation and thought. When we connect Hobbes’ account of individuation, life, sensation and thought, motion seems to be the principal factor. Motion configures extension to manifest the appearance of a human. This human then in turn manifests the qualities of life, sensation and thought. But the individuation, life, sensation and thought being manifested actually belong to motion itself, not to the body of the human: for Hobbes, motion produces nothing but motion. In short, Hobbes may have defined motion as ‘change of place’, but he seems to have implicitly held that motion is responsible for all aspects of ontology, beyond extension. With this established, we can now turn to Hobbes’ implicit and explicit corporeal God writings. Hopefully, these can provide some sort of guide that might allow us to make better sense of what might seem a confusing and even contradictory position.

## **2.6 Hobbes’ Explicit Corporeal God Writings**

In chapter III – “*On certain objections against Leviathan*” – of the Appendix to the 1668 edition of *Leviathan*, Hobbes stated for the first time that God was corporeal:

- A. ...our author denies that any substances are incorporeal. What else is this but either to deny that God exists or to affirm that God is a body?

B. Clearly; he asserts that God is body.<sup>208</sup>

Wright suggests that the final Latin phrase could also be translated as “God is a body”.<sup>209</sup> However, as he points out:

While both state the proposition that God is material, the first seems preferable, especially if the second [i.e., with the indefinite article] is taken to suggest limitation and specification, which is contrary to Hobbes’s intentions.<sup>210</sup>

Throughout his writings, Hobbes held that God is infinite – and so a limit seems questionable. In order to defend his position that God is corporeal, Hobbes cited Tertullian’s dictum that “Whatsoever is not body is not an entity...” and that “...all substance is body after its own kind”.<sup>211</sup> Hobbes also pointed out that terms like ‘incorporeal’ and ‘immaterial’ are not in the Bible and in fact the Bible, referencing *Colossians* 2:9 (“For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily”) and *Acts* 17:28 (“For in him we live, and move, and have our being”), attributes corporeal characteristics to God.<sup>212</sup> I agree with Walton, Wright and MacDonald Ross that since, according to Paul *Acts* 17:29, we all live, move and have our being in God, Hobbes held that God must have material and spatial dimensions to allow for this.<sup>213</sup> As MacDonald Ross notes, in this regard: “Since having spatial dimensions is the defining characteristic of body, it follows that God is body, and that we are parts of the divine whole.”<sup>214</sup> But while I agree that, for Hobbes, individuals are parts of the divine whole, I disagree that our bodies are part of the divine whole. As I will establish, it is the *motion* that configures extension, which gives the appearance of an individual that is part of the divine whole. It is motion that makes extension into a living, sensitive and rational creature that is part of the divine whole – not the extension that motion is affecting. This position will be established by drawing on Hobbes’ principle that motion produces nothing but motion and his reliance upon God to account for the existence of motion.

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<sup>208</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch iii, 179-180, W p 148.

<sup>209</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch iii, 179-180, W footnote 230 p 149.

<sup>210</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch iii, 179-180, W footnote 230 p 149.

<sup>211</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch iii, 180, W p 148; 6, C p 540; According to Wright (2006 footnote 233 p 150) Hobbes conflated a statement from Tertullian’s *De Carne Christi* XI, “All that is is body after its own kind; nothing is incorporeal except that which does not exist”; with one from *Adversus Praxeam* VII, “Who will deny that God is body even though He is spirit? For spirit is body after its own kind and in its own form”.

<sup>212</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch iii, 180, W p 150; 6, C p 540-541.

<sup>213</sup> Walton 1975 p 36; Wright 2006 footnote 237 p 150-151; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 151.

<sup>214</sup> MacDonald Ross 2009 p 151.

Hobbes in his 1668 (1682) *Answer* claimed that God is: “corporeal and infinite”<sup>215</sup> and “a corporeal spirit, that is to say, something that has magnitude.”<sup>216</sup> Furthermore, he characterized a spirit as a thin fluid transparent invisible body.<sup>217</sup> Accordingly, as Copleston puts it, Hobbes’ God is therefore “infinite, invisible extension.”<sup>218</sup> Hobbes referenced the same passages from the Bible and Tertullian’s writings as he had in his Appendix to support his position that God is corporeal.<sup>219</sup> Hobbes in his *Answer* detailed that he thought God was “a most pure, simple, invisible spirit corporeal”.<sup>220</sup> And:

A pure and simple body, he tells us, must be a...body of one and the same kind, in every part throughout; and if mingled with body of another kind, though the total be compounded or mixed, the parts nevertheless retain their simplicity, as when water and wine are mixed, the parts of both kinds retain their simplicity. For water and wine can not both be in one and the same place at once.<sup>221</sup>

Hobbes then presents the following analogy in order to account for the operation of this corporeal God in the universe:

I have seen, and so have many more, two waters, one of the river, the other a mineral water, so like that no man could discern the one from the other by his sight; yet when they are both put together, the whole substance could not by the eye be distinguished from milk. Yet we know that the one was not mixed with the other, so as every part of the one to be in every part of the other, for that is impossible, unless two bodies can be in the same place. How then could the change be made in every part, but only by the activity of the mineral water, changing it every where to the sense, and yet not being every where, and in every part of the water? If then such gross bodies have so great activity, what shall we think of spirits, whose kinds be as many as there are kinds of liquor, and activity greater? Can it then be doubted, but that God, who is infinitely fine spirit, and withal intelligence, can make and change all species and kinds of bodies as he pleaseth?<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 306.

<sup>216</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 308.

<sup>217</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 309.

<sup>218</sup> Copleston 1959 p 8.

<sup>219</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 306-307; p 383.

<sup>220</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 313.

<sup>221</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 309.

<sup>222</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 309-310.



Hobbes then states that he dare not say that this is the way that God operates because God's operations are beyond "his apprehension" nonetheless, he holds that the analogy was superior to traditional accounts.<sup>223</sup>

The important point for us to note is that, as Gorham has pointed out, Hobbes' analogy here is striking evidence of how his corporeal God was designed to solve the problem of accounting for motion and diversity.<sup>224</sup> As Wright has suggested, Hobbes' analogy illustrates how his God can move in all things and bring about the diverse motions we perceive, how God makes and moves every type and sort of body – although it fell short of specifying how God operates as a physical cause.<sup>225</sup> While Hobbes did not explicitly state how God operates as a physical cause, it appears that he had to conceive of God as motion. In his overall system, motion is the only the cause; meanwhile, as we have seen, motion produces nothing but motion. Hobbes' God as infinite invisible extension is responsible for making and changing all species and kinds of bodies as he pleases. Hobbes' corporeal God *qua* motion is in contact with extension because it permeates extension. The permeation of extension by Hobbes' corporeal God allows it to manifest its qualities externally and internally within extension.

I disagree with Gorham that for Hobbes "God produces all change and diversity by moving the parts of the plenum to produce the accidents of matter we perceive (but God lacks)".<sup>226</sup> Despite Hobbes' wordage – indicating that the liquor or mineral water is responsible for giving the river water a distinct feature, a milky whiteness, it otherwise lacked and which the mineral water itself lacks – I do not understand how a new feature in both substances can be produced, given Hobbes' acceptance of the principle of sufficient reason. Since the plenum of extension does not have any secondary qualities, like colour, Hobbes' corporeal God must possess these secondary characteristics.

There is also the issue that Hobbes held that motion produces nothing but motion. Since sensations are motion then Hobbes' corporeal God must possess sensitive qualities – otherwise there appears to be no way to account for secondary characteristics. If this is the

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<sup>223</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 310.

<sup>224</sup> Gorham 2013a p 253-255.

<sup>225</sup> Wright 2002 p 475-476; 2006 p 256-257.

<sup>226</sup> Gorham 2013a p 253.

case, then when Hobbes' corporeal God affects extension: the qualities that extension manifests belong to Hobbes' corporeal God, not to extension. It appears that Hobbes denied that God had accidents not because God lacked accidents, but because without extension there would be no way for the accidents of God to be manifested. If we could separate Hobbes' corporeal God from the plenum of extension it would be invisible, and it would appear to lack any accidents, as his characterization of God being infinite invisible extension indicated. This is because without extension Hobbes' corporeal God would have no way to manifest its accidents. The accidents we perceive in extension are similar to a shadow cast on a surface by an object. The shadow belongs to the object. But without a surface the shadow will never be manifested. Despite the necessity of the surface for the shadow to be visible, the shadow's existence is independent of the surface. Hobbes' corporeal God requires extension in order for it to manifest its qualities otherwise it would appear to be invisible.

We find further iterations of the corporeal God thesis in the 1678 *DP*, where Hobbes discusses – and rejects – the possibility of a void. Given that the universe is a plenum, he states, the existence of a void in nature was inconsistent with God's presence in nature:

Because He that created them is not a fancy, but the most real substance that is; who being infinite, there can be no place empty where He is, nor full where He is not.<sup>227</sup>

Furthermore, Hobbes claimed that God is involved in the creation of new life:

And it may be the earth may yet produce some very small living creatures: and perhaps male and female. For the smallest creatures which we take notice of, do engender, though they do not all by conjunction; therefore if the earth produce living creatures at this day, God did not absolute rest from all his works on the seventh day, but (as it is chap.ii.2) *he rested from all the work he had made*. And therefore it is no harm to think that God worketh still, and when and where and what he pleaseth. Beside, it is very hard to believe, that to produce male and female, and all that belongs therefore, as also the several and curious organs of sense and memory, could be the work of anything that had not understanding. From whence, I think we may conclude, that whatsoever was made after the creation, was

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<sup>227</sup> Hobbes 1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 89.

a new creature made by God no otherwise than the first creatures were, excepting only man.<sup>228</sup>

For Hobbes, God exists throughout the plenum of extension and operates within the universe to produce new life – and since the only active power in Hobbes’ system is motion, his God must operate within the universe as motion.

## 2.7 Hobbes’ Implicit Corporeal God Writings

Now let us turn to Hobbes’ implicit corporeal God writings, assuming that his God was motion. Hobbes in his 1650 (1647) *Citizen* was clear that “God rules by nature only”.<sup>229</sup> If Hobbes’ God governs the world then his God can only govern through motion, which – after all – is the only cause within Hobbes’ system. While Lange was writing about Hobbes’ 1658 *De Homine* his characterization of Hobbes’ God is also appropriate for Hobbes’ *Citizen*:

We must not indeed conclude from this that Hobbes identified God with the *sum* of nature-pantheistically. He seems rather to have conceived as God a *part* of the universe-controlling, universally spread, uniform, and by its motion determining mechanically the motion of the whole.<sup>230</sup>

It appears that Hobbes’ God is part of the universe because it is motion and as motion it has an independent existence to extension. As motion, Hobbes’ God is universally spread throughout the plenum of extension which, by its motion, characterized in mechanistic terms, is responsible for the manifestation of the natural world. We find further support for my view that, for Hobbes, the natural world is the result of God directly affecting extension and that he granted priority to extension over God within the first line of his 1651 *Leviathan*: “Nature (the art whereby God hath made and governs the world)...”<sup>231</sup> Martinich suggests that Hobbes may have been imitating the opening passages of the Book of Genesis, but he rhetorically promoted nature above God.<sup>232</sup> But Hobbes appears to have done more than rhetorically promote nature above God: he also seems to have held that extension was necessary for his corporeal God to manifest its qualities through the natural world. For Hobbes, it seems, the natural world is artificial because the “natural” state of the extension

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<sup>228</sup> Hobbes 1678 *DP* Ch. X EW VII p 176-177.

<sup>229</sup> Hobbes 1650 (1647) *Citizen* Ch XV.17 EW II p 220

<sup>230</sup> Lange 1877 p 290 note 33.

<sup>231</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Introduction 1, C p 3.

<sup>232</sup> Martinich 1999 p 225.

which comprises the universe is simply a passive undifferentiated plenum. The natural world is the result of a corporeal God affecting this passive undifferentiated plenum – hence it is artificial. Hobbes stated that God’s power is manifested in the diversity of the natural world:

But the acknowledging of one God, eternal, infinite, and omnipotent, may more easily be derived from the desire men have to know the causes of natural bodies, and their several virtues and operations, than from the fear of what was to befall them in time to come.<sup>233</sup>

Pietarinen, in reference to *Lev* Part I Ch xii, 6, C p 64, summarizes thus:

What is claimed here is that God’s active power can be thought to be manifest in the world as the structures, qualities, and behaviour of bodies, that is, as things resulting from various kinds of motions obeying certain general laws.<sup>234</sup>

God’s active power is manifested, it seems, in the diversity of the natural world.

I would suggest that this conception of ‘God as motion’ provides a hermeneutical principle that allows us to make better sense of the implicit claims made elsewhere in the *Leviathan* and in *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance*. For example, the *Leviathan*:

The world (I mean not the earth only, that denominates the lovers of it *worldly men*, but the *universe*, that is, the whole mass of all things that are) is corporeal (that is to say, body) and hath the dimensions of magnitude (namely, length, breadth, and depth). Also, every part of body is likewise body, and hath the like dimensions. And consequently, every part of the universe is body, and that which is not body is no part of the universe. And because the universe is all, that which is no part of it is nothing (and consequently, nowhere). Nor does it follow from hence that spirits are nothing. For they have dimensions, and are, therefore, really bodies (though that name in common speech be given to such bodies only as are visible or palpable, that is, that have some degree of opacity). But for spirits, they call them incorporeal, which is a name of more honour, and may therefore with more piety be attributed to God himself, in whom we consider not what attribute expresseth best

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<sup>233</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch xii, 6, C p 64.

<sup>234</sup> Pietarinen 2009 p 192.

his nature, which is incomprehensible, but what best expresseth our desire to honour Him”.<sup>235</sup>

As Leijenhorst has noted, Hobbes seems to suggest here (*Lev* Part IV Ch xlvi, 15, C p 458-459) that God is part of the universe, but despite being part of the universe Hobbes’ God does not have any of the defining characteristics of natural bodies.<sup>236</sup> The ‘solution’ seems to be that Hobbes’ God does not have any of the defining characteristics of bodies because it is not a body but is motion. As motion Hobbes’ God is an infinite incomprehensible part of the universe. God for Hobbes is an infinite part of the universe because motion produces nothing but motion.

Moving on to the 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance*, we find Hobbes stating that:

There is nothing that has a real being, but God, and the world, and the parts of the world; nor has anything a feigned being, but the fictions of men’s brains. The world and the parts thereof are corporeal, endued with the dimensions of quantity, and with figure.<sup>237</sup>

Notice the distinction that Hobbes drew in regards to what exists in the universe. There is God, the world and the parts of the world. The world and its parts are endowed with the dimensions of quantity and figure. But Hobbes made no reference to God having quantity or figure. This is because the appearance of quantity and figure seems to be the result of Hobbes’ God as motion affecting the plenum of extension.

In *De Corpore*, Hobbes held that it can be inferred that God is inside the universe and is an eternally moving first mover:

Besides, though from this, that nothing can move itself, it may rightly be inferred that there was some first eternal movent; yet it can never be inferred, though some used to make such inference, that that movent was eternally immoveable, but rather

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<sup>235</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part IV Ch xlvi, 15, C p 458-459.

<sup>236</sup> Leijenhorst 2005 p 207; p 212.

<sup>237</sup> Hobbes 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* No. XV EW V p 211.

eternally moved. For as it is true, that nothing is moved by itself; so it is true also that nothing is moved but by that which is already moved.<sup>238</sup>

But if Hobbes' God is eternally moving does this not violate his rejection of self-movement? No and for two different reasons. First, as both Gorham and Abizadeh have noted, Hobbes' principles rule out the possibility of a first mover that begins at rest and then moves but his principles do not rule out an eternally moving first cause.<sup>239</sup> Secondly, Hobbes' principles rejected the self-movement of bodies but not of motion. In the *De Corpore*, Hobbes was clear that:

...to attribute to created bodies the power to move themselves, what is it else than to say that there be creatures which have no dependence upon the Creator?<sup>240</sup>

So, for Hobbes, God is eternally moving within the universe and is responsible for the appearance of the movement of bodies. Since God is within the universe and is eternally moving, the amount of motion in the universe is constant. Hobbes characterized God's eternity in the *De Corpore* as time without end; this was also how he characterized eternity in the *Leviathan*.<sup>241</sup> Since Hobbes equated time with motion, eternity is another way of articulating 'endless motion'.

Hobbes' account of causality supports the interpretation that he implicitly held that God is motion. Hobbes in his 1654 *Of Liberty and Necessity* was clear that without the existence of God there would be no way of making sense of any effect:

Nor does the *concourse of all causes* make one simple *chain* or concatenation, but an innumerable number of chains, joined together, not in all parts, but in the first link God Almighty; and consequently the whole cause of an event, doth not always depend on one single chain, but on many together.<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>238</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 26.1 EW I p 412.

<sup>239</sup> Gorham 2013a p 255; Abizadeh 2017a p 730.

<sup>240</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 30.2 EW I p 510.

<sup>241</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 26.1 EW I p 413; 1651 *Leviathan* Part IV Ch xlvi, 22, C p 461; Glover 1960 p 292; Glover 1960 footnote 59 p 296; Martinich 1999 p 188.

<sup>242</sup> Hobbes 1654 *Of Liberty and Necessity* EW IV p 246-247.

As Zarka has pointed out, Hobbes relied upon God's omnipotence acting as first cause to ground his determinism: if there was no *first* cause then there would be an infinite regress of causes in which case there would be no possibility of making sense of a given effect.<sup>243</sup>

Hobbes himself explicitly states in his 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* that God is responsible for causality:

That which I say necessitateth and determineth every action (that [Bramhall] may no longer doubt of any meaning), is the sum of all those things, which now being existent, conduce and concur to the production of that action hereafter, whereof if any one thing now were wanting, the effect could not be produced. This concurrence of causes, whereof every one is determined to be of such as it is by a like concurrence of former causes, may well be called (in respect they were all set and ordered the eternal cause of all things, God Almighty) the decree of God.<sup>244</sup>

In his *Questions*, Hobbes reiterates this point that the whole cause of an event does not depend on a single cause but on many together.<sup>245</sup> As Wright notes, pertinently, Hobbes' attempt to coordinate theology and natural science means that he described every event in the natural world "...as a confluence of causal chains producing the given effect and at the same time unified immutably in the will of God".<sup>246</sup> Hobbes identified God's will, God's providence, with a universal and unbreakable material causality.<sup>247</sup> He argued that God acts after creation only by means of secondary causes, according to strict mechanical necessity; miracles do not violate the laws of nature because God foresaw the need for them at creation and organized the world to produce them.<sup>248</sup> Zarka has raised the possibility that Hobbes' theology of omnipotence turns out to be a *denial* of God's existence since he recognized no more than a material world subject to natural necessity.<sup>249</sup> But this is not the case: as Gillespie notes, for Hobbes, God's will consists in the interacting motions of all things acting corporeally upon one another.<sup>250</sup> It appears that, for Hobbes, God's will and natural necessity are the same thing.

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<sup>243</sup> Zarka (translated by Sorrell) 2006 p 78-80.

<sup>244</sup> Hobbes 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* No. XI. EW V p 105.

<sup>245</sup> Hobbes 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* No. XI. EW V p 105.

<sup>246</sup> Wright 2006 p 271.

<sup>247</sup> Martinich 2002 p 5; Gillespie 2009 p 225.

<sup>248</sup> Gillespie 2009 p 250-251.

<sup>249</sup> Zarka (translated by Sorrell) 2006 p 78-80.

<sup>250</sup> Gillespie 2009 p 229.

In his *Questions*, Hobbes, was clear that God works through secondary causes:

...all external causes depend necessarily on the first eternal cause, God Almighty, who worketh in us both to will and to do, by the meditation of second cause.<sup>251</sup>

According to Hobbes:

It is true, that God doth not all things that he can do if he will; but that he can *will* that which he hath not *willed* from all eternity, I deny; unless that he can not only *will a change*, but also *change his will*, which all divines say is immutable; and then they must needs be necessary effects, that proceed from God.<sup>252</sup>

As Glover has suggested, in reference to EW V p 246, Hobbes sought to reconcile the problem of an unchanging God which was implied by his determinism with the dynamic activity of God who commands and acts in history by holding that “God’s present acts are carrying out his eternal intentions”.<sup>253</sup> For Hobbes, it seems, God was responsible for all change yet is unchanging in relation to his will: as causality, God has already pre-determined what will be manifested in the natural world through its activity. God, through the activity of the natural world, carries out his own pre-determined eternal intentions.

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<sup>251</sup> Hobbes 1656 *Questions Concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* No. XXXVIII EW V p 450.

<sup>252</sup> Hobbes 1656 *Questions Concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* No. XVIII EW V p 246.

<sup>253</sup> Glover 1960 p 291; footnote 58 p 296.



## CHAPTER THREE

### HOBBS' UNDERSTANDING OF SCIENCE AND PIETY

#### 3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will explore Hobbes' use of God in science in order to argue that he implicitly held that God is motion. In his *De Corpore*, Hobbes excluded theology from philosophy because there is nothing to either divide nor compound, nor any generation to be conceived in God.<sup>254</sup> This chapter examines the implications of this position, giving particular attention to the way in which – despite the apparent exclusion – Hobbes referenced God in his account of natural science. I will argue that this is because Hobbes implicitly held that God is motion. I will establish how Hobbes argued that the study of nature leads to belief in God's existence as both first mover and designer. Following this I will explore Hobbes' understanding of natural science. I will establish that, for Hobbes both truth and science are linguistic not ontological. After this I will explore Hobbes' understanding of statements about God. I will then establish that it is possible to reconcile the inconsistencies in Hobbes' statements about God because they are linguistic not ontological. Finally I will explore how Hobbes, despite excluding God from science, relied upon God to account for the origin of science and for determining the plausibility of scientific theories.

Scholars on both sides of the debate regarding Hobbes and God recognize that it was not possible for Hobbes to have had an idea of God:<sup>255</sup> he held that thoughts consist of images which are derived from sensation; but since God is insensible, we cannot have an idea of God. Hobbes' approach to sensation and ideas entails that whereas ideas such as cat or green have an image that corresponds to them, there is no image for the idea of God. Martinich argued that; "According to Hobbes's linguistic views, "God" is the name of an object of which humans can have no image".<sup>256</sup> In contrast to Martinich, I suggest that we should understand the name "God" for Hobbes as a blank image rather than a non image. (While the shift in holding that the name "God" for Hobbes is not a non image but a blank image might not seem like a significant difference, it actually is.) This is because a non image

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<sup>254</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part I 1.8 EW I p 10.

<sup>255</sup> Tuck 1989 p 77; Martinich 1999 p 139; 2002 p 186; Curley 1994 *Leviathan* Introduction p xii; Jesseph 2002; Wright 2006 p 297; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 144.

<sup>256</sup> Martinich 1997 p 58.

closes off opportunities to try and offer an account of how Hobbes might have used God within his ontological system, whereas holding that Hobbes' God was a blank image opens such opportunities up. I will be building on aspects of Holden's understanding of Hobbes' first cause argument – namely, that Hobbes' first cause was an inference and is a blank canvas upon which religious beliefs are projected.<sup>257</sup> I agree with Holden on this point, but I will argue that Hobbes went further than this claim: as I will show, Hobbes also projected upon this blank canvas those aspects of his ontological system for which he could not otherwise account for, which, as I suggest, was motion.

### 3.2 The Study of Nature leads to God

Throughout his writings, Hobbes maintained that the study of nature leads to belief in the existence of God. In the 1647 (1650) *Citizen*, Hobbes says that, from our experience of nature, we know that God exists – “by the light of nature it may be known that there is a God”<sup>258</sup> – and that the wonder of the natural world leads men to believe that God is the invisible manufacturer of all things.<sup>259</sup> In the 1651 *Leviathan*, he maintained that it is impossible to inquire into natural causes without being inclined to believe in the existence of either a single God or multiple gods; by inquiry into natural events men conceive that God is responsible for the order of the visible world.<sup>260</sup> And in the 1656 (1655) *De Corpore*, Hobbes again reiterates that our study of nature leads to us admiring God:

...when after meditation and contemplation many things which we wondered at before are now grown more familiar to us, we then believe them, and transfer our admiration from the creatures to the Creator.<sup>261</sup>

So, for Hobbes, as we progress in our inquiries into nature, we transfer our admiration from creatures to God.<sup>262</sup> And, as he holds in 1658 *De Homine*, when we study nature we are led to the idea that God is responsible for it:

Any who have sufficiently contemplated all the machinery both of generation and nutrition and yet have not seen that they have been constructed by some mind, and

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<sup>257</sup> Holden 2015 p 666.

<sup>258</sup> Hobbes 1650 (1647) *Citizen* Ch II.21 EW II p 27

<sup>259</sup> Hobbes 1650 (1647) *Citizen* Ch XVI.1 EW II p 227. God for Hobbes was a manufacturer because he held that the natural world was an artificial construct.

<sup>260</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch xi, 26, C p 62; xii, 6, C p 64.

<sup>261</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 27.1 EW I p 447.

<sup>262</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 27.1 EW I p 447.

directed each to its own functions, must indeed be considered themselves without a mind.<sup>263</sup>

As Cromartie puts it, commenting on the 1678 *DP* (EW VII p 176-177), Hobbes is clear that we believe that God is a designer from our experience of the natural world.<sup>264</sup>

In the 1651 *Leviathan*, Hobbes maintained that:

...it is impossible to make any profound inquiry into natural causes without being inclined thereby to believe there is one God eternal, though they cannot have any idea of him in their mind answerable to his nature.<sup>265</sup>

As Brown, Tuck and Leijenhorst have all pointed out, for Hobbes God's existence as first cause is an inference based on our experiences of the natural world, even though we are unable to have a positive idea of God.<sup>266</sup> For Martinich, Holden and McIntyre Hobbes' first cause argument in his *Leviathan* was a rational process characteristic of the scientific mind.<sup>267</sup> Bunce has noted the similarity between science and monotheism for Hobbes: for Bunce, Hobbes held that both are rooted in the study of natural causes.<sup>268</sup> According to Glover and Gillespie, God's existence for Hobbes can be known by rational inquiry into causes.<sup>269</sup> As Wright has noted, despite Hobbes holding that God's nature is incomprehensible, he held that God's existence as first cause is nevertheless a necessary conclusion of reason, as, led by curiosity, it traces cause-and-effect relations to their ultimate source.<sup>270</sup> According to both Holden and McIntyre, in reference to *Lev* Part I xi, 25, C p 62, Hobbes was reporting on a psychological fact about human beings; when humans, animated by curiosity, profoundly investigate natural phenomena they must come to the conclusion that there is a first cause which they call by the name "God".<sup>271</sup> It seems that, for Hobbes, rational inquiry out of psychological necessity terminates in the belief that God is more than a first eternal cause, but is an eternally moving designer. As Cromartie has

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<sup>263</sup> Hobbes 1658 *De Homine* LW II p 6 (Brown translation 1962 p 342).

<sup>264</sup> Cromartie 2008 p 869.

<sup>265</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch xi, 25, C p 62.

<sup>266</sup> Brown 1962 p 340; Tuck 1989 p 78; Leijenhorst 2005 p 200; p 205.

<sup>267</sup> Martinich 2002 p 192; Holden 2015 p 665; McIntyre 2016 p 567.

<sup>268</sup> Bunce 2013 p 55.

<sup>269</sup> Glover 1960 p 288; Gillespie 2009 p 248.

<sup>270</sup> Wright 1999 footnote 50 p 409.

<sup>271</sup> Holden 2015 p 654-655; McIntyre 2016 p 550; Stephen maintains that for Hobbes belief in God's existence is driven by "curiosity" into what is the cause of the effects we perceive (2012 p 147).

suggested, for Hobbes the First Mover that every human is prone to postulate is simultaneously also a Designer responsible for sense experience.<sup>272</sup> This positing of God as both eternal mover and designer appears to be for Hobbes a non-optional posit for the natural scientist when engaged in rational inquiries into causes.

So the supposition of God's existence as first cause was the product of rational thinking. But how can we be certain that, for Hobbes, the name "God" is not a "mere name", psychologically necessary and useful in scientific theories, yet not delineating anything that actually exists? How can we be certain that there is anything more than psychological necessity underpinning our 'rational belief' in God's existence? I believe that we can be certain that Hobbes' concept of God had a rational and ontological grounding: without God, there appears to be no other way of accounting for the existence of motion. I agree with Martinich, Gillespie, MacDonald Ross and McIntyre that Hobbes' basis for believing in the existence of God is strictly analogous to the basis for believing in the existence of bodies: for Hobbes, the only things we have direct cognitive access to are our own ideas, so we must infer the existence of bodies.<sup>273</sup> Hobbes' belief in the existence of bodies is justified by the (supposed) fact that the only sensible way to explain our phantasms is to infer that bodies exist and act in the way described.<sup>274</sup> So for Hobbes, belief in the existence of God is the only sensible way of explaining the effects of motion. I previously suggested that we should understand Hobbes' idea of God as a blank image, rather than a non-image. It seems that, as Hobbes continued his work, and despite the lack of explicit acknowledgement, he equated God with motion.

### **3.3 Understanding Hobbes' Approach to Natural Science**

Hobbes held that our knowledge of the universe is derived either directly or indirectly from sense impressions which are caused by the impact of external objects on our senses. These impacts produce "phantasms" in the brain and these "phantasms" in turn are the basis of knowledge. Hobbes held that our perceptions of the world are not real representations of the objective world and are instead obscure signs of hidden natural events that must be

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<sup>272</sup> Cromartie 2008 p 869-870.

<sup>273</sup> Martinich 2002 p 192; Gillespie 2009 p 249; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 148; McIntyre 2016 p 549.

<sup>274</sup> Martinich 1999 p 349.

deciphered.<sup>275</sup> In the *Leviathan*, Hobbes denied that the principles of natural science can teach us to the nature of anything:

...from the principles of natural science, which are so far from teaching us anything of God's nature as they cannot teach us our own nature, nor the nature of the smallest creature living.<sup>276</sup>

For Hobbes, humans cannot know the nature of anything – so we must rely on fallible hypotheses to account for natural events.<sup>277</sup> As Jesseph has noted, referencing *Lev* Part II Ch xxi, 33, C p 241:

Furthermore, he recognized that our knowledge of how bodies act upon one another is radically incomplete and conjectural; so, for instance, we must rely upon fallible hypotheses to explain why water dissolves sugar and not gold.<sup>278</sup>

There is a tension in Hobbes' account of sensation in his 1656 (1655) *De Corpore*: at Part I 6.1 (EW I p 65-66) he claims that by reason we know what the causes of our sensations are: they are “...*the shortest way of finding out effects by their known causes, or of causes by their known effects*”. But at Part IV 25.1 EW I p 388 Hobbes claims that we cannot know by reason what the causes of our sensations are and instead we can only give plausible explanations. As Hobbes writes:

The principles...are not such as we ourselves make and pronounce in general terms, as definitions; but such, as being placed in the things themselves by the Author of Nature, are by us observed in them; and we make use of them in single and particular, not universal propositions. Nor do they impose upon us any necessity of constituting theorems; their use being only, though not without such general propositions as have been already demonstrated, to show us the possibility of some production or generation.<sup>279</sup>

Because the causal principles of natural phenomena are “placed in the things themselves by the Author of Nature”, they do not “impose upon us any necessity of constituting theorems”, and so, consequently, the use of hypotheses in natural science is only “to show us the

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<sup>275</sup> Gillespie 2009 p 231-232; McIntyre 2016 footnote 37 p 568.

<sup>276</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part II Ch xxxi, 33, C p 241.

<sup>277</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part II Ch xxxi, 33, C p 241.

<sup>278</sup> Jesseph 2002 p 144.

<sup>279</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 25.1 EW I p 388.

possibility of some production or generation”.<sup>280</sup> In his 1678 *Decameron Physiologicum*, Hobbes was clear that he held that scientific explanations are hypothetical because God can do anything: “For there is no effect in nature which the Author of nature cannot bring to pass by more ways than one.”<sup>281</sup>

Hobbes adopted a voluntarist theological view which maintained that there are no phenomena that God cannot bring about in an infinite number of ways; whatever we witness in nature might have been produced in any way that God pleased.<sup>282</sup>

Hobbes held that we can only give plausible explanations to account for the causes of natural phenomena because they are produced by God. This means that natural philosophy will always remain hypothetical and conjectural. In *De Corpore*, Hobbes was clear that he thought his physics is comprised of hypotheses and was willing to accept the hypotheses of other men as long as they were conceivable: for Hobbes, conceivability underpins natural hypotheses.<sup>283</sup>

Despite holding that our knowledge of how bodies act upon one another is radically incomplete and conjectural, and that we must rely upon fallible hypotheses to explain natural events, nonetheless, Hobbes was certain that motion accounted for all natural events. In *De Corpore* he made clear his position that motion is the principle from which absolutely everything can be derived:

But the causes of universal things (of those, at least, that have any cause) are manifest of themselves, or (as they say commonly) known to nature; so that they need no method at all; for they have all but one universal cause, which is motion.<sup>284</sup>

At the most general level, the analytic method of science terminates with the concept of motion because motion is the ultimate cause of everything.<sup>285</sup> Hobbes, it seems, did not

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<sup>280</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 25.1 EW I p 388.

<sup>281</sup> Hobbes 1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 88.

<sup>282</sup> Miller 1999 p 159-160; McIntyre 2016 p 568; As previously mentioned Hobbes despite embracing a voluntarist theological view maintained that everything which occurs is necessary because while God is capable of anything, God does not change his will (Hobbes 1656 *Questions Concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* No. XVIII EW V p 246).

<sup>283</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 30.15 EW I p 531.

<sup>284</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part I 6.5 EW I p 69.

<sup>285</sup> Jesseph 2006a p 124.

understand how the natural world works – and so he ended up relying on God, given that he implicitly identified God with motion. I agree with Wright, in reference to Hobbes' *Answer* (EW IV p 309-310), that he fell short of specifying precisely how God operates as a physical cause, offering it only as a hypothesis, instead.<sup>286</sup> But although Hobbes did not specify how his corporeal God operates as a physical cause, it seems that, since the only cause within his system was motion, Hobbes' corporeal God must operate as motion: God is motion and motion causes everything, and so God causes everything.

### 3.4 Truth and Science: Linguistic not Ontological

Truth for Hobbes is purely logical (and linguistic), not ontological. It consists in the right ordering of words: truth relates to statements in the form of propositions, not in the things spoken of.<sup>287</sup> In *Human Nature* and the *Leviathan*, Hobbes was clear that prudence, which is the wisdom acquired through experience, cannot produce truth.<sup>288</sup> Prudence can never result in certainty. Sensation alone leads to prudence; sensation cannot make universal conclusions because it is only knowledge of fact.<sup>289</sup> A prudent man may guess that an event will happen, but can never be certain that it will. Since words are arbitrarily imposed on sensation, how is truth decided? What for Hobbes is the determining ground on which we declare that one name is comprehended in another? One would assume that, since Hobbes held that all knowledge begins with sensation, so he would have held that our experience of the world would determine why one name is comprehended in another. But Hobbes did not do this. Instead, Hobbes referred to the arbitrary power individuals have to impose or attach names to particular conceptions derived from sensation; these names are assigned due to man's fiat and not according to some independently established truth which existed prior to the imposition of names themselves.<sup>290</sup>

Hobbes embraced a conventionalist theory of truth: 1) truth depends on human convention; and 2) a true proposition does not describe some fact about the world, but simply reveals

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<sup>286</sup> Wright 2006 p 257.

<sup>287</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iv, 11-12, C p 18-19; Hobbes 1655 (1656) *De Corpore* Part I 3.7 EW I p 36-37; Mintz 1964 p 24; Miller 1999 p 151-152; Cromartie 2008 p 865-866.

<sup>288</sup> Hobbes 1640 (1650-1651) *Human Nature* Ch iv, 10 EW IV p 17-18; Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I ch.iii, 7-10, C p 13-14; Hobbes held that animals can be prudent (Hobbes 1640 (1650-1651) *Human Nature* Ch vi, 4 EW IV p 29; Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iii, 9, C p 14).

<sup>289</sup> Hobbes 1640 (1650-1651) *Human Nature* Ch iv, 10 EW IV p 18; Copleston 1959 p 17; Miller 1999 p 159.

<sup>290</sup> Martinich 1997 p 97; Miller 1999 p 157.

something about the way we use words.<sup>291</sup> Given that truth is purely linguistic, what is the relationship between truth and reality for Hobbes? As Miller has noted, Hobbes rejected the use of experience to assess truth claims:

Under Hobbes's regime a witness who sees a ghost and claims to have seen a man may be said to have spoken a falsehood. This claim of falsehood, however cannot be grounded in an empirical assertion.<sup>292</sup>

Hobbes assigned truth and falsity to propositions and not to the entities spoken about, hence only the witness's statement can be submitted to the test of truth or falsehood. Given that truth is logical not ontological, what effect does this have on his account of scientific truth? Hobbes maintained that scientific truths are not substantive: scientific truths do not give information about the world, but they explain the meaning of words.<sup>293</sup>

Hobbes held that science is acquired through correct reasoning.<sup>294</sup> But how did Hobbes understand how correct reasoning is determined? Imagine a dispute between two scientists, such as what 6 multiplied by 6 is. Let us call them Mr A and Mr B. Mr A believes that the correct answer is 36, while Mr B believes that the answer is 30. Each scientist believes that they have reasoned correctly but have arrived at different answers. How did Hobbes believe that this dispute should be resolved? According to the *Leviathan*:

...when there is a controversy in an account, the parties must by their own accord set up for right reason the reason of some arbitrator or judge to whose sentence they will both stand, or their controversy must either come to blows or be undecided, for want of a right reason constituted by nature, so it is also in all debates of what kind soever.<sup>295</sup>

Reason cannot be used to solve such disputes because it is the testimony of reason itself which is the issue; instead, Hobbes held that disputes of reason could only be solved by appealing to an authority.<sup>296</sup> This authority, of course, is the sovereign. Hobbes' solution to

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<sup>291</sup> Finn 2007 p 30-31; Gillespie 2009 p 209; p 228.

<sup>292</sup> Miller 1999 p 157.

<sup>293</sup> Martinich 1997 p 95; p 98.

<sup>294</sup> Martinich 1997 p 87-88.

<sup>295</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch v, 3, C p 23.

<sup>296</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch v, 3, C p 23; Martinich 1997 p 88.



disputes over what constitutes right reason was conventionalism.<sup>297</sup> For Hobbes, scientists involved in a dispute must take as “right reason” whatever the sovereign authority or his deputies say that it is. When Mr A and Mrs B turn to the sovereign to settle their disputes, they must take whatever solution the sovereign decrees; they must accept whatever the sovereign decrees “right reason” to be – even if this means the answer is something completely different, like 42. As Santi noted in regards to Hobbes’ use of the term “Right Reason”:

...Hobbes rejects the idea of a “right reason constituted by nature” to be found “*in rerum natura*”; the only universal right reason is not natural but artificial: it is the reason of the State, expressed and made known through the law.<sup>298</sup>

For Hobbes, science cannot exist without a sovereign; science cannot exist in the state of nature.<sup>299</sup>

Hobbes, in *De Corpore*, held that the end and scope of philosophy was practical. Despite this, he does not depict science as apodictic: science only has hypothetical truth; there is no guarantee that the picture that science paints of the world corresponds to reality.<sup>300</sup> According to McIntyre, the ultimate descriptive accuracy of scientific hypotheses or models is irrelevant to the aims of natural science.<sup>301</sup> And as Jesseph has noted, natural science, for Hobbes, amounts to a systematic attempt to “save the phenomena” with hypotheses detailing their causes; the natural scientist can aspire to nothing more than plausible opinions.

But how to reconcile the tension between Hobbes’ position that philosophy/science does not inform us of the world and his position that philosophy should have a practical purpose, that philosophy should produce effects in the world? I agree with Miller’s suggestion that, for Hobbes, scientific definitions do not need to be empirically true but merely describe how things could be generated. Similarly, McIntyre holds that the ultimate descriptive accuracy of scientific hypotheses or models is irrelevant to the aims of natural science because, for

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<sup>297</sup> Martinich 1997 p 88.

<sup>298</sup> Santi 2017 p 61; for more on Hobbes’ approach to right reason see Greene 2015.

<sup>299</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch xiii, 9, C p 76.

<sup>300</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part I 1.6 EW I p 7; Gillespie 2009 p 231-234.

<sup>301</sup> McIntyre 2016 p 567-568.

Hobbes, the use of hypotheses in natural science is only “to show us the possibility of some production or generation” (*De Corpore* Part IV 25.1 (EW I p 388)). And as Gillespie puts it:

It is not crucial that we know the actual chains that govern the motions of matter. For science to achieve its goal we need only hypothetical truth. The hypothetical picture that we construct need not correspond to the actual causal pathways by which events occur; it need only explain how to produce or prevents effects.<sup>302</sup>

Hobbes defined the philosophical/scientific method in his *De Corpore* as “...*the shortest way of finding out effects by their known causes, or of causes by their known effects.*”<sup>303</sup> Given this definition, it would seem that, for Hobbes, the shortest way of finding out effects by their known causes or of causes by their known effects is simply the statement “God does it”. And given the linguistic nature of Hobbes’ approach to science, it seems that this statement provides just as much ontological information as any other scientific definition.

### 3.5 The Purpose of God-Talk

Hobbes consistently held that we cannot have a conception of something infinite: see, for example, *Citizen* Ch xv.14 EW II p 214-15, *Leviathan* Part I Ch iii, 12, C p 15, *De Corpore* Part II 7.12 EW I p 100 or Part IV XXVI.1 EW I p 411. For Hobbes, when we use the word “infinite” we express nothing other than our incapacity to conceive of something.<sup>304</sup> Since Hobbes also held that God is infinite, what was expressed by the word “God”? In the *Leviathan* Hobbes tells us that

...therefore the name of *God* is used, not to make us conceive of him (for he is *incomprehensible*, and his greatness and power are unconceivable), but that we may honour him.<sup>305</sup>

The *Leviathan* was clear that the purpose of speech was to transfer our thoughts into words and that words have two purposes: remembrance and communication.<sup>306</sup> But if words are meant to express our thoughts about something, what effect does this have on Hobbes’ God-writings; given that he held that we have no idea of God? Curley maintains that because Hobbes held that God is insensible he could not meaningfully talk about God; despite this,

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<sup>302</sup> Gillespie 2009 p 232.

<sup>303</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part I 1.6 EW I p 66.

<sup>304</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iii, 12, C p 15; Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part II 7.11 EW I p 98-99.

<sup>305</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iii, 12, C p 15.

<sup>306</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iv, 3, C p 16-17.

Curley acknowledges that we should understand Hobbes' God-writings as intending to honour God.<sup>307</sup> But this does not appear to be the case. Hobbes seems to have spoken meaningfully about God in two ways: 1) asserting God's existence; and 2) to honour or signify our incapacity before God.

In the *Leviathan*, Hobbes claimed that, bar God's existence, theological utterances do not signify any truth about God:

For the nature of God is incomprehensible; that is to say, we understand nothing of *what he is*, but only *that he is*; and therefore, the attributes we give him are not to tell one another *what he is*, nor to signify our opinion of his nature, but our desire to honour him with such names as we conceive most honourable amongst themselves.<sup>308</sup>

Hobbes adopted an expressivist interpretation in relation to talk about divine attributes; he consistently writes that attributes given to God are not intended to represent or describe God and instead either signify our incapacity before God or are intended to express our reverence towards God.<sup>309</sup> It should also be noted that Hobbes' view that analogous talk about God was not useful in describing God's nature is characteristic of many writers in the Protestant tradition.<sup>310</sup> For Hobbes, religious language is not intended to make true or false claims about God; instead, it is intended to worship God.<sup>311</sup>

Hobbes repeatedly claimed that "God exists" and "God is a substance" are equivalent. For example, in the 1668 (1680) *Historical Narration* Hobbes states that:

The first principle of religion in all nations, is, *that God is*, that is to say, that God really is something, and not a mere fancy; but that which is really something, is considerable alone by itself, as being *somewhere*. In which sense a man is a thing

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<sup>307</sup> Curley 1994 *Leviathan* Introduction p xii.

<sup>308</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part III Ch xxxiv, 4, C p 263; See also Hobbes 1650-1651 (1640) *Human Nature* Ch XI.2 EW IV p 59; Mori 2012 p 206; Abizadeh 2017a p 716.

<sup>309</sup> Hobbes 1650-1651 (1640) *Human Nature* Ch XI.13 EW IV p 60; 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iii, 12, C p 15; Part IV Ch xlvi, 15, C p 459; 1662 (1680) *Considerations* EW IV p 426; Johnson 1975 p 116; Glover 1960 p 288; Leijenhorst 2005 p 201; Wright 2006 p 297; Finn 2007 p 110; Stephen 2012 p 148; Holden 2015 p 648.

<sup>310</sup> Wright 2006 footnote 148 p 297-298.

<sup>311</sup> Hepburn 1972 p 99; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 145.

real; for I can consider him *to be*, without considering any other thing *to be* besides him.<sup>312</sup>

Similarly, in the 1668 Latin edition of *Leviathan* Hobbes claimed that:

...when someone says *God is*. For then he wishes to be understood as if he had said *God is something real, not a figment of the mind, a hypostasis, not a phantasm*.<sup>313</sup>

And the 1668 Appendix claimed that:

...the saying, “God is,” means the same thing as that God exists, or, if we resolve the substantive verb into its parts, that He is a being....something real, not merely an appearance, like that which we call a spectre or like the spirits worshipped by the pagans, those which the Apostle Paul calls “nothing”.<sup>314</sup>

As Curley translates the same passage:

Therefore, the expression *God is* signifies the same as God exists, i.e., when the substantive verb is analysed, *God is a being* [*Deus est ens*] or [in Greek] *ho on*, i.e., something real, and not a mere phantasm, such as that which is called a spectre, or like the demons the Gentiles worshipped (which St. Paul calls *nothing* [1 Cor. 8:4]).<sup>315</sup>

Cromartie has suggested that, for Hobbes, “God exists” was not a proposition, but he appears to be mistaken in this regard.<sup>316</sup> This is because Hobbes made clear that he considered “God exists” to be a proposition in the 1668 appendix to his *Leviathan*.<sup>317</sup> According to Leijenhorst, Hobbes’ statements about God – beyond those positing God’s existence – were religious statements; they are non-cognitive statements or pre-formative expressions of our wish to honour God.<sup>318</sup> For Martinich, all of Hobbes’ God talk bar assertions of God’s existence and possibly God’s eternity and omnipotence (*Lev* Part I Ch xii, 6-7, C p 64-65) is honorific.<sup>319</sup> And Mintz maintains that:

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<sup>312</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1680) *Historical Narration* EW IV p 393.

<sup>313</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Ch xlvi, 16, C p 473.

<sup>314</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch i, 4, W p 40.

<sup>315</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch i, 4, C p 499.

<sup>316</sup> Cromartie 2008 p 872.

<sup>317</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch i, 4, W p 40.

<sup>318</sup> Leijenhorst 2005 p 201; p 209.

<sup>319</sup> Martinich 1992 p 95; p 202; 1997 p 56-57; 1999 p 139-140.

God, Hobbes said, exists; he is material; he is the First Cause; he is omnipotent; whatever other attributes he may possess are ineffable, though we describe him in various ways by way of honouring him.<sup>320</sup>

I would suggest that, as motion, Hobbes' God exists, is "material" and is First Cause.

Miller has commented that, in terms of 'knowledge' of God, Hobbes maintains that "...He is omnipotent, that He is material, and that His dictates always agree with the dictates of right reason."<sup>321</sup> I would suggest that, as motion, Hobbes' God is omnipotent, material and right reason is an outflow of God's activity. As Finn has noted, in reference to *Leviathan* Part II Ch XXXI, 28, C p 240, for Hobbes God is not finite, not capable of death, and not comprehensible.<sup>322</sup> This characterisation applies equally to Hobbes' understanding of motion: for Hobbes, motion is not finite, not capable of death and is not comprehensible.

According to Holden (2015), Hobbes held that are some truth-apt descriptions of the divine nature:

....we can say quite literally that the being that we call "God" is (i) the cause of the humanly imaginable system of causes, and (ii) powerful enough to deserve human worship.<sup>323</sup>

Once again, I maintain that these statements are equally true for Hobbes' account of motion: 1) motion is the cause of the humanly imaginable system of causes; and 2) motion is powerful enough to deserve human worship.

### **3. 6 Reconciling Inconsistencies in Hobbes' God-Talk**

As Leijenhorst has noted, Hobbes, in the *Leviathan* (Part IV Ch xlvi, 15, C p 458-459), preferred to call God an incomprehensible substance rather than an incorporeal substance, but he allowed for the use of incorporeal so long as it was used as an attempt to honour God.<sup>324</sup> In his writings before the 1660s, Hobbes held it was possible to call God incorporeal

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<sup>320</sup> Mintz 1962 p 41.

<sup>321</sup> Miller 1999 p 159.

<sup>322</sup> Finn 2007 p 110.

<sup>323</sup> Holden 2015 p 661.

<sup>324</sup> Leijenhorst 2005 p 207.

as long as the term was used piously, but by the 1660s he rejected even pious use of the term.<sup>325</sup> For Abizadeh and Cromartie, all of Hobbes' God writings, including his corporeal God writings, were oblations; when Hobbes called God corporeal he was signifying his will to honour God by conceiving that God exists and recognizing that it is not possible to conceive that something exists without conceiving of it as bodily.<sup>326</sup> I disagree with this claim, however: as Wright suggests, "[s]aying that God is corporeal seems to attribute a characteristic to God that is not negative but descriptive of His nature."<sup>327</sup>

For Abizadeh, because Hobbes held that God is incomprehensible, it does not matter whether we call God incorporeal or corporeal – because both are just attempts to honour God. But Hobbes preferred to call God incomprehensible rather than 'incorporeal', which indicates non-existence, or 'corporeal', which indicates limitedness.<sup>328</sup> I agree with Leijenhorst that because of Hobbes' dual use of language he can simultaneously claim that God is corporeal in philosophical language and incorporeal in religious language.<sup>329</sup>

Hobbes in his 1668 (1682) *Answer* was unclear if God was part of the universe or the whole universe:

I mean by the universe, the aggregate of all things that have being in themselves; and so do all men else. And because God has a being, it follows that he is either the whole universe, or part of it.<sup>330</sup>

I agree with Leijenhorst that taking into account Hobbes' 1651 *Leviathan* (Part IV Ch xlvi, 15, C p 458-459), as well as the *Answer*, Hobbes' God is not the whole universe but part of it.<sup>331</sup> This position is also supported by Hobbes' 1678 *DP* (Ch. II EW VII p 89), in which he also distinguished between God and extension.

Despite stating that we should not attribute parts to God, in his 1668 (1682) *Answer* (EW IV p 266), Hobbes went on to do precisely this and attribute parts to God – inseparable parts,

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<sup>325</sup> According to Leijenhorst (2005) this was because Hobbes in his later writings took a stricter position in regards to the use of non-biblical vocabulary to honour God (p 207-208; p 210).

<sup>326</sup> Abizadeh 2017a p 717-718; p 731-732; Cromartie 2008 p 872; p 875.

<sup>327</sup> Wright 2006 p 256.

<sup>328</sup> Abizadeh 2017b p 919-920.

<sup>329</sup> Leijenhorst 2005 p 209.

<sup>330</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 349.

<sup>331</sup> Leijenhorst 2005 p 212.

but parts nevertheless (EW IV p 302-303). According to Gorham, Hobbes in his *Answer* (EW IV p 302-303) was willing to accept the implication that God has conceptually distinct parts which are not physically divisible.<sup>332</sup> In the 1651 *Leviathan* (Part I ch.iii, 12, C p 15) and his 1656 (1655) and *De Corpore* (Part II 7.12 EW I p 99-100), Hobbes claimed that we have no idea of anything infinite because whatever we imagine is finite; for Hobbes, nothing infinite can truly be said to be either whole or part. I agree with Leijenhorst that, taking into account Hobbes' point in his *De Corpore* (Part II 7.12 EW I p 99-100) – namely, that the notion of whole and part cannot meaningfully be applied to infinite entities – solves the apparent contradiction between his *Leviathan* (xlvi.15) and *Answer* (EW IV p 349): when Hobbes stated that God was “part” of the universe he was speaking religiously;<sup>333</sup> and this seems to be equally valid for Hobbes' attribution and denial of parts in regards to God.

Hobbes' *Answer* (EW IV p 296) criticised Bramhall's position that God is “wholly where, and wholly there, and wholly every where” because “it implies also the whole world is also in the whole God, and in every part of God”, and that it makes God the soul of the world. Yet despite Hobbes' criticism of Bramhall's position, it does not appear to be very different from his own. In his contemporary Latin edition of *Leviathan*, Hobbes dropped the censure against holding that God is the soul of the world, and in its appendix he indicated that the world is inside of God. In his 1678 *DP* (Ch. II EW VII p 89), he also indicated that God is inside the world and the world is inside of God – because a void is inconsistent with God's presence throughout the plenum of extension. Holden's suggests that, for Hobbes, we must not “say” something about God, as this would lead us to speak less reverently than we might, but this does not mean that the something in question is not true.<sup>334</sup> This same point is valid, I would suggest, regarding Hobbes holding that God is “inside” the world and his rejection of the same notion; we should not say that God is “inside” of the world or that the world is “inside” God – despite both being true.

There are also tensions in Hobbes' list of honorific attributes in his 1650 (1647) *Citizen* and 1651 *Leviathan* – for example, that is dishonourable to attribute motion and rest to God.<sup>335</sup> But how could Hobbes have held that attributing neither motion nor rest to God is

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<sup>332</sup> Gorham 2013a p 247.

<sup>333</sup> Leijenhorst 2005 p 212-213.

<sup>334</sup> Holden 2015 p 665.

<sup>335</sup> Hobbes 1650 (1647) *Citizen* Ch XV.14 EW II p 213-216; Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part II Ch xxxi, 14-28, C p 239-240.

honourable? I agree with Holden that the contradictions within Hobbes' God-talk can be reconciled when we recall that, for Hobbes, language that honours God in one context may not honour God in another.<sup>336</sup> As Martinich notes, this is the result of Hobbes' approach to religious language: "Because religious language is honorific and not descriptive, it is not the case that every property that is true of God will be appropriately applied to him."<sup>337</sup> So, despite conceiving of God as being in motion, Hobbes did not consider God "is in motion" an honourable predicate – even though it was true! Similarly, and as Abizadeh has noted, it is hard to square the idea that Hobbes held that God is corporeal while holding that it is dishonourable to attribute to God the characteristics of corporeality.<sup>338</sup> It seems that, despite holding that it is a true predicate that God is corporeal, Hobbes did not hold that it was honourable to attribute to God corporeal characteristics. And, as Holden has noted, in reference to Hobbes' *Citizen* (Ch xv.14 EW II p 213-214) and *Leviathan* (Part II Ch xxxi, 15, C p 239), we must not "say" that the world is eternal or that God is part of the world, because we would speak less reverently than we should. Nonetheless, this prohibition does not mean that the world is not in fact eternal or that God is not in fact part of the world.

Hobbes changed his 1668 Latin edition from "to say the world was not created, but eternal, (seeing that which is eternal has no cause) is to deny there is a God" to "Those who say that the world is eternal do not honour God as much as they can; nor do those who deny that God has any care for human affairs" (C p 239)). This makes clear that Hobbes' controlling concern was the expression of a will to honour God, rather than an accurate representation or the expression of true propositions. As Holden has suggested, this solves the problem of accounting for how Hobbes could say that God is a corporeal body (1668 Appendix Ch iii, 6, C p 540), that the world is the system of all bodies (*Lev* Part IV Ch. xlvi, 15, C p 459), while also holding that God is not a part of the world (*Citizen* xv.14 EW II p 213-214) and *Leviathan* (Part II Ch xxxi, 15, C p 239).<sup>339</sup> Martinich argues that Hobbes' position in regards to language about God being true yet not honorable has a parallel in Pre-Vatican II Roman Catholic theology, according to which some true things were not to be asserted because they were "offensive to pious ears".<sup>340</sup> It is ironic that, for all of his criticism and

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<sup>336</sup> Holden 2015 p 658-659.

<sup>337</sup> Martinich 1999 p 140.

<sup>338</sup> Abizadeh 2017b p 919-920.

<sup>339</sup> Holden 2015 footnote 22 p 665.

<sup>340</sup> Martinich 1999 p 140.



repudiation of Catholicism, Hobbes appears to have ended up with a position in regards to God-talk that is not dissimilar to Pre-Vatican II Roman Catholic theology.

### 3.7 God's Role: Contradictory Statements?

As previously mentioned Hobbes excluded God from the subject matter of philosophy and science. Jesseph suggests that Hobbes allotted no role for God in his system.<sup>341</sup> But, as we have seen, Hobbes explicitly uses God within his account of natural science. In *De Corpore*, for example, Hobbes writes:

...the Omnipotent Creator of the world can actually from a part of any thing take another part, as far as we by our understanding can conceive the same to be divisible. Wherefore there is no impossible smallness of bodies.<sup>342</sup>

As Gorham has noted, Hobbes used theological premises within the physics of his *De Corpore* because he held that “although we do not comprehend God, we can know from his infinite power which physical explanations are plausible.”<sup>343</sup> One might wonder why Hobbes’ used God to determine the plausibility of natural hypotheses when he excluded God from science. But as Sorrell has noted, when Hobbes denied that something is a science, he was not necessarily denying that it was a field of knowledge, nor did he deny that a non-science could promote science.<sup>344</sup> An example of this can be seen in Hobbes’ claim in his *De Corpore* that history, despite not being scientific, was “useful (nay necessary) to philosophy”.<sup>345</sup>

It seems that the same position is true for Hobbes’ use of God in philosophy. God as a standard for plausibility appears to have been necessary for Hobbes’ natural philosophy. Aside from using God to underpin the conceivability of natural hypotheses, Hobbes also relied upon God to account for the existence of science. In the *Leviathan* and *De Corpore* he treated God as the original creator of language.<sup>346</sup> Since Hobbes held that language is necessary for science, this suggests that God is responsible for science. The *Leviathan* held that geometry “...is the only science that it hath pleased God hitherto to bestow on

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<sup>341</sup> Jesseph 2006a p 139.

<sup>342</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 27.1 EW I p 446.

<sup>343</sup> Gorham 2013a p 249.

<sup>344</sup> Sorrell 2006 p 47.

<sup>345</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part I 1.8 EW I p 10.

<sup>346</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iv, 2, C p 16; Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part I 2.4 EW I p 16; Höffe (translated by Walker) 2016 p 94.

mankind”.<sup>347</sup> So, for Hobbes, God is responsible for words and the method of science. Despite Hobbes’ explicit exclusion of God from science, we consistently find him relying upon God in different ways within his account of science. And as Cromartie has noted, Hobbes’ *DP* offered a scientific theory that postulated God’s own intervention in the creation of new life.<sup>348</sup>

Hobbes was clear that God cannot and should not be an object of scientific investigation.<sup>349</sup> In *De Corpore*, Part I 1.8 EW I p 10, he excluded theology from philosophy because there is nothing to either divide nor compound, nor any generation to be conceived in God. Yet later in the *De Corpore* Hobbes involved God in his account of natural events. Perhaps Hobbes excluded God from philosophy because philosophy is concerned with bodies in motion and not with motion itself. Perhaps Hobbes excluded God from philosophy because philosophy studies the *effects* of motion which are manifested in extension, not with motion itself. Perhaps, since motion has always existed, there is no generative process underpinning it, and so we cannot study it; but accidents are generated within extension by the effects of motion, and so we can study them.

According to Vieira:

...many of the “truths” of theology were not, in Hobbes’s own admission, amenable to scientific inquiry. They belonged to the domain of the unknown, and all one could do was to offer their most plausible rendering or interpretation in the light of that which we could actually know to be true.<sup>350</sup>

But as has been established, given the unknowableness of the natural world, Hobbes’ account of science is also merely the most plausible suggestion of what we could actually know to be true. With this in mind I will turn to the contemporary context for Hobbes’ writings.

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<sup>347</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iv, 12, C p 19.

<sup>348</sup> Cromartie 2008 p 870.

<sup>349</sup> Martinich 1997 p 58.

<sup>350</sup> Vieira 2015 p 287.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### HOBBS IN COMPARISON TO MORE AND CUDWORTH'S SYSTEMS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter will contextualize Hobbes' corporeal God writings and his account of diversity with that of More's and Cudworth's respective approaches. It will compare and contrast Hobbes' account of existence and activity alongside a passive understanding of bodies with More's understanding of these issues. It appears that Hobbes' corporeal God performs the same role as spirits in More's system and shares the principle of heterogeneity. Hobbes and More both attributed inseparable parts to God. While both Hobbes and More held that existence is tied to extension they disagreed on whether the universe was a plenum or not. Hobbes, unlike More, held that the universe was a plenum. It appears that whereas More implicitly held that God is absolute space, Hobbes implicitly held that God is motion. There is a reverse dynamic in the relationship between Hobbes' corporeal God and extension and More's God and extension. Whereas More's God provides a receptacle in which bodies can move, extension provides a receptacle in which Hobbes' corporeal God can manifest the appearance of movement. Hobbes' corporeal God and More's spirit of nature have numerous similarities bar the fact that Hobbes' God directly exercises its power and acts with consciousness, while More's God indirectly exercises its power through an intermediary agent which acts without consciousness.

I will then compare and contrast Hobbes' account of existence and activity alongside a passive understanding of bodies with Cudworth's understanding of these issues. For both Hobbes and Cudworth the core characteristic of "incorporeals" was self-activity; their dualism can be understood as a dualism of the active and the passive. Following this I will draw out the parallels between the role of Cudworth's plastic nature and Hobbes' corporeal God. Cudworth's plastic nature acts without unconsciousness and is tasked with the day-to-day running of the universe, while Hobbes' corporeal God acts with consciousness is directly responsible for the running of the universe. I will then draw out the parallels between Hobbes' implicit reliance upon God to account for the mind and mental activities and Cudworth's position that human minds are copies of God's mind. I will argue that Hobbes, like Cudworth, was an atomist theist who relied upon an "incorporeal substance", to account for the diversity of the natural world and individuals. But whereas Cudworth relied upon numerous "incorporeal substances", Hobbes relied upon a single - "incorporeal

substance” his corporeal God. Finally I will compare and contrast Hobbes’ account of God’s presence and role in his system with the concept of plastic powers which was commonly embraced in the 17<sup>th</sup>C.

#### 4.2 More on Spirits and Bodies

More in his 1659 (1662) *Immortality* rejected the view that spirits have no dimensions and that extension belongs exclusively to bodies:

For it is not the Characteristicall of a *Body* to have *dimensions*, but to be *Impenetrable*. All Substance has *Dimensions*, that is, Length, Breadth, and Depth: but all has not *Impenetrability*.<sup>351</sup>

According to his implicit and explicit corporeal God writings, Hobbes seems to have held, like More, that all substances have dimensions and that not all substances are bodies. For Hobbes, motion is not a body yet it exists. More in *Immortality* outlined his understanding of the immediate properties of a spirit: 1) penetrability and indiscerptibility; 2) spissitude, which is the ability of a spirit to contract into less space than it sometimes occupies; and 3) self-activity, which is communicated to matter.<sup>352</sup> There are a number of parallels between More’s explicit approach and Hobbes’ implicit approach. Hobbes’ God, like More’s spirits, possesses penetrability, indiscerptibility and self-activity; Hobbes also held that bodies are impenetrable. The problem of accounting for the presence of spirits alongside impenetrable bodies is present in More’s writings, as it is in Hobbes’: More held that spirits (like Hobbes’ corporeal God) are capable of penetrating bodies, despite also holding that bodies are impenetrable. For both More and Hobbes the activity present in matter belongs to an independently existing, extended, active substance. In Hobbes’ case this was God, while in More’s case this was spirit. Hobbes’ God, unlike More’s spirits, appears not to possess spissitude. But Hobbes’ God does seem to have a quality similar to spissitude, given that, through its activity, it manifests the appearance of a body getting larger or smaller when ‘in fact’ all that is happening is extension is being affected differently by motion. The activity of Hobbes’ God produces the appearance of contraction and dilation within extension. But the extension that appears to undergo this process does not contract nor dilate. Change, for Hobbes, does not involve the spatial movement of change. Instead, Hobbes’ corporeal God changes itself to give the appearance of change within extension.

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<sup>351</sup> More 1659 (1662) *Immortality* Bk.1, Ch X.4 p 41.

<sup>352</sup> More 1659 (1662) *Immortality* Bk.1, Ch II.11 p 19-20; Bk.1, Ch VII.1 p 31.

More held that the soul possess “heterogeneity”, through which different parts of the soul exist in different parts of the body.<sup>353</sup> Spirits do not possess the same powers and qualities throughout the region of space that they extend within in.<sup>354</sup> This entails that different parts of the soul are responsible for different bodily characteristics. In essence, spirits as “heterogeneous” suggest that the rational part of the soul is in the head. As previously established, Hobbes’ corporeal God also seems to possess “heterogeneity”: despite Hobbes holding that his God is present throughout the plenum of extension, he did not hold that it is present in the same manner throughout the plenum of extension. The heterogeneous nature of God appears to be how Hobbes – despite insisting that all bodies are in motion – could hold that not all bodies are alive, sensitive or rational. Hobbes held that both a rock and a human are merely extension in motion: a human manifests living, sensitive and rational qualities, while the rock merely manifests sensitive qualities. It seems that, due to the heterogeneous nature of Hobbes’ corporeal God, the extension involved manifests different qualities. If Hobbes’ God was holomerically present throughout the plenum of extension, there would be no diversity. So if Hobbes’ God possessed the quality of redness then the universe would manifest nothing more than redness. But of course the universe possesses diversity – so Hobbes’ God must possess heterogeneity which, in turn, is then manifested in extension.

Taking into consideration More’s understanding of bodies and spirits, let us now imagine what this entails for the conception of a human being. A human is comprised of two extended substances: a body which is extended and impenetrable and a spirit which is extended, heterogeneous and possesses penetrability, indiscernibility, spissitude and self-activity (which is communicated to matter). Basically, for More, a human is comprised of two human-shaped substances, one bodily and the other spiritual. The different parts of the apparition correspond to the different parts of the human-shaped piece of matter. Despite being comprised of different substances, they are identical images of one another. In comparison, Hobbes’ (implicit) position is that a human is comprised of two human-shaped substances, one bodily and the other which is an aspect of the corporeal God. If we could bifurcate Hobbes’ human into its two respective substances, on the one side we have a human-shaped piece of extension and on the other we have the corporeal God in the form of a human being. Despite being comprised of different substances they are identical images of

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<sup>353</sup> More 1659 (1662) *Immortality* Bk.III, Ch II, 3-4 p152.

<sup>354</sup> Blank 2013 p 858.

one another. It seems that, bar the terminology used (“corporeal God” versus “spirit”), the core ideas in More’s explicit position and Hobbes’ implicit position are the same.

In his 1668 *Divine Dialogues*, More reiterated his position that everything which exists possesses extension, and that not everything which is extended is matter, by pointing to motion: “extension is intrinsic to motion, and yet motion is not matter.”<sup>355</sup> As we have seen, Hobbes also seems to have held that motion is extended yet is not matter: he distinguished between the existence of bodies and motion. According to More, the essential properties of matter are self-disunity, self-impenetrability and self-inactivity: he held that matter does not have the ability to hold itself together, is impenetrable and requires an external cause to move it and is incapable of modifying the motion that it receives.<sup>356</sup> Hobbes similarly appears to have held that matter is incapable of binding itself together, is impenetrable, possesses no activity, requires an external cause to move it and is incapable of modifying the motion that it receives, because it is merely extended. In regards to More’s position that matter possesses disunity, Hobbes’ understanding of matter also appears to have a similar but different quality. For Hobbes, matter does not possess disunity in the same way that More understood disunity, but it does seem to possess its own form of disunity. Bearing in mind More’s and Hobbes’ respective positions, we could imagine an apple. For both More and Hobbes, the unity which is responsible for the apple’s identity is due to the presence of an active extended substance affecting matter. Now let us separate the active substance from the apple. For More, once the active substance is removed from the apple, the matter which comprises the apple is reduced to a sawdust-like state, because the matter involved is incapable of holding itself together. Matter is reduced to into being “congeries” of mere physical monads, into a mere jumble of little particles. But for Hobbes, once the active substance is removed from the apple, the matter which comprises the apple is reduced to an undifferentiated lump of extension. So while Hobbes’ matter is not disunified in the same way as More’s matter, it still has its own form of disunity.

More in his *Divine Dialogues* claimed that the characteristics of spirits are self-unity, self-activity and self-penetrability; a spirit holds itself together because of its own indiscerptible nature.<sup>357</sup> Hobbes similarly appears to have held that his God possesses self-unity, self-

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<sup>355</sup> More 1668 *Divine Dialogues* XXV p 77.

<sup>356</sup> More 1668 *Divine Dialogues* XXIX p 95-96; p 98.

<sup>357</sup> More 1668 *Divine Dialogues* XXIX p 99.

activity and self-penetrability: God as motion is responsible for the appearance of individuality in the plenum of extension and, as motion, is active and can penetrate extension. More in his *Divine Dialogues* characterized the activity of self-active spirits in the following way:

I understand an active power in a spirit, whereby it either modifies itself according to its own nature, or moves the matter regularly according to some certain modification it impresses upon it, uniting the physical monads into particles of such magnitude and figure, and guiding them in such motions as answer the end of the spiritual agent, either conceived by it or incorporated into it. Whence there appears, as was said, the reason why both disunity and inactivity should belong to matter.<sup>358</sup>

As previously established, Hobbes' corporeal God performed a similar function to More's spirits. Hobbes' God affects extension by modifying its own active nature. The activity of Hobbes' God is responsible for the appearance of diversity within extension, including the appearance of particular magnitudes and figures in bodies.

#### 4.3 More's God in the Natural World

While More and Hobbes defined existence in terms of extension, they disagreed over the nature of the universe. Hobbes thought that the universe was a plenum; More did not. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> appendix to his 1662 *Antidote*, More claimed that:

...if after the removal of *corporeal Matter* out of the world, there will be still *Space* and *Distance* in which this very Matter, while it was there, was also conceived to lye, and this *distant Space* cannot but be something, and yet not corporeal, because neither impenetrable nor tangible; it must of necessity be a Substance Incorporeal necessarily and eternally existent to it self: which the clearer *Idea* of a *Being absolutely perfect* will more fully and punctually inform us to be the *Self-Subsisting God*.<sup>359</sup>

More asserted that a plenitude of matter is logically impossible: although we can imagine a world empty of matter, we cannot think away the idea of space.<sup>360</sup> For More, space is ontologically superior to bodies, given that it was not possible to conceive of a body without

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<sup>358</sup> More 1668 *Divine Dialogues* XXX p 103.

<sup>359</sup> More 1662 3<sup>rd</sup> Appendix to *Antidote* Ch VIII.6 p 165.

<sup>360</sup> Minz 1962 p 91.

also conceiving the portion of real space which constitutes is place.<sup>361</sup> More held that space is a kind of receptacle in which bodies can move.<sup>362</sup> For him, space is real and extended yet is non-material; the penetrability of space is due to its incorporeality.<sup>363</sup> Space existed independently of bodies: space and place cannot be identified with matter, otherwise movement would be impossible. As previously established, Hobbes' identification of space, place and extension alongside the universe as a plenum appears to make the local motion of bodies impossible. The appearance of the local motion of bodies seems to be, for Hobbes, an illusion manifested by the activity of a corporeal God within extension.

More rejected the "nullibist" understanding of God being nowhere and the "holenmerist" view of the scholastics that God is wholly in every place.<sup>364</sup> In his 1668 *Divine Dialogues*, More held that while God and spirits are extended, they are physically indivisible but are intellectually divisible.<sup>365</sup> More held that God is genuinely extended throughout absolute space: God is located at every place yet is entirely without division;<sup>366</sup> even if God's extension is logically divisible into parts, it does not follow that God can be physically divided into these parts.<sup>367</sup> Hobbes similarly held that God is physically indivisible but logically divisible into parts in his 1668 (1682) *Answer*.<sup>368</sup> In his *Divine Dialogue*, More held that the nature of space is similar to God's nature: the former, he stated, was

...a very able champion for the truth of immaterial beings, and therefore art not far off from the right apprehension of the nature of God. Of whole essence I must confess I have always been prone to think this subtil extension (which a man cannot dis-imagine but must needs be) to be a more obscure shadow or adumbration, or to be a more general and confused apprehension of the *Divine Amplitude*. For this will be necessarily, tho' all matter were annihilated out of the world. Nay indeed this is antecedent to all matter, forasmuch as no matter nor any being else can be conceived to be but in this. In this are all things necessarily apprehended *to live and move and have their being*.<sup>369</sup>

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<sup>361</sup> Reid 2007 p 87-88.

<sup>362</sup> Mintz 1962 p 90; Boylan 1980 p 399.

<sup>363</sup> Jammer 1954 p 41-43; Mintz 1962 p 90.

<sup>364</sup> Slowik 2019 p 235.

<sup>365</sup> More 1668 *Divine Dialogues* XXIX p 100-101; Reid 2007 p 100; Blank 2013 p 857-858,

<sup>366</sup> Gorham 2009 p 868.

<sup>367</sup> Gorham 2009 p 868.

<sup>368</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 302-303.

<sup>369</sup> More 1668 *Divine Dialogues* XXVII p 84-85.



There is disagreement within scholarship over whether More identified space with God or merely held that space was analogous to God's being.<sup>370</sup> But it is generally agreed that, for More, absolute space is a kind of shadow or symbol of God's presence and immensity: absolute space relates to God's being, not to God's power or activity.<sup>371</sup> As previously established, for Hobbes, space only exists subjectively – so he could not identify his corporeal God with space (given that it lacks independent existence). Hobbes instead identified his corporeal God with motion. By contrast, More could identify God with space because he believed that space exists independently to bodies.

Within both systems, God is identified with a substance which is extended and exists inseparately to bodies, yet has a distinct existence to bodies. To illustrate this point, imagine More's God and Hobbes' God as an open can of paint and a body as a rock. Now drop the rock into the paint can. The rock is surrounded on all sides by the paint and the can, yet the rock continues to exist independently to the paint and can. Despite bodies for both More and Hobbes being thoroughly surrounded by God (space/motion), both God and bodies retain their own existences relative to one another. For More, space relates to God's being but not to God's power or activity. For Hobbes, by contrast, motion embodies God's being, power and activity. It appears, then, that there is a reverse dynamic in the relationship between a) Hobbes' corporeal God and extension and b) More's God and extension. Whereas More's God provides a receptacle in which bodies can move, extension provides a receptacle in which Hobbes' corporeal God can manifest the appearance of movement. Or to put it another way: for More bodies exist "inside" of God, but for Hobbes God exists 'inside' extension. According to Reid, More interpreted *Acts* 17:28 in an extremely literal sense, particularly in his later writings:

As far as More was concerned, we could be understood to "live, and move, and have our being" in God *locally*, to the extent that the various regions of His own amplitude were what constituted the internal places of His creatures.<sup>372</sup>

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<sup>370</sup> For Jammer (1954 p 45) More identified space with God, while for Reid (2007 p 88) More held that space is an attribute of God. Mintz (1962 p 91) in contrast holds that More hesitated on the question of whether space was to be absolutely identified with God or merely considered analogous to God's being.

<sup>371</sup> Jammer 1954 p 2; Copleston 1959 p 64; Mintz 1962 p 90-91; Boylan 1980 p 400.

<sup>372</sup> Reid 2007 p 79.

As previously established, there is a similar dynamic within Hobbes' writings. For Hobbes, the corporeal God permeates extension; in a sense, extension is "inside" of the corporeal God and the corporeal God is also "inside" of extension. The activity of Hobbes' corporeal God affecting extension gives the appearance that individuals live, move and have their being inside of God, but what is occurring is that the plenum of extension is being affected differently by motion. According to Mackinnon:

If one combines, as More apparently never thought of combining, this sole distinction between matter and spirit with the argument in the *Enchiridon Metaphysicum* that space itself is immaterial, may indeed be considered as a manifestation of the infinite spirit, the result is a queer hybrid conception, in which matter, though independently real, is dependent for meaning on its relation to spirit.<sup>373</sup>

There is a similar dynamic between Hobbes' corporeal God and extension and Mackinnon's suggested understanding of More's understanding of space and matter – but in reverse. Just as More's concept of matter exists independently to space but is dependent on space for its meaning, Hobbes' corporeal God exists independently to extension but is dependent on extension for its meaning. Without extension, Hobbes' corporeal God would have no way to manifest any of its attributes. While Hobbes' approach to God is certainly unusual, this unorthodoxy should not be assumed to be atheistic – given that we can accept More's approach to God as being sincere, despite it too being highly unusual.

More in his 1659 (1662) *Immortality* argued for the necessity of his "Spirit of Nature":

The Spirit of Nature therefore, according to that notion I have of it, is, A Substance incorporeal, but without Sense and Animadversion, pervading the whole Matter of the Universe, and exercising a Plastical power therein according to the sundry predispositions and occasions in the parts in works upon, raising such Phaenomena in the World, by directing the parts of the Matter and their Motion, as cannot be resolved into mere Mechanical powers.<sup>374</sup>

Let us now compare More's account of his "Spirit of Nature" to Hobbes' corporeal God. Unlike More's Spirit of nature, Hobbes' corporeal God possesses sense. Hobbes' God does

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<sup>373</sup> Mackinnon 1925 p xxi.

<sup>374</sup> More 1659 (1662) *Immortality* Bk. III, Ch. XII, p 193.

not use a plastic power; instead, it expresses its power through motion. And, while Hobbes characterized activity in mechanical language, he appears to have implicitly held a quasi-vitalistic understanding of the power of motion. Yet, despite these differences, there are a number of similarities between their respective concepts. Hobbes' corporeal God, like More's Spirit of Nature, can be called incorporeal as long as the term is used piously and not to entail an unextended substance. Similarly, Hobbes' corporeal God is an extended substance that pervades the whole matter of the universe exercising its power to manifest the natural world within extension. While the idea that Hobbes' corporeal God and extension can co-exist and remain separate might seem like an ironic or veiled expression of atheism, this is not necessarily the case. When we look at the writings of More, not only does a similar position exist, but it is even more incongruous: for More, three extended substances occupy the same place. According to Mintz, the ultimate forces which guide More's universe are non-mechanical, immaterial and divine.<sup>375</sup> Hobbes, despite using mechanistic language, also suggests that the ultimate force, his corporeal God, which guides the universe can also be called immaterial and is divine. So while Hobbes held that the phenomena of nature are the result of the effects of matter in motion, this motion is vitalistic in nature. Hobbes also held that the phenomena of nature are guided by wisdom and by some "immaterial principle" – namely, motion understood as a corporeal God. Gorham characterized More's "Spirit of Nature" as God's lieutenant who works upon matter to produce all the changes we perceive in matter.<sup>376</sup> Hobbes, in contrast, appears to have held that his God requires no 'lieutenant' and instead directly produces the change we perceive in extension. More thought that, without an intrinsic "Spirit of Nature", the Cartesian world of *res extensae* was implausible in scientific terms and was a short step to materialism and atheism.<sup>377</sup> It may very well be possible that Hobbes held that a world without his "corporeal God" operating within it was scientifically implausible and was a short step towards atheism.

In summary, we could say that More's system is comprised of numerous extended substances (God, spirit of nature, individual souls and matter), whereas Hobbes' system is comprised of only two extended substances (God and extension). This seems to be the major difference. For More, individual creatures and the inanimate natural world are a fusion of

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<sup>375</sup> Mintz 1962 p 87-88.

<sup>376</sup> Gorham 2013a p 256-257.

<sup>377</sup> Gorham 2009 p 867-868.

their respective body and spirit, both of which are extended. While Hobbes agreed with More that existence is tied to extension, he held that individual creatures and the inanimate natural world are the result of a partial mixture of extension and his corporeal God. More's universe was comprised of a world soul and millions of individual souls; Hobbes' was comprised of a single soul manifested in millions of different ways. Once Hobbes' ontological approach is placed within its contemporary context, while different to that of More's, it has a number of important parallels.

#### 4.4 Cudworth on Spirits and Bodies

Cudworth offered the following definition of a body in his 1671 (1678) *TIS*:

For Body being nothing but *Antitypous Extension*, or *Resisting Bulk*, nothing but mere *Outside*, *Aliud extra Aliud*, together with *Passive Capability*, hath no *Internal Energy*, *Self-activity*, or *Life* belonging to it; it is not able so much as to *Move it self*, and therefore much less can it *Artificially direct* its own Motion.<sup>378</sup>

In summary, a body consists of nothing but “extended bulk”; a body's whole nature consists of filling up space and can only move because of external pressure (pulling or pushing).<sup>379</sup> As has been established, Hobbes also understood bodies to be nothing more than passive extension which are only capable of movement because of external pressure, pushing or pulling. Cudworth argued that the world cannot consist entirely of bodies because it would be uniform and eternally at rest.<sup>380</sup> He held that in order to account for the motion of bodies we must recognize the existence of incorporeal substances:<sup>381</sup> anything which has its own energy is incorporeal; and the essential characteristic of incorporeal substance was active power.<sup>382</sup> Again, we find an overlap with Hobbes: without the existence of a corporeal God which has its own energy, its own active power, there appears to be no way to account for the existence of motion which in turn accounts for diversity.

Cudworth argued that that is a “Principle of Reason” that nothing can come from nothing nor go to nothing; since bodies are mere extension, bodies are incapable of giving rise to

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<sup>378</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.20 p 163.

<sup>379</sup> Passmore 2013 p 12; p 20-21.

<sup>380</sup> Passmore 2013 p 21.

<sup>381</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch I.38 p 47.

<sup>382</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch I.27 p 27.

life, sensation or thought.<sup>383</sup> Hobbes, too, subscribed to the principle that nothing comes from nothing. They both agreed that since bodies are mere extension they cannot give rise to life, sensation or thought. Cudworth held that there was an entire class of incorporeal substances which were responsible for activity, which he then divided on the basis of whether they act with deliberation (express consciousness), such as the human mind, or without deliberation (unconsciously), such as animal instinct.<sup>384</sup> For Cudworth, different creatures have different souls with different powers. Hobbes, in contrast, appears to have accounted for the existence of creatures by holding that different configurations of extension in motion manifest the appearance of different creatures. It seems that whereas Cudworth had an entire class of incorporeal substances to account for different types of activity, Hobbes had a single active substance – his corporeal God – to account for different types of activity. For Cudworth, corporeal substances act mechanistically by the communication of motion on impact, whereas incorporeal substances act teleologically for the sake of ends, even if they do not themselves understand the ends for which they act.<sup>385</sup> The activity of Hobbes' corporeal God seems like a cross between the activity of Cudworth's corporeal and incorporeal substances: all activity is teleological (because the corporeal God is for responsible it), but the action of the corporeal God is characterized mechanistically.

Cudworth summarized incorporeals thus:

...that there is a Substance Specifically distinct from Body; namely such, as consisteth Not of Parts Separable from one another; and which can Penetrate Body; and Lastly, is Self-Active, and hath an Internal Energy, distinct from that of Locall Motion...But whether this Substance, be altogether Unextended, or Extended otherwise than Body; we shall leave every man to make his own Judgment concerning it.<sup>386</sup>

Let us now compare Cudworth's summary of incorporeal substances to the summary of Hobbes' corporeal God. They both agreed that their "incorporeal" substance exists distinctly from bodies, consists of parts which are not separable and can penetrate bodies, and has an

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<sup>383</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch I.28-29 p 29-36; Mintz 1962 p 96-97; Duncan 2016 p 674-675.

<sup>384</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.16 p 159; Copleston 1950 p 59-60; Allen 2013 p 342-343; Passmore 2013 p 23.

<sup>385</sup> Allen 2013 p 342.

<sup>386</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Preface p xiv.

internal energy distinct from local motion. As previously established, while Hobbes characterized all motion as local motion, he seems to have held that local motion is impossible. This means that despite Hobbes' language, his corporeal God, like Cudworth's incorporeals, has an internal energy distinct from local motion.

Cudworth was unclear if incorporeal substances are unextended or extended in a different way to bodies<sup>387</sup> For Allen, it is likely that Cudworth held that incorporeal substances are unextended.<sup>388</sup> But if Cudworth accepted that incorporeals could be extended, then Hobbes' corporeal God also shares this characteristic. Passmore maintains that Cudworth did not care if an incorporeal was thought to be extended or not because he held that the essence of an incorporeal was self-activity, while the essence of a body is passivity.<sup>389</sup> Irrespective of whether Hobbes and Cudworth agreed or disagreed on whether "incorporeals" are extended, they both agreed that the essence of their respective "incorporeal" substance was self-activity and that the essence of a body is passivity.

Cudworth offered the following summary of what the universe is comprised of it in his *TIS*:

The result of all which was; that whatsoever is either in our selves, or the whole world, was to be reduced to one or other of these two principles; passive matter, and extended bulk, or self-active power and vertue; corporeal or incorporeal substance; mechanism or life; or else to a complication of them both together.<sup>390</sup>

Let us now compare Cudworth's summary to Hobbes' summary of the universe, based on the latter's implicit and explicit corporeal God writings. In both systems the universe is comprised of two substances, one of which is passive and the other active. According to Passmore, Cudworth's dualism was not a dualism of spirit and body but of activity and passivity, of force and matter.<sup>391</sup> Hobbes' ontological system also appears to be a dualism of the active and the passive, of his corporeal God and extension.

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<sup>387</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch V. p 771-833.

<sup>388</sup> Allen 2013 p 342.

<sup>389</sup> Passmore 2013 p 27.

<sup>390</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch I.27 p 29.

<sup>391</sup> Passmore 2013 p 23.

#### 4.5 Cudworth's Plastic Nature and the Natural World

Cudworth, in *TIS*, claimed that it was inconceivable and therefore impossible that entirely undirected matter in motion could produce "Infinite Regularity and Artificialness".<sup>392</sup> Hobbes seems to agree that the natural world cannot be the result of undirected matter in motion; instead, the diversity of the world is the result of the corporeal God *qua* motion directing the motion of matter. Cudworth rejected mechanism because he held that it could not explain the world's perfections, while he rejected occasionalism because he held that it cannot explain the world's imperfections.<sup>393</sup> He wanted to avoid the problems of both through the conception of plastic powers.<sup>394</sup> Cudworth held that God is turned into a mere "Idle Spectator" whose wisdom is "useless and insignificant" if the regularity and harmony in nature comes about entirely fortuitously or is produced by the unguided motion of matter.<sup>395</sup> Yet at the same time, Cudworth thought that the idea that God constantly intervenes in nature was unbecoming of the divine:

...it is not so Decorous in respect of God neither, that he should...set his own Hand, as it were, to every Work, and immediately do all the Meanest and Triflingest things himself Drudgingly, without making use of any Inferior and Subordinate Instruments.<sup>396</sup>

What was far more becoming was that a certain power derived from God would be the immediate cause of the whole lower order of things in the universe, such as the movement of the Sun and the Moon.<sup>397</sup> He also rejected the immediate intervention of God in nature, because it would be unable to explain gradual changes nor mistakes.<sup>398</sup> Cudworth called this power plastic 'nature'; it is alive and is the lowest of all incorporeal substances.<sup>399</sup> It is able to organize and direct matter because it has a vital sympathy with matter which it acts upon.<sup>400</sup> Hobbes may not have used the language of vital sympathy, but it seems that his corporeal God had some vital sympathy with the extension it acts upon.

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<sup>392</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.3 p 148.

<sup>393</sup> Passmore 2013 p 25.

<sup>394</sup> Passmore 2013 p 23-25.

<sup>395</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.3 p 148.

<sup>396</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.4 p 149.

<sup>397</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.4 p 150.

<sup>398</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.4 p 149-150.

<sup>399</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.20 p 163.

<sup>400</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.16 p 159.

Cudworth's plastic nature derives its power from God; it is an instrument of God and is the immediate agent responsible for producing natural effect; while its power is teleological in nature it operates unconsciously.<sup>401</sup> Cudworth held that plastic powers are limited and this is why they make bumbles and mistakes.<sup>402</sup> And he held that one of the functions of plastic nature was to maintain the quantity of motion in the universe and transfer motion from one body to another on impact.<sup>403</sup> As we have seen, one of the functions of Hobbes' corporeal God was to maintain the quantity of motion in the universe, and it is responsible for the appearance of the transference of motion. Cudworth indicated that another function of plastic nature includes the generating and conserving of plants and animals.<sup>404</sup> Again, Hobbes held that his corporeal God was responsible for the generating and conserving of plants and animals.

There seems to be a tension in Cudworth's position as regards God's role in nature and his concept of plastic nature. On one hand, Cudworth did not want to turn God into an idle spectator; but on the other hand, he did not want God to be involved in a ceaseless labour regarding the unfolding of creation. But how does the existence of plastic nature not turn God into an idle spectator? Cudworth's God still appears to be idle spectator because it is not involved in the unfolding of creation. There is also the problem that plastic nature does not take away responsibility away from God for the presence of errors and bumbles in the universe: after all, God created the plastic nature and matter involved in the error. All Cudworth has done is make God indirectly responsible for the errors and mistakes in the universe. In essence, Cudworth's plastic nature is the lowest form of incorporeal substance and is tasked by God with the day to day running of the universe which it does so unconsciously. Hobbes, in contrast, appears to have had no problem in maintaining that his God is constantly intervening in nature. As such Hobbes' corporeal God is the immediate cause of the movement of the entire universe. In Cudworthian terms, Hobbes' corporeal God 'sets his own hand to work on the meanest and triflingest things without making use of a subordinate instrument'. Unlike Cudworth, Hobbes appears to have accepted that his

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<sup>401</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.26 p 172; Copleston 1959 p 60; Mintz 1962 p 101; Allen 2013 p 344-345; Hutton 2017 p 470.

<sup>402</sup> Passmore 2013 p 25.

<sup>403</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.5 p 151.

<sup>404</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.5 p 151; Cudworth at other points suggested that it is the soul of animals which is responsible for their generation and conservation (Bk.1, Ch III.22, p 167) and that other plastic natures might account for the formation of plants, vegetables and minerals (Bk.1, Ch III.24, p 167-171).



corporeal God could work slowly and because of his acceptance of determinism he rejected the possibility of mistakes.

#### 4.6 Cudworth's Account of the Mind's Relationship to God

While the idea that Hobbes relied upon his corporeal God to account for the mind and its abilities might seem strange, it does have a strong parallel to Cudworth's position. Cudworth argued that implicit in the atomist theory of perception was that the mind is not a corporeal entity because it is actively involved in producing and perceiving sensations.<sup>405</sup> Phenomenal qualities, for atomists, are not the properties of bodies but are "phantasms", produced within the mind when we experience certain external bodies. So, unless we suppose that phenomenal qualities are produced by the mind, there is no way to account for their character and origin.<sup>406</sup> As we have seen, Hobbes regarded phenomenal qualities as being created by the activity of the mind reacting to external pressures. Cudworth maintained that, if the mind was merely passive, then it could never perceive reality nor formulate theories.<sup>407</sup> This criticism is valid for Hobbes' approach to the mind, based on his understanding of bodies and motion. Cudworth opposed Hobbes' account of consciousness and thought, rejecting the view that all ideas originate from sensation and that thinking is merely motion in the material brain; for Cudworth, sensation is not sufficient for knowledge and, instead, cogitation and judgment are necessary for knowledge.<sup>408</sup> For Hobbes, thinking and knowledge seems to be more than sensation because there is an active element over and above sensation involved in these processes, such as the production, labelling, storage and calculation of names.

Cudworth held that God is the first mind.<sup>409</sup> According to Cudworth, human minds are copies of this divine mind:

And from hence it is Evident also, that there can be but *One only Original Mind*, or no more than *One Understanding Being Self Existent*; all other *Minds* whatsoever

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<sup>405</sup> Passmore 2013 p 21-22.

<sup>406</sup> Cudworth 1731 *EIM* 3, 1, 3 (Passmore 2013 p 22).

<sup>407</sup> Cudworth 1731 *EIM* 2, 6, 3 (Passmore 2013 p 22).

<sup>408</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk. I Ch IV p 732-734; Copleston 1959 p 59; Mintz 1962 p 97; Allen 2013 p 333-334, p 338; Passmore 2013 p 22.

<sup>409</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch V p 847-848.

*Partaking of one Original Mind; and being as it were Stamped with the Impression or Signature of one and the same Seal.*<sup>410</sup>

For Cudworth, human minds are incorporeal substances which exist distinct to matter: minds are imperfect copies of God's mind and contain an extensive catalogue of ideas which are not derived from sensation but are known *a priori*;<sup>411</sup> these include ideas of perfect geometrical properties and of God.<sup>412</sup> There is a striking similarity with Hobbes' implicit position in relation to the mind. For Hobbes, minds appear to exist distinctly from extension: mental activity is the result of motion manifesting these attributes in extension. These attributes do not belong to extension but to motion. Despite holding that knowledge is derived from sensation, Hobbes also seems to have held that there is an extensive catalogue of "ideas" in the mind which are known *a priori*: these are the "names" which we use to label ideas derived from sensations. Hobbes similarly held that there is only one original mind – his corporeal God – and that all other minds partake of this original mind. But whereas Cudworth held that human minds are copies of God's mind, Hobbes posited human minds as manifestations of God's mind. Cudworth held that God's mind is the original source of knowledge and is the architect of the world:

...[it] containeth its *Immediate Intelligibles within it self*; which *Intelligibles* also are Eternal...the First *Mind* being That of a Perfect Being, comprehending it self, and the Extent of its own Omnipotence, or the *Possibilities* of all things. So that *Knowledg* is Older than all *Sensible things*; *Mind Senior* to the World, and the *Architect* thereof.<sup>413</sup>

The natural world reflects the mind of its creator, and this "stamp of intellectuality" is expressed in the order of the natural world; the natural world reflects the providential purposes of God.<sup>414</sup> Similarly, in Hobbes' implicit ontology we find that the natural world reflects the mind of its creator and the order of the natural world appears to be a product of the providentialism of God.

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<sup>410</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk. 1, Ch IV p 737.

<sup>411</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk. 1, Ch IV p 734; Mintz 1962 p 97-99; Allen 2013 p 343.

<sup>412</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk. 1, Ch V p 636; Ch. IV p 732-733; Allen 2013 p 338.

<sup>413</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk. 1, Ch V p 847-848.

<sup>414</sup> Hutton 2017 p 470.

#### 4.7 Hobbes and Cudworth: Comparison

It seems that Hobbes, like Cudworth, was an atomistic theist. Without the existence of God, which Hobbes said could be honorifically called an “incorporeal substance”, the universe would be uniform and eternally at rest. Hobbes, like Cudworth, held that an “incorporeal substance” is necessary to account for life, sensation and thought. As previously mentioned, Passmore maintained that Cudworth’s dualism was both active and the passive.<sup>415</sup> Hobbes’ system was also a dualism of the active and the passive – namely, the corporeal God and extension. If Passmore is correct that Cudworth did not care whether incorporeals were thought to be extended or not (because extension has no effect on the essential nature of incorporeals, which is to be active)<sup>416</sup>, we can say that Hobbes’ self-active but extended God does not contradict Cudworth’s approach to incorporeals. Their disagreement seems to have been driven by a misunderstanding of what terms like corporeal and incorporeal entailed.

Sellars offers the following summary of Cudworth’s overall ontological system: God, a mechanical atomistic nature and, between the two, immaterial souls and an unconscious but animate “plastic nature” that emanates from God and orders the inert physical world according to God’s providence.<sup>417</sup> If we compare this with Hobbes, we find that his system also comprises a God, a mechanical atomistic understanding of extension, and a notion of souls. But Hobbes does not propose any equivalent to Cudworthian plastic nature. Instead, and given that motion produces nothing but motion, Hobbes had his God directly order the inert physical world according to God’s own providence. Hobbes’ corporeal God cannot emanate anything other than motion. This also seems to be true for souls: individual souls do not have independent existence because they themselves are motion. As motion, Hobbes’ God directly orders not only the inert physical world but also the animate physical world. While Cudworth and Hobbes disagreed on the terminology to be used and the amount of substances to be admitted, they both agreed that the natural world is the result of an active substance affecting a passive substance. It seems that, whereas Cudworth hoped to escape from mechanism and occasionalism, Hobbes wanted to bring mechanism and occasionalism together in his system.

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<sup>415</sup> Passmore 2013 p 23.

<sup>416</sup> Passmore 2013 p 27.

<sup>417</sup> Sellars 2011 p 124.

#### 4.8 Hobbes' Corporeal God versus Plastic Powers in General

The concept of a plastic power permeating all of creation was embraced in the 17<sup>th</sup>C in order to combat materialism and atheism; it was widely held in the second half of the century, driven in part as a response to Hobbes, but it then quickly disappeared, overtaken by improvements in science.<sup>418</sup> The concept entails the following constituent elements: 1) God at creation endowed matter with a spiritual power; 2) this spiritual power has ordered matter and continues to work immanently within each part of matter; 3) it is a force which operates blindly to achieve divine ends of which it is unconscious; 4) plastic nature is not to be conceived as an external force (for this would suggest that it is only a material force operating through motion) but as an internal and vital power working immediately upon the passive matter which contains it; and 5) the partial failure of plastic nature is responsible for errors in nature, not God.<sup>419</sup> These core ideas are well worth comparing and contrasting with important 'constituent elements' of Hobbes' conception of a corporeal God (in particular, his 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 309-310 and 1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 89; Ch. X EW VII p 176-177). According to Hobbes, the corporeal God and extension do not occupy the same place and can it be doubted that "...God, who is infinitely fine spirit, and withal intelligence, can make and change all species and kinds of bodies as he pleaseth?"<sup>420</sup> God exists throughout the plenum of extension and is involved in the creation of new life.<sup>421</sup> But, unlike those who subscribed to a plastic power, Hobbes held that God had not endowed matter with a spiritual power: plastic power works immanently within each part of matter to produce order and new creatures at God's command; but Hobbes' corporeal God works directly within each part of extension to produce order and new creatures. Furthermore, Hobbes' corporeal God, unlike plastic nature, does not operate blindly to achieve divine ends of which it is unconscious. Instead, the activity of Hobbes' corporeal God operates according to its own will. Like plastic nature, Hobbes' corporeal God is not an external force (despite being motion): it is an internal and vital power working immediately within extension.

According to Hunter, those who subscribed to the idea of plastic power in nature wanted to assert that it was not merely matter in motion but was a manifestation of spirit or incorporeal

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<sup>418</sup> Hunter 1950 p 199; p 209-213; Mintz 1962 p 100; Allen 2013.

<sup>419</sup> Hunter 1950 p 200-206; p 209; Mintz 1962 p 100.

<sup>420</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 309-310.

<sup>421</sup> Hobbes 1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 89; X EW VII p 176-177.

substance.<sup>422</sup> But as has been established, it seems that, for Hobbes, matter in motion can be understood as a manifestation of spirit: the corporeal God 'is' motion. Those who subscribed to the concept of plastic power wanted to find an alternative between mechanism and a type of vitalism in which God is responsible for maintaining the activity of the universe.<sup>423</sup> Hobbes, by contrast, seems to have embraced a type of vitalism in which God is responsible for maintaining the activity of the universe.

Despite the notion of plastic power being used to argue against atheism, it can actually be used to argue in favour of atheism: if there is some non-deliberate activity in nature then it might be possible to go further and claim that *all* activity in the universe is the result of non-deliberative activity.<sup>424</sup> Hobbes' corporeal God writings have an advantage, in this regard. Everything which occurs for Hobbes is because God's will commands it. Every action in Hobbes' universe carries out the deliberative activity of God's will. In contrast to both mechanism and vitalism, Hobbes' approach safeguarded the existence of God – but only by transforming God into motion. Now that we have examined Hobbes' approach in comparison to recognized contemporary forms of substance dualism, let us now compare his approach to Cavendish's unique uniform of substance monism.

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<sup>422</sup> Hunter 1950 p 201.

<sup>423</sup> Hunter 1950 p 202; Mintz 1962 p 100.

<sup>424</sup> Hunter 1950 p 211-212; Allen 2013 p 345; Passmore 2013 p 27-28.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### HOBBS' IMPLICIT ONTOLOGICAL APPROACH AND CAVENDISH'S EXPLICIT SYSTEM

#### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will compare and contrast Hobbes' implicit and explicit account of God's role in diversity and sensation with Cavendish's explicit account of diversity and sensation. I will also compare and contrast their more general conceptions of God. A number of recent articles, including Hutton (1997) and Wilkins' (2016), have been produced examining the possible influence of Hobbes and Cavendish; I will instead be exploring the possible influence of Cavendish on Hobbes. Wilkins argued that Cavendish in her writings revealed a significant, but unacknowledged, intellectual debt to Hobbes; in particular Cavendish's views on incorporeal substances developed an intensely Hobbesian flavour over time.<sup>425</sup> Just as Hutton, arguing for a closer alignment between Hobbes and Cavendish, was not suggesting that Cavendish was a Hobbist, or that Cavendish's philosophy was derivative of Hobbes' philosophy, so I will not be arguing that Hobbes' philosophy was derivative of Cavendish's philosophy or that Hobbes was necessary a follower of Cavendish.<sup>426</sup> Instead, I will be suggesting that taking Cavendish's writings into account helps to illuminate a number of Hobbes' implicit positions – in particular, his account of change and God's presence within extension. Cavendish's writings, I suggest, provide a Rosetta stone in terms of understanding Hobbes' implicit positions. But whereas Cavendish relied upon the presence and activity of active matter (which she broke down into sensitive and rational parts, each of which has their own unique role and function) affecting inanimate matter, Hobbes relied upon the presence and activity of his corporeal God affecting extension to account for change.

In order to support these claims, I will first focus on Cavendish's critique of Hobbes' writings in general. This will draw out the general similarities and differences between their systems. While both Hobbes and Cavendish embraced plenism and held that only matter in motion exists and that motion is responsible for diversity, they disagreed whether or not this motion is generated by matter and whether bodies are divisible and penetrable by other bodies. For Hobbes, the motion of matter belongs to the corporeal God, and the extension of

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<sup>425</sup> Wilkins 2016 p 865; p 860.

<sup>426</sup> Hutton 1997 p 429.

bodies are indivisible and impenetrable; for Cavendish, motion belongs to bodies which are divisible and penetrable. They both privileged matter over motion, in their own way, but disagreed on whether matter is the cause of motion. I will also explore their respective understanding of accidents. I will argue that the relationship between Hobbes' God and extension can be better understood by taking Cavendish's understanding of matter into account: Hobbes' God performs the same role as Cavendish's animate matter. Cavendish's explicit characterization of animate matter's activity and interaction with inanimate matter helps to illuminate Hobbes' implicit account of God's activity and interaction with extension. Hobbes, like Cavendish, held that the existence of "individuals" depends on the existence of the larger natural world. They disagreed on how active and passive substances mix: for Cavendish, they totally mix while, for Hobbes, they only partially mix. Hobbes disagreed with Cavendish that rational and sensitive qualities are present throughout the natural world and instead held that these qualities require specific configurations of extension in motion. But Cavendish and Hobbes used similar language to characterize their respective notions of active substance.

It appears that Hobbes' implicit account of causation and sensation can be better grasped by taking Cavendish's explicit account of causation and sensation into account. Hobbes, like Cavendish, implicitly rejected the 'transfer model' of causation. But Hobbes, unlike Cavendish, completely ruled out the possibility of the transference of motion between bodies, because he held that it was impossible for matter to be transferred between bodies. Hobbes implicitly agreed with Cavendish that a body can occasion another body to move, but the body that moves is the principal cause of its own motion. Cavendish's account of perception provides a possible guide to how Hobbes' implicit account of perception functioned. She does not depend on the transference of anything, or on the pressure exerted by one body on another; instead, her position amounts to a kind of autokinesis. Hobbes' corporeal God appears to have performed the same function as Cavendish's account of sensitive and rational matter. Both Hobbes and Cavendish relied upon their respective active substance to account for the harmony and order of the natural world.

Despite the parallels that exist between Cavendish's explicit and Hobbes' implicit approaches, they subscribed to radically different accounts of God. Both excluded theology and religious issues from philosophy, and sought to make their materialism consistent with certain Christian doctrines. (Cavendish claimed that her views were more theologically

orthodox than those of her philosophical opponents.) Both emphasised God's incomprehensibility and held we cannot have an idea of a God who is infinite. Despite disagreeing on whether God is extended or unextended, they used similar language to describe God: for Cavendish, "God is a Spirit and not a bodily substance" (1664 *PL* I.II p 8) and an "Infinite Immaterial Purity" (1664 *PL* I.II p 10), while Hobbes' God is "a corporeal spirit" (*Answer* EW IV p 308), an "infinitely fine spirit" (*Answer* EW IV p 309-310), and is "pure" and "simple" (*Answer* EW IV p 313). Cavendish argued for the separation of God and Nature, because a mixture would lead to disorder and chaos; Hobbes, despite holding that God and extension were partially mixed together, distinguished between God and extension and claimed this partial mixture leads to the order manifested in our experience of the natural world. For both Cavendish and Hobbes, God is the first author of motion and God rules over extension through his will. But they disagreed on God's role: in essence, Cavendish's God is a supervisor who commands self-moving matter into various forms, whereas, for Hobbes, God is a labourer which directly affects extension to manifest the natural world.

## 5.2 Cavendish's General Critique of Hobbes

Cavendish's critique of Hobbes' writings were aimed at points where his opinions were incompatible with her own.<sup>427</sup> It is important to note that Cavendish's writings do not offer the standard charges of atheism founded on his materialism, nor did she question his method of argument or his application of mechanistic principles in general.<sup>428</sup> Cavendish, like Hobbes, held that philosophy should have some practical benefit as to its outcome and criticised contemporary philosophy for what she perceived as its explanatory inadequacies.<sup>429</sup> According to Hutton and O'Neill, Hobbes and Cavendish were unique within the 17<sup>th</sup>C for their exclusion of non-corporeal explanations from the domain of physics.<sup>430</sup> Unlike Hobbes, Cavendish believed that the source of movement and perception was internal to matter, not external to it.<sup>431</sup> Cavendish focused her critique on Hobbes' account of sense perception; she rejected his explanation of sensation as the result of pressure from particles of mobile matter because she rejected the "impact" theory of

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<sup>427</sup> Hutton 1997 p 425.

<sup>428</sup> Hutton 1997 p 424.

<sup>429</sup> Hutton 1997 p 426; Wilkins 2016 p 874.

<sup>430</sup> Hutton 1997 p 428; O'Neill 2001 p xiii.

<sup>431</sup> Hutton 1997 p 423-424; Sarasohn 2010 p 117.



motion.<sup>432</sup> But as has been established, despite his explicit endorsement of the impact theory of sensation, Hobbes seems to have held that it was impossible, given that he ruled out the possibility of the spatial movement of bodies and of the transference of motion between bodies. In section 4.4, I have argued that Hobbes' implicit approach to sensation has significant parallels with Cavendish's explicit account of sensation. But I will briefly note that Cavendish in her 1664 *PL* critiqued Hobbes' position that all sense is motion but not all motion is sense:

But your Author seems to make all Sense, as it were, one Motion, but not all Motion Sense, whereas surely there is no motion but is either Sensitive or Rational...<sup>433</sup>

While Hobbes held that sensation is motion, he did not hold that motion is sufficient for sensation. The presence of sensation requires specific manifestations of motion within extension in order for sensation to be present. Thus Hobbes could hold that all bodies possess endeavour and that all bodies do not possess sense or knowledge, which require a specific configuration of extension in motion. While both a cow and a rock possess endeavour, only the cow possess sense. For Hobbes, sense is more than reaction; sensation requires a central nervous system. Cavendish, in her 1664 *PL*, also criticised Hobbes' account of sensation in his *Leviathan* (Part I ch. i, 4, C p 6-7): she held that the pressure of parts upon parts does not make perception (Sect. I. IV p 18).<sup>434</sup> As previously established, despite Hobbes appearing to embrace the view that the pressure of parts upon parts makes perception/sensation, this does not appear to be the case. Hobbes' implicit position was that bodies are incapable of spatial movement, and that bodies are incapable of generating the counter pressure which is the true cause of sensation. It appears that the motion which is responsible for sensation is expressed through pressure, but pressure is not responsible for sensation. Pressure is an effect of sensation; sensation is not an effect of pressure.

Cavendish in her 1664 *PL* gave the following characterization of the universe based on Hobbes' position that a thing cannot start or stop its own motion and that nothing can change itself: "... but Matter, if it were all Inanimate and void of Motion, would lie as a

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<sup>432</sup> Hutton 1997 p 424.

<sup>433</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.VI p 27.

<sup>434</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.IV p 18.

dull, dead and senseless heap.”<sup>435</sup> Cavendish’s characterization of Hobbes’ universe seems broadly correct, unless of course we recognize the presence of his corporeal God within the universe: without the presence and activity of the corporeal God, the universe should be comprised of nothing more than an inanimate plenum of extension, void of motion, life, sensation and thought. Cavendish in her *PL* embraced plenism: she held that “there is nothing in Nature but what is material” and she rejected the possibility of a vacuum, which she took to be incomprehensible and naturally impossible.<sup>436</sup> Hobbes likewise embraced plenism; he held that only extended things exist within the universe and rejected the possibility of a vacuum. Cavendish held that all extended substances are divisible.<sup>437</sup> While Hobbes agreed that matter is infinitely divisible, he did not agree that all extended substances are divisible: for him, God is both extended and indivisible. Cavendish rejected the view that bodies are impenetrable, suggesting that penetration is “nothing else but division”.<sup>438</sup> For Cavendish, matter could be both penetrable and impenetrable depending on what is doing the penetrating.<sup>439</sup> Hobbes, in contrast, held that bodies are impenetrable.

Cavendish held that matter in motion could produce the diversity of the natural world.<sup>440</sup> Hobbes also held that the diversity of the world could be explained by matter in motion. Cavendish held that a body’s motion is what distinguishes it from the rest of matter; a body’s motion is responsible for particular properties such as its figure, shape, density and colour.<sup>441</sup> Hobbes agreed that the motion present within a body distinguishes it from the rest of matter and that this motion is responsible for a body’s particular properties. But unlike Cavendish, Hobbes did not attribute this motion to the body itself, but to the presence of the corporeal God within extension. Cavendish in her *PL* explained why immaterial substances are unnecessary to account for nature’s activity:

For why should it not be as probable, that God did give Matter a self-moving power to her self, as to have made another Creature to govern her? For Nature is not a Babe, or Child, to need such a Spiritual Nurse, to teach her to go, or to move; neither is she so young a Lady as to have need of a Governess, for surely she can

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<sup>435</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.V p 22.

<sup>436</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.II. p 7; Sect. II.VI. p 149; Sect. IV. VIII. p 452

<sup>437</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. II.XXI p 194.

<sup>438</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. II.XXIII p 204.

<sup>439</sup> Broad 2009b p 60.

<sup>440</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. II.X-XI p 160-164.

<sup>441</sup> James 1999 p 232.

govern herself; she needs not a Guardian for fear she should run away from a younger Brother, or one that cannot make her a Jointure.<sup>442</sup>

As previously established, Hobbes held that the powers of God are limited, so his God, unlike Cavendish's God, could not give matter a self-moving power. So in regards to the language of the above quotation, Hobbes appears to have held that extension *is* like a babe, child or young lady which requires a constant nurse or governess. For Hobbes, the nurse or governess in question is his corporeal God.

Cavendish claimed that there can be no rest in nature:

...for there is no such thing as rest in Nature, but there is an alteration of motions and figures in self-moving matter, which alteration causeth variety as well in opinions, as in every thing else...<sup>443</sup>

Hobbes agreed that there is no such thing as rest in Nature and the alternation of motions is the cause of diversity. But Hobbes held that the motion present within matter belongs not to matter but to his corporeal God. Cavendish privileged matter over motion: "Motion is not the cause of Matter, but Matter is the cause of Motion, for Matter might subsist without Motion, but not Motion without Matter."<sup>444</sup> It seems that Hobbes agreed with Cavendish that motion is not the cause of matter and matter might subsist without motion. But Hobbes did not hold that matter is the cause of motion: for him, bodies are incapable of self-motion and motion produces nothing but motion. Hobbes also appears to have disagreed with Cavendish that motion could not exist independently of matter: if we could remove motion from matter, Hobbes maintained, we would be unable to perceive its effects. So despite appearing to hold that motion could exist independently to matter, Hobbes, like Cavendish, privileged matter over motion.

Cavendish agreed with Hobbes that an accident "*is nothing else, but the manner of our Conception of body, or that Faculty of any body, by which it works in us a Conception of it self*". But she disagreed with him that

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<sup>442</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. II.VI p 149-150.

<sup>443</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.V p 25.

<sup>444</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.V p 22.

*An accident is not a body, but in a body, yet not so, as if any thing were contained therein, as if for example, redness were in blood in the same manner as blood as in a bloody cloth; but as magnitude is in that which is great, rest in that which resteth, motion in that which is moved.*<sup>445</sup>

For Cavendish, nothing in Nature could be without a body:

...that redness is as well in blood, as blood is in a bloody cloth, or any other colour in anything else; for there is no colour without a body, but every colour hath as well a body as any thing else, and if Colour be a separable accident, I would fain know, how it can be separated from a subject, being bodiless, for that which no body is nothing, and nothing cannot be taken away from any thing.<sup>446</sup>

Hobbes' later corporeal God writings seem to suggest that accidents are in a body but not contained within the body: a body merely manifests the accidents which belong to the corporeal God. An accident like redness can be separated from a body because the corporeal God has a separate existence to the body it is being manifested in. In order to illustrate how an accident can be in a body without being contained with a body, picture an image on a television screen. A television screen can manifest different images such as a cat. While the image of a cat is 'in' the television, a cat is not contained within the television. Hobbes' corporeal God performs a similar role to photons of light that make up the image of the cat, while extension performs a similar role to a television screen.

Cavendish disagreed with Hobbes' account of the generation of accidents, in which he said that "*when a White thing is made black, the whiteness perishes*": she held that whiteness does not perish because, although it has been altered matter possesses the power to turn itself from black back to white.<sup>447</sup> For Hobbes, it seems that the whiteness ceases to exist because it is no longer being manifested by the corporeal God within extension. The appearance of whiteness only exists when extension is being affected by God in a specific way. While the corporeal God has the power to regenerate the whiteness, the whiteness that was ceases to exist and a new whiteness is generated. In the same way that when an image of a cat on a television screen is changed, the image ceases to exist, but the television still

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<sup>445</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XVI p 52.

<sup>446</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XVI p 52.

<sup>447</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XVI p 53.

has the capacity to re-generate it. But until we return to that station, the image of the cat no longer exists ‘within’ the television.

Cavendish criticized Hobbes’ distinction between bodies and accidents, “*that bodies are things and not Generated, but accidents are Generated and not things*”; she held that accidents must be bodies, otherwise accidents could not be generated in nature.<sup>448</sup> It appears that for Hobbes bodies are things which are not generated because they are extension, while accidents are not things but are generated because they are motion. While both extension and motion appears to eternally exist, motion undergoes generation while extension does not. In Hobbes’ account of the natural world the extension involved is unchanging while the motion involved is constantly changing. The change of motion generates different accidents which are then manifested within extension. Whether something appears to get bigger or smaller, is alive or inanimate, the underlying extension involved does not change; only the accidents being manifested in the extension change. Hence accidents are generated but are not things, while bodies are things which are not generated. To illustrate this let us return to our television analogy. No matter how many different images are generated on the screen, the screen itself is unchanging. The screen for Hobbes performs the role of extension, while the photons of light perform the role of his corporeal God,

As previously established, Hobbes held that place is nothing out of the mind, immoveable and feigned extension. Cavendish disagreed: she held that place, body and magnitude are but one thing and that when a body moves its place moves.<sup>449</sup> She agreed with Hobbes that two bodies cannot be in the same place and that one body cannot be in two places at the same time.<sup>450</sup> She agreed with Hobbes that a body always has the same magnitude, because she held that magnitude, place and body are the same thing.<sup>451</sup> For Cavendish, place and time are adjuncts of matter and do not exist separately from it.<sup>452</sup> Like Cavendish, Hobbes seems to have held that place and time do not exist separately from matter; but Hobbes appears to have held that place and time have an independent existence to matter. Hobbes distinguished between the existence of his corporeal God and extension – but without extension to affect, Hobbes’ corporeal God would have no way to manifest place and time.

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<sup>448</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XVI p 53-54.

<sup>449</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XVII p 56-57.

<sup>450</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XVII p 57.

<sup>451</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XVII p 57-58.

<sup>452</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XXXI-XXXII p 101-106.

### 5.3 Hobbes' God and Extension, Cavendish's Matter

According to Cavendish's account in her 1664 *PL*:

...all matter is partly animate, and partly inanimate, and all matter is moving and moved, and that there is no part of Nature that hath not life and knowledg, for there is no Part that has not a commixture of animate and inanimate matter; and though the inanimate matter has no motion, nor life and knowledg of it self, as the animate has, nevertheless being both so closely joyned and commixed as in one body, the inanimate moves as well as the animate, although not in the same manner; for the animate moves of it self, and the inanimate moves by the help of the animate, and thus the animate is moving and the inanimate moved; not that the animate matter transfers, infuses, or communicates its own motion to the inanimate; for this is impossible, by reason it cannot part with its own nature, nor alter the nature of inanimate matter, but each retains its own nature; for the inanimate matter remains inanimate, that is, without self-motion, and the animate loses nothing of its self-motion, which otherwise it would, if it should impart or transferr its motion into the inanimate matter; but onely as I said heretofore, the inanimate works or moves with the animate, because of their close union and commixture; for the animate forces or causes the inanimate matter to work with her; and thus one is moving, the other moved, and consequently there is life and knowledge in all parts of nature, by reason in all parts of nature there is a commixture of animate and inanimate matter:<sup>453</sup>

Because all three degrees of matter are “commixt”, there is no part of nature, no matter how small, that lacks any of the three aspects.<sup>454</sup> There are a number of similarities but also important differences between Hobbes' implicit account of the presence and activity of his corporeal God and Cavendish's account of matter in *PL* (Sect. I. XXX p 99). Hobbes' corporeal God performs the same role as Cavendish's animate matter, while extension performed the same role as her inanimate matter. Cavendish's inanimate matter is incapable of moving itself, but is always in motion because it is intermixed with animate matter. Hobbes likewise held that extension is incapable of moving itself, but is always in motion because it is partially mixed with the corporeal God. While Cavendish and Hobbes disagreed over how their animate matter and corporeal God mix, they both held that there is

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<sup>453</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XXX p 99.

<sup>454</sup> Detlefsen 2009 p 425; Boyle 2018 p 112.

no part of their respective natural world that lacks the presence of their respective active and passive substance. Just as Cavendish's animate matter does not alter the nature of inanimate matter, Hobbes' corporeal God does not alter the nature of extension: the corporeal God and extension retain their own distinct natures despite being partially mixed together.

Unlike Cavendish, Hobbes did not hold that the entire natural world possess life or knowledge. Cavendish argued that we cannot assign a certain seat or place to rational or sensitive matter because it is diffused and intermixed throughout all the body.<sup>455</sup> Hobbes in contrast held that specific configurations of extension in motion are required to manifest rational and sensitive qualities. For Hobbes, rational qualities are found in the brain, whereas for Cavendish they are diffused throughout the body. Cavendish claimed that animate matter can only produce infinite effects by working on inanimate matter.<sup>456</sup> In a similar fashion, Hobbes' corporeal God can only produce infinite effects by affecting extension.

Cavendish characterized the activity of animate matter on inanimate matter thus:

...since the Animate part of Matter is the onely architect, creator, or producer of all those effects, by reason it is the self-moving part, and the Inanimate is onely the instrument which. the Animate works withal, and the materials it works upon, the Production of the infinite effects in Nature is more fitly ascribed to the Animate then the Inanimate part of matter; as for example, If the architect should build an house, certainly he can do nothing without materials, neither can the materials raise themselves to such a figure as a house without the help of the architect and workmen, but both are of necessity required to this artificial production; nevertheless, the building of the house is not laid to the materials, but *to* the architect: the same may be said of animate and inanimate matter in the production of natural effects.<sup>457</sup>

Hobbes' God performs the same function as Cavendish's animate matter, while extension performs the same function as Cavendish's inanimate matter. Hobbes' God, like Cavendish's animate matter, is the architect, creator or producer of all effects in extension.

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<sup>455</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.IV p 19; Sect. I.XXXV p 111-112.

<sup>456</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. IV.XXIII p 530-531.

<sup>457</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. IV.XXXIII p 531.

Just as Cavendish's natural world requires the existence of both animate and inanimate matter, so Hobbes' natural world requires the existence of both his God and extension: without extension, Hobbes' corporeal God would have nothing in which to manifest its qualities. But by the same token, without Hobbes' corporeal God, extension would never manifest any qualities beyond being extended. Both substances are necessary for the existence of the natural world. Cavendish in her 1664 *PL* claimed that animate matter is "the life and soul of Nature."<sup>458</sup> Hobbes implicitly held that his corporeal God is the life and soul of the natural world. Cavendish claimed that "there is but one Soul in infinite Nature" which is divided into the different parts of nature.<sup>459</sup> Hobbes also appears to have held that there is one soul in nature which is divided into the different parts of the natural world. This soul, for Hobbes, is the corporeal God.

Cavendish held that all three degrees of matter can interact because they are all matter and only differ in degrees of purity, subtlety and activity.<sup>460</sup> For Cavendish, sensitive matter is distinguished from rational matter because sensitive matter always works with inanimate matter, while rational matter can work on its own because it is purer and more subtle.<sup>461</sup> Hobbes did not split animate matter into two components, as Cavendish did. But like Cavendish, Hobbes held that his corporeal God can interact with extension, given that they both share the quality of being extended.

I will now turn to Cavendish's account of matter and diversity in her 1668 *Observations*. According to Cavendish, there are two degrees of animate matter which are rational and sensitive.<sup>462</sup> Cavendish characterized the difference between her two degrees of animate matter in the following way:

As the several degrees of matter are not several kinds of matter; so neither are rational and sensitive knowledge, several kinds of self-knowledges, but only different degrees of one self-knowledge: for, as there is but one matter, and one self-motion; so there is also but one self-knowledge in nature, which consists of two degrees, rational and sensitive, whereof the rational is the highest degree of self-knowledge: for it is a most pure, subtle, active and piercing knowledge than

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<sup>458</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. IV.XXXIII p 533.

<sup>459</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. IV.III p 433.

<sup>460</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. II.XXI p 196-197.

<sup>461</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. II.XVII p 170.

<sup>462</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* Q.8. p 211.



the sensitive, by reason it is not bound to work on, and with the inanimate parts of matter, but moves freely in its own degree; whereas the sensitive is encumbered with labouring on the inanimate parts of matter: Indeed, there is as much difference between those two degrees of self-knowledge, as betwixt a chief architect, designer or surveyor, and betwixt a labourer or workman: for, as the labourer and surveyor, though they be different particulars, are yet both of one kind, viz. mankind.<sup>463</sup>

According to Cavendish's *Observations* (Q.7 p 161), the rational degree of self-knowledge is not bound to work on the inanimate parts of matter: due to its purity, it moves freely within its own degree, unlike the sensitive degree of self-knowledge.<sup>464</sup> Cavendish characterized the difference between the two degrees in the following way: the rational degree is the chief architect, designer or surveyor, while sensitive degree is a labourer or workman.<sup>465</sup> Unlike Cavendish, Hobbes did not divide his corporeal God into two degrees. Nonetheless, he seems to have held that the rational motions of his corporeal God, like Cavendish's rational degree of self-knowledge, can operate within itself without affecting the sensitive aspects of the body. In Cavendish's terms, Hobbes' corporeal God is a combination of both chief architect/designer or surveyor and a labourer/workman. Cavendish in her *Observations* (Q.7 p 161) characterized the rational degree of self-knowledge as being "most pure, subtle, active". Hobbes in his 1668 (1682) *Answer* used similar terminology to characterize his God as an active "infinitely fine spirit" (EW IV p 309-310), is "pure" and "simple" (EW IV p 313), and able to mix with extension while retaining its own nature.

Cavendish's 1668 *Observation* sets out the necessity of inanimate and animate matter:

...for, were there no inanimate matter, there would be no ground, or grosser substance to work on, and so no solid figures: and, were there no animate sensitive matter, there would be no "labourer," or "workman," as I may call it, to form the inanimate part of matter into various figures; nor would there be such infinite changes, compositions, divisions, productions, dissolutions, etc...<sup>466</sup>

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<sup>463</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* Q.7 p 161.

<sup>464</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* Q.7 p 161.

<sup>465</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* Q.7 p 161.

<sup>466</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* Q.3 p 157-158.

...were there no animate rational matter, there would be no “designer” or “surveyor,” to order and direct all things methodically; nor no fancies, imaginations, conceptions, memory, etc. so that this “triumvirate” of the degrees of matter, is so necessary a constitutive principle of all natural effects, that nature could not be without it.<sup>467</sup>

According to Cavendish, 1) both inanimate and animate matter are necessary for the existence of the natural world; 2) without inanimate matter there would be no “ground” or “gross substance” to work on; 3) without animate matter there would be no “labourer” or “workman” to form the inanimate part into various figures; 4) both inanimate and animate matter are necessary for infinite changes, compositions, divisions, productions, dissolutions etc.; 5) without rational matter there would be no “designer” to order and direct all things methodically; and 6) without rational matter there would be no fancies, imaginations, conceptions, memory, etc.

Let us now compare Cavendish’s *Observations* (Q.3 p 157-158) on the necessity of inanimate and animate matter with Hobbes’ understanding of natural world. It seems that there is a similar principle at play within Hobbes’ system. If there was no extension, then Hobbes’ God would have nothing to work on and there would be no solid figures. For Hobbes, the solidity of objects is comprised of extension, while their sensible qualities are comprised of the corporeal God. To illustrate this, we can imagine extension as wood and Hobbes’ corporeal God as the activity of a craftsman. A craftsman can smooth down or rough up a piece of wood. The sensation of the roughness or smoothness of the wood is due to the activity of the craftsman. But without the basic, untreated, wood the craftsman cannot do anything. Unless Hobbes’ corporeal God has extension to affect, it cannot manifest different sensible qualities – just as a craftsman cannot express their skills without materials to effect. In Cavendish’s terms, without the existence of a corporeal God there would be no “designer” or “surveyor” to order and direct all things methodically, nor would there be any “labourer” or “workman” to effect extension in order to manifest various figures. Without the corporeal God there would be no fancies, imaginations, conceptions, memory etc. Just as Cavendish held that inanimate and animate matter are necessary for the existence of the

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<sup>467</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* Q.3. p 158.

natural world, Hobbes' corporeal God and extension are both necessary for the manifestation of the natural world.

As previously established, Hobbes seems to have relied upon his corporeal God to manifest the appearance of diversity within extension. If this is the case, then Hobbes implicitly held a position similar to Cavendish's account of how animate matter works on inanimate matter. As Cavendish puts it, in her *Observations* (Q.4 p 158):

...the inanimate part of matter, considered in itself, or in its own nature, hath no self-motion, nor can it receive any from the animate; but they being both so closely intermixt, that they make but one self-moving body of nature, the animate parts of matter, bear the inanimate with them in all their actions; so that it is impossible for the animate parts to divide, compose, contract, etc. but the inanimate must serve them, or go along with them in such a corporeal figurative actions.<sup>468</sup>

A similar principle is at play within Hobbes' ontology. For Hobbes, extension has no self-motion nor does it receive any motion from the corporeal God. Extension, due to its partial mixture with the corporeal God, "bears" the activity of God. But the "bearing" of this activity is different to how Cavendish's inanimate matter "bears" the activity of animate matter: as previously established, Hobbes seems to have ruled out the possibility of spatial movement. For Hobbes, it seems, the activity of the corporeal God affecting extension manifests the appearance of division, composition or contradiction within the plenum of extension. But the actual extension involved does not divide, compose or contract. Instead, all that occurs is that the extension involved is being affected by motion differently

In her *Observations*, Cavendish states that

...nature is self-moving, and therefore never at rest: I do not mean exteriorly moving; for nature being infinite, is all within itself, and has nothing without, or beyond it, because it is without limits or bounds: but interiorly, so that all the motions that are in nature, are within herself; and being various and infinite in their changes, they divide the substance or body of nature into infinite parts; for the parts

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<sup>468</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* Q.4 p 158.

of nature, and changes of motion, are but one thing: for, were there no motion, there would be no change of figures.<sup>469</sup>

Again, there are significant parallels with Hobbes. For Hobbes, the natural world is also comprised of moving matter which is never at rest. But unlike Cavendish's natural world, the motion of matter belongs to the corporeal God not to matter itself. Hobbes' universe, like Cavendish's nature, contains all that exists, given that he also denied the existence of anything outside of the universe. As previously established, despite Hobbes' definitions of motion being local motion, local motion appears to be impossible based on his ontological principles. So motion, for Hobbes, must occur as it does for Cavendish – interiorly. The interior motion of Hobbes' corporeal God within the plenum of extension manifests the appearance of change, including spatial movement.

There is also a similarity between Cavendish's explicit account of nature (*Observations* XXXI p 127) and Hobbes' implicit account of nature. But whereas Cavendish's natural world is an infinite composition of rational, sensitive and inanimate matter, Hobbes' natural world is an infinite composition of his corporeal God and extension. Unlike Cavendish's commixture of rational, sensitive and inanimate matter, Hobbes' mixture of his corporeal God and extension does not constitute one body: Hobbes' God only partially mixes with extension. Cavendish held that, because nature is a commixture of animate and inanimate matter, no particle in nature can be conceived or imagined which is not composed of animate and inanimate matter.<sup>470</sup> Hobbes, in contrast, held that it is possible to imagine extension without motion.

Cavendish, in her *Observations*, was clear that there is no such thing as a single or separable part in nature. She conceived of nature as

...an infinite body, bulk or magnitude, which by its own self-motion, is divided into infinite parts; not single or indivisible parts, but parts of one continued body, only discernible from each other by their proper figures, caused by the changes of particular motions.<sup>471</sup>

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<sup>469</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* XXXI p 126.

<sup>470</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* Q.4 p 158.

<sup>471</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* XXXI p 126.

A similar principle is implicit in Hobbes' ontology. For Hobbes, the universe is also one continued body and the appearance of individuality is due to the effects of motion. The appearance of "single" parts within the universe are only discernible from the larger plenum they are part of, due to their figure. The figures of "individual" parts are caused by the particular motions of Hobbes' corporeal God affecting extension. According to Cavendish, there are no self-subsistent entities; apparently individual entities depend on the larger whole of nature for their existence:

...for example, an animal, though it be a whole and perfect figure, yet it is but a part of earth, and some other elements, and parts of nature, and could not subsist without them.<sup>472</sup>

Likewise Hobbes: just as Cavendish's animal, though a whole and perfect figure, is part of the larger whole of the natural world, so Hobbes' animal, despite being a whole and perfect figure, also depends on the larger body of the natural world in order to be manifested. For Hobbes, the manifestation of an animal depends on the larger natural environment also being manifested: the extension of every "single" or "individual" part of the natural world is part of the larger plenum of extension. In essence, the appearance of "single" or "individual" entities is an illusion created by the activity of Hobbes' corporeal God as motion affecting extension. The extension of an "individual" belongs to the larger plenum of extension, while the motion of an "individual" belongs to Hobbes' corporeal God.

#### **5.4 Causation and Sensation**

I now want to compare and contrast Hobbes' implicit account of causation and sensation within Cavendish's explicit account in her 1664 *PL*. Cavendish rejected the transfer model of causation: she held that motion cannot be transferred by impact as motion is not separable from matter, and that it was impossible to conceive of motion without a body.<sup>473</sup> Implicitly, at least, Hobbes held the same position. For Hobbes, motion was an accident of a body and there is no way to perceive motion without a body to effect. According to Cavendish, motion can be transferred from body to body, but only if matter is transferred between the bodies:

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<sup>472</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* XXXI p 126-127.

<sup>473</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XXX p 97-98.

...all bodies that receive motion from other bodies, must needs increase in their substance and quantity, and those bodies which impart or transferr motion, must decrease as much as they increase.<sup>474</sup>

Hobbes, in contrast, seems to have completely ruled out the possibility of the transference of motion and the transference of matter between bodies. Bodies, for Hobbes, are incapable of increasing or decreasing their substance and quantity: Hobbes' principles entail that the spatial movement of bodies is impossible. The appearance of a body increasing or decreasing its substance and quantity is not caused by the extension involved increasing or decreasing in amount; instead, the appearance of a body increasing or decreasing in substance and quantity is caused by Hobbes' corporeal God affecting the plenum of extension differently.

Cavendish held that a body can occasion another body's motion but that the motion of the second body belongs to the second body itself:

Wherefore one body may occasion another body to move so or so, but not give it any motion, but everybody (though occasioned by another, to move in such a way) moves by its own natural motion.<sup>475</sup>

Hobbes also held that a body can occasion another body to move, but that it cannot give a second body any motion. But whereas for Cavendish every body moves by its own natural motion, for Hobbes every body gives the appearance of motion due to the activity of his corporeal God. Cavendish held that while the motion of a hand is not transferred into the bowl, a hand still contributes to the motion of the bowl:

...for though the bowl hath its own natural motion in it self...nevertheless the motion of the bowl would not move by such an exterior local motion, did not the hand motion of the hand, or any other exterior moving body give it occasion to move that way; Wherefore the motion of the hand may very well be said to be the cause of that exterior local motion of the bowl, but not to be the same motion by which the bowl moves.<sup>476</sup>

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<sup>474</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XXX p 98.

<sup>475</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XXX. p 100.

<sup>476</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. IV.VI p 447-448.

While Cavendish rejected the transfer of motion without the transference of matter she held that it was possible for one body to occasion another body's motion. The same principle also seems to apply in Hobbes' ontology, but as the presence of his corporeal God. To illustrate this let us compare a) Hobbes' implicit approach regarding what happens when a hand causes a bowl to move and b) Cavendish's explicit account. For Hobbes, the hand occasions the bowl to move without transferring motion to the bowl. The hand is the cause of the appearance of the exterior local motion of the bowl, but the motion of the bowl is the bowl's own motion. Hobbes' corporeal God *qua* motion is responsible for the motion of the hand and the bowl.

O'Neill has summarized Cavendish's non-mechanical explanation of change in the following way: 1) a hand does not transfer its motion to the ball upon impact; 2) instead, the rational matter in the ball shares a sympathetic affinity with the hand; 3) the ball "perceives" that the hand is about to change its own configuration, that it is about to diminish its motion by a certain amount; 4) the hand occasions the ball to "pattern out" a certain amount of motion so the ball is the principal cause; and 5) instead of motion being transferred between bodies, there is a system of imitation within bodies.<sup>477</sup> It appears that the same principle is implicitly at play within Hobbes' system: 1) for Hobbes, a hand does not transfer its motion to the ball upon impact; 2) instead, the corporeal God, which is inside the ball, shares a sympathetic affinity with the hand within which the corporeal God is also present; 3) the corporeal God within the ball "perceives" that it is about to change its own configuration in the hand by a certain amount and then configures the ball to give the appearance of the transference of motion; 4) the ball is the principal cause while the hand is the occasional cause; and 5) instead of motion being transferred between bodies, there is a system of imitation caused by Hobbes' corporeal God within extension which gives the appearance of the transference of motion.

Cavendish, in her account of how sensations are produced distinguished, between *principal* and *occasional* causes: Cavendish held that for every natural effect there is an occasional cause, which is the body eliciting the effect in another body, and a principal cause, which is the affected body which brings forth from within itself the appropriate effect.<sup>478</sup> So for Cavendish, while we might say that the sensation of heat is "caused" by the presence of fire,

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<sup>477</sup> O'Neill 2001 p xxxiii-xxxiv.

<sup>478</sup> Detlefsen 2009 p 425; Broad 2009b p 50.

this fire is not the true cause of the sensation. Fire is merely the occasion for the internal self-motion of matter and this internal motion is the true or principal cause of sensation. The same principle appears to be true in relation to Hobbes' account of sensation. For Hobbes, while the sensation of heat is "caused" by the presence of fire, this fire is not the true cause of the sensation. Instead, the sensation of fire is caused by the counter-pressure produced within the heart.<sup>479</sup> So, for Hobbes, the fire is merely the occasion for this internal self-motion, which is the true or principal cause of sensation. The fire is necessary for the internal motion to be produced; the corporeal God is responsible for both the principal and occasional cause.

Cavendish was explicit about her understanding of perception:

...Perception, in my opinion, is not made by Pressure, nor by Species, nor by matter going either from the Organ to the Object, or from the Object into the Organ.<sup>480</sup>

Perception does not depend on the movement of species, atoms, or corpuscles or on the pressure exerted by one body on another and is instead a kind of autokinesis.<sup>481</sup> As she states:

The sensitive perception of foreign objects is by making or taking copies from these objects, so as the sensitive corporeal motions in the eye copy out the objects of sight...<sup>482</sup>

Cavendish held that when a person sees or hears a cat, its figure is copied, imitated, printed or "patterned" out by the sensitive matter of the eye or ear which senses/perceives it. These figures are then patterned out by the rational matter in a person's body to form an integrated figure of a cat.<sup>483</sup> Cavendish held that this "patterning" is made possible by a system of mutual agreement and sympathy between parts. But how can Cavendish's process of patterning function if there is no transference or pressure involved? Let us imagine that Cavendish's patterning functions like clay being moulded around an object: the only way to

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<sup>479</sup> As previously mentioned, Hobbes, in his account of sensation in 1651 *Leviathan* (Part I Ch i, 4, C p 6), held that the heart is involved in sensation because it produces a counter-pressure which is responsible for sensible experiences.

<sup>480</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.V p 20.

<sup>481</sup> James 1999 p 232-233.

<sup>482</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XLII p 127.

<sup>483</sup> James 1999 p 232.



account for patterning, if nothing is transferred, would be if patterning involved contact or pressure between the perceiver and the thing being sensed. If patterning was the result of rational/sensitive matter “moulding itself” around the external object to create a copy, this could then account for sensation. In which case, the perception of an external object involves rational/sensitive matter moulding itself around the object being sensed, the mould printing the object’s shape, colour, texture, etc. When the perceived object is taken away the sensation of the object dissipates. But this would require contact or pressure between the rational/sensitive part of matter and the object being sensed – and Cavendish denied that perception involves contact. It seems highly problematic explaining how patterning can take place if nothing is transferred. Cavendish acknowledged this difficulty, but held that this problem poses a greater threat to competing systems than her own.<sup>484</sup> In her 1664 *PL*, she freely admitted that certain features of her concept of patterning out remain deeply mysterious.<sup>485</sup> As previously established Hobbes’ account of perception must function in a similar fashion, given that nothing is transferred between the perceiver and the perceived. Hobbes held that motion is non-transferrable and that bodies cannot spatially move. Perception for Hobbes also appears to be a form of autokinesis triggered in some way by an external body, despite nothing being transferred. For Hobbes, the motion that is present within the extension of the perceiver changes itself to give the appearance of external perception. But Hobbes, in contrast to Cavendish characterized perception in terms of pressure: the activity of his corporeal God is expressed as the effect of pressure within extension. For Cavendish, although we know from experience that the sensory organs (and by inference bodies as well) can pattern out many figures at once and the comparatively small organs can pattern out much larger figures, we do not understand how this is done and can instead only imagine that nature acts like an engraver:

Next, as for confusion, I say, that the sensitive matter makes no more confusion, then an Engraver, when he engraves several figures in a small stone, when he engraves several figures in a small stone, and a Painter draws several figures in a small compass; for a Carver will cut out several figures in a Cherry-stone, and a Lady in a little black Patch; and if gross and rude Art is able to do this, which may not Ingenious and Wise Nature do?<sup>486</sup>

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<sup>484</sup> James 1999 p 235; O’Neill 2001 p xxxiv.

<sup>485</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. II.VIII-XVII p 154-181.

<sup>486</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. II.XIII p 172.

It appears that, for Cavendish, nature acts like a carver who carves several figures on a cherry stone, while for Hobbes his corporeal God acts like carver to manifest the appearance of diversity on the unchanging plenum of extension.

Cavendish rejected Hobbes' view that all the actions of nature are due to the force of one part driving, pressing or shoving another.<sup>487</sup> She held that Nature is self-regulating and this self-regulation does not involve the forcing of its own parts.<sup>488</sup> By contrast, Hobbes held that the natural world is not self-regulating but is regulated by a corporeal God. Hobbes' characterized this regulation in terms of the pressure of one body on another – despite the fact that he also deemed spatial movement is impossible. Cavendish accounted for the orderliness and harmoniousness of nature by the presence of rational and sensitive matter throughout the natural world.<sup>489</sup> She rejected the existence of a void within the universe, as this would destroy the unity of the natural world.<sup>490</sup> Hobbes also rejected the possibility of a void: for him, the natural world was unified by the presence of his corporeal God.

O'Neill has summarised Cavendish's account of the order of the natural world in the following way: 1) the different parts of the natural world know what to do because of the presence of rational matter throughout the natural world; 2) instead of a transfer model of change (where discrete parts of nature give and receive motion), we should regard nature in terms of vital agreement and harmony in a unified organism; and 3) this vital agreement should be understood in terms of the mutual "perceptions" that the agent and patient share.<sup>491</sup> Similarly, Detlefsen maintains that Cavendish explained the order and lawfulness of the natural world by supposing that every body has perceptive qualities: Cavendish's occasional causation entails that bodies sense other bodies around them and know how to react when other bodies rationally suggest to them how to act.<sup>492</sup> But since Cavendish in her 1664 *PL* held that perception "is not made by Pressure, nor by Species, nor by matter going either from the Organ to the Object, or from the Object into the Organ" (Sect. I. V p 20), how do bodies perceive how to act in the proper way? Within a biological organism the transfer of something is required for a biological effect to occur. Take a person whose spinal

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<sup>487</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XXIX p 95.

<sup>488</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.XLV p 135; Sarasohn 2010 p 135.

<sup>489</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* p 207.

<sup>490</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* XXXI p 129.

<sup>491</sup> O'Neill 2001 p xxxii.

<sup>492</sup> Detlefsen 2009 p 425-426.

cord is severed below the neck: the signals sent from their brain to their legs and arms do not arrive, hence the legs and arms cannot move. It seems that, for Cavendish, the spinal cord of her natural world is severed. We find a similar dynamic in Hobbes' implicit ontology. But, of course, Hobbes accounted for the orderliness and harmony of the natural world via the presence of a corporeal God, rather than via the presence of rational and sensitive matter. It seems that, for Hobbes, the corporeal God within a responding body knows how to manifest the correct response because it is carrying its own pre-determined will through the manifestation of causality within extension.

### 5.5 Cavendish and Hobbes on God

Despite the parallels that exist between Cavendish's explicit and Hobbes' implicit approaches, they subscribed to radically different accounts of God. Cavendish in her 1664 *PL* excluded theology and religious issues from philosophy: she held that philosophy is governed by reason and observation while theology is built on implicit faith. Theological questions, such as the nature of God, should be left to the church to decide, given that disputes over theological matters weaken faith.<sup>493</sup> Nonetheless, Cavendish sought to make her thorough-going materialism consistent with certain Christian doctrines,<sup>494</sup> and she claimed that her views were more theologically orthodox than those of her philosophical opponents.<sup>495</sup> These positions are also true for Hobbes. Cavendish argued for the separation of God and "his servant Nature": if they were mixed, this would lead to disorder and chaos.<sup>496</sup> Hobbes also distinguished between God and extension, and held that they were partially mixed together. The partial mixture of God and extension does not result in disorder or chaos, but instead results in the order manifested within our experience of the natural world. Cavendish argued against those writers, including More, who jumbled the natural and the divine by using God within the system:

But some Philosophers striving to express their wit, obstruct reason; and drawing Divinity to prove Sense and Reason, weaken Faith so, as their mixed Divine Philosophy becomes meer Poetical Fictions and Romancical expressions, making material Bodies immaterial Spirits, and immaterial Spirits material Bodies; and

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<sup>493</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. II.III p 142; Sect. II.XXX p 220-221; Hutton 1997 p 427; James 1999 p 231; Detlefsen 2009 p 421; Broad 2009a p 36; p 48.

<sup>494</sup> O'Neill 2001 p xxiii.

<sup>495</sup> Wilkins 2016 p 874.

<sup>496</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.II p 13.

some have conceived some things neither to be Material nor Immaterial, but between both.<sup>497</sup>

If Cavendish had read Hobbes' later corporeal God writings, she may well have considered that Hobbes had jumbled together the material and immaterial by holding that God and spirits are extended.

Cavendish, in her *PL*, emphasised God's incomprehensibility and held that we cannot have an idea of God who is infinite.<sup>498</sup> At times, she seemed to argue that we cannot know anything about God.<sup>499</sup> Nonetheless, she did make 'positive' claims about God. For example: "God is a Spirit, and not a bodily substance".<sup>500</sup> Cavendish also described God as an "Infinite Immaterial Purity"<sup>501</sup> who enjoyed "Supernatural and Incomprehensible Infinite Wisdom and Power";<sup>502</sup> she also held that God is a Spirit and is Immovable.<sup>503</sup> There are a number of similarities, but also some important differences, between Cavendish's approach and Hobbes'. For Hobbes, God is not immovable: God, he held, is a perpetually moving mover. Nonetheless, Hobbes' corporeal God does not move from place to place: it moves *within itself* to manifest the appearance of change within extension. As an illustration, we can imagine a number of people moving around inside a house. The house, despite being immovable, allows for individuals to move around. Hobbes' corporeal God is both the house and the people moving around inside it. Like the house Hobbes' God is immovable, but like the people it is capable of movement within.

Cavendish used the term 'spirit' to denote an unextended substance; Hobbes did not. Nonetheless, despite Hobbes in his 1668 (1682) *Answer* disagreeing with Cavendish that God is unextended and not in motion, he used similar terminology: where, for Cavendish, "God is a Spirit and not a bodily substance" (*PL* I.II 8) and is an "Infinite Immaterial Purity" (*PL* I.II. p 10), Hobbes' God is "a corporeal spirit" (*EW* IV p 308), an "infinitely fine spirit" (*EW* IV p 309-310), and is "pure" and "simple" (*EW* IV p 313). Cavendish held that God cannot admit of addition or diminution and that what is material cannot become immaterial

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<sup>497</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.II p 12-13.

<sup>498</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. II.II p 139-140.

<sup>499</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. IV.XXXII p 525-527.

<sup>500</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.II p 8.

<sup>501</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.II p 10.

<sup>502</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.II p 9.

<sup>503</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. II.XXI p 196.

and vice versa.<sup>504</sup> Hobbes similarly seems to have held that what is God cannot become matter and what is matter cannot become God – given that, for him, motion produces nothing but motion. Hobbes’ God *qua* motion cannot make matter into motion, nor can matter become motion. Cavendish argued that because of the distinct natures of God and Nature they cannot join, mix or work together.<sup>505</sup> Hobbes, by contrast, seems to have held that God can work on extension, given that they share the quality of being extended. Cavendish argued that God could create Nature despite Nature being eternal because natural rules, such as cause and effect, do not apply to God.<sup>506</sup> Hobbes in contrast does not appear to have held that God could create extension because of his principle that motion produces nothing but motion. There is disagreement within scholarship regarding Cavendish’s writings as to whether or not she embraced both the notion of creation *Ex Nihilo*’ and of the eternity of matter. Detlefsen argues against this, but Boyle maintains that Cavendish held both to be true. If Cavendish did hold both theses, this would be an important point of difference with Hobbes, who argued for the eternity of matter but rejected the notion of creation *Ex Nihilo* i.e. creation out of nothing.

For Cavendish, the Genesis account is about how God *ordered* matter to produce our current world and not about how God created matter itself; this current world was created by God’s command but the executor of this command was self-moving nature.<sup>507</sup> As she puts it:

Thus all was made by Gods Command, and who executed his Command but the Material servant of God, Nature: which ordered her self-moving matter into such several Figures as God commanded, and God approved of them.<sup>508</sup>

For Cavendish, God is a supervisor who commands self-moving matter into various forms, whereas for Hobbes God is a labourer which directly affects extension to manifest the natural world. Cavendish was clear that God is responsible for nature’s self-moving power.<sup>509</sup> By contrast, Hobbes’ God does not give extension any self-moving power; instead, his God is directly responsible for the presence of motion in extension. Cavendish

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<sup>504</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.II p 10.

<sup>505</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.II p 10.

<sup>506</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.III p 14-15; James 1999 p 230-231; Sarasohn 2010 p 140.

<sup>507</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.III p 13-17; James 1999 p 231; Detlefsen 2009 p 430; Boyle 2018 p 123.

<sup>508</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.III p 16.

<sup>509</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. II.XI p 164.

in her 1664 *PL* was clear that God is the “Creator and Cause” of Nature.<sup>510</sup> Hobbes’ God was also the creator and cause of nature: as motion, Hobbes’ God affects extension to manifest the natural world.

Turning now to Cavendish’s 1668 *Observations* and its account of God and God’s relationship to nature, we find that Cavendish defines God as “...eternal, infinite, omnipotent, incorporeal, individual, immovable being”.<sup>511</sup> Hobbes’ God, like Cavendish’s God, can also be understood to be eternal, infinite, omnipotent and incorporeal (as long as the term is used piously to abstract from corporeal characteristics and not to entail an unextended being). Hobbes’ God, like Cavendish’s, is in a sense immovable because it is incapable of changing place despite being a perpetually moving being.

In her 1668 *Observations*, Cavendish states:

As for God, he being immovable, and beyond all natural motion, cannot actually move matter; neither is it religious to say, God is the soul of nature; for God is no part of nature, as the soul is of the body.<sup>512</sup>

I contend that here is a similar dynamic between Cavendish’s position, that her God cannot actually move matter, and Hobbes’ position, that his corporeal God cannot move matter. Hobbes’ God cannot move matter because the spatial movement of matter is impossible. Instead, the appearance of spatial movement is the result of Hobbes’ corporeal God *qua* motion affecting unmoving extension differently; Cavendish maintained that calling God the soul of nature was irreligious because God is not part of nature. Hobbes in the 1668 Latin edition of his *Leviathan* dropped his censure against those who held that God is the soul of the world. Cavendish in her 1668 *Observations* repeated her position that “God is the cause of nature, and nature the effect of God...”.<sup>513</sup>

Cavendish in her 1668 *Observations* explicitly rejected calling natural effects artificial or calling nature the “art of God”.<sup>514</sup> Hobbes in contrast to Cavendish characterized nature as being artificial and the art of God, “Nature (the art whereby God hath made and governs the

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<sup>510</sup> Cavendish 1664 *PL* Sect. I.III p 14.

<sup>511</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Further Observations* XI p 216-217.

<sup>512</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Further Observation* XX p 230.

<sup>513</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Further Observations* XI p 217.

<sup>514</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Further Observations* II p 198.

world” (1651 *Leviathan* Intro 1 C p 3). According to Cavendish in her 1668 *Observations* nature is the eternal servant of God.<sup>515</sup> Perhaps we should understand extension for Hobbes as also being the eternal servant of God. This is because extension is governed by the activity of Hobbes’ corporeal God.

Cavendish held that God is the first author of motion:

It is true, God is the first author of motion, as well as he is of nature; but I cannot believe that God should be the prime actual movent of all natural creatures, and put all things into local motion, like as one wheel in a clock turns all the rest: for, God’s power is sufficient enough to rule and govern all things by an absolute will and command, or by a “Let it be done”; and to impart self-motion to nature, to move according to his order and decree, although in a natural way.<sup>516</sup>

We find a similar theme in Hobbes, who held that God is the author of motion and that God rules over extension through his will (which is motion). Like Cavendish, Hobbes suggests that God does not put extension in motion through local motion. But unlike Cavendish, he held that God is directly responsible for the motion of the natural world.

Detlefsen has offered the following account of relationship between Cavendish’s God and nature:

Both God and nature exist eternally, but God does so as an immaterial, unmoving, atemporal, and unchanging rational being, while nature does so as a material, moving, temporal, and changing whole.<sup>517</sup>

God brings order out of an original natural chaos through rational communication with the whole of nature, and in doing so, is the ultimate source of nature’s overall harmony as well as of the normative standards through which creatures come to have ends and purposes proper to the kinds of things they are.<sup>518</sup>

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<sup>515</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Further Observations* XIV p 220.

<sup>516</sup> Cavendish 1668 *Further Observations* VII p 212.

<sup>517</sup> Detlefsen 2009 p 431.

<sup>518</sup> Detlefsen 2009 p 431.

Let us compare Detlefsen's account of the relationship between Cavendish's God and nature with Hobbes' implicit account of the relationship between God and extension. We find the following: 1) both God and extension eternally exist; 2) Hobbes' God, like Cavendish's, can be called immaterial as long as the term is not intended to stand for a non-extended substance; 3) Hobbes' God is an immaterial, perpetually moving, temporal, changing, rational being, while extension is a material, unmoving, atemporal and unchanging whole; 4) the rational activity of Hobbes' corporeal God is responsible for the order manifested by extension within the natural world; and 5) Hobbes' God, like Cavendish's, is the source of nature's overall harmony as well as the ends and purposes found within the natural world. Hobbes' implicit account of extension and God appear to have the reverse characteristics of Cavendish's explicit account of nature and God. Hobbes' extension and Cavendish's God are both unmoving, atemporal and unchanging; Hobbes' God, like Cavendish's nature, is moving, temporal and changing. According to Wilkins, Cavendish, by holding that the natural world and everything within it was material, sought to preserve a special place for God as a uniquely immaterial and unknowable presence.<sup>519</sup> Perhaps Hobbes, despite holding that God was extended, was seeking to preserve a special place for God by holding that God was motion.

One of the possible reasons why Hobbes and Cavendish arrived at such different conclusions about God's nature might be that they held different conceptions of God's 'location'. For Hobbes, God exists inside of the universe; for Cavendish, God exists outside of the universe. They also disagreed over God's activity and interaction with matter. For Cavendish, God is beyond all natural motion, is immovable and immutable and as such may not even be able to interact with nature. Hobbes, by contrast, held that God was perpetually moving and is directly affecting extension. Nonetheless, there is still some overlap: Hobbes' God is incapable of exterior motion and causality; for Hobbes, is the unfolding of God's unchanging predetermined will.

Despite the possibility that Cavendish's God is unable to interact with matter, it is generally agreed that Cavendish held that God ordered moving matter into various different forms.<sup>520</sup> Even if we assume that Cavendish held that God created self-moving intelligent matter and could interact with nature through rational suggestion, overall, Cavendish's God has a

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<sup>519</sup> Wilkins 2016 p 874.

<sup>520</sup> James 1999 p 231; Detlefsen 2009 p 430; Boyle 2018 p 123.



minimal role within the unfolding of the natural world (beyond possibly commanding the self-moving intelligent matter of nature to form itself into different configurations). In contrast, Hobbes' God plays a fundamental role in the unfolding of the natural world: without the constant presence of this corporeal God affecting extension, the natural world would cease to be manifested. In essence, Cavendish appears to have turned God into a supervisor of a self-sufficient natural world, while Hobbes appears to have made his God into a manual labourer constantly working within the universe to keep the natural world being manifested. Hobbes' corporeal God is the heart and brain of his ontological system, we could say, while Cavendish's God is an appendix to her ontological system. And while a person can live without an appendix, they cannot live without a heart and brain.

### **5.6 Hobbes and Cavendish: Comparison**

According to Detlefsen Cavendish's mature natural philosophy contained the following four features: 1) materialism; 2) plenism; 3) a non-mechanical account of change; and 4) the belief that motion must inhere in matter.<sup>521</sup> Hobbes subscribed to all four of these features. But while Hobbes held that matter is always in motion, he did not hold that this motion belongs to matter itself. Instead, the motion of matter belongs to Hobbes' corporeal God, which is present within matter. According to O'Neill, Cavendish's mature system of the 1660s contained the following five major features: 1) materialism; 2) an acceptance of total blending; 3) pan-organism and pan-psychism; 4) a continuum theory of matter; and 5) a non-mechanical account of natural change.<sup>522</sup> Let us now compare these features to Hobbes' implicit system. Hobbes proposed: 1) materialism; 4) a continuum theory of matter and 5) a non-mechanical account of natural change, but he rejected: 2) total blending; and 3) pan-organism and pan-psychism. He did not accept the concept of total blending because he steadfastly rejected co-location and held instead that his corporeal God and extension are partially mixed together. Hobbes' system does not contain pan-organicism or pan-psychism: despite Hobbes and Cavendish both holding that life and knowledge are motion, Hobbes, unlike Cavendish, did not hold that motion is sufficient for the presence of life or knowledge. The presence of life and knowledge requires specific qualities of motion being manifested within extension.

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<sup>521</sup> Detlefsen 2009 p 423-424.

<sup>522</sup> O'Neill 2001 p xxiii-xxxv.

According to James, Cavendish's natural philosophy was a response to some of the limitations of mechanism that troubled her and many of her contemporaries; she held that matter must possess some active or vital power, because she was not persuaded that all natural phenomena are mechanically explicable by appealing to the motions and impact of inert particles of matter.<sup>523</sup> Perhaps Hobbes' natural philosophy was also a response to some of the limitations of mechanism. Hobbes appears to have agreed with Cavendish that natural phenomena are not mechanically explicable by appealing to the motions and impact of inert particles of matter. But, unlike Cavendish, Hobbes rejected the view that matter must possess an active or vital power to account for natural phenomena. Instead, he appears to have relied upon the presence of his corporeal God permeating extension to account for the active or vital power which, in turn, accounts for natural phenomena. According to James, Cavendish developed an unusual form of vitalism which held that the whole of nature consists of infinite self-moving matter which in some sense thinks, and which also held that the harmoniousness of nature is the result of the self-contained properties of bodies (rather than the interaction of bodies).<sup>524</sup> While Hobbes like Cavendish held that the whole of nature consists of moving matter, he disagreed that matter is self-moving and that the harmonious nature of nature is the result of self-contained properties of bodies. For him, the motion of matter is the result of the presence of a corporeal God within matter, and the harmoniousness of nature is the result of this corporeal God's activity. As O'Neill has noted, Cavendish was not a vitalistic corpuscularian: her theory targeted all particulate theories of matter.<sup>525</sup> Hobbes also appears not to have been a vitalistic corpuscularian: his positions entail that he implicitly rejected all particulate theories of matter.

O'Neill has offered the following summary of the unique position of Cavendish's system as outlined in her *Observations*: a) Cavendish was materialistic with respect to nature and held that motion, life, perception and reason are inherent within every part of nature; b) Cavendish was distinct as a mechanist because she rejected the transference of motion and mechanism's characterization of matter as inert, inanimate, and completely characterizable in terms of geometrical properties; c) Cavendish agreed with mechanical atomists that the universe is wholly material, but in contrast to them she held to a continuum theory of matter; and d) Cavendish was different to vitalist atomists who held that nature is a

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<sup>523</sup> James 1999 p 219.

<sup>524</sup> James 1999 p 219.

<sup>525</sup> O'Neill 2001 p xxvi-xxvii.

continuum, its parts being linked in a great chain of being, as she rejected the existence of incorporeals.<sup>526</sup> A comparison with Hobbes is instructive. We find that Hobbes, like Cavendish, was materialistic with respect to nature and proposed that motion inheres within matter (given his corporeal God commitments). But Hobbes did not hold that life, perception and reason are inherent within matter: they required specific configurations of extension in motion in order to be manifested. We also find that Hobbes, like Cavendish, had a distinct take on mechanism, given that he rejected the transference of motion; unlike Cavendish, however, Hobbes embraced mechanism's characterization of matter as inert, inanimate and completely characterizable in terms of geometrical properties. We find that Hobbes, like Cavendish, agreed with mechanical atomists that the universe is wholly material but, like Cavendish, disagreed with mechanical atomists and proposed a continuum theory of matter. Finally, we find that, like Cavendish, Hobbes differed with vitalist atomists by denying that nature is a continuum. Cavendish's ontological system was unusual within the contours of wider 17<sup>th</sup> century debates.<sup>527</sup> Nonetheless, it shares many characteristics with Hobbes' equivalent. Cavendish's materialism has been characterized in different ways as "animist materialism" but more commonly as "vitalist/vitalistic materialism".<sup>528</sup> With this in mind perhaps we should characterize Hobbes' position as vitalist/vitalistic extended substance dualism. I have sought to establish that engagement with Cavendish's writings helps to illuminate Hobbes' implicit positions in particular how his God's corporeal God could affect extension to manifest change as well. It does not appear that Hobbes' philosophy was derivative of Cavendish's writings nor vice versa. Instead, Hobbes and Cavendish's respective writings appear to have areas of overlap because they emerged out of a common milieu. Now that I have established the contemporary context for Hobbes' writings, I will turn to a possible ancient source for his thought: Stoicism.

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<sup>526</sup> O'Neill 2001 p xxxvi.

<sup>527</sup> O'Neill 2001 p xxxvi.

<sup>528</sup> Hutton 1997 p 421; James 1999 p 219; O'Neill 2001 p xix; Broad 2009a p 44; Sarasohn 2010 p 15; Wilkins 2016 p 863.

## CHAPTER SIX

### HOBBS AND THE STOICS

#### 6.1 Introduction

Hobbes' God is an eternally moving intelligent designer who exists throughout the plenum of extension, whose activity is manifested as diversity within this plenum, but who remains distinct to extension. It appears that Hobbes implicitly held that God possess heterogeneity. In this chapter, I will compare and contrast Hobbes' implicit and explicit positions with Stoicism – in particular, its attempt to account for diversity. To this end, I will principally be comparing and contrasting Hobbes' account of the presence and activity of his corporeal God within extension to the role, presence and activity of the Stoics' God-within-matter. I will also be exploring the similarity between Hobbes' account of fate and Stoicism's account of fate. I will secondarily be comparing and contrasting Hobbes' general approach to religion with Stoicism's approach to God. My principal focus is on the purpose of Stoicism's God rather than the terminology which they used. I will then turn to particular points in common between Hobbes and Stoicism: how both systems exhibit “monistic” and “dualistic” tendencies; that the natural world is the result of God affecting a passive principle; and their approach to existence and incorporeals. Following this will I focus on the parallels and differences between Stoicism's Two Principles and Hobbes' God and extension. A key difference between their systems was the characterization of God in biological terms; the Stoics characterized their God in biological terms while Hobbes did not.

Another key difference is that Hobbes and Stoicism disagreed on how God and the passive principle mix; for the Stoics, this mixture involved “total blending”, while for Hobbes this mixture was “partial”. (Hobbes' position on mixing appears to have been more than a juxtaposition but less than total blending.) I will then point out the similarity between the Stoic and Hobbesian understanding of the natural world's existence: the natural world is necessitated by the constant conjunction of two everlasting principles. Hobbes appears to have distinguished more forcefully between the existence of these principles than the Stoics, because he held they only partially mix. Nonetheless, for both Hobbes and Stoicism, individuals are comprised of both God and the passive principle. I will then turn to the similarity between Hobbes and Stoicism's identification of causality with providence, as well as their distinct understanding of providence: for Hobbes' providence is a linear series

of events, while for the Stoics it is an endless loop. Given the similarities between Hobbes and Stoicism I will explore the different ways that the Stoic system can be characterized and the effect that this has on how we should characterize Hobbes' system.

## **6.2 Similarities between Hobbes' Ontology and Stoicism**

Stoic ontology exhibits both "monistic" tendencies, which is the belief that reality is comprised of a single substance, and "dualistic" tendencies, which is the belief that reality is comprised of two substances.<sup>529</sup> The Stoics were not strict monists: they did not hold that everything including God proceeds from and is ultimately reducible to matter as the sole basic constituent of reality. But neither were they strict dualists: they held that matter and God have in common crucial physical properties because they are both bodies.<sup>530</sup> Hobbes' ontology also exhibits both "monistic" tendencies, because he held that reality consists of only extended substances, but also "dualistic" tendencies, because he held that reality is comprised of two extended substances. Like the Stoics, Hobbes was not a strict monist, because he did not hold that his God was reducible to matter, nor was he a strict dualist, because he held that God and matter share the physical properties of being extended. For the Stoics, the cosmos is the result of God affecting a passive principle (matter), and God's continuous activity is responsible for all change inside the universe; the passive principle underlines all change undergone by the cosmos in its various phases.<sup>531</sup> Hobbes also seems to have held that the natural world is the result of God affecting a passive principle (extension). Extension, for Hobbes, underlines all changes caused by the continuous activity of God.

The powers of the Stoic god are limited: 1) as a formative force he guarantees the purpose and the ordering of the good which is present in the cosmos; 2) as a rational force he incorporates the laws of rationality; and 3) as a physical force he incorporates the laws of physics.<sup>532</sup> These positions are also true for Hobbes. His corporeal God is a rational and physical force which is directly responsible for the laws of rationality and the physical laws which are manifested in extension; and Hobbes' corporeal God also guarantees the teleology and ordering of the good which is manifested in extension. For the Stoics, god exerts his

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<sup>529</sup> Algra 2003 p 167.

<sup>530</sup> Salles 2009 p 2.

<sup>531</sup> Bénatouïl 2009 p 27; Salles 2009 p 2.

<sup>532</sup> White 2003 p 129-130; Algra 2003 p 172-173; Frede 2003 p 201; Brunschwig 2003 p 211.

providential activity within the matter it moulds and manipulates.<sup>533</sup> Hobbes' God also appears to exert its providential activity within the extension that it directly moulds and manipulates. The Stoic God can be understood as being both a superhuman mind and a thermodynamic/gravitational force-field which binds the entire universe together and endows individual things with their distinctive properties.<sup>534</sup> Hobbes' corporeal God can also be understood as a superhuman mind and a thermodynamic/gravitational force field which binds the universe together and endows individual things with their distinctive properties. Sensation, intelligence and consciousness were not emergent properties for Stoicism.<sup>535</sup> By the same token sensation, intelligence and consciousness do not appear to have been emergent properties for Hobbes – for him, something cannot come from nothing.

The Stoic understanding of the corporeality of the cosmos has both a physical and biological aspect; Stoic cosmology is also a cosmo-biology.<sup>536</sup> God for the Stoics is a physical and mental power which interpenetrates matter which makes the world a living structure; the Stoics held that the world's structure is "genetically" determined by the formulas that constitute the divine mind's causal power.<sup>537</sup> While Hobbes similarly held that his God is both a physical and mental power which interpenetrates extension, thereby manifesting the natural world, he did not hold that the natural world is "genetically" determined by the activity of a corporeal God. In contrast to Stoicism, Hobbes seems to have held that while his corporeal God was a physical and mental power, it mechanically determines the world's structure. Stoic physics comprises what we today understand as physics, cosmology, rational psychology and theology; Stoic physics is both the scientific investigation of natural phenomena and the metaphysical interpretation of the universe.<sup>538</sup> The Stoics theology, as part of their physics, was focused on the overall coherence, teleology and providential design of the cosmos, rather than the purely physical aspects of the cosmos; it focused on the governing principle.<sup>539</sup> As previously established, despite Hobbes' explicit exclusion of God from science, he seems to have relied upon a conception of God to determine the probability of physical theories. Given that Hobbes implicitly held that his God was motion,

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<sup>533</sup> Salles 2009 p 5.

<sup>534</sup> Long 1999 p 84; Sellars 2006 p 97-99.

<sup>535</sup> Sellars 2011 p 132.

<sup>536</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 173; Davidson 1907 p 3; Hahm 1977 p 91; Sellars 2006 p 96; Salles 2009 p 1; For more on the biological character of Stoic physics see Hahm 1977.

<sup>537</sup> Long 1999 p 84; White 2003 p 133.

<sup>538</sup> Davidson 1907 p 48; p 84; White 2003 p 125.

<sup>539</sup> Long 1999 p 84; Algra 2003 p 153; Brunschwig 2003 p 208.

his physics – like Stoicism’s – was concerned with overall coherence, teleology and providential design of the cosmos.

The Stoics took as the criterion of existence the capacity of acting or being acted upon, which they exclusively reserved for bodies.<sup>540</sup> They held that bodies have the capacity of acting on or being acted upon, which leaves open the possibility that some bodies are only passive while others are only active.<sup>541</sup> It appears that the Stoics – like Hobbes – exclusively used the term substance in relation to matter.<sup>542</sup> According to Diogenes Laertius’ the Stoics had different definitions of a body:

....that which is extended in three dimensions, length, breadth, and depth. This is also called solid body. But surface is the extremity of a solid body, or that which has length and breadth only without depth.<sup>543</sup>

A line is the extremity of a surface or length without breadth, or that which has length alone.<sup>544</sup>

As Hobbes put it in the 1651 *Leviathan*:

The word *body*, in the most general acceptation, signifieth that which filleth or occupieth some certain room or imagined place, and dependeth not on the imagination, but is a real part of that we call the *universe*.<sup>545</sup>

Stoic ontology is unusual. Despite maintaining that bodies (corporeal substances) are the only substances which actually exist in the universe, the Stoics also believed that incorporeals have some form of existence. Stoic ontology admitted both bodies, which are “existent beings”, and incorporeals – non-corporeal substances which, while they are not “existent beings”, are not nothing.<sup>546</sup> The Stoics used the genus “something” for what is real.<sup>547</sup> Stoic incorporeals include void (which is an empty place), place and time (which are conditions of physical processes) and what is sayable (certain logical entities that exist only

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<sup>540</sup> Hahm 1977 p 38; Frede 2003 p 183; Brunschwig 2003 p 210; Sellars 2006 p 82.

<sup>541</sup> Brunschwig 2003 p 210.

<sup>542</sup> Hahm 1977 p 40.

<sup>543</sup> DL II: VII.135 p 239.

<sup>544</sup> DL II: VII.135 p 239.

<sup>545</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part III Ch XXXIV, 2, C p 261.

<sup>546</sup> Brunschwig 2003 p 220.

<sup>547</sup> Brunschwig 2003 p 213.

in thought, such as predicates and propositions).<sup>548</sup> It is important to note that there is a contradiction within Stoicism with regards to incorporeals: despite recognizing the quasi-existence of incorporeals, Stoicism held that “...something incorporeal cannot act nor be acted upon”.<sup>549</sup> But if incorporeals cannot affect bodies or be affected by bodies, how does time affect a body? Imagine a banana; as a seed is affected by time it grows into banana. A banana then ages until it eventually becomes rotten. But if, as the Stoics maintain, time is an incorporeal and an incorporeal cannot act on a body, how does the seed eventually become a rotten banana? Hobbes seems to have avoided this problem by holding that time is motion. For Hobbes, motion affects extension in order to manifest the appearance of a seed turning into a banana and then rotting. Hobbes appears to have been a stronger corporealist than the Stoics, given that he completely denied the existence of non-corporeal substances, in any shape or form. For Hobbes, physical processes like place and time, as well as logical entities, are manifestations of motion within extension and he completely denied that voids have any kind of existence. As has been established, based on Hobbes’ implicit and explicit treatment of his corporeal God thesis, everything which exists is either extension or the effects of motion being manifested in extension.

### 6.3 Stoicism’s Two Principles versus Hobbes’ God and Extension

As Diogenes Laertius summarizes, the Stoics

...hold that there are two principles in the universe, the active and the passive. The passive principle, then, is a substance without quality, *i.e.* matter, whereas the active is the reason inherent in this substance, that is God.<sup>550</sup>

For the Stoics, then, matter is unqualified substance and God is rational principle; matter is passive while God is active.<sup>551</sup> As has been established, there is a similar structure in relation to Hobbes’ two substances. Hobbes held that extension is both passive and unqualified and that his corporeal God is active and rational. Diogenes Laertius’ account of Stoicism’s two principles indicates that the Stoics held that their principles were incorporeals:

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<sup>548</sup> For more on time being an incorporeal for the Stoics see DL II: VII.141 p 245; Hahm 1977 p 5; White 2003 p 128-129.

<sup>549</sup> White 2003 p 131.

<sup>550</sup> DL II: VII.134 p 239.

<sup>551</sup> Stock 1908 p 75; Hahm 1977 p 29; White 2003 p 125; Brunschwig 2003 p 210; Sellars 2006 p 82.



There is a difference, according to them, between principles and elements; the former being without generation or destruction, whereas the elements are destroyed when all things are resolved into fire. Moreover, the principles are incorporeal and destitute of form, while the elements have been endowed with form.<sup>552</sup>

But as Hahm, Long, Brunschwig and Frede have noted, the Stoics described both of their principles as physical bodies.<sup>553</sup> Hobbes, like the Stoics, maintained that his two substances are physical, extended, bodies. The Stoics claimed that their principles are ungenerated, imperishable and are limited in amount.<sup>554</sup> Similarly, Hobbes held that his God and extension are ungenerated and imperishable – because his principles entail that God and matter are both eternal. Unlike the Stoics, Hobbes does not appear to have suggested that his two substances are limited in amount, at least as regards God. Hobbes' God appears to have been unlimited, given Hobbes' principle that motion produces nothing but motion.

According to Diogenes Laertius, the Stoics characterized God's activity as a creative fire:

Nature in their view is an artistically working fire, going on its way to create; which is equivalent to a fiery, creative, or fashioning breath.<sup>555</sup>

While the Stoics characterized the activity of their God as an artist, Hobbes characterized God as a designer. (Hobbes also held that God's breath is responsible for life.) Nonetheless, as Algra has noted, the Stoics inferred the existence of God through a design argument:

In general, it is claimed that although god is not directly perceptible, his existence can be inferred, on some minimal reflection, from the orderly, beautiful, and beneficent structure of the world.<sup>556</sup>

The same principle is at play within Hobbes' inference of God's existence: for Hobbes, God is not directly perceptible but God's existence can be inferred from the Moving Designer argument. According to Zellar, the Stoics held: 1) that matter cannot move nor fashion itself; 2) that the world could not be perfect and complete unless reason was inherent in it; 3) that the world could not contain any beings possessing consciousness unless there was

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<sup>552</sup> DL II: VII.134 p 239.

<sup>553</sup> Hahm 1977 p 32 footnote 12; Long 1999 p 84; Frede 2003 p 183; Brunschwig 2003 p 210-211.

<sup>554</sup> Hahm 1977 footnote 32 p 32; Algra 2003 p 166; Frede 2003 p 183.

<sup>555</sup> DL II: VII.156 p 261.

<sup>556</sup> Algra 2003 p 161; p 157-161.

consciousness within; and 4) the world could produce no creatures endowed with a soul and reason unless it were itself endowed with a soul and reason.<sup>557</sup> All of these positions are equally true for Hobbes.

As Diogenes Laertius summarized, in relation to the Stoics' understanding of God:

[t]he deity, they say, is a living being, immortal, rational, perfect or intelligent in happiness, admitting nothing evil [into him], taking providential care of the world and all that therein is, but he is not of human shape. He is, however, the artificer of the universe and, as it were, the father of all, both in general and in that particular part of him which is all-pervading, and which is called many names according to its various powers.<sup>558</sup>

Hobbes' God also seems to be a living, immortal, rational, perfect and intelligent being, and Hobbes also held that God admits no evil to himself: God cannot sin; thus it seems logical to assume that Hobbes' God possess no evil either. Just as the Stoic God is not of human shape, neither is Hobbes', and in both systems God takes providential care of the world. Hobbes' God, like the Stoics', is all pervading and is the artificer of the universe; both Hobbes and the Stoics used the term 'father' in relation to God. We find further similarities in terms of how both Hobbes and the Stoics understand matter. Diogenes Laertius tells us that: "[t]he primary matter they make the substratum of all things",<sup>559</sup> and that "by matter is meant that out of which anything whatsoever is produced."<sup>560</sup> As he also writes:

Both substance and matter are terms used in a twofold sense as they signify (1) universal or (2) particular substance or matter. The former neither increases nor diminishes, while the matter of particular things both increases and diminishes.<sup>561</sup> Body according to them is substance which is finite.<sup>562</sup>

Matter can also be acted upon, as the same author says, for it were immutable, the things which are produced would never have been produced out of it. Hence the further doctrine that matter is divisible *ad infinitum*.<sup>563</sup>

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<sup>557</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 138-139.

<sup>558</sup> DL II: VII.147 p 251.

<sup>559</sup> DL II: VII.150 p 255.

<sup>560</sup> DL II: VII.150 p 255.

<sup>561</sup> DL II: VII.150 p 255.

<sup>562</sup> DL II: VII.150 p 255.

As has been established, Hobbes also held the same positions regarding extension. For him, extension is entirely unqualified yet is capable of receiving any quality. Extension is infinitely divisible and is the material of which everything is comprised. Hobbes seems to have implicitly held that there is a finite amount of extension, given Hobbes' principle that motion produces nothing but motion. Hobbes' God as motion cannot create extension, and extension, given its inherent passivity, is incapable of producing more extension. While the Stoics held that matter is constantly in motion, they held that motion is not a property of matter but is the result of matter's constant conjunction with pneuma.<sup>564</sup> Hobbes' similarly held that while matter is constantly in motion this motion is not a property of matter but is the result of matter's constant conjunction with his corporeal God.

As Gorham has pointed out, in relation to Hobbes' account of his corporeal God in his *Answer* (EW IV p 309-310) and Diogenes Laertius' account of God's role in Stoic physics (II: VII.134 p 239):

The parallels are striking. Both passages identify God with a special kind of corporeal substance that produces the diversity among familiar bodies or elements by acting on passive and undifferentiated matter. Furthermore, in both schemes the divine body operates by thoroughly pervading ordinary matter (though Hobbes denies this involves complex mixing...). Finally, both conceive of the divine body as conscious or at least intelligent.<sup>565</sup>

As Gorham also notes, there is a difference between how the Stoic God and Hobbesian God affect matter with regards to their respective analogies:

On the Stoics' biological metaphor, God acts like the seed in seminal fluid; on Hobbes's chemical metaphor, God is the catalyst (mineral water) in a sort of cosmic cocktail.<sup>566</sup>

As Diogenes Laertius summarizes the Stoics' account of God's activity:

In the beginning he was by himself; he transformed the whole of substance through air into water, and just as in animal generation the seed has a moist vehicle, so in

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<sup>563</sup> DL II: VII.150 p 255.

<sup>564</sup> Long 1999 p 84.

<sup>565</sup> Gorham 2013b p 38.

<sup>566</sup> Gorham 2013b p 38.

cosmic moisture God, who is the seminal reason of the universe, remains, behind in the moisture as such an agent, adapting matter to himself with a view to the next stage of creation.<sup>567</sup>

As Hahm noted, a birth is being described here, in an account that bristles with biological terms: the Stoic god is compared to the seed in the seminal fluid.<sup>568</sup> The Stoics held that God is endowed with inherent productive/creative power (seminal reasons which are germs of future existences endowed with a productive capacity of realisation, change and phenomenal succession) which manifests itself in the various phenomena of the universe.<sup>569</sup> For the Stoics, the *spermatikoi logoi* are the formulae or principles contained in the seed of anything which determines the biological and psychological aspects of animals.<sup>570</sup>

We find a parallel between the Stoics' claim that their god leaves behind a portion of itself within matter (with a view to later adapting matter for the next stage of creation) and Hobbes' claim in regards to God's activity in the creation of new life, in his 1678 *DP* (Ch. X EW VII p 176-177). Just as the Stoic God lies within matter waiting to adapt matter for the next stage of creation, so too does Hobbes' God. While Hobbes did not use biological language, given his acceptance of the principle that something cannot be produced from nothing, nonetheless, his corporeal God must possess biological characteristics. The motion that is responsible for the manifestation of an individual functions in a similar fashion to the Stoics *spermatikoi logoi*: for Hobbes this motion is responsible for an individual's biological and physical characteristics. There is a similar dynamic between the Stoic account of the human mind and the one which have I suggested we can find in Hobbes' implicit approach. The Stoics held that the activity of their God (*pneuma*) is responsible for the human mind.<sup>571</sup> Frede has offered this account of how the Stoics account for individuation:

There is no pre-existing divine plan or secret decree of fate that gives each being its place and role. Instead, in every object in the world, there is some portion of the divine element that accounts for its behaviour. This portion of the inner *pneuma*

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<sup>567</sup> DL II: VII.136 p 241.

<sup>568</sup> Hahm 1977 p 60.

<sup>569</sup> Davidson 1907 p 88.

<sup>570</sup> Hahm 1977 p 76.

<sup>571</sup> Wenley 1924 p 85.

does not represent a foreign element. The active element in us *is* our personality...<sup>572</sup>

Hobbes, in contrast to the Stoics, appears to have accepted the notion of a pre-existing divine plan or decree of fate, given his apparent embrace of pre-destination. But as in Stoicism, individual identity, despite being some portion of the corporeal God, is not a foreign element. The motion of Hobbes' corporeal God is what is responsible for an individual's identity and personality. It seems that Hobbes shared with Stoicism the position that individual human minds are manifestations of the divine mind.

How do the Stoic and Hobbesian Gods mix with their respective passive substance? According to Diogenes Laertius, the two main Stoic principles (God and matter) mix thus:

Hence, again, their explanation of the mixture of two substances is, according to Chrysippus in the third book of his *Physics*, that they permeate each other through and through, and that the particles of the one do not merely surround those of the other or lie beside them.<sup>573</sup>

The Stoics held that God penetrates matter in a total mixture: pneuma is so tenuous and dynamic that it completely interpenetrates matter, with the result that bodies and pneuma occupy exactly the same place, and so God and matter are co-extended.<sup>574</sup> As we have seen, Hobbes in his *Answer* (EW IV p 309-310) rejected the co-extension of the corporeal God and extension and instead maintained that they partially mixed together.

Bearing this in mind, let us now compare Hobbes' partial mixture of his corporeal God and extension to Stoicism's different theories of mixing. According to the Stoics, two material entities can be mixed together in three different ways: 1) "juxtaposition" (*parathesis*); 2) "fusion" (*sunkrisis di'holon*); and 3) "total blending" (*krasis di'holon*).<sup>575</sup> For the Stoics, "juxtaposition" is when two or more entities are mixed together but continue to exist distinctly to one another. So, despite being together, each constituent involved in the mixing preserves its own nature and quality. Such a mixing can be illustrated through the analogy of

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<sup>572</sup> Frede 2003 p 202.

<sup>573</sup> DL II: VII.151 p 255.

<sup>574</sup> Hahm 1977 p 32; Salles 2009 p 5.

<sup>575</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 131-133; footnote 1 p 132; White 2003 p 147-148; Sellars 2006 p 88-89.

mixing salt and sugar in a bowl: although combined, they preserve their own qualities and exist separately to one another. For the Stoics, “fusion” is a mixture in which two or more entities are mixed together and cease to exist independently because a new entity is created. Such a mixing occurs in the process of cooking, for example. For the Stoics “total blending” involves the interpenetration of two or more bodies in such a way that each preserves its own nature and qualities despite being together in such a way that every part of the mixture contains the other entity. This “total blending” involves the acceptance of co-location: each of the original entities retains its own distinctive properties which in theory can be extracted from each other.

The mixture of Hobbes’ God and extension does not correspond to any of Stoicism’s theories of mixing. It cannot be a juxtaposition: if it were, extension would never manifest any of the qualities of Hobbes’ God. Nor can it be a fusion of two substances: Hobbes distinguished between the existence of matter and God; and he held that motion produces nothing but motion. So the natural world, for Hobbes, cannot be the result of God and extension respectively being destroyed and giving rise to something new. Furthermore, the mixture of Hobbes’ God and extension does not appear to be a total blending: Hobbes did not accept co-location; his God and extension never occupy the same location. Hobbes’ theory of partial mixture between his God and extension appears to have been a cross between Stoicism’s concept of juxtaposition and total blending. As in juxtaposition, Hobbes’ God (despite being mixed with extension) continues to have a distinct spatial existence to extension. Yet it is more than a juxtaposition, because Hobbes’ God thoroughly permeates extension. Nonetheless, it is not a total blending, given Hobbes’ rejection of co-location. The relationship between Hobbes’ God and extension can be grasped through the analogy of a sponge in water. The mixture of water and a sponge can be understood as more than a juxtaposition, but is less than a total blending. It is also more than merely a surface mixing: water permeates the sponge. But the mixture of water and a sponge is not a total blending: the water involved does not occupy the exact same location as the sponge. In relation to this analogy, Hobbes’ God is the water while extension is the sponge. Hobbes’ God, like water permeating a sponge, permeates extension in such a way that is more than a surface meaning but is less than co-location.

## 6.4 Stoic and Hobbesian Understanding of the Natural World

The Stoics held that:

[t]he world has no empty space within, but forms one united whole. This is a necessary result of the sympathy and tension which binds together things in heaven and earth.<sup>576</sup>

The unity and cohesion of the cosmos was a function of their god, and the activity of their god was typically identified with fate.<sup>577</sup> The Stoic cosmos is characterized by a seamless radical continuity, in keeping with their anti-corpuscularianism: they did not believe that matter is composed of tiny particles.<sup>578</sup> Hobbes' universe also appears to have been characterized by a seamless radical continuity, because it is a plenum. Hobbes implicitly held that the appearance of tiny particles is the result of motion affecting the plenum of extension to give the illusion of tiny particles. Hobbes seems to have held that all things within the universe are united due to the presence of his God throughout the plenum of extension. The Stoics held that the world's existence is necessitated by the constant conjunction of the two everlasting principles, God and matter.<sup>579</sup> Hobbes also held that the natural world's existence is necessitated by the constant conjunction of two everlasting principles, the corporeal God and extension. Given the constant conjunction of Stoicism's two principles it is unclear how they relate to one another: are they two bodies in a total mixture or two aspects of a single unified body?<sup>580</sup> For Baltzly, the Stoics' two principles were not separate bodies, but were descriptions or aspects of every natural object.<sup>581</sup> According to Hensely, the Stoics held that matter constitutes natural objects and that God is the immanent efficient cause of these objects: God is distinct from natural objects yet is inseparable from matter.<sup>582</sup> For both Long and Gouriant, the Stoics' two principles are not wholly separate and independent but instead are bodies which never exist separately to one another.<sup>583</sup> While Hobbes' corporeal God and extension seem exist inseparably from one another, it is not possible to understand them as two aspects of a single body: by holding

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<sup>576</sup> DL II: VII.140 p 141.

<sup>577</sup> White 2003 p 138.

<sup>578</sup> White 2003 p 146.

<sup>579</sup> Long 1999 p 84.

<sup>580</sup> Sellars 2006 p 95.

<sup>581</sup> Baltzly 2003 p 10.

<sup>582</sup> Hensely 2018 p 190-191.

<sup>583</sup> Long 1999 p 84; Long 2006 p 12; Gourinant 2009 p 68.

that his God and extension only partially mix, Hobbes seems to have more forcefully separated their respective existence.

Some ancient sources note that the Stoics identified God with Nature, while others held that, for the Stoics, God is the active force within Nature.<sup>584</sup> The difficulty in distinguishing the two principles can be grasped by Diogenes Laertius' account of God's activity, as understood by the early Stoics like Zeno and Chrysippus:

Now the term Nature is used by them to mean sometimes that which holds the world together, sometimes that which causes terrestrial things to spring up. Nature is defined as a force moving of itself, producing and preserving in being its offspring in accordance with seminal principles<sup>585</sup> within definite periods, and effecting results homogenous with their sources. Nature, they hold, aims both at utility and at pleasure, as is clear from the analogy of human craftsmanship.<sup>586</sup>

The activity of Hobbes' corporeal God is identical, holding the world together, acting as terrestrial cause, moving itself, and producing and preserving creatures in accordance with its own plan.

According to Diogenes Laertius, the Stoics held that God is "everlasting and is the artificer of each several things throughout the whole extent of mater".<sup>587</sup> Hobbes' corporeal God is also the everlasting artificer of everything throughout the plenum of extension. The Stoics held that their active principle permeates its passive counterpart, determining the form and consistency of all objects in the universe.<sup>588</sup> Hobbes' corporeal God does precisely the same. According to Diogenes Laertius, the Stoics held that God exists throughout the universe but they also held that its presence is qualified:

Only there is a difference of degree; in some parts there is more of it, in others less.

For through some parts it passes as a "hold" or containing force, as is the case with

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<sup>584</sup> Sellars 2006 p 93.

<sup>585</sup> Footnote A "Or perhaps "seminal propositions". This obscure expression would seem intended to assimilate all development and evolution to the growth, whether of plants or animals, from seed (p 252).

<sup>586</sup> DL II: VII.148-149 p 253.

<sup>587</sup> DL II: VII.134 p 239.

<sup>588</sup> Hahm 1977 p 44; Frede 2003 p 183.



our bones and sinews; while through others it passes as intelligence, as in the ruling part of the soul.<sup>589</sup>

For the Stoics, *pneuma* is responsible for different degrees of tension which in turn is responsible for diversity: 1) “cohesion” (*hexis*) which is the force responsible for giving unity to a physical object; 2) “nature” (*phusis*) which is the force that is responsible for biological life in organisms such as plants; 3) “soul” (*psuche*) which is the force responsible for the life of organisms such as animals, it includes the power of perception (*impressions*), movement (*impulses*), and reproduction; and 4) “rational soul”/reason (*logike psuche/dianoia*) that generates the qualities of rationality, which is only found in humans.<sup>590</sup>

Hobbes, like the Stoics, held that God is present throughout the plenum of extension but that its presence is qualified: despite holding that all extension is in motion, Hobbes did not hold that all extension is alive, sensitive or rational. The activity of Hobbes’ corporeal God is also responsible for the cohesion manifested within extension, as well as biological, sensitive and rational qualities.

Hobbes, like the Stoics, held that humans are unique because they possess the power to reason using language. The Stoics accounted for the identity of individual beings by referencing the “sustaining” power of a thing’s internal *pneuma*.<sup>591</sup> So, for the Stoics, the identity of particular beings (animate or inanimate) is ultimately a function of God’s activity being manifested in matter. As has been previously established, the same principle applies within Hobbes’ ontological system: the identity of a particular object within Hobbes’ universe is determined by its internal motion. As long as the extension involved continues to be affected by motion in the same way, then that object will continue to exist. So, for both the Stoics and Hobbes, the existence of a chair is the result of extension being affected by their respective gods in a particular way. When their respective God affects extension differently the chair will cease to exist. The identity of particular objects is tied not to the extension involved but to the activity of their respective God. For the Stoics, even if the world was frozen, God’s activity would be responsible for the existence of the frozen

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<sup>589</sup> DL II: VII.138 p 243.

<sup>590</sup> Davidson 1907 p 89; Frede 2003 p 185; Long 2006 p 12; Sellars 2006 p 91-92; p 105.

<sup>591</sup> Long 2006 footnote 12 p 27.

world.<sup>592</sup> The same principle is at play within Hobbes' corporeal God writings: if Hobbes' God could be separated from the frozen world, then the extension of the world would be reduced to its natural undifferentiated state.

The Stoics conceived their God as both a body and a spirit; loosely stated, "spirit" for the Stoics meant air in motion.<sup>593</sup> Hobbes in a similar fashion held that God can be called both a body and a spirit – and, of course, his God is in motion. The Stoics held that extension was essential to body, but that shape was not.<sup>594</sup> While it might seem strange that Hobbes could hold that God could be both corporeal and formless, there is a parallel in Diogenes Laertius's account (DL II: VII.134 p 239) of the Stoics' suggestion that God is corporeal yet formless. Algra suggests that the Stoics may have held that their God "assumes" a form as soon as he interacts with matter and thus gives shape to the cosmos and its parts.<sup>595</sup> Hobbes, in his list of honorific attributes, stated that God should not be attributed figure, parts or place.<sup>596</sup> This means that, in a sense, Hobbes' God is corporeal yet shapeless. In order to illustrate this, imagine what is entailed by Hobbes' understanding of a cat. The existence of a cat is the result of particular sensible qualities being manifested in extension by the activity of Hobbes' God. A cat has a particular figure, parts and place. But the extension and motion involved do not have their own figure, parts or place independently of one another: if could we separate the motion from the extension involved, the appearance of the cat's figure, parts and place would cease to be manifested; the extension involved would be reduced to its natural state of undifferentiated extension, while motion (unless it has extension within which it is manifested) is invisible. In order to illustrate this imagine a sculpture of a cat formed from a block of ice. The water itself has no shape. The shape of the cat is the result of low temperature affecting the water. But the temperature involved has no shape either. Despite this, the low temperature affecting the water results in the appearance of the cat shape. When the temperature warms it alters the ice, which causes the water involved to revert back to its original shapeless form. If there was no water for the low temperature to affect, the shape of the cat would never be manifested. But by the same token if there was no low temperature, the water would never manifest the shape of the cat either.

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<sup>592</sup> Bénatouïl 2009 p 27-28.

<sup>593</sup> Stock 1908 p 76-77.

<sup>594</sup> Stock 1908 p 80.

<sup>595</sup> Algra 2003 p 166.

<sup>596</sup> Hobbes 1650 (1647) *Citizen* Ch XV.14 EW II p 214-215; 1651 *Leviathan* Part II Ch xxxi, 18-22, C p 239-240.

Within this analogy Hobbes' corporeal God performs the role of a sculptor and temperature as extension performs the role of water.

According to Diogenes Laertius, the early Stoics like Zeno and Chrysippus held that:

...the whole world is a living being, endowed with soul and reason...<sup>597</sup>

The doctrine that the world is a living being, rational, animate and intelligent, is laid down by Chrysippus...<sup>598</sup>

It is a living thing in the sense of an animate substance endowed with sensation; for animal is better than non-animal, and nothing is better than the world, *ergo* the world is a living being. And it is endowed with soul, as is clear from our several souls being each a fragment of it. Boethus, however, denies that the world is a living thing.<sup>599</sup>

While the early Stoics such as Zeno and Chrysippus held that the whole cosmos is a living, ensouled and rational being, later Stoics like Boethus denied that the world is a living being.<sup>600</sup> Hobbes, unlike the early Stoics, denied that the whole cosmos possessed life, sensitivity and rationality; while he held that his God possesses life, sensation and reason, and that God exists throughout the plenum of extension, Hobbes did not hold that life, sensation and rationality exist throughout the plenum. Thus, for Hobbes, the whole cosmos is not a living, ensouled and rational being. According to Diogenes Laertius, the Stoics held that individual souls are fragments of the world soul: "And it is endowed with soul, as is clear from our several souls being each a fragment of it."<sup>601</sup> For the Stoics, the human soul is *pneuma* and is a fragment of the *pneuma* that constitutes God's soul, while the human body is a fragment of the matter that constitutes the cosmic body.<sup>602</sup> The same principle is at play in Hobbes' ontological system. For Hobbes, motion produces nothing but motion; and since Hobbes' God is motion and individual souls are motion, so individual souls seem to be manifestations of his God. Or in the words of the above quotation, individual souls are

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<sup>597</sup> DL II: VII.138 p 243.

<sup>598</sup> DL II: VII.143 p 247.

<sup>599</sup> DL II: VII.143 p 247.

<sup>600</sup> DL II: VII.138 p 243; VII.143 p 247.

<sup>601</sup> DL II: VII.143 p 247.

<sup>602</sup> Sellars 2006 p 104.

fragments of the corporeal God, while the bodies of individuals are fragments of the matter that constitute the larger plenum of extension that comprises the universe.

For the Stoics, according to Diogenes Laertius,

...the soul is a nature capable of perception. And they regard it as the breath of life, congenital with us; from which they infer first that it is a body and secondly that it survives death. Yet it is perishable, though the soul of the universe, of which the individual souls of animals are parts, is indestructible.<sup>603</sup>

Zeno defined the soul as a warm breath, through which we become animate and able to move.<sup>604</sup> For the Stoics, the soul resides in every part of the body, but the soul is not identical to the body.<sup>605</sup> Hobbes similarly held that the soul is the breath of God which animates the extension that is our body. The soul, for Hobbes, similarly resides in every part of the body but is not identical to the body. According to Diogenes Laertius, there was disagreement within Stoicism over whether individual souls continue to exist after death until the general conflagration.<sup>606</sup> If the Stoics held that individual souls continue to exist after death, then Hobbes' position was different to Stoicism. But, on the other hand, if the Stoics held that the soul dies until the general conflagration, then there is a similarity to Hobbes' position, which was the soul is dead until it is resurrected by God at Judgement Day.

## 6. 5 Causality as Providence

According to Diogenes Laertius, for the Stoics all things happen by fate, understood as “an endless chain of causation, whereby things are, or as the reason or formula by which the world goes on.”<sup>607</sup> At the same time, the Stoics also held the world was “ordered by reason and providence... inasmuch as reason pervades every part of it, just as does the soul in us”.<sup>608</sup> As Diogenes Laertius states: “God is one and the same with Reason, Fate, and Zeus; he is also called by many other names.”<sup>609</sup> In short, the Stoics combined rigid causal determinism with divine providence; fate is a continuous string of causes which is

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<sup>603</sup> DL II: VII.156 p 261.

<sup>604</sup> DL II: VII.156 p 261.

<sup>605</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 131.

<sup>606</sup> DL II: VII.156 p 261; Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 205-206.

<sup>607</sup> DL II: VII.149 p 253.

<sup>608</sup> DL II: VII.138 p 243.

<sup>609</sup> DL II: VII.135 p 241.

administered by mind and providence.<sup>610</sup> In similar vein, Hobbes appears to have combined causal determinism with divine providence. In both *Leviathan* and *De Corpore*, Hobbes inferred the goodness and wisdom of his God.<sup>611</sup> I agree with Gorham that, based on Hobbes' understanding of what constitutes goodness, what Hobbes' God wills is good. As Hobbes puts it, famously: "Whatsoever is the object of any man's appetite or desire that is it for his part which he calleth *good*".<sup>612</sup> As Gorham has suggested, based on this point:

...God's will or appetite is simply the power and knowledge by which he accomplishes everything. So God's operation is directed at and achieves the "good" for the simple reason that he wills and produces the successive states of the whole world. And since we are an important part of this world, he likewise wills the good for us.<sup>613</sup>

We might note, as well, that in his list of honourable attributes, in *Citizen* and in the *Leviathan*, Hobbes explicitly criticised those who claim that God does not care for the world.<sup>614</sup>

For the Stoics, the world is a harmonious whole governed by God; the Stoics believed in theological determinism because they identified divine reason with fate.<sup>615</sup> Hobbes shared this position, it seems: he was clear that (his) God is responsible for causality.<sup>616</sup> The Stoics held that the purpose manifested in the cosmos is identifiable with active substance (as they understood it).<sup>617</sup> Hobbes similarly held that the purpose manifested in the cosmos is identifiable with God's activity: he identified God's will/providence with universal and material causality. For the Stoics, since their god is not locally removed from the movement he causes, it makes no difference to say that god operates through fate, a chain of causes, or

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<sup>610</sup> White 2003 p 143; Frede 2003 p 184; Baltzly 2003 p 14-20; Long 2006 p 15; Sellars 2006 p 99-100; Salles 2009 p 1-2; Gorham 2013b p 42.

<sup>611</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch xi, 25, C p 62; 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 27.1 EW I p 447.

<sup>612</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch vi, 7, C p 28.

<sup>613</sup> Gorham 2013b p 44.

<sup>614</sup> Hobbes 1650 (1647) *Citizen* Ch XV.14 EW II p 214; 1651 *Leviathan* Part II Ch xxxi, 17, C p 239.

<sup>615</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 137-138; Long 1999 p 84; White 2003 p 143; Frede 2003 p 180; p 184; Bénatouïl 2008 p 23.

<sup>616</sup> Hobbes 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* No. XI EW V p 105; No. XXXVIII EW V p 450.

<sup>617</sup> Hahm 1977 p 44.

that god causes movement directly from within.<sup>618</sup> The same seems true for Hobbes: his God is the first eternal cause and also works through secondary causes.<sup>619</sup> Bramhall, in his 1655 *A Defense of True Liberty*, identified Hobbes' arguments for necessity with classical Stoicism; he went so far as to label Hobbes' position as being nothing more than a "rare piece of sublimated Stoicism".<sup>620</sup> Hobbes never accepted the Stoic label, denying that he had taken his opinion from the authority of the Stoic philosophers.<sup>621</sup> Despite this, Hobbes, in his 1656 *Questions*, claimed that the Stoic concept of fate was right but that their belief in the god Jupiter was false:

If they had said it had been the word of the true God, I should not have perceived anything in it to contradict; because I hold, as most Christians do, that the whole world was made, and is now governed by the word of God, which bringeth a necessity of all things and actions to depend upon the Divine disposition.<sup>622</sup>

Hobbes endorsed Lipsius' account of Stoic destiny in his *On Constancy*, asserting that "...fate is a series or order of cause depending upon the Divine counsel".<sup>623</sup> Bramhall contended that any doctrine of necessity which teaches that all events are determined by antecedently existing physical causes must ultimately make God responsible for sin in the world.<sup>624</sup> But Hobbes accepted that God was responsible for sin, following the Calvinist position that God is the cause of the physical actions that are sinful because God is the cause of all things.<sup>625</sup>

Cudworth in his *A Treatise of Freewill* (1831) also maintained that Hobbes' determinism was a recurrence of Stoicism.<sup>626</sup> Cudworth rejected the Stoic doctrine of cyclical recurrence, arguing that, not only did this rule out the possibility of human freedom, but that it turns God into a "necessary agent" unable to change any event from one cycle to another.<sup>627</sup> Christians who admired Stoicism were concerned by the tension between fate and necessity:

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<sup>618</sup> Hahm 1977 p 55.

<sup>619</sup> Hobbes 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* No. XXVIII EW V p 450.

<sup>620</sup> Bramhall 1655 *A Defence of True Liberty* IV Part III.XVIII p 116-121; IV p 20.

<sup>621</sup> Hobbes 1654 *Liberty and Necessity* EW IV p 260-261; 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity and Chance* No. XVIII EW V p 238-246.

<sup>622</sup> Hobbes 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity and Chance* No. XVIII EW V p 245.

<sup>623</sup> Hobbes 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity and Chance* No. XVIII EW V p 245.

<sup>624</sup> Brooke 2001-2002 p 103.

<sup>625</sup> Martinich 2012 p 26.

<sup>626</sup> Cudworth 1831 *A Treatise of Freewill* ch.2, 158-159 (Sellars 2012 p 936; p 938).

<sup>627</sup> Cudworth 1831 *A Treatise of Freewill* ch.3, 161 (Sellars 2012 p 938).

does fate, since it is a necessary order of causes, limit or restrict God's providence, or does God's providence determine fate – and, if so, how can fate be necessary if it is a product of God's will?<sup>628</sup> According to Zellar and Davidson, the Stoics held that everything is subject to destiny, including God: there is an unconditional dependence of everything on a universal law.<sup>629</sup> Cooper, however, suggests that the Stoics held that fate is identical with the sequences of causes that work out Zeus' providential plan for the unfolding of the natural world; Zeus' reason and plan establish and direct fate, so therefore Zeus himself is not subject to fate in any way.<sup>630</sup> If Zellar and Davidson are correct that the Stoics held that their god is bound by fate,<sup>631</sup> then Hobbes' position regarding God's will and fate is different to Stoicism. However, if Cooper is correct that fate is determined by God's will for the Stoics,<sup>632</sup> then Hobbes shared this position. According to Capes, the Stoics understood fate as the order of providence in which God unfolds his latent possibilities of being.<sup>633</sup> Hobbes held a similar position: the natural world for Hobbes is an expression of God's activity.

According to Diogenes Laertius, while the Stoics held that the universe is a plenum they admitted the existence of an infinite void outside of the universe:

Outside of the world is diffused the infinite void, which is incorporeal. By incorporeal is meant that which, though capable of being occupied by body, is not so occupied.<sup>634</sup>

The Stoics held that the void was unlimited – there can be no limit to what is immaterial and non-existent.<sup>635</sup> For the Stoics, the void ceases to be a void when it is occupied by body; while the void is bodiless itself, it has the capacity to contain a body.<sup>636</sup> Stoicism posited the existence of the incorporeal extra-cosmic void in order to account for the cycles of the universe; at the end of each cycle there is a great conflagration, after which events run their course in the exact same way as before.<sup>637</sup> According to Diogenes Laertius, the Stoics held

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<sup>628</sup> Sellars 2006 p 100.

<sup>629</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 161-162; Davidson 1907 p 222.

<sup>630</sup> Cooper 2009 p 18.

<sup>631</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 161-162; Davidson 1907 p 222.

<sup>632</sup> Cooper 2009 p 18.

<sup>633</sup> Capes 1880 p 40.

<sup>634</sup> DL II: VII.140 p 245.

<sup>635</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 192.

<sup>636</sup> Stock 1908 p 81-82; Brunschwig 2003 p 213.

<sup>637</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 155-160; Davidson 1907 p 91; Brunschwig 2003 p 207; Sellars 2006 p 97-99.

that the cosmos is bound to an endlessly unchanging repetitive cycle of birth, life and death.<sup>638</sup>

The eternal recurrence of the Stoic cosmic cycles is not a purely mechanical consequence of their determinism. Instead, the endless repetition is the result of divine rationality and providence: the Stoics held that God has no reason to modify his excellent world; the universe's determinism and the eternal recurrence of this determinism were manifestations of the all-encompassing divine reason which controls the cosmos.<sup>639</sup> While Hobbes appears to have agreed with the Stoics that God's reason is manifested in the universe through determinism, he did not embrace their concept of eternal cycles. Stock has characterized the Stoics' position in relation to their embrace of repetitive cosmic cycles in the following way: "They were content that the one drama of existence should enjoy a perpetual run without perhaps too nice a consideration for the actors."<sup>640</sup> Bearing this in mind, perhaps we should understand Hobbes' drama of existence as an eternal linear play beginning at Genesis and ending at Judgement Day.

Wenley characterizes Stoicism's need for the conflagration thus: "Eventually, too, motive-force runs down in the course of transformations, and must be restored by the reversion of all things to the primitive high tension Ether."<sup>641</sup> Hobbes, unlike the Stoics, did not have to solve the problem of accounting for the energy of his God dissipating, because he did not accept the problem of entropy. Hobbes held that motion produces nothing but motion. Thus, unlike the Stoics, Hobbes had no need for a conflagration to recharge the power of his God. In order to illustrate the difference between the two systems imagine that a battery powers their respective universes. The Stoic God functions like a rechargeable battery, while Hobbes' God functions like a perpetual battery.

The Stoics understood place as the portion of space exactly occupied by a given body at a given time.<sup>642</sup> For the Stoics, the space that a body occupies is something derivative because it is produced as a consequence of tension affecting matter.<sup>643</sup> As previously established,

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<sup>638</sup> DL II: VII.141-142 p 245-247.

<sup>639</sup> White 2003 p 143.

<sup>640</sup> Stock 1908 p 92.

<sup>641</sup> Wenley 1924 p 84.

<sup>642</sup> Brunschwig 2003 p 214.

<sup>643</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 126; p 186.



Hobbes held that place and body were identifiable with one another and that place is something derivative that does not exist outside of the mind. Place for Hobbes is a consequence of motion affecting matter. It appears that motion performed the same function for Hobbes as tension did for the Stoics. Hobbes and the Stoics disagreed on the possibility of empty space. The Stoics granted empty space a quasi-form of existence because they held it was an incorporeal. The Stoics believed in a form of the box theory of space, but they did not grant their box of space true existence: when their cosmos fully expands, the emptiness within the box ceases to have any form. So while empty space for the Stoics does have an independent existence to the corporeal universe, it does not truly exist and is not ontologically superior to bodies. Hobbes in contrast completely ruled out the possibility of any form of existence for empty space: for him, the appearance of space was a kind of shadow cast by a mind upon the plenum of extension. In order to illustrate the difference between their respective universes, imagine Hobbes' universe and the Stoic universe as both existing within a box. The box for the Stoics contains a void which surrounds the universe. But this void only has a temporary form of existence: the universe expands into the void and the void ceases to have its quasi-form of existence. At the peak of the expanse, the void is entirely occupied by the universe and ceases to have any form of existence. But as the Stoic universe contracts, the void regains its quasi-form of existence which in turn allows for the universe to expand again. For Hobbes, in contrast, the box never contains empty space: the universe always occupies the entire box. The extension of Hobbes' universe appears to be eternally spatially unmoving, unlike the extension of the Stoic universe, which eternally spatially expands and contradicts like an accordion.

## 6. 6 Reading the Stoics

There is scholarly disagreement over how Stoic ontology should be understood. According to Long and Gourinant, the Stoics were vitalists.<sup>644</sup> As White noted, what is distinctive about Stoics' vitalism is that they "...insisted that the active, life-giving, rational, creative, and directive principle of cosmos is just as corporeal as is the passive, "material" principle."<sup>645</sup> This is also true for Hobbes. If the characterization of Stoicism by White, Long and Gourinant is correct,<sup>646</sup> it also seems possible to characterize Hobbes' system as being vitalistic. According to Zellar, while the Stoics were materialists, their materialism was not

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<sup>644</sup> Long 2006 p 9; Gourinant 2009 p 68.

<sup>645</sup> White 2003 p 129.

<sup>646</sup> White 2003 p 129; Long 2006 p 9; Gourinant 2009 p 68.

mechanical; Gerson also maintains that the Stoics were materialists.<sup>647</sup> Both White and Brunschwig maintain that Stoic materialism can be understood as a form of vitalist-theological materialism.<sup>648</sup> Again, this would open the possibility of understanding Hobbes' system as a form of vitalist-theological materialism. However, according to Wenley, the Stoics were not materialists because: 1) they did not treat matter as purely mechanical and account for the activity of the universe in terms of matter according to the universal operation of motion; and, instead, 2) the animism of the time led them to the notion of a vitalizing force, which motion, life, sensation and reason inheres within, which interpenetrates everything and is the efficient cause of all that happens; and 3) Stoic physics was a pantheistic hylozoism.<sup>649</sup> In contrast to Stoicism thus understood, Hobbes did explicitly characterize matter mechanically and accounted for the activity of the universe in terms of matter according to the universal operation of motion. But Hobbes, like the Stoics, appears to have implicitly held that motion was a vitalizing force which life, sensation and reason inheres within, which interpenetrates everything, and which is the efficient cause of all that happens. If Stoicism was a form of pantheistic hylozoism, then perhaps we should understand Hobbes' physics as hylozoic extended substance dualism.

Were the Stoics Pantheists? According to Diogenes Laertius, the Stoics used the term 'universe' or 'cosmos' in different ways:

The term universe or cosmos is used by them in three senses: (1) of God himself, the individual being whose quality is derived from the whole of substance; he is indestructible and ingenerable, being the artificer of this orderly arrangement, who at stated periods of time absorbs into himself the whole of substance and again creates it from himself.<sup>650</sup>

(2) Again, they give the name of cosmos to the orderly arrangement of the heavenly bodies in itself as such; and (3) in the third place to that whole of which these two are parts.<sup>651</sup>

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<sup>647</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 138-139; Gerson 2009 p 90.

<sup>648</sup> White 2003 p 129; Brunschwig 2003 p 211.

<sup>649</sup> Wenley 1924 p 83-84; footnote 22 p 178.

<sup>650</sup> DL II: VII.137 p 241.

<sup>651</sup> DL II: VII.138 p 241-243.

For Papy and MacDonald Ross, the Stoics were pantheists who held that God is the whole world.<sup>652</sup> For Cooper, by contrast, the Stoics were not pantheists, if we understand the term pantheism as entailing that everything which exists is god: matter, for the Stoics, is not God.<sup>653</sup> For Frede, the Stoics were pantheists who held that the entire world is permeated by God; nonetheless, Stoic pantheism is not panpsychism, given that the Stoics did not hold that their God is present everywhere in the same form and does not give consciousness and reason to all things.<sup>654</sup> For Zellar, the Stoics were pantheists who thought that at the end of every conflagration the distinction between what is originally God and what is God only in a derivative sense ceases to hold.<sup>655</sup> As can be seen there are quite distinct forms of pantheism: 1) a strong pantheism for which God and the world are identical; and 2) a weak pantheism for which everything that exists makes up a unity that is considered divine. Hobbes does not appear to have been a pantheist under Papy's and MacDonald Ross' criteria.<sup>656</sup> Nor does Hobbes appear to have been a pantheist under Zellar's criteria.<sup>657</sup> Hobbes always seems to distinguish his corporeal God and extension.

I agree with Glover and Gillespie that Hobbes cannot have been a pantheist, because his God is not identical with the world; instead, Hobbes' God acts and commands the world.<sup>658</sup> However, if we use Frede's criteria then Hobbes does seem to have been a pantheist, but not a panpsychist:<sup>659</sup> despite holding that God is everywhere, Hobbes did not hold that his God was present everywhere in the same form. Hobbes apparent rejection of panpsychism allows him to hold that, despite all bodies being in motion, not all bodies possesses life, sensation and thought. I agree with Gorham that under the weaker criteria of what constitutes pantheism, Hobbes was a pantheist.<sup>660</sup> The weaker understanding of pantheism appears to be reconcilable with Glover's and Gillespie's respective positions.<sup>661</sup> Hobbes' God as motion acts and commands the natural world without being identical to the world: God is not the extension of the world.

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<sup>652</sup> Papy 2001-2002 p 69; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 151.

<sup>653</sup> Cooper 2009 footnote 22 p 29.

<sup>654</sup> Frede 2003 p 185.

<sup>655</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 149-151.

<sup>656</sup> Papy 2001-2002 p 69; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 151.

<sup>657</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 149-151.

<sup>658</sup> Glover 1960 p 293; Gillespie 2009 p 352.

<sup>659</sup> Frede 2003 p 185.

<sup>660</sup> Gorham 2013b p 40.

<sup>661</sup> Glover 1960 p 293; Gillespie 2009 p 352.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### HOBBS' SYSTEM: STOICISM RECONFIGURED OR CHRISTIAN HERESY?

#### 7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will explore whether or not we should understand Hobbes' ontological system as a reconfiguration of Stoicism's core ontological principles. I will compare and contrast the fundamental characteristic of their respective Gods' relationship to matter. Following this I will point out the general similarities in their approaches to religion. I will then explore the unacknowledged influence of Stoicism – in particular, it is possible influence on Cavendish's and Hobbes' respective systems. Given the similarity between Hobbes' system and Stoicism, I will explore how Hobbes' system should be understood under Cudworth's criteria of Stoic theism and atheism; this is especially important because of the vital role that Cudworth's *TIS* played in delineating whether Stoicism should be understood as form of theism or atheism. Following this I will offer my view on whether or not we should hold that Hobbes' system was derived from Stoic sources. I will then turn to the possibility that Hobbes' writings should be understood as a form of Christian heresy.

#### 7.2 Was Hobbes' System a Reconfiguration of Stoicism?

For the early Stoics like Zeno, the fundamental characteristic of God was activity.<sup>662</sup> The fundamental characteristic of Hobbes' God was also activity. Hahn has offered the following summary of Stoicism's active principle: 1) it is in motion; 2) it is eternal, ungenerated and imperishable; 3) it lies within the cosmos permeating every inch of matter causing movement directly throughout the cosmos; and 4) it is both god and reason.<sup>663</sup> Hobbes' God has precisely the same characteristics. According to Bénatouïl, there are four aspects to the relationship between the Stoic God and matter: 1) God is present inside of matter and is in direct contact with matter; 2) God's activity is aimed at producing things; 3) God is immanently involved in creation; and 4) God is responsible for good and evil.<sup>664</sup> Again, these four aspects are true for the relationship between Hobbes' corporeal God and extension.

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<sup>662</sup> Salles 2005 p 67; Bénatouïl 2009 p 29.

<sup>663</sup> Hahn 1977 p 42; p 54.

<sup>664</sup> Bénatouïl 2009 p 24.

According to Long there is no modern equivalent to Stoicism's conception of the world as a vitalistic and completely rational system, a world causally determined by a fully immanent and providential God.<sup>665</sup> Perhaps we can understand Hobbes' implicit ontological approach as the closest to a modern equivalent to Stoicism's conception of the world as a vitalistic rational system, causally determined by an immanent deity. Despite the similarities between Hobbes' approach and Stoicism, there are also significant differences. While Hobbes' held that his world is causally determined by a fully immanent and providential God, he did not hold that the entire world possesses life or rationality. The manifestation of life and rationality requires specific configurations of extension in motion. Long offered the following summary of the characteristics of Stoicism: 1) the Stoic divinity is a thinking being; 2) it is also an extended being and there is no part of matter in which it is not physically present; 3) although God and matter are conceptually distinct, their constant conjunction generates a notion of unitary substance; 4) Stoicism is monistic in its treatment of God as the ultimate cause of everything; 5) God's activity is strictly determinist and physically active, yet it is dualistic because of its division between thought and extension; 6) all individual things derive their own mode of existence from the attributes of God; and 7) the Stoics did not speak of God as having infinite attributes or infinite extension – despite being temporally eternal, it is finite in regards to spatial extension.<sup>666</sup>

Now let us compare Long's summary with Hobbes' system: 1) Hobbes' God is a thinking being; 2) Hobbes' God is an extended being, and there is no part of extension in which he is not physically present without resulting in co-location; 3) Hobbes' God and extension are conceptually distinct but their constant conjunction generates a notion of unitary substance; 4) Hobbes' system is monistic because his God is the ultimate cause of everything and his activity is strictly deterministic and physically active; 5) nonetheless, Hobbes' system is dualistic because of his division between God and extension; 6) all individual things derive their own mode of existence from the attributes of God; 7) Hobbes, unlike the Stoics, held that his God was eternal, infinite (not necessarily in spatial terms but in terms of the production of motion) and possessed infinite attributes.

According to Sellars, since the Stoics held that Nature is a living organism which is conscious, one might say that they simply preserved the label "God" for appearances'

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<sup>665</sup> Long 2006 p 9.

<sup>666</sup> Long 2006 p 12-13.

sake.<sup>667</sup> In a similar vein, some critics have argued that, given the complete blending between God and matter, no substantive distinction was possible between God and matter in the Stoics' system.<sup>668</sup> But we can argue against such a critique being directed towards Hobbes' ontological system, given his more forceful distinguishing between his corporeal God and extension.

Stoicism was both a philosophical and religious system.<sup>669</sup> For the Stoics, the true worship of God consists only in the mental effort to know God and to live a moral and pious life.<sup>670</sup> According to Zellar, Stoicism contains no important features derived from contemporary forms of religion; nonetheless, the Stoics sought a closer union with contemporary popular religious forms to avert the dangers caused by opposing religion.<sup>671</sup> For Zellar, the ethical basis of the Stoics' philosophy imposed on them the duty of supporting rather than destroying the popular religion, so they upheld the traditional faith; despite the inadequacy of existing creeds, they sought to give a relative vindication of them.<sup>672</sup> Hobbes may well have been engaged in a similar process: like the Stoics, Hobbes may have been seeking to uphold Christianity, partly because he did not want to face the dangers caused by denying popular religion, but also because he wanted to strengthen the commonwealth.

According to Diogenes Laertius, the Stoics held that their God is "called by many other names" (II: VII.135 p 241) and that their God is "called many names according to its various powers" (II: VII.147 p 251). As Algra has noted, in regards to DL II: VII.147 p 251, the Stoic understanding of god is rather complex and can be characterized as a mixture of pantheism, theism and polytheism; it is tailored for a monotheistic conception of a single cosmic god, but is polytheistic because it allows the visible manifestations of this one god to be called by many names.<sup>673</sup> There is a different but similar dynamic in Hobbes' approach to God. While Hobbes was monotheistic, he appears to have been willing to allow for this single God to be called by many names: he held that all religions, including non-Christian forms of religion, worship the same God.

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<sup>667</sup> Sellars 2006 p 95.

<sup>668</sup> Salles 2009 p 5.

<sup>669</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 323.

<sup>670</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 324.

<sup>671</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 323-324.

<sup>672</sup> Zellar (translated by Reichel) 1870 p 324-325; p 328.

<sup>673</sup> Algra 2003 p 166; p 169.

### 7.3 The Unacknowledged Influenced of Stoicism

I agree with Gorham that Cavendish was distinctly Stoic in ways similar to Hobbes: Cavendish's animate matter (like Hobbes' corporeal God) is thoroughly mixed with and acts upon ordinary matter.<sup>674</sup> However, I disagree with Gorham about the nature of Cavendish's influence on Hobbes. He states that

Hobbes's corporeal God doctrine was not yet formulated; indeed, I am suggesting that Cavendish and her Stoic circle pushed Hobbes towards accepting self-motion, at least in the special case of God.<sup>675</sup>

In contrast to Gorham's claim, and as I have sought to establish in chapter two, Hobbes' self-moving God was present in his writings before the 1660s, but was not expressed in Stoic language. I agree with Gorham that Hobbes' corporeal God writings in his 1668 (1682) *Answer*, like Cavendish's writings, had a distinctly Stoic character.<sup>676</sup> This Stoic character of Hobbes' *Answer* as well as his approach more generally has been explored in chapter six. It seems that Hobbes' interaction with Cavendish in the 1660s did not push Hobbes towards a self-moving God. Instead, I suggest that it pushed Hobbes towards using Stoic language, at least within his 1668 (1682) *Answer*. My argument is that, while Hobbes' moving designer God is present in his writings before the 1660s, it was not presented in a way that has striking similarities to Stoicism until his 1668 (1682) *Answer*. Perhaps, just as Cavendish appears to have been influenced by Hobbes, Hobbes in turn was influenced by Cavendish – not in the formulation of the concept of a moving designer God, but in using Stoic language.

According to O'Neill, Cavendish's ontological approach in her *Observations* has a number of parallels with, but also some importance differences to, Stoicism: 1) her account of matter ("animate matter" and "inanimate matter") seems consonant with Stoicism's active and inactive principles; however, Cavendish broke from Stoic tradition by specifying the functions of the active principle<sup>677</sup>; 2) Cavendish made use of the Stoic theory of "total blending" or "complete mixture"<sup>678</sup>; 3) like the Stoics, she denied the existence of a void inside the cosmos because, like the Stoics, she maintained that a void would sever the unity

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<sup>674</sup> Gorham 2013b p 44-45.

<sup>675</sup> Gorham 2013b footnote 78 p 44.

<sup>676</sup> Gorham 2013b p 44-45.

<sup>677</sup> O'Neill p xxiv.

<sup>678</sup> O'Neill p xxiv-xxv.

of nature; nonetheless, she differed by denying the existence of a void outside of the cosmos<sup>679</sup>; and 4) there are parallels between the Stoic account and Cavendish's account of change: Stoicism's *pneuma* and Cavendish's rational matter perform the same function.<sup>680</sup> In addition to the points made by O'Neill, we could also note some further points: the shared position between Cavendish and Stoicism that the universe is a biological organism; but also how Cavendish rejected Stoic notions of conflagrations, cyclical understanding of time, or its determinism.

Let us now compare and contrast Hobbes' implicit system to Cavendish's and Stoicism's respective positions: 1) Hobbes' corporeal God and extension have parallels to Cavendish's account of matter and to Stoicism's principles; nonetheless, Hobbes, unlike Cavendish, stuck with Stoic tradition by refusing to specify the function of his active substance; 2) Hobbes, unlike Cavendish, did not use the Stoic theory of total blending or complete mixture and instead maintained that his corporeal God and extension partially mix; this partial mixture is more than Stoicism's juxtaposition but less than their total blending; 3) Hobbes, like Cavendish and the Stoics, denied the existence of a void within the universe; however, Hobbes, like Cavendish, differed from the Stoics by denying the existence of a void outside of the universe; 4) within Hobbes' account of change his corporeal God appears to have performed the same function as both Cavendish's rational matter and Stoicism's *pneuma*; 5) unlike Cavendish and the Stoics, Hobbes did not hold that the entire universe was a living creature; and 6) Hobbes, like Cavendish, made no mention of a conflagration or a cyclical understanding of time; unlike Cavendish, however, Hobbes did embrace determinism, as the Stoics had.

If we assume that Cavendish and Hobbes were influenced by Stoicism, it appears that they both reconfigured Stoicism to suit their own ends. In some ways, Cavendish's mature writings were closer to Stoicism than Hobbes' writings were; but in other ways, Hobbes' writings were closer than Cavendish's. Unlike Cavendish, Hobbes preserved the corporeal God aspect of Stoicism and God's direct role in the existence of the natural world through contact with the passive principle. But Cavendish, unlike Hobbes, preserved the biological character of Stoicism and accepted its doctrine of total blending (co-location). They both

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<sup>679</sup> O'Neill p xxviii.

<sup>680</sup> O'Neill p xxxi-xxxiii.



preserved the non-mechanical account of change of Stoicism and both rejected the existence of a void outside of the universe.

#### 7.4 Hobbes Judged by Cudworthian Criteria

Now that I have established what Hobbes' conception of a corporeal God seems to have been, I want to examine whether or not Hobbes would be classed as an atheist according to Cudworth's understanding of the term. I have previously established the complicated nature of the term "atheism" in 17<sup>th</sup>C discourse. An example of this can be seen in Cudworth's *TIS*, where he delineates two fundamental types: 1) Atomistic Atheism; and 2) Hylozoic Atheism.<sup>681</sup> The former conceives matter as mere extended bulk, while the latter holds that matter is extended bulk and alive.<sup>682</sup> Furthermore, each category can be divided in two again, so that, in total, there are four subtypes of atheism.<sup>683</sup> All four forms of atheism share in common corporealism: they admit no other substance beyond body or matter. Within the first category, there are: 1) "Atomical" atheism and 2) "Hylopathian" atheism. Both maintain that matter is inert (dead); but "atomical" atheism derives objects from the arrangement of atoms, while "hylopathian" atheism derives objects from qualities and forms.<sup>684</sup> Within Cudworth's second category there are: 1) "Hylozoic" atheism and 2) "Cosmo-Plastick" atheism.<sup>685</sup> Both maintain that matter is living, but they attribute life differently: "Hylozoic" atheism attributes a life principle or life force to each material entity, while "Spermatick" or "Cosmo-Plastick" theism posits just one living principle animating the whole corporeal world, without any sense or conscious understanding.<sup>686</sup> As Cudworth describes this:

The whole world is no animal, but as it were, one huge plant or vegetable, a body endued with one plastick or spermatick nature, branching out the whole, orderly and methodically, but without any understanding or sense. And this must needs be accounted a form of atheism, because it does not derive the original of things in the universe from any clearly intellectual principle or conscious nature.<sup>687</sup>

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<sup>681</sup> Sellars 2011 p 126.

<sup>682</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.I p 105; Sellars 2011 p 126; Allen 2013 p 339.

<sup>683</sup> Sellars 2011 p 127.

<sup>684</sup> Sellars 2011 p 127.

<sup>685</sup> Sellars 2011 p 127.

<sup>686</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.26 p 131-132; Sellars 2011 p 127.

<sup>687</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk.1, Ch III.26 p 132.

As previously established, Hobbes' universe is neither an animal, a plant nor a vegetable; instead, it is a machine. Despite this it seems that Hobbes' corporeal God writings could have been understood by Cudworth as form of "spermatick/cosmo-plastick" atheism. Hobbes did not attribute life to matter, but he did postulate just one living principle animating the whole corporeal world. If Cudworth did read Hobbes this way, he neglected to account for the fact that Hobbes did not deny that his corporeal God had sense and conscious understanding: as Gorham has noted, Cudworth did not seem to realize that Hobbes was a corporeal theist in the vein of ancient Stoicism, and he failed to appreciate the dis-analogy in the *Leviathan* between God's intelligence and human intelligence.<sup>688</sup> As Hobbes states: "when we ascribe to God a *will*, it is not to be understood, as that of man, for a *rational appetite*, but as the power by which he effecteth everything."<sup>689</sup> Furthermore, in the 1656 *Questions Concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* Hobbes was explicit that:

...whatsoever is done comes into God's mind, that is, into his knowledge, which implies a certainty of the future action, and that certainly an antecedent purpose of God to bring it to pass.<sup>690</sup>

For that which we call design, which is reasoning, and thought after thought, cannot be properly attributed to God, in whose thoughts there is no *fore* nor *after*.<sup>691</sup>

As Brown notes, in this regard:

But who among those who have supported the Argument from Design would ever want to *deny* this? It is merely analogous to the point that those who talk of God "seeing" have no wish to imply that He does so by means of pupil, retina and optic nerves.<sup>692</sup>

Or, as Gorham puts it:

Hobbes is not denying that God acts by will, and for a purpose, but only that he deliberates about how to achieve future ends.<sup>693</sup>

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<sup>688</sup> Gorham 2013b p 39; p 43; footnote 65 p 43.

<sup>689</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part III Ch. xxxi, 27-28 C p 240.

<sup>690</sup> Hobbes 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* EW V p 14.

<sup>691</sup> Hobbes 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* EW V p 14.

<sup>692</sup> Brown 1962 footnote 1 p 343.

<sup>693</sup> Gorham 2013b footnote 65 p 43.

God has purposes but never needs to think through (design) how to achieve them.<sup>694</sup>

It is also important to remember that Hobbes in his 1668 (1682) *Answer* (EW IV p 309-310) explicitly attributed “intelligence” to the operation of his corporeal God – although this of course was not published until long after Cudworth’s *TIS* was produced.

Overall, Hobbes’ approach to the universe does not fall under any of Cudworth’s criteria in a neat and tidy way; in some senses, Hobbes fits both main categories. While it is possible to mistake Hobbes’ position for “cosmo-plastick” atheism, it also shares characteristics of what Cudworth understood as “atomical” atheism: the activity of Hobbes’ corporeal God affecting extension gives the illusion that particular objects are derived from the arrangements of atoms. Or, as Hobbes would put it, the arrangement of corpuscles gives the illusion of particular objects.

Cudworth distinguishes atomical and hylozoic atheism thus:

One main difference betwixt these two forms of atheism in this, that the Atomical supposes all life whatsoever to be accidental, generable, and corruptible: but the Hylozoick admits of a certain natural or plastick life, essential and substantial, ingenerable and incorruptible, though attributing the same only to matter, as supposing no other substance in the world besides it.<sup>695</sup>

Hobbes’ position in regards to life appears to be a hybrid between Cudworth’s atomical and hylozoick depictions of atheism: while Hobbes held that life is not generated and is incorruptible, he also maintained that nothing comes from nothing. Hobbes also held that the manifestation of life requires a specific configuration of extension: without extension being configured specifically by a corporeal God, life would never be manifested.

Furthermore, and as Sellars has noted, the key characteristic of atheism, for Cudworth, is the claim that consciousness is an emergent property.<sup>696</sup> Hobbes does not meet this criterion: extension in a specific configuration is necessary to manifest consciousness; but, given

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<sup>694</sup> Gorham 2013b footnote 65 p 43.

<sup>695</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk. 1, Ch III.1 p 105.

<sup>696</sup> Sellars 2011 p 128.

Hobbes' principle that nothing comes from nothing, consciousness would still exist even if it was not manifested in extension. Fouke has maintained that, for Cudworth, an atheist was committed to belief in a cosmic system in which all causality could be attributed to "senseless and stupid matter devoid of all understanding of life".<sup>697</sup> If Fouke is correct, then Cudworth could not have taken Hobbes to be an atheist, given that, for Hobbes, causality is not senseless but instead manifests God's will.

### 7.5 Cudworth's Understanding of Stoicism

Given the parallels between Hobbes' ontological approach and Stoicism's Two Principles, I will now turn to Cudworth's assessment of whether the Stoics were theists. Cudworth held that the ancient Stoics like Zeno were "ignorant, childish and unskilful theists."<sup>698</sup> However, they were not atheists because:

...they supposed their fiery matter, to have not only life, but also a perfect understanding originally belonging to it, as also the whole World to be an Animal.<sup>699</sup>

Cudworth called Zeno's position 'corporeal cosmozoism' and considered it to be a spurious form of theism:

First, that the whole world, though having nothing but Body in it, yet was not withstanding an animal, as our humane bodies, are endued with one sentient or rational life and nature, one soul or mind, governing and ordering the whole. Which corporeal cosmo-zoism we do not reckon amongst the forms of atheism, but rather account it for a kind of spurious theism...<sup>700</sup>

According to Sellars, by Cudworth's own terms early Stoics like Zeno were not atheists because their cosmos is rational, ensouled and intelligent; the Stoics, for Cudworth, were theists because they held that sensation, intelligence and consciousness are not emergent properties and because the Stoics held that their God is sentient.<sup>701</sup> Thus it appears that Hobbes should not be considered to be atheist under Cudworth's criteria, given that he did not hold that consciousness is an emergent property.

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<sup>697</sup> Fouke 2007 p 125.

<sup>698</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk. 1, Ch III.XXX p 136.

<sup>699</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk. 1, Ch II.XII p 113.

<sup>700</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk. 1, Ch III.XXVI p 131-132.

<sup>701</sup> Sellars 2011 p 130-133.

Finally, we could also note that, for Cudworth, all forms of atheism share corporealism in common; they admit no other substance beyond body or matter:

...all atheists are possessed with a certain kind of madness, that may be called pneumatophobia, that makes them have an irrational but desperate abhorrence from spirits or incorporeal substance, they being acted also, at the same time, with an hylomania, whereby they madly dote upon matter, and devoutly worship it, as the only numen.<sup>702</sup>

Nonetheless, Cudworth held that not all corporealists are atheists:

...because as there are no Atheists but such as are mere corporealists, so all corporealists are not to be accompted Atheists neither: Those of them, who notwithstanding they make all things to be matter, yet suppose an intellectual nature in that matter, to preside over the corporeal universe, being in reason and charity to be exempted out that number.<sup>703</sup>

Bearing these points in mind, it would seem that Hobbes was not an atheist, in Cudworthian terms: he was a corporealist, but he held that there was an intelligent nature which presides over the corporeal universe – namely, his corporeal God. If Cudworth had recognized Hobbes as a corporeal theist, he probably would have considered him an ‘ignorant, childish and unskilful theist’. But would he have deemed Hobbes one of ‘the most foolish’ corporeal theists? These “grossest and most sottish” theists, he tells us,

...seem to be those, who contend that God is only one particular piece of organized matter, of humane form and bigness, which endued with perfect and reason and understanding, exerciseth an universal dominion over all the rest.<sup>704</sup>

Again, though, Hobbes does not fit the description. He held that God is only one particular piece of the universe and is endowed with perfect reason and understanding (which exercises a universal dominion over extension); but he did not hold that God is of human form. So at least in this regard Hobbes was not one of Cudworth’s ‘most foolish’ of all corporeal theists!

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<sup>702</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk. 1, Ch III.XXX p 135.

<sup>703</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk. 1, Ch III.XXX p 135.

<sup>704</sup> Cudworth 1671 (1678) *TIS* Bk. 1, Ch III.XXX p 135.

## 7.6 A Stoic Derivation?

Bramhall in his 1658 *Castigations*, his final word in the liberty debate with Hobbes, stated:

If [Hobbes] had not been a professed Christian, but a plain Stoic, I should not have wondered so much at this answer; for they held, that God was corporal.<sup>705</sup>

Despite Hobbes' legitimate complaints in his 1668 (1682) *Answer* that Bramhall had quoted *Leviathan* out of context, without the proofs that supported his conclusions, and had misread his writings,<sup>706</sup> perhaps Bramhall correctly hit the nail on the head regarding the similarity between Hobbes' and Stoicism's approaches to God. While I recognize the significance of Gorham's suggestion that Hobbes' corporeal God doctrine might have been inspired by Bramhall's reference to the Stoics' corporeal God (in his *Castigations* – which Hobbes studied in developing his 1668 (1682) *Answer*<sup>707</sup>), I do not think that is the case. As I have sought to establish, Hobbes' corporeal God doctrine appears to have been present within his works as early as his 1650 (1647) *Citizen*, albeit without the Stoic language of his *Answer*. Also, and as previously mentioned, Hobbes even before his 1668 (1682) *Answer*, made important references to Stoicism. For example, he cites the Stoics in the context of his rejection of free will, and both editions of *Leviathan* made numerous references: 1) he listed “the Stoa” among the major schools of Athenian philosophy<sup>708</sup>; 2) he endorsed the various observations of Cicero<sup>709</sup>; 3) he rejected the Stoic doctrine of the equality of crimes<sup>710</sup>; and 4) he mentioned the Stoic view of fate.<sup>711</sup> Wright similarly suggested that if there is an ancient source for Hobbes' natural theism within the Appendix to the 1668 edition of *Leviathan* it was Stoicism.<sup>712</sup>

Throughout the 17<sup>th</sup>C, one of the main projects undertaken by European philosophers was to provide a metaphysical framework for mechanism. In order to do this, many turned to ancient Greek and Roman philosophies.<sup>713</sup> Many sought to avoid being associated with pagan ideas by changing their names or not acknowledging where these ideas were derived

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<sup>705</sup> Bramhall 1658 *Castigations* Part III Discourse II *Works* IV p 426.

<sup>706</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 281-282; p 291; p 338; p 365; Martinich 1999 p 326.

<sup>707</sup> Gorham 2013b p 47.

<sup>708</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part IV Ch xlvi, 7-8, C p 455-456.

<sup>709</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch v, 7, C p 24; Part I Ch xvi, 3, C p 101; Part II, Ch xxiv, 5, C p 160; Part II Ch xxviii, 21, C p 207 etc.

<sup>710</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part II Ch xxvii, 21, C p 197.

<sup>711</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch i, 24, C p 503.

<sup>712</sup> Wright 2006 footnote 73 p 274.

<sup>713</sup> O'Neill 2001 p x-xi.

from. An example of this can be seen in relation to the widespread use of ‘plastic nature’, the function of which was indistinguishable from the function of the Stoic’s *logoi spermatikoi*. Hunter suggests that the name was changed in order to avoid associations with the paganism of Stoicism.<sup>714</sup> Perhaps Hobbes denied his proximity to Stoicism for the same reasons. Burchell suggests that Hobbes denied that he had taken his position from the Stoics because he always loathed associating his ideas with earlier authorities.<sup>715</sup> While this is certainly possible, Hobbes may instead have derived his determinism from Calvinism: John Calvin himself is believed to have been influenced by Stoicism in relation to his determinism.<sup>716</sup> Hobbes in his 1654 *Liberty and Necessity* was clear that he thought that while “*stoical necessity*” and “*Christian necessity*” are two different kinds of doctrines, they are not two kinds of necessity.<sup>717</sup> As Martinich has noted, this is probably because necessity is a logical or metaphysical concept, so prefixing terms like “Stoical” or “Hobbesian” is unilluminating with respect to the concept’s content.<sup>718</sup>

I agree with Gorham that:

The Stoic and Hobbesian gods are necessitarian, entirely corporeal, and thoroughly intermixed with ordinary bodies, while also supremely intelligent, providential, and good. And both gods serve as the ultimate source of diversity and change in a material world divested of Aristotelian forms and causes.<sup>719</sup>

According to Gorham, Hobbes in his *Answer* signalled his debt to Stoicism by noting that the word “spirit” in Greek signifies *pneuma* and, because Hobbes employed their standard wine and water example,<sup>720</sup> Gorham argues that Hobbes’ fixation on mixing within his account of God’s operation in his *Answer* (EW IV p 309-310) is clarified when it is set within a Stoic context, especially given their focus on different types of “mixing”.<sup>721</sup> Gorham maintains that the Stoics and Hobbes each modelled their respective body on

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<sup>714</sup> Hunter 1950 p 199-200.

<sup>715</sup> Burchell 1999 p 521.

<sup>716</sup> Sellars 2006 p 142.

<sup>717</sup> Hobbes 1654 *Liberty and Necessity* EW IV p 260-261.

<sup>718</sup> Martinich 2012 p 22.

<sup>719</sup> Gorham 2013b p 33.

<sup>720</sup> Gorham 2013b p 39; p 42.

<sup>721</sup> Gorham 2013b p 41.

elements which they considered to be inherently motive and all-pervasive; for the Stoics this was *pneuma*, fiery air, while for Hobbes this was a liquid spirit.<sup>722</sup>

Gorham claims that “Hobbes’s corporeal God is the true modern heir to the Stoic theology,”<sup>723</sup> and while we cannot definitively state that Hobbes derived his concept of God from Stoic sources, it is also worth noting that, in the 1668 edition of his *Leviathan*, Hobbes dropped his censure of those who hold that God is the soul of the world.<sup>724</sup> In the 1651 edition of *Leviathan*, he equated pantheism with atheism and censured those who said that God was the soul of the world. But by 1668 he had dropped this objection. This characterisation was, of course, typical of how many Stoics understood the relationship between God and the world. It could be that when Hobbes began outlining his explicit corporeal God writings he grasped how similar they were to the forms of pantheism which he had earlier decried as atheism. The similarity between Hobbes’ corporeal God and Cudworth’s and More’s respective intermediary substances, as well as the general concept of plastic powers might be explained more fully if we appreciate the extent to which Hobbes was influenced by Stoicism.

I agree with Holden that the project of reasoning out the literal implications of Hobbes’ various divine attributes is misconceived, because these attributes are honorific; these attributes are not something that reason discovers or detects in reality, but are simply titles we confer on God for their honorific value.<sup>725</sup> But as has been established, taking Hobbes’ ontological principles and honorific character of his God talk into account, it is highly likely that he held that God was motion. As Holden notes, Hobbes’ embargo on any realist interpretation of the divine attributes is not generally recognized in Hobbesian literature.<sup>726</sup> This has led some commentators to attempt to wrestle out a coherent picture of Hobbes’ God that would reconcile the apparently inconsistent attributes that he gave God. These scholars arrive at an account of Hobbes’ God as some sort of rarefied and all-pervasive fluid or as a form of Stoicism’s *deus sive natura* or some other physico-theological account of God, while other commentators maintain that Hobbes rejected the existence of God and argue that he intentionally attributed inconsistent attributes to God in order to secretly reveal

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<sup>722</sup> Gorham 2013b p 38-39.

<sup>723</sup> Gorham 2013b p 33.

<sup>724</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part II Ch xxxi, 15, C p 239; footnote 8 C p 239.

<sup>725</sup> Holden 2015 p 658-660.

<sup>726</sup> Holden 2015 p 660.



his atheism.<sup>727</sup> While I agree with Holden that Hobbes' God writings were not literal, nonetheless, and given the strong parallels between the honorific character of Hobbes' God writing and Stoicism, these parallels should not be ignored.

### **7.7 Hobbes the Christian Heretic?**

In this thesis, I have explored Hobbes' implicit and explicit corporeal God writings, as well as the contemporary context within which they were produced. I have argued that Hobbes implicitly held that his corporeal God was motion and – as motion – exists throughout the plenum of extension and is responsible for all aspects of the universe which go beyond passive extension. I have established that while Stoicism was the closest philosophical system to Hobbes' own implicit system, there are also significant differences between the two. Despite these differences, it may very well be possible to classify Hobbes as a Stoic. But this does not rule out the possibility that Hobbes might have subscribed to some form of Christianity.

I have already mentioned how contemporary scholarship tends to use narrow criterion in judging whether or not Hobbes was a theist. But, as has been touched upon within this dissertation, what constitutes Christianity has had and continues to have an extremely loose designation. As Geach has noted, for certain Christians in the 17<sup>th</sup>C the formula "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" was the essential Christian creed and they held that someone who rejected this formula was not a Christian.<sup>728</sup> Hobbes, despite his conventionalism in all matters to do with religion, still insisted that the formula "Jesus is the Christ" was sacrosanct. It should also be remembered that within Hobbes' own life time there were heretical forms of Christianity, such as Socinianism, which also embraced a corporeal God. Even today there are still forms of Christianity such as the Latter-day Saints movement which believe that God is material.<sup>729</sup> As Martinich has noted, there are different criteria used for judging whether or not Hobbes was an atheist.<sup>730</sup> When Hobbes espoused ideas held by contemporaries, his views are considered atheistic while their views are not. The same holds true today in that when Hobbes espouses a view which is widely held by present day - Christians he is still considered to be an atheist. Taking this into account, we can

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<sup>727</sup> For example Jesseph 2002 p 146-148.

<sup>728</sup> Geach 1981 p 554.

<sup>729</sup> Martinich 1999 p 300.

<sup>730</sup> Martinich 2002 p 3-4; p 345.

perhaps understand Hobbes as some form of Christian. As previously mentioned, Geach maintains that Hobbes was a believing and professed Socinian.<sup>731</sup> While this is certainly possible, I am unable to render a definitive judgement on such a claim. Instead, I am suggesting that we should leave open the possibility that Hobbes was a Christian – not a mainstream orthodox Christian, but a heretical Christian, nonetheless. Hobbes in his 1668 *A Dialogue of the Common Law* held that: “...heresy, is a singularity of doctrine or opinion contrary to the doctrine of another man, or men”.<sup>732</sup> As has been established throughout this dissertation under Hobbes’ own understanding of heresy he was a heretic. While we may never be certain if Hobbes was an atheist or not, we can be certain that he would have been considered a heretic by the vast majority if not all Christian denominations.

Nonetheless, and as previously noted, many of Hobbes’ positions over the centuries have been accepted into mainstream Christian thought, despite their apparently heretical nature. Maybe one day not just Hobbes’ ideas but Hobbes himself might be accepted as well. I agree with Martinich that Hobbes’ treatment of religious matter contributed to a decline in belief in revealed religion within western European countries, but I disagree with him that this was an unintended consequence of how Hobbs wrote.<sup>733</sup> Overall, Copleston seems correct in his statement of why Hobbes should not be classed as an “atheist”:

...if Hobbes, who appeals not only to Tertullian but also to Scripture in support of his theory, is serious in all this, as presumably he is, he cannot be called an atheist, unless under the term “atheist” one includes the man who affirms God’s existence but denies that He is infinite, incorporeal substance. And in Hobbes’s opinion to affirm the latter would be itself atheism; for to say that God is incorporeal substance is to say that there is no God, since substance is necessarily corporeal.<sup>734</sup>

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<sup>731</sup> Geach 1981 p 556.

<sup>732</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Dialogue of Common Law* EW VI p 97.

<sup>733</sup> Martinich 2002 p 345.

<sup>734</sup> Copleston 1959 p 8.

## 7.8 Hobbes' use of Scripture

Hobbes in his *Answer* was clear that he thought that scripture should be used to speak about God:

And I think it impiety to speak concerning God any thing of my own head, or upon the authority of philosophers of Schoolmen, which I understand not, without warrant in the Scripture: and what I say of omnipotence, I say also of ubiquity.<sup>735</sup>

For Hobbes, it was impious to personally speculate about God or upon the authority of Schoolmen; instead, we should use Scripture to support our positions.<sup>736</sup> And Hobbes seems to have tried to support his corporeal God thesis through the use of Scripture.

We find support for this claim by turning to the *Leviathan's* use of Scripture to 'explain' the relationship between the corporeal God and the activity of individuals. Here, Hobbes explicitly credited God with the origin of names and speech: "The first author of speech was *God* himself, that instructed *Adam* how to name such creatures as he presented to his sight".<sup>737</sup> As has been previously established, for Hobbes, names and speech are motion, and since motion produces nothing but motion, and if God is the origin of names and speech, then God must be motion.

Hobbes' account of the origin of life supports the interpretation that he relied upon God to account for individuality and life:

Gen. 2:7 It is said: "God made man of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils" (spiraculum vitae) "the breath of life, and man was made a living soul". There the *breath of life* inspired by God signifies no more but that God gave him life; and (Job 27:3): "as long as the Spirit of God is in my nostrils" is no more than to say *as long as I live*. So in Ezek. 1:20, "the spirit of life was in the wheels" is equivalent to *the wheels were alive*. And (Ezek. 2:2): "the Spirit entered into me,

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<sup>735</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 296.

<sup>736</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 296.

<sup>737</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch iv, 1, C p 15-16; it is important to note that Hobbes made changes in relation to God's role as the origin and speech in the 1668 edition. Hobbes changed "...*God* himself, that instructed *Adam* how to name such creatures as presented to his sight" to "Adam, who named the creatures which God presented to his sight" (Curley note 1 C p 16, as Curley noted this more accurately reflects the text of *Genesis* 2: 19-20).

and set me on my feet,” that is, *I recovered my vital strength*; not that any ghost or incorporeal substance entered into and possessed his body.<sup>738</sup>

...as (Gen. 2:7), where – [*sic*] it is said that God inspired into man the breath of life, no more is meant than that God gave him vital motion. For we are not to think that God made first a living breath, and then blew it into Adam after he was made, whether this breath were real or seeming, but only as it is (Acts 17:25) “that he gave him life, and breath,” that is, made him a living creature.<sup>739</sup>

Hobbes writes that God made man from the dust of the earth and then breathed in his face the breath of life: God through his breath made man a living creature.<sup>740</sup> By Hobbes’ account of the origin of life, God made Adam by forming him out of the earth and then shared with him the breath of life – which is motion. These passages support the interpretation that Hobbes’ God is directly responsible for the activity of individual creatures by not only designing them but also by animating them. Bearing in mind that Hobbes’ God appears to be motion, the universe is a plenum and that specific configurations of extension in motion are required in order to manifest the appearance of life and sensation, it seems that Hobbes’ God as motion configures extension and in doing so first manifests the sensible appearance of a man in the plenum of extension. Hobbes’ God then configures extension to manifest the appearance of life in the plenum of extension. The extension of the living body is part of the plenum while the living sensitive aspect of the body belongs to Hobbes’ God.

Hobbes also argued that the soul, in the Bible, was not an independent substance to the body; he maintained that the soul always signified a living creature, the body and soul joined together, a body which is alive.<sup>741</sup> He argued for the resurrection event promised in Christianity on the last day.<sup>742</sup> His eschatological commitment also supports the interpretation that he relied upon God to account for individuality and life:

For supposing that when a man dies, there remaineth nothing of him but his carcass, cannot God that raised inanimated dust and clay into a living creature by

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<sup>738</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part III Ch xxxiv, 10, C p 264.

<sup>739</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part III Ch xxxiv, 25, C p 270-271.

<sup>740</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part IV Ch xlv, 15, C p 419.

<sup>741</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part IV Ch xlv, 15, C p 419.

<sup>742</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part III Ch xxxviii, 4, C p 303-305.

his word, easily raise a dead carcass to life again, and continue him alive forever, or make him die again, by another word?<sup>743</sup>

This again fits in with the idea that Hobbes' corporeal God is a puppet designer and puppeteer. The corporeal God can re-animate the dead just as it originally animated the passive extension which comprises the body. Once the presence of the corporeal God as life and sensation ceases to be manifested, the body is then reduced to being nothing more than its undifferentiated state: the form and structure of the body were dependent on the presence of the corporeal God. Without the activity of the corporeal God manifesting a living body, extension reverts to its natural state or, in the words of the aforementioned quote, dust and clay. As Wright has noted, once materialism and voluntarism as understood by Hobbes is embraced it may not be possible to maintain any strong notion of personal identity as a specifically human possession, apart from the operation of God.<sup>744</sup> Hobbes relied upon God to account for individuality.

### **7.9 Hobbes' Critique of Christianity a Part of Christian Tradition?**

Historically, Christian scholars in principle were able to engage with Stoicism or any other "pagan" philosophy that they came across, given a certain inbuilt elasticity within Christianity: the central claims of Christianity were not based on a particular philosophy, but on God's putative actions in history, inherited assumptions, and practices which provided a stable framework for judging the assimilation of external philosophical ideas.<sup>745</sup> As long as the Catholic Church's teaching, preaching, worship, devotional practices and prayers continued to convey and embody the faith's central truth claims, non-Christian philosophical systems could be accepted.<sup>746</sup> The classic example is Aristotelianism: despite initial condemnations and some ideas entirely at odds with Christianity, such as the eternity of the world and the mortality of the soul, it was accepted into the Christian mainstream during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.<sup>747</sup> It is important to note that many Protestant reformers, including Luther and Calvin, sought to purge from Christianity what they viewed as the corrupting

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<sup>743</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part III Ch xliv, 15, C p 419; For more on Hobbes' views on errors concerning eternal Life and everlasting Death see Part IV Ch xliv, 14, C p 418-419; for more on Hobbes' approach to the Resurrection see Part III Ch xliv, 15, C p 419; for more on Hobbes' approach to eternal life being on earth see Part III Ch xxxviii, 3-4, C p 302-303.

<sup>744</sup> Wright 2002 p 473-474.

<sup>745</sup> Gregory 2012 p 39.

<sup>746</sup> Gregory 2012 p 40.

<sup>747</sup> Gregory 2012 p 39.

influence of Aristotelianism and popish superstitions.<sup>748</sup> This was of course was the very same goal that Hobbes claimed he was seeking within his writings. Given this, it appears that Hobbes' criticisms of Christianity should not be assumed to be a hidden expression of atheism.

As previously mentioned, criticism over the use of classical thought within Christianity is almost as old as Christianity itself. Given this, we could view Hobbes' de-Hellenization project as part of the larger struggle between those Christians who embraced Greek philosophy and those who rejected it. Whereas Hobbes' contemporaries like Bramhall, More and Cudworth were quite happy to embrace the Greek philosophy of Aristotle and Plato that they found within Christian thought, Hobbes may have been rejecting what he considered to be the Hellenic superstructure that had been built around the Bible and Christianity more generally. It may be that Hobbes, in his attempt to return to the roots of what he considered Christianity, rediscovered the early, material, conception of the nature of God.

The idea that God is spatial is not new: it was established within the Jewish tradition and dated back to at least the first century Common Era.<sup>749</sup> Jammer has argued that More's concept of space was influenced by Jewish sources.<sup>750</sup> As previously established, Hobbes was a forerunner of what became known as Biblical hermeneutics and, as such, was well versed in Scripture and the history of theological doctrines. Hobbes claimed that he was de-Hellenizing Christianity within his writings in order to return it to its original form. It seems distinctly possible that Hobbes returned to the Jewish idea that God was spatial in his de-Hellenized version of Christianity. Mintz has recognized the possibility that More came across the idea that God was spatial from Jewish sources, but thinks it is more likely that he developed it as a reaction to Descartes.<sup>751</sup> As previously mentioned this possibility may also be true for Hobbes' extended God.

Despite Hobbes' stated rejection of Hellenistic thought, he appears to have produced an ontological system which itself has striking parallels to Stoicism. This raises four distinct

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<sup>748</sup> Gregory 2012 p 40.

<sup>749</sup> Jammer 1954 p 2; p 26-31.

<sup>750</sup> Jammer 1954 p 2; p 39.

<sup>751</sup> Mintz 1962 p 90.

possibilities. The first is that Hobbes was insincere in his corporeal God writings and their similarity to Stoicism was a clue. The second is that because Hobbes distinguished between religion and science, he had no problem with using Greek philosophy in natural science but not within religion. The third is that Hobbes unintentionally produced an ontological system which has striking parallels to Stoicism. The parallels may simply be because of the profound influence that Greek thought has had on Western thought in general and Christian thought in particular. Hobbes, despite his best efforts, may have been unable to eliminate the Greeks' influence because it had become so intermingled with every aspect of our thought. There is a fourth possibility that Hobbes, in his return to an "original" form of Christianity, may have rediscovered the Stoic elements which have been lost or buried over the centuries: there is substantial evidence that early Christianity contained within it strong Stoic influences.

In this thesis, I have mentioned how Hobbes relied upon Tertullian to support his position that only corporeal substances exist.<sup>752</sup> Although full consideration of the validity of Hobbes' use of Tertullian is beyond my scope, it seems important to draw out some of the general parallels between their respective approaches. Tertullian was a second/third century Church Father and a Roman Christian Stoic. A thorough going materialist, he insisted on the philosophical and biblical veracity of corporealism about God and finite souls.<sup>753</sup> As Leijenhorst has noted, Tertullian was the only church Father who in some sense confirmed Hobbes' position; his Stoic conception of God's corporeal nature is a lonely voice among the *Patres*.<sup>754</sup>

In terms of God's corporeality, Tertullian states: *Quis enim negabit Deum corpus esse, etsi Deus spiritus est*, or: "For, who will deny that God is body, even though He is spirit".<sup>755</sup> He also states:

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<sup>752</sup> Hobbes cited but not exactly passages from Tertullian's *On the Flesh of Christ (De carne Christi)* xi and his *Against Praxeas (Adversus Praxean)* vii to defend his position that God is corporeal and the orthodoxy of Tertullian's materialism (See Hobbes' 1662 (1680) *Considerations* EW IV p 429; 1668 (1680) *Historical Narration* EW IV p 397-398; 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch iii.6, C p 540-542; 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 306-307; p 383); Curley 1992 p 52; Wright 2006 p 150 footnote 233; Gorham 2013b p 45.

<sup>753</sup> Davidson 1907 footnote 3 p 94; Wright 2006 p 190; Gorham 2013b p 45.

<sup>754</sup> Leijenhorst 2005 p 198.

<sup>755</sup> Wright 2006 p 190.

*Cum autem sit, habeat necesse est aliquid, per quod est, hoc erit corpus eius. Omne quod est, corpus est sui generis. Nihil est incorporabile nisi quod non est.*

Translated as:

But, although He is, it is necessary that He have something through which He exists. This will be His body. For, everything which exists is body of its own kind. There is nothing that is incorporeal except that which does not exist.<sup>756</sup>

There are broad points of similarity between Hobbes' and Tertullian's respective positions. While Hobbes held that God is body (or corporeal), he was willing to call God a spirit. Hobbes agreed with Tertullian that everything which exists is a body of its own kind and that there is nothing incorporeal or "unextended", except that which does not exist. Hobbes' God, like Tertullian's, is a body of its own kind. It is important to note the language of Tertullian's position and its translation as that "...*Deum corpus esse*..." as "...God is body...". This, of course, is the very same phraseology that Hobbes used in his 1668 *Appendix* "...*Deum esse corpus*.", "...God is body".<sup>757</sup> It may very well be that Hobbes was implicitly referencing Tertullian's position.

Gorham has noted a Tertullian tract against Hermogenes which invoked with sympathy the Stoic model of God's mixture with matter: "The Stoics maintained that God pervaded mater, just as honey the honeycomb."<sup>758</sup> I agree with Gorham that, despite Hobbes not mentioning this text in his writings, this position appears to be very similar to Hobbes' own apparent corporeal theism.<sup>759</sup> While Gorham only refers to Hobbes' position in his *Answer*, it appears to be true for all of Hobbes' implicit and explicit corporeal God writings, in particular, his *DP*. The idea that God pervades extension just as honey pervades the honeycomb supports my contention that Hobbes' God was in a sense ontologically dependent on extension. Hobbes' God does not depend on extension for its existence, unlike the existence of honey which is dependent on bees. But it does depend on extension in order to manifest itself. Without extension Hobbes' corporeal God would be unable to manifest any of its attributes. So, in a sense, Hobbes' corporeal God is dependent on extension.

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<sup>756</sup> Wright 2006 p 190.

<sup>757</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch iii.179-180, W p 148.

<sup>758</sup> Tertullian *Ad Hermogenes* xliv; RD 501 (Gorham 2013b p 45).

<sup>759</sup> Gorham 2013b p 45.



To make this clear, I will return to my analogy of a sponge (extension) being permeated by water (Hobbes' God). Both a sponge and water have independent existences and can be separated. But without the sponge the water will have no way to manifest its wetness. Just as the sponge will remain eternally dry without the effect of water, extension will remain forever unchanging without the effects of Hobbes' corporeal God. Given the similarities between Hobbes' approach and those of early Christians such as Tertullian, it appears impossible to definitively rule out the possibility that Hobbes could have been both a Christian and a Stoic.

### **7.10 Hobbes vis-à-vis Christian Engagement with Stoicism**

There has been a long but intermittent and limited engagement with Stoicism by Christian scholarship, dating back to St Paul and St Augustine. Christian scholars rejected Stoicism because they tended to believe that Stoic theology was uncomfortably materialistic, pantheistic and deterministic.<sup>760</sup> Broadly speaking, Christian engagement with Stoicism was marked by widespread alteration and sometimes wholesale elimination of aspects of Stoicism, both in the field of physics and ethics. Stoic physics tended to be eliminated or at the very least greatly augmented. This was in order to try and make it acceptable to Christians. In essence, these writers presented Stoicism within a Christian framework. Despite these attempts, Stoicism was never accepted into the mainstream of Christian thought. Stoicism fell out of public consciousness, but it made a return during the Renaissance, and enjoyed a revival over the course of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>761</sup> Stoicism during this period was not merely revived but was developed into a new system of thought, neo-Stoicism. It is important to note that there is no exact definition of neo-Stoicism. The term can be used to describe an intellectual movement rather than a single school of thought, or it can even be understood in a very broad sense as a term for anything which has the slightest Stoic undertone.<sup>762</sup> The neo-Stoic movement was less concerned with Stoicism's metaphysics than with its ethics.<sup>763</sup>

Hobbes' associates in Paris during the 1630s and 1640s were steeped in neo-Stoic doctrine.<sup>764</sup> For example, the Cavendishes operated within a neo-Stoic circle connected to

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<sup>760</sup> Copenhaver and Schmitt 1992 p 268.

<sup>761</sup> Sellars 2006 p 144; Kraye 2007 p 97.

<sup>762</sup> Papy 2001-2002 p 47.

<sup>763</sup> Kraye 1997 p 210; Sellars 2006 p 144.

<sup>764</sup> Burchell 1999 p 518.

Justus Lipsius (1547-1606) when they were in Antwerp.<sup>765</sup> Lipsius was the greatest renaissance exponent of Stoicism.<sup>766</sup> It is also important to note that Hobbes had at his disposal at the Hardwick library (the private library of the Cavendish family) all of the relevant sources for the reconstruction of Stoic thought, including some of Lipsius' works.<sup>767</sup> Hobbes made numerous references to Lipsius, but the possible influence of Lipsius on Hobbes has not been fully examined.<sup>768</sup> Nonetheless, it has been suggested that key concepts in Hobbes' mature political works, such as the subordination of religion to the state and the distinction between inward faith and outward profession, were probably derived from Lipsius' ideas.<sup>769</sup> Irrespective of the extent of Lipsius' influence on Hobbes, they both cited Tertullian to support their positions. Lipsius in his *De Constantia* (1584), *Manuductio ad Stociam philosophiam (Guide to the Stoic Philosophy)* (1604) and his *Physiologia Stoicorum (The Physical Theory of the Stoics)* (1604) sought to show the general compatibility between Stoicism and Christianity.<sup>770</sup>

Lipsius presented an eclectic account of Stoicism, given that not all Stoic doctrines were compatible with Christianity. It is generally held that Lipsius sought to explain away conflicts between Stoic physics and Christianity, or failing that, to delete unresolved contradictions from a Christianized neo-Stoic natural philosophy.<sup>771</sup> Lipsius used three different techniques to achieve this end: 1) the allegorical interpretation; 2) the use of equivalents; and 3) imposing neo-Platonic corrections on them.<sup>772</sup> Hobbes in contrast does not appear to have attempted to reconcile Stoicism with Christianity. Instead, and as we have seen, Hobbes outlined an ontological approach which has remarkable parallels with Stoicism's two principles.

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<sup>765</sup> O'Neill 2001 p xiv; Gorham 2013b p 44-45.

<sup>766</sup> Copenhagen and Schmitt 1992 p 260-261; Jill 2007 p 101; Krayer 1988 p 360-374.

<sup>767</sup> There is not much direct evidence for what kinds of Stoic sources Hobbes might have read but, according to Burchell (1999 p 518) and Oestreich (2008 p 619-620), Hobbes would have access to Lipsius' works through the Cavendish library; it appears that Hobbes bought Lipsius' six-volume folio *Opera Omnia* and his complete edition of Seneca, along with its English translation by Thomas Lodge for the Cavendish library. According to Santi, the private library of the Cavendish family included numerous Stoic texts including Stobaeus, Galen, Diogenes Laertius, Plutarch and Cicero (2017 p 61); Santi suggests that Chrysippus had the greatest influence on Hobbes (2017 p 63); According to Burchell, Hobbes actually bought some of Lipsius' works for the Devonshire's library catalogue (1999 p 518).

<sup>768</sup> Both Francis Bacon and Joseph Hall, who influenced Hobbes, were influenced by Lipsius (Burchell 1999 p 520; Papy 2001-2002 p 70; Oestreich 2008 p 114-117).

<sup>769</sup> Burchell 1999 p 520-521; Oestreich 2008 p 115.

<sup>770</sup> Young 1997 p 200; Sellars 2011 p 121-122.

<sup>771</sup> Copenhagen and Schmitt 1992 p 261; p 268; Papy 2001-2002 p 68; Long 2006 p 16-17.

<sup>772</sup> Papy 2001-2002 p 68; Long 2006 p 16-17.

### 7.11 Was Hobbes a Neostoic?

According to Brooke, the neo Stoic doctrines being produced at the start of the 17<sup>th</sup>C were intended as a set of personal therapies for troubled times – political doctrines intended to strengthen the civil government of a virtuous prince and a philosophical view of the world that sought harmoniously to blend Christian teaching with ancient wisdom.<sup>773</sup> Under Brooke’s criteria, it may be possible to classify Hobbes as a Neo-Stoic. Hobbes’ writings, in particular his 1651 *Leviathan*, offered a solution to the problems caused by civil war and disorder by strengthening the commonwealth. While it impossible to determine if Hobbes was deliberately reconciling Christianity with Stoicism or not, the possibility provides another reason to consider Hobbes as a fellow traveller.

As the 17<sup>th</sup>C unfolded, Stoicism was increasingly criticised by both Catholic and Protestant writers in particular for its understanding of free will.<sup>774</sup> Catholics argued that the Stoics exaggerated the power of unaided human will; Protestants (including, as has been mentioned, Bramhall) criticised it for its denial of human liberty. Such a contradictory critique is almost worthy of Hobbes! By the end of the 17<sup>th</sup>C Stoicism was considered to be so controversial that it invited accusations of atheism and was considered to be thoroughly incompatible with the theologies of the mainstream Churches.<sup>775</sup> Stoicism’s reputation became intertwined with Hobbism; Stoicism was blamed for inspiring or providing the ideas that underpinned Hobbes and similar “atheistic” philosophies.<sup>776</sup> As Sams has noted, within England during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, works which had Stoic elements tended not to be explicitly labelled Stoic.<sup>777</sup> So Hobbes being explicitly connected with Stoicism by his critics appears to have been unusual. Perhaps the apparent Stoic character of Hobbes’ writings was more explicit than in those of his contemporaries, hence he was explicitly labelled Stoic. Or perhaps Hobbes was labelled a Stoic because of the similarity between his ontological system and Stoic physics, rather than its ethics, whereas the writings of his contemporaries had similarities to Stoic ethics rather than its physics.

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<sup>773</sup> Brooke 2001-2002 p 93.

<sup>774</sup> Brooke 2001-2002 p 94-95; p 102; Sellars 2006 p 145.

<sup>775</sup> Brooke 2001-2002 p 93-94; p 104.

<sup>776</sup> Brooke 2001-2002 p 93--94; p 104; Sellars 2006 p 146; Sellars 2011 p 123.

<sup>777</sup> Sams 1944.

### 7.12 An attempt at reconciling the Greek and Biblical Traditions?

According to Glover, most of the difficulties in Christian theology result from the attempt to reconcile the theism which developed out of the Biblical tradition (that God is personal, a Creator immediately sovereign over nature and acts in history) with the concept of God which developed out of Greek rationalism (that God is perfect, unchanging, pure act without the possibility of action, rational and yet impersonal) – positions which seem ultimately irreconcilable.<sup>778</sup> I would suggest that Hobbes was seeking to reconcile this tension by conceiving of God as motion. Hobbes' God is perfect, unchanging and rational, given that God's will is immutable. Yet Hobbes' God is immediately sovereign over nature and acts in history, given that God is causality. Hobbes' God as motion is distinct from extension so in a sense it is the impersonal cause of all things. Yet Hobbes' God is also the personal cause of all things because God is directly responsible for the sensible qualities present within diversity.

As Glover has noted, 'God as body' would have posed problems for Hobbes in accounting for creation *ex nihilo* alongside a concept of creation as the influence of one body on another.<sup>779</sup> But Hobbes appears to have avoided these difficulties: he seems not to have believed in creation *ex nihilo*, given his acceptance of the principle of sufficient reason and because he held that motion produces nothing but motion. Given these two positions, Hobbes' corporeal God could not have created the extension present within the universe. Hobbes appears to have embraced a concept of creation as the influence of motion on extension while rejecting creation *ex nihilo*. As Jesseph has noted, regarding the apparent difficulty of Hobbes' God being the creator of the material world:

...the notion that a material God should be the creator of the material world is problematic; if God is an everlasting, uncreated material body then matter itself must be eternal and uncreated, and God is part of the material world. We are thus left to wonder how God might properly be deemed the creator of the material world...<sup>780</sup>

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<sup>778</sup> Glover 1960 p 291; footnote 57 p 296.

<sup>779</sup> Glover 1960 p 277-278.

<sup>780</sup> Jesseph 2002 p 148.

Hobbes' God appears to be creator of the order and diversity of the natural world manifested within extension, but is not the creator of the extension within which the natural world is manifested. For Hobbes, questions about the origin of the world are not philosophical:

The questions therefore about the magnitude and beginning of the world, are not to be determined by philosophers, but by those that are lawfully authorized to order the worship of God.<sup>781</sup>

Hobbes stated that he accepted the doctrine concerning the beginning and magnitude of the world because of the Bible, custom of his country and reverence due to the law.<sup>782</sup> It appears that for Hobbes if the sovereign mandates that we believe in creation *ex nihilo* then subjects should believe in creation *ex nihilo*, irrespective of it being ontologically true or not. But by the same token if the sovereign mandates that the world eternally existed, then his subjects should believe that the world has eternally existed.

Throughout Hobbes' lifetime individuals were seeking to reconcile their faith in God's existence with developments in science. In order to do this, many turned to ancient philosophical systems, including Stoicism, and offered new interpretations of Christianity. It appears that we can either accept that Hobbes was sincerely engaged in a similar project, or we can hold that Hobbes was engaged in an elaborate project of dissimulation. If we accept that Hobbes was insincere in his writings then we appear to have no way of accounting for the existence of motion or diversity. Bearing in mind the similarities between Hobbes' ontological approach and Stoicism, perhaps instead of understanding his project as the de-Hellenization of Christianity we should understand his project as Hellenizing Christianity in a different way. So instead of using Plato and Aristotle to understand Christianity we should instead use the early Stoics. Perhaps if Hobbes' embrace of Christianity and Stoicism had been accepted, we would not look upon him as an atheist, but as a Christian in the vein of St. Aquinas who also brought a traditionally rejected un-Christian Greek philosophy, that is Aristotle, into the Christian mainstream. In a similar vein, and given the acceptance of many of Hobbes' positions into the Christian mainstream over the centuries – in particular his position that the essence of Christianity is that Jesus is the Christ and that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses – perhaps we should understand Hobbes as a Christian before his time.

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<sup>781</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV XXVI.1 EW I p 412.

<sup>782</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 26.1 EW I p 414.

## CONCLUSION

### 8.1 Hobbes' God is Motion

As Lange observed, Hobbes seems to have conceived God as “a *part* of the universe-controlling, universally spread, uniform, and by its motion determining mechanically the motion of the whole”.<sup>783</sup> Hobbes' God as motion is part of the universe, is universally spread throughout the plenum of extension, and is responsible for the appearance of motion throughout the universe. I have built on Wright's idea that Hobbes by 1668 asserts the corporeality of God but falls short of specifying precisely how God operates as a physical cause, offering only a hypothesis which he considered to be consistent with divine omnipotence.<sup>784</sup> I have argued that since the only cause within Hobbes' system is motion, so the operation of his God as a physical cause must be as motion. I agree with Pietarinen that Hobbes made certain assumptions about God's role in the world, principally that God exercises power in the corporeal world through the laws of motion which are a manifestation of God's power; but I disagree with him that Hobbes' God is an immovable first mover.<sup>785</sup> Instead, I established that Hobbes' God was a perpetually moving mover which directly exercises power over extension. While Hobbes' corporeal God is a moving first mover, this movement is not movement in the sense of changing place. Instead, the movement of Hobbes' God is qualitative. Put another way, the activity of Hobbes' corporeal God results in the *appearance* of spatial movement, but actual spatial movement never actually occurs. I argued that Hobbes' God could not move spatially, nor could bodies. Hobbes held that the universe is a plenum and rejected co-location; thus, as I argued, the appearance of spatial movement is an illusion caused by the effect of Hobbes' corporeal God on extension.

Stephen, in reference to Hobbes' 1668 (1682) *Answer* (EW IV p 309-310), held that Hobbes was attempting to reconcile his materialism with his theology, but also that this system would be more consistent and intelligible if he simply omitted theology altogether.<sup>786</sup> But as has been established here, without taking Hobbes' corporeal God writings into account there appears to no way of accounting for diversity. Jesseph argued that Hobbes was a sly and

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<sup>783</sup> Lange 1877 p 290 note 33.

<sup>784</sup> Wright 2006 p 257.

<sup>785</sup> Pietarinen 2009 p 210-211.

<sup>786</sup> Stephen 2012 p 151-152.

ironic atheist who concealed his disbelief behind a screen of disingenuous theological verbiage while constructing a philosophical system that makes the concept of God inadmissible.<sup>787</sup> Jesseph argued that God was unnecessary and would have no role in Hobbes' ontological system because his God was not needed in the justification of the basic laws of physics or for corporeal distinction.<sup>788</sup> Despite this Jesseph recognised that:

The result is that the foundations of Hobbes's grand mechanical philosophy remain essentially mysterious, for if we ask why a body in motion remains in motion, or why motion should be transmitted from one body to another in collision, we discover nothing that even approaches an answer.<sup>789</sup>

It appears that we can either follow Jesseph and deny any role for God in Hobbes' system (and hold that Hobbes provided no answer to what lay at the foundations of his "mechanical" philosophy), or we can accept that Hobbes did provide an answer through his implicit and explicit corporeal God writings, even if this answer is one that an atheistic interpreter would dislike. It seems that Hobbes' corporeal God accounts for the existence of motion which in turn accounts for the laws of physics and makes the appearance of corporeal distinction possible.

## 8.2 Transposing the word God with Motion

In order to help demonstrate my overall contention, it seems worthwhile to carry out a close comparative reading of terms in Hobbes' writings and judging the effect. In itself, of course, this does not 'prove' my case; nonetheless, it does provide illuminating 'evidence'. For example: in his *Citizen*, Hobbes held that men believe that God is the invisible manufacturer of natural events and was clear that "God rules by nature only".<sup>790</sup> As motion, Hobbes' God is manufacturer of natural events and he rules through the laws of nature. According to the *Leviathan*, the natural world is artificial: Hobbes writes of "Nature [is] (the art whereby God hath made and governs the world)...".<sup>791</sup> Nature is artificial because it is the result of Hobbes' God-as-motion affecting the plenum of extension: God's active power is manifested in the activity of the natural world.<sup>792</sup> The activity of motion is responsible for

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<sup>787</sup> Jesseph 2002 p 140.

<sup>788</sup> Jesseph 2002 p 163; p 146-147.

<sup>789</sup> Jesseph 2006a p 152; p 150-152.

<sup>790</sup> Hobbes 1650 (1647) *Citizen* Ch. XVI.1 EW II p 227; Ch. XV.17 EW II p 220.

<sup>791</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Introduction 1, C p 3.

<sup>792</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I ch xii.6, C p 64.

the natural world. For Hobbes, God is an incomprehensible part of the universe which does not possess any of the defining characteristics of natural bodies.<sup>793</sup> Motion is an incomprehensible part of the universe which does not possess any of the defining characteristics of natural bodies because it is infinite. According to Hobbes' account of the universe in his 1656 *Questions concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* there is God, the world and the parts of the world.<sup>794</sup> The appearance of quantity and figures seems to be the result of Hobbes' God-as-motion affecting the plenum of extension. Hobbes claimed that without God there would be no way of making sense of any effect and he claimed that God is responsible for causality (No. XI (EW V p 105); No. XXXVIII (EW V p 450)). Without motion there would be no way of making sense of any effect and without motion there would be no causality.

In *De Corpore*, Hobbes implied that God is within the universe and is eternally moving<sup>795</sup> – another interesting identification. In the 1668 Appendix to the *Leviathan*, Hobbes implied that God is within the universe because God is corporeal and only corporeal things exist within the universe; he also stated that God is infinite and distinct from bodies, and he reiterated Paul's dictum that we live, move and have our being in God.<sup>796</sup> Motion exists within the universe yet is infinite - this is because motion produces nothing but motion. Motion is distinct from bodies because motion is not extension and extension is not motion: while motion manifests the appearance of bodies in the undifferentiated plenum of extension, it does not comprise the extension of bodies. We live, move and have our being in motion because motion is responsible for individualization and for the appearance of diversity including life and spatial movement. Furthermore, connecting together Hobbes' statements about God and God's activity in his *Answer* leads to the following characterization of God: God is infinite and corporeal, God is a corporeal spirit and has magnitude, God is the means by which all bodies are produced and sustained; a spirit is a thin fluid transparent invisible body; God is a pure and simple body which can be mixed with another body while retaining its own nature and does not result in co-location; God has intelligence and can make and change all species of bodies as he pleases and God is part of the universe.<sup>797</sup> When we replace, or transpose, 'God' here with 'motion', the result is

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<sup>793</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part IV Ch xlvi, 15, C p 458-459.

<sup>794</sup> Hobbes 1656 *Question concerning Liberty, Necessity, and Chance* No. XV EW V p 211.

<sup>795</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 26.1 EW I p 412.

<sup>796</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Appendix Ch iii. 179-180, W p 148-150; 5-6, C p 540-542.

<sup>797</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 306; p 308; p 309-310; p 349.



highly instructive: motion is corporeal yet infinite; it is the means by which all bodies are produced and sustained in the plenum of extension; motion can be mixed with extension while retaining its own nature because motion is not extension and extension is not motion. Hobbes in his *DP* indicated that God is inside the world and that the world is inside of God<sup>798</sup>: the notion of a void is inconsistent with God's presence throughout the plenum of extension. Motion also exists throughout the plenum of extension. And just as God is responsible for the creation of new life, so too motion is responsible for the creation of new life. It does not seem at all unreasonable to suggest that the one term is synonymous with the other.

### 8.3 Reconciling Hobbes' Design Argument with God *qua* Motion

I agree with Brown and Cromartie in reference to 1651 *Leviathan* Part I ch. xi, 25, C p 62, 1658 *De Homine* LW II p 6 and 1678 *Decameron* EW VII p 176 that we should accept Hobbes' use of the argument from Design.<sup>799</sup> We can also add 1650 (1647) *Citizen* Ch. XVI.1 EW II p 227 and *Leviathan* Part I ch. xii.6, C p 64 to this collection of passages which reference design. Furthermore, I would suggest that we reconcile Hobbes' 'God-as-motion' and his commitment to the Design Argument. In his *Citizen*, Hobbes states:

Mankind, from conscience of its own weakness and admiration of natural events, hath this; that most men believe God to be the invisible maker of all invisible things; whom they also fear, conceiving that they have not a sufficient protection in themselves.<sup>800</sup>

As Glover has noted, for Hobbes, invisible things are unknown causes.<sup>801</sup> Since the only cause in Hobbes' system is motion, and given that motion produces nothing but motion, so motion must be the unknown maker (or to put it another way designer) of all unknown causes – which are themselves different forms of motion. Similarly, in *Leviathan*, Hobbes suggests that we think that God is responsible for the natural world from our experience of it:

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<sup>798</sup> Hobbes 1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 89.

<sup>799</sup> Brown 1962 p 343 footnote 1; Cromartie 2008 p 869.

<sup>800</sup> Hobbes 1650 (1647) *Citizen* Ch XVI.1 EW II p 227.

<sup>801</sup> Glover 1960 p 290.

...by the visible things of this world and their admirable order, a man may conceive<sup>802</sup> there is a cause of them, which men call God, and yet not have an idea or image of him in his mind.<sup>803</sup>

He later states that:

...the acknowledging of one God, eternal, infinite, and omnipotent, may more easily be derived from the desire men have to know the causes of natural bodies, and their several virtues and operations, than from the fear of what was to befall them in time in time to come.<sup>804</sup>

For Hobbes, men by inquiry into natural events conceive that God is responsible for the order of the visible world. Since the only cause in Hobbes' system is motion, which produces nothing but motion, this God must be motion. For Hobbes, God as motion is responsible for the order and diversity of the visible world. Cromartie's point, commenting on 1678 *DP* EW VII p 176-177, that for Hobbes "the First Mover that every human being is prone to postulate is simultaneously a Designer"<sup>805</sup> seems particularly relevant for my argument here. Hobbes' God is both Mover and Designer because it is motion; as motion, Hobbes' God is responsible for the manifestation of diversity within the plenum of extension.

I also agree with Brown that Hobbes' cosmological argument in his 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* (Part IV 26.1 (EW I p 410-414) slides into a Design Argument.<sup>806</sup> As Brown argues, Hobbes' *De Corpore* (EW I p 412-413) asserts that we cannot account for the world without invoking God: even if the succession of material events in time were infinite, this would not account for the creation of matter or determine its basic characteristics (e.g., inelasticity).<sup>807</sup> While I agree with Brown that Hobbes does not assert that we can account for the world without invoking God, I disagree with him that Hobbes' God was necessary to account for the creation of matter or its basic characteristics. Once again, Hobbes' principle that motion produces nothing but motion is a central consideration: as motion, Hobbes' God cannot create matter or its basic characteristic. Instead, it seems that Hobbes relied upon his

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<sup>802</sup> In the OL edition "may conceive" is "is certain" (Curley p 62).

<sup>803</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch xi, 25, C p 62.

<sup>804</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch xii, 6, C p 64.

<sup>805</sup> Cromartie 2008 p 869.

<sup>806</sup> Brown 1962 p 342-342.

<sup>807</sup> Brown 1962 p 341.

God to account for the motion of matter which in turn is responsible for all of those characteristics which go beyond simple extension. Based on Hobbes' ontological principles, it seems that matter would still exist even God did not. But without God, the universe would be comprised of a plenum of eternally unmoved and undifferentiated extension.

According to Glover, Hobbes' denial, in *De Corpore* (EW I p 412-414), that the world can be proven either to be eternal or to have a beginning was the closest he came to grasping the radical distinction between God and the world within Christianity.<sup>808</sup> As Glover notes: "The Christian concept of creation involves a radical discontinuity between God and the world which is contradicted by including God and the world in the same system of causes."<sup>809</sup> It seems that while Hobbes included God and the world in the same system of causes, by holding that God was motion he may have been seeking to preserve the radical discontinuity between God and the world, by distinguishing between the existence of motion and extension. Hobbes' God is neither reducible to nor identifiable with extension. Nor is extension reducible to or identifiable with Hobbes' God. The radical discontinuity between their natures can be grasped by imagining a table. The sensible qualities of the table including even its shape belong to Hobbes' God, while the materials which these sensible qualities are manifested in belong to extension.

#### **8.4 Problems with God as Motion**

As has been established, while there is significant implicit and explicit textual support for the thesis that Hobbes held that God was motion, there are two problems in regards to maintaining that Hobbes' God was motion: 1) Hobbes held that accidents are generated while God is not generated; and 2) Hobbes held that God is real and that accidents are not. In regards to the first problem, it is important to recall Hobbes' distinction between accidents and bodies in his account of change in *De Corpore* (Part II 8.20 EW I p 116-117): that "...bodies are things, and not generated; accidents are generated, and not things" (EW I p 117). But how could Hobbes hold that God is responsible for the generation of accidents yet hold that God is not generated? While this is a legitimate question there seems to be no other way of accounting for the generation of accidents. Perhaps Hobbes could reconcile God being ungenerated, being responsible for accidents, and accidents being generated, because, for him, God's will is pre-determined.

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<sup>808</sup> Glover 1960 p 288.

<sup>809</sup> Glover 1960 p 288.

In regards to the second problem, throughout his writings, Hobbes was clear that he thought that God was a substance: in his 1668 (1680) *Historical Narration* he stated “that God is, that is to say, that God really is something, and not a mere fancy;”<sup>810</sup> in the 1668 Latin edition of his *Leviathan* he claimed that “God is something real, not a figment of the mind, a hypostasis, not a phantasm”<sup>811</sup> and in its appendix he stated that God is “something real, not merely an appearance”<sup>812</sup>/“something real, not a mere phantasm”.<sup>813</sup> According to the 1668 (1682) *Answer* (EW IV p 308):

The word *substance*...signify the same thing, namely, a ground, a base, any thing that has existence or subsistence *in itself*, anything that upholdeth that which else would fall, in which sense God is properly the hypostasis, base, and substance that upholdeth all the world, having subsistence not only *in himself*, but *from himself*; whereas other substances have their substance only in themselves, not from themselves.<sup>814</sup>

I agree with McIntyre, in reference to *Answer* EW IV p 308, that Hobbes held that God is a substance which is responsible for all appearances.<sup>815</sup> *Qua* motion, Hobbes’ God is a substance which is responsible for all appearances. Furthermore, it seems that Hobbes’ God as motion is a substance because it has an independent existence to extension. I disagree with Gorham on the role that Hobbes’ God performed in his system:

[Hobbes’] God provides a continuous, resistance-free supply of motion or *conatus* to a material plenum whose parts would otherwise quickly slow to an infinitesimal crawl.<sup>816</sup>

This claim seems hard to reconcile with Hobbes’ principle of inertia, which entails that motion does not dissipate; instead, it seems that Hobbes’ God was necessary for the constant starting and stopping of the *conatus* involved in diversity. Despite this I agree with Gorham, in reference to *Answer* EW IV 308, that: “...Hobbes God’s support for the world is the means by which one special kind of body produces and sustains all others”, and that Hobbes

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<sup>810</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1680) *Historical Narration* EW IV p 393.

<sup>811</sup> Hobbes 1668 *Leviathan* Ch xlvi, 16, C p 473.

<sup>812</sup> Hobbes 1668 Appendix Ch i, 4, W p 40.

<sup>813</sup> Hobbes 1668 Appendix Ch i, 4, C p 499.

<sup>814</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 308.

<sup>815</sup> McIntyre 2016 p 565.

<sup>816</sup> Gorham 2013a p 242.

“relies on corporeal God to account for the ultimate origin of motion, and hence diversity, in the physical world”.<sup>817</sup>

It seems that Hobbes’ God *qua* motion is responsible for sensible qualities. But there is a tension within his writings: while he was clear that he thought that God as motion was a real substance and is responsible for the diversity manifested in extension, he also held that diversity does not truly exist; sensible qualities like light, colour, heat and sound are not objects, but are phantasms in the perceiver and are not accidents of the object perceived.<sup>818</sup> Hobbes in his 1640 (1650-1651) *Human Nature* denied “that there is any reality in accidents” and in his 1668 (1682) *Answer* he again denied “that there is any reality in accidents”.<sup>819</sup> In the *Answer*, Hobbes was clear that God is something real while accidents are not:

I say there is nothing left but corporeal substance. For I have denied, as he knew, that there is any reality in accidents; and nevertheless maintain God’s existence, and that he is a most pure, and most simple corporeal spirit.<sup>820</sup>

While stating that God’s operations are beyond his apprehension, Hobbes held that his analogy detailing God’s operation was better than holding that God was a “phantasm which is nothing”.<sup>821</sup> For Hobbes, substances really exist while phantasms/appearances do not.

But how could Hobbes hold that God is real (because he held that God is a substance) and is responsible for sensible qualities, yet hold that sensible qualities are not real and do not exist (because they are phantasms)? Again, while this is a legitimate question, there seems to be no other way of accounting for sensible qualities. Hobbes denied reality to all appearances/phantasms, because they depend on some other entity for their existence.<sup>822</sup> But Hobbes’ corporeal God appears to have been dependent on some other entity – namely, extension. So while Hobbes’ God does not depend on extension in order to exist, it does depend on extension in order to manifest its qualities. To reiterate: there is an unresolved tension between holding that Hobbes’ God as motion is a substance, that motion produces

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<sup>817</sup> Gorham 2013a p 249.

<sup>818</sup> Hobbes 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 25.3 EW I p 391-392; 25.10 EW I p 404.

<sup>819</sup> Hobbes 1640 (1650-1651) *Human Nature* EW IV p 103; Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 306.

<sup>820</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 306.

<sup>821</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 309-310.

<sup>822</sup> Wright 2006 footnote 13 p 41.

nothing but motion and that Hobbes' God as motion is responsible for phantasms which do not actually exist. Despite these tensions, there appears to be no other way of accounting for the problem of diversity within Hobbes' system.

### **8.5 Accounting for the Presence of Hobbes' Corporeal God**

As previously mentioned within "1.5 *Specific Interpretative Challenges*", there is significant scholarly disagreement over how Hobbes' statement that God is corporeal should be interpreted. Based on Hobbes' writings more generally, we can be certain that, despite the opaqueness of his particular claims about God's corporeality, he treated God's existence as something distinct from extension. Jesseph has noted that Hobbes' rejection of the pantheistic identification of God with the universe suggests that God must be identified with a proper part of the universe<sup>823</sup>; I disagree with him that this is impossible because of God's infinity. Hobbes' God, as Leijenhorst notes, is a "part" of the universe which does not have any of the characteristics of normal bodies, including finitude.<sup>824</sup> Hobbes' God as motion is an infinite boundless part of the universe.

However, this still leaves the difficulty in accounting for how Hobbes' God exists within the universe. As previously mentioned in "2.2 *Motion as Change of Place*", Hobbes held that the universe was a plenum (1651 *Leviathan* Part III ch. xxxiv, 2, C p 261-262; 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV XXVI.1 (EW I p 410); 1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 89) and was clear that he rejected co-location, whereby two bodies can be in the one place or the penetration of bodies by other bodies (1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 85). I agree with Gorham that Hobbes' analogy in his *Answer* (EW IV p 309-310) allows for contact between his corporeal God and extension without resulting in pantheism or co-location.<sup>825</sup> This is also true for the rest of Hobbes' accounts of God's presence and activity within in the universe (1650 (1647) *Citizen* Ch. XV.17 (EW II p 220); 1651 *Leviathan* Introduction 1, C p 3, Part I ch. xii.6 C p 64, Part IV ch. xlvi, 15, C p 458-459; 1654 *Liberty, Necessity and Chance* No. XV (EW V p 211); 1656 (1655) *De Corpore* Part IV 26.1 (EW I p 411-412); 1668 Appendix ch iii. 179-180; W p 148-149; and 1678 *DP* Ch. II EW VII p 89, EW VII p 176-177).

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<sup>823</sup> Jesseph 2002 p 145.

<sup>824</sup> Leijenhorst 2005 p 213.

<sup>825</sup> Gorham 2013 p 253.

However, as will be established, I disagree with Gorham that Hobbes in his analogy avoided the absurd scholastic doctrine that God is somehow “co-located” with bodies.<sup>826</sup> In his account of how his corporeal God exists, Hobbes seems to have ended up with a position not that dissimilar to the very scholastic doctrines he ridiculed. In the 1651 *Leviathan*, Hobbes claimed that there were many errors brought into religion from Aristotle’s writings, including the idea of abstract essences, as well as the doctrine of separated essences.<sup>827</sup> In the *Leviathan* and the 1668 (1682) *Answer*, he also rejected the distinction between *circumscriptive* and *definitive* place, and he rejected holenmerism.<sup>828</sup> For Hobbes, it was impossible that one body can be in many places or that multiple bodies can be in one place.<sup>829</sup> Accordingly, he rejected the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation: body could not be in many places at once.<sup>830</sup> Hobbes’ position, in this regard, would seem to challenge the sincerity his corporeal God writings – after all, Hobbes’ corporeal God also appears to be a body which is in many places at once. Again, though, we need to recall that Hobbes’ corporeal God was not a body but, instead, motion. But, bearing in mind Hobbes’ understanding of extension, how did his corporeal God exist throughout the plenum of extension? The simplest way of accounting for the presence of Hobbes’ corporeal God within extension would be if extension was penetrable – but we know that Hobbes rejects such a notion. The ‘solution’ here again entails configuring God as motion: extension is impenetrable to other forms of extension; but Hobbes’ corporeal God is motion and as motion it is able to penetrate extension. Hobbes’ corporeal God was not a body but was motion, and Hobbes’ principles do not rule out the possibility of motion penetrating bodies. In fact, Hobbes’ principles entail that motion and bodies must exist together: for him, the manifestations of sensible qualities found in a body is the result of motion affecting extension. Hobbes’ principles entail that motion and bodies while having independent existences to one another must exist together, but how?

Gorham maintains that Hobbes’ statement in his 1668 Appendix to the *Leviathan* should be understood as “God is body” and that Hobbes’ God is infinite indeterminate body.<sup>831</sup> I have suggested, instead, that we should understand Hobbes’ statement as ‘God is motion’: as

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<sup>826</sup> Gorham 2013 p 253.

<sup>827</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part IV Ch xlvi, 14-15, C p 458-459; 18 C p 460.

<sup>828</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part IV Ch xlvi, 23, C p 462; Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 295-297.

<sup>829</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part IV Ch xlvi, 23, C p 462.

<sup>830</sup> Martinich 1992 p 200.

<sup>831</sup> Gorham 2013a p 243-245.

motion, God is infinite because of Hobbes' principle that motion produces nothing but motion. Gorham, attempting to account for the presence of Hobbes' corporeal God, maintains that:

...Hobbes's corporeal God is infinite, indeterminate body rather than a determinate body and therefore lacks boundaries and so likewise shape. So strictly speaking, it does not occupy a place.<sup>832</sup>

So finite bodies occupy "real places" outside of the mind, which coincide with their determinate magnitudes, while corporeal God occupies real space, which coincides with its own indeterminate magnitude.<sup>833</sup>

But as has been established, for Hobbes there is no such thing as "real places" nor "real space" outside of the mind, because both place and space only subjectively exist. However Hobbes' God and extension might exist, they do so without occupying "real places" or "real space".

Gillespie has argued that it is problematic accounting for the interaction of Hobbes' God and bodies without resulting in either pantheism or mysticism – both of which Hobbes wanted to avoid.<sup>834</sup> Gillespie suggests a solution to how Hobbes could have avoided this problem:

In fact, Hobbes really only needed to focus on the priority of motion and treat body as an assumption we make in order to understand and explain motion. The term "body" then would be the sign we use as a means of explanation. Hobbes could then have defined God consistently as the motion or causality in all things.<sup>835</sup>

But Hobbes did not develop this solution because "...it would seem to vitiate his claim that we can only conceive of a cause as the action of one body on another."<sup>836</sup> As Gillespie explains,

The deep problem that Hobbes leaves unexplained is how bodies can be both inaccessible to us and yet essential to our conceptualization of causality. This

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<sup>832</sup> Gorham 2013a p 246.

<sup>833</sup> Gorham 2013a p 246.

<sup>834</sup> Gillespie 2009 p 249.

<sup>835</sup> Gillespie 2009 p 249.

<sup>836</sup> Gillespie 2009 footnote 148 p 352.



perplexity could be resolved by admitting that bodies are merely imaginary entities, that is, merely arbitrary signs for demarcating and understanding motion.<sup>837</sup>

I agree with Gillespie that Hobbes sought to avoid pantheism and mysticism, but I suggest that Hobbes achieved this by advocating an extended substance dualism. Hobbes could not hold that bodies are imaginary, because extension has to really exist in order for his God to be able to manifest itself: God was infinite invisible extension. It seems that if we could bifurcate Hobbes' God from extension, it would be insensible. Hence bodies are inaccessible yet essential to our conceptualization of causality. Based on Hobbes' treatment of God's activity, the corporeal God can be understood as the motion or causality of all things, without the need to eliminate the real existence of extension. Without extension there would be no way to perceive the effects of motion; without extension Hobbes' God would be unable to manifest its qualities.

For Glover, in reference to Hobbes' 1656 *Questions* No. XVII. EW V p 246 and his 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 310, because Hobbes conceived God to be a body he could account for God's providential activity:

Bodies can move other bodies, and God, the cause of all causes, still operates directly on other bodies in accordance with his eternal purpose and foreknowledge of all things.<sup>838</sup>

Aside from Glover's characterization of Hobbes' God as a body, I agree with his account of how Hobbes' God operates. Hobbes' corporeal God *qua* motion is the cause of all causes operating directly on extension in accordance with his eternal and purpose and foreknowledge of all things. As motion, Hobbes' God manifests the appearance of diversity (including shape, figure, place and spatial movement). As Gillespie has noted: "Natural bodies are imagined to move as they do not simply because they are impacted by other mindless bodies but because they are willed to do so by God."<sup>839</sup> I agree with Gillespie that Hobbes held that God's will is responsible for the movement of bodies. But since Hobbes held that God's will and causality are the same, this means that it is also possible to say that Hobbes' God as causality is directly responsible for the appearance of the movement. Citing Gillespie, again: "God is not a *demiurgos* that sets the mechanism of nature in motion and

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<sup>837</sup> Gillespie 2009 footnote 148 p 352.

<sup>838</sup> Glover 1960 p 277.

<sup>839</sup> Gillespie 2009 p 225.

then looks on but is instead present in some sense in the continual and sustaining motion of the universe.”<sup>840</sup> For Hobbes, motion is his God.

I disagree with Glover that Hobbes reduced God to being one member of the causal system:<sup>841</sup> rather than being merely one member of the causal system, God is the only cause within this system. I agree with Glover that Hobbes’ God was radically discontinuous with the created world because the substance of God was not like any other substance.<sup>842</sup> Interpreting Hobbes’ God as motion preserves God’s nature as being radically discontinuous with extension: while Hobbes’ God may share the characteristic of extension, but it is also active and so radically discontinuous with extension. Hobbes’ God can be interspersed throughout extension while retaining its infinite nature: it is infinite in the sense of being infinite motion rather than being spatially infinite. Hobbes’ God can exist “within” a finite piece of extension yet retain its infinite nature: motion produces nothing but motion.

### **8.6 Is Hobbes’ Universe Governed by Senseless Causality or God’s Will?**

According to Gillespie, Hobbes’ theology was developed within a framework which granted priority to nature rather than to God.<sup>843</sup> But where Gillespie held that Hobbes sought to fit his theology to his understanding of nature (because he granted it ontological priority over God), I have argued that Hobbes granted priority to extension rather than nature: without extension Hobbes’ corporeal God would have no way to manifest its activity. Despite this, I agree with Gillespie that Hobbes identified divine will or providence with a universal and unbreakable material causality and that, for Hobbes, the natural world is God’s artifice, his continuity activity, and so is itself a product of divine will.<sup>844</sup> I agree with Martinich’s recognition of Hobbes’ identification of divine will, or providence, with a universal material causality and his suggestion that Hobbes rejected the notion that nature precedes God or that nature is distinct from art.<sup>845</sup> For Hobbes, God’s will as motion affecting extension is responsible for the existence of the natural world, and so, for him, the natural world is “artificial”. Cromartie maintains that Hobbes believed in the existence of a God who was

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<sup>840</sup> Gillespie 2009 p 229.

<sup>841</sup> Glover 1960 p 278.

<sup>842</sup> Glover 1960 p 277.

<sup>843</sup> Gillespie 2009 p 248; footnote 137 p 350-351.

<sup>844</sup> Gillespie 2009 p 225; p 229; footnote 137 p 351.

<sup>845</sup> Martinich 2002 p 5; p 46.

responsible for order and that his God plays a marginal role in the natural world.<sup>846</sup> While I agree with Cromartie that Hobbes' God is responsible for order, I disagree that Hobbes' God plays a marginal role in the natural world, given that the natural world is the manifestation of Hobbes' corporeal God.

Depending on the perspective taken, two vastly differently interpretations of Hobbes' ontological system are possible. Those who want to claim Hobbes as a precursor to the modern scientific worldview would probably interpret his system as nothing more than a universe of matter in motion governed by nothing more than senseless causality. But those who want to claim Hobbes as a continuation of the attempt to reconcile God and the natural world would probably interpret his system as a universe of matter in motion manifesting God's activity. As has been previously mentioned, the use of different interpretative methods and stances had led to vastly different and contradictory interpretations of Hobbes' writings. Given the difficulty in determining Hobbes' position we will probably never be in a position to be certain which of these two possible interpretations are correct. But bearing in mind Glover's and Martinich's points on the use of the term 'atheism', it seems that it was once used as a term of denigration against Hobbes while today it is used as an accolade.<sup>847</sup> Today those who want to denigrate Hobbes would probably view his natural world as a manifestation of God's activity, whereas those in the 17<sup>th</sup>C intending to denigrate Hobbes would have probably have viewed his natural world as a manifestation of causality. Those today who want to applaud Hobbes would probably view his natural world as a manifestation of causality, whereas those who wanted to support Hobbes in the 17<sup>th</sup>C would have probably viewed his natural world as a manifestation of God's activity. What a difference a few centuries make.

While a definitive interpretation of Hobbes' system is likely to be impossible, his own statements suggest that his writings should not be used to support the atheistic interpretation. After all, in his *Citizen*, Hobbes was clear on the difference between right reason (science) and superstition:

Now the fear of invisible things, when it is severed from right reason, is superstition. It was therefore almost impossible for men, without the special assistance of God, to avoid both rocks of *atheism* and *superstition*. For this

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<sup>846</sup> Cromartie 2008 p 870.

<sup>847</sup> Glover 1960 p 278; Martinich 2002 p 9.

proceeds from fear without right reason; that, from an opinion of right reason without fear.<sup>848</sup>

As previously mentioned, for Hobbes, invisible things are unknown causes.<sup>849</sup> The only cause within Hobbes' system is motion. Fear of invisible things severed from right reason is superstition, while atheism is the opinion of right reason without fear; we need God's help to avoid atheism and superstition.<sup>850</sup> As Glover has noted, Hobbes' definition of atheism in his 1650 (1647) *Citizen* (Ch. XIV.1 EW II p 227) as being an opinion of right reason without fear is misunderstood by later readers as "a commendation of atheism and a contempt for religion"; but fear, for Hobbes, was not a term of opprobrium – and fear of God was the beginning of wisdom.<sup>851</sup> In his *Citizen*, Hobbes connected right reasoning with knowledge of God's existence and suggested that an atheist is a fool. He stated that, with the light of reason, it may be known that God exists:

I say therefore, that although it may be known to some by the light of reason that there is a God; yet men that are continually engaged in pleasures or seeking of riches and honour; also men that are not wont to reason right, or cannot do it, or care not to do it; lastly, fools, in which number are atheists, cannot know this.<sup>852</sup>

The *Leviathan* was also clear that only a fool says there is no God.<sup>853</sup> In *De Homine*, Hobbes suggests that people who study nature and do not think that it was constructed by some mind are mindless.<sup>854</sup> He reiterates the point in his *Answer*, suggesting that inquiries into nature lead to an opinion of God's existence: "... all men by nature had an opinion of God's existency; but of his other attributes not so soon, but by reasoning, and by degrees."<sup>855</sup> As he continued:

Fear of invisible powers, what is it else in savage people, but the fear of somewhat they think a God?<sup>856</sup>

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<sup>848</sup> Hobbes 1650 (1647) *Citizen* Ch XVI.1 EW II p 227.

<sup>849</sup> Glover 1960 p 290.

<sup>850</sup> Hobbes 1650 (1647) *Citizen* Ch XVI.1 EW II p 227.

<sup>851</sup> Glover 1960 p 290; footnote 53 p 296; Gillespie also pointed out how Hobbes held that fear is the root of wisdom (2009 p 209).

<sup>852</sup> Hobbes *Citizen* 1650 (1647) Ch XIV.19 note EW II p 198-199.

<sup>853</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch xv, 4, C p 90.

<sup>854</sup> Hobbes 1658 *De Homine* LW II p 6 (Brown translation 1962 p 342).

<sup>855</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 293.

<sup>856</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer* EW IV p 292.

Ignorance of second causes made men fly to some first cause, the fear of which bred devotion and worship. The ignorance of what that power might do, made them observe the order of what he had done; that they might guess by the like order, and what he was to do another time.<sup>857</sup>

Furthermore, he denied that an atheist has reason:

...but says I make atheism to be more reasonable than superstition; which is not true: for I deny that there is any reason either in the atheist or in the superstitious.<sup>858</sup>

And because the atheist thinks he has reason, where he has none, I think him the more irrational of the two.<sup>859</sup>

According to Hobbes, atheism is ignorance because right reason dictates that God exists: “I say that atheism is a sin of ignorance”,<sup>860</sup> meanwhile, he contended,

...right reason dictates, there is a God. Does it not follow, that denying of God is a sin proceeding from misreasoning.<sup>861</sup>

Given all of this textual evidence, it seems mistaken to regard him as an atheist or to use his writings to support the cause of atheism. I contend that the most plausible interpretation of Hobbes’ natural world is that it is a manifestation of God’s will. Hobbes’ position on God’s corporeal nature may be blatantly heterodox but, as Leijenhorst has suggested, it is neither inconsistent nor implicitly atheistic.<sup>862</sup> As Gorham puts it, Hobbes’ late theology may be heterodox, but its content was not so different in function from the “physico-theologies” of his contemporaries.<sup>863</sup>

### **8.7 A Truly Religious System?**

As Cromartie has stated, while “Hobbes seems to have believed in ‘God’, he certainly disapproved of most ‘religion’, including virtually all forms of Christianity.”<sup>864</sup> Despite this, Hobbes believed that all societies operate on a shared religious commitment and he could

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<sup>857</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer EW IV* p 292.

<sup>858</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer EW IV* p 292-293.

<sup>859</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer EW IV* p 293.

<sup>860</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer EW IV* p 293.

<sup>861</sup> Hobbes 1668 (1682) *Answer EW IV* p 293.

<sup>862</sup> Leijenhorst 2005 p 124.

<sup>863</sup> Gorham 2013a p 240; p 256-257.

<sup>864</sup> Cromartie 2008 p 857.

have scarcely have imagined a political order that does not gain authority and stability from an enforced public religion.<sup>865</sup> Hobbes consistently claimed that a rational sovereign would organize some form of religion for his citizens as a means of worshipping the “natural” god.<sup>866</sup> He held that a religion is a shared system of belief that rests on “faith” in those who proclaim the religion rather than the religion itself, and that a religion decays when it is undermined by misconduct or disbelief through contradictory or illogical proclamations, as well as the failure to produce miracles.<sup>867</sup> Hobbes held that atheism was typically caused by bad religion, which he held was superstition.<sup>868</sup> Perhaps a ‘good’ religion for Hobbes would be one rooted in the scientific method: science is supposed to contain no contradictory or illogical proclamations and promises no miracles. I agree with Holden that Hobbes’ position was a genuinely religious one because for Hobbes a proper object of reverence and awe is a proper object of worship; Hobbes employed the traditional vocabulary of piety and religion in the face of an overwhelmingly powerful but otherwise incomprehensible source of the humanly imaginable system of causes.<sup>869</sup> What could be more reverential and awe-inspiring than holding that God is motion?

As Mintz has noted:

Hobbes must have known that the line between his brand of theism and seventeenth-century atheism was a thin one and that for many of his contemporaries this line did not exist at all.<sup>870</sup>

It appears that just as this line was unrecognized by his contemporaries, it is also unrecognized by many today. But this seems an over-hasty judgement. According to Martinich and Gillespie, Hobbes’ philosophical approach was deeply influenced by Protestantism, in particular by Calvinism.<sup>871</sup> According to Glover, Hobbes was clearly a Calvinist; no other contemporary Calvinist presented so clearly and consistently the deterministic implications of predestination or insisted more vigorously on its relation to the absolute sovereignty of God.<sup>872</sup> Both Martinich and MacDonald Ross have noted how

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<sup>865</sup> Rose 2013 p 6.

<sup>866</sup> Tuck 1989 p 89-90.

<sup>867</sup> Hobbes 1651 *Leviathan* Part I Ch xii, 24-28, C p 71-72.

<sup>868</sup> Cromartie 2008 p 857.

<sup>869</sup> Holden 2015 p 665-666.

<sup>870</sup> Mintz 1962 p 44; Tuck similarly made this point (1989 p 89-90).

<sup>871</sup> Martinich 2002 p 1-2; Gillespie 2009 p 247.

<sup>872</sup> Glover 1960 p 276.

Hobbes held that God is ultimately responsible for everything that happens in the universe.<sup>873</sup>

Gillespie has made the case that modernity was not formed through a breakage with religious and theological ideas, or as an attempt to eliminate religion: instead, religious and theological ideas played a central role in modernity's foundation, and there was an attempt to develop a new view of religion and its place in life against the challenges posed by developments in science.<sup>874</sup> If we accept this conception – that, to some extent, the emergence of modernity was marked by the effort to preserve old religious beliefs by developing a new and coherent metaphysical/theological worldview compatible with science – then it seems reasonable to suggest that Hobbes was seeking to achieve the same result. Perhaps Hobbes was trying to develop a system which allowed for belief in God as the cause of the world without contradicting science. It seems possible that Hobbes embraced a world governed by motion and Calvinism's commitment to theological determinism by holding that God is motion. Hobbes' ontology sought to safeguard the belief in God's existence and guarantee God a vital role within the natural world. Hobbes did this by bringing together the language of both mechanism and vitalism: he turned God into motion, which is vitalistic because it is alive, sensitive and rational; nonetheless, God's activity is expressed mechanically. I would contend that we have mistaken Hobbes' attempt to preserve the existence of God (by holding that God was motion) for a denial of God's existence.

I would also contend that there is a similar issue at play regarding the misunderstanding of the purpose of Cudworth's *TIS*. Despite Cudworth strongly arguing against atheism, some individuals thought he was actually arguing in favour of it because he stated the case for atheism so well and because he provided the materials which atheists could use to support their position.<sup>875</sup> It seems that Hobbes, despite not intending to support atheism, actually provided the materials which atheists could use to advance their claims. According to Sellars, while we might question the strict orthodoxy of Cudworth's own theology, there is little doubt that he was a devoted Christian.<sup>876</sup> I suggest that the same possibility might be

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<sup>873</sup> Martinich 1999 p 269; MacDonald Ross 2009 p 138.

<sup>874</sup> Gillespie 2009 p xi-xii.

<sup>875</sup> Passmore 2013 p 27; Berman 1988 p 62-63; Sellars 2011 p 125.

<sup>876</sup> Sellars 2011 p 126.

true for Hobbes: while his theology was hardly orthodox, he may still have been a devoted Christian – in his own way. I accept that such a possibility remains tentative and needs to be more forcefully explored and supported.



## FINAL STATEMENT

This dissertation has been an exploration of Hobbes' corporeal God and its role within his wider ontology. My exploration of Hobbes' God can be broken into two distinct but interrelated parts: firstly, an examination of the thesis itself and secondly, the contextualization of this thesis. I have sought to offer a solution to the riddle of Hobbes' God by exploring Hobbes' account of God's presence and activity and examining the role such an account would have played in his ontological system. While many prominent claims have been offered in regards to Hobbes' God, it is my contention that these treatments have failed to grapple with both its radical and complex nature and have accordingly misconstrued its significance within his system as a whole. So much commentary appears not to recognize that Hobbes implicitly held that God and motion are the same substance. It is my contention that any attempt to understand Hobbes' thought requires that we engage with his account of God's presence and activity throughout his writings. Hobbes provided this account, to various degrees, in his *Human Nature*, *Citizen*, *Leviathan*, *Of Liberty and Necessity*, *Questions Concerning Liberty*, *De Corpore*, *Considerations*, *Historical Narration*, Appendix to the Latin *Leviathan*, *Answer and Decameron Physiologia*: the notion that Hobbes' God has no role within his system must be rejected. As I have shown, Hobbes' corporeal God played an essential role within his system. This corporeal God, I have argued, is motion itself. Despite the strong explicit and implicit textual support for my contention that Hobbes held that God was motion. Hobbes never explicitly declared that his God was motion. The fear of the consequences of stating such a radical idea probably played a significant role in Hobbes' lack of an explicit declaration.

I have challenged the assumption that Hobbes was an atheist, materialist and mechanist, and instead argued that his system was a form of theological vitalistic corporealism. Hobbes was not a mechanist; he was a vitalist who characterized the activity of motion in mechanical terms. Despite Hobbes characterizing the activity of sensation in terms of the collision of matter in motion, such collisions appear to be impossible, because Hobbes was a plenist and because of his rejection of the transference of motion. Sensation seems more like a partial form of autokinesis caused by motion. While Hobbes was a corporealist, he was not a corporeal monist; instead, he is more like a corporeal dualist who divided the universe into two corporeal substances – extension, which was passive, and motion, which was active. While extension and motion have independent existences to one another they exist

inseparably. The effect of motion on the passive corporeal substance is responsible for the manifestation of the natural world.

I argued that, depending on the interpretative stance taken in regards to understanding the relationship between the corporeal God and extension, Hobbes' ontology can either be understood as a weak form of substance dualism or as a weak form of substance monism: while Hobbes appears to have held that his corporeal God and extension exist inseparably he insisted that they never become one substance. If Hobbes' corporeal God writings are viewed as a weak form of substance dualism then there are striking similarities between his system and Henry More's and Ralph Cudworth's substance dualism. While Hobbes' characterization of his corporeal God is closer to Cudworth's characterization of the presence and activity of plastic nature, Hobbes, like More, definitively equated existence with extension and held that God must have physical contact with extension. However, if Hobbes' corporeal God writings are viewed as a weak form of substance monism then there are striking parallels between his system and Margaret Cavendish's substance monism. Despite the strong parallels between Hobbes and Cavendish neither system appears to be derivative of one another. Instead, the parallels appear to be because they were operating within the same milieu. Perhaps it is not surprising that Hobbes' ontological approach can be interpreted as either a weak form of substance dualism or substance monism, given the strong parallels that we saw between Hobbes' system and Stoicism (which itself has monistic and dualistic tendencies).

Hobbes' approach to God does not neatly fall under the category of either theism or deism. Unlike theists, Hobbes did not accept the possibility of supernatural revelation; rather, the natural world "reveals" the will of God. Like deists, Hobbes maintained that God does not interfere or alter the natural course of causality; but unlike them, Hobbes' God is directly involved in the running of the universe – Hobbes' God is causality.

Overall, my claim is that Hobbes' approach to religious questions is a multifaceted affair that needs to be treated in a nuanced manner – one that avoids far-too-prevalent reductive assumptions and that situates Hobbes' 'God-talk' in the rich historical context within which it emerged.

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