


Article

Hobbes and Spinoza on Sovereign Education

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Abstract: Most comparisons of Thomas Hobbes and Baruch Spinoza focus on the difference in understanding of natural right. We argue that Hobbes also places more weight on a rudimentary and exclusive education of the public by the state. We show that the difference is related to deeper disagreements over the prospect of Enlightenment. Hobbes is more sanguine than Spinoza about using the state to make people rational. Spinoza considers misguided an overemphasis on publicly educating everyone out of superstition—public education is important, but modes of superstition may remain and must be offset by institutions and a civil religion. The differences are confirmed by Spinoza’s interest in the philosopher who stands apart and whose flourishing may be protected, but not simply brought about, by rudimentary public education. Spinoza’s openness to a wisdom-loving elite in a democracy also sets up an interesting parallel with Thomas Jefferson’s own commitment to the natural aristocracy needed to sustain republicanism. In demonstrating the 17th century philosopher’s skepticism toward using the state exclusively to promote rationality, even as he recognizes the importance of a sovereign pedagogical role and the protection of philosophy, we move to suggest that Spinoza is relevant to contemporary debates about public education and may reinvigorate moral and political discourse in a liberal democracy.



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1. Introduction

Most of the literature comparing Hobbes and Spinoza focuses in a general way on the question of natural right [1] p. 168, [2] (pp. 206–216), [3–7]. Hobbes makes what is referred to as a “juridical break” between the state of nature and the state of society: the state of nature ends through a conscious agreement, the social contract, that marks the conclusion of the war of all and the beginning of peace. Spinoza, on the other hand, is presented as not making a juridical break between a natural state and society. The transition to civil society does not happen as the result of a conscious agreement. And since human society increases human power, and for Spinoza natural right is the right of the stronger, human society itself exists by the right of nature.

The theoretical point is an interesting one. But what access does it provide us to Hobbes and Spinoza today? This article begins with a more concrete point of entry into the dialogue between the two philosophers. It has been mentioned, but neglected, in the literature. The difference has to do with their disparate assessments of state pedagogy: Hobbes, but not Spinoza, appears to be a committed supporter of centralized public education. To be clear about the use of the term “public education:” the reference is not to mandatory tax-supported systems that began to appear after the French Revolution. The education proposed by Hobbes focuses on a minority educated to serve as ministers at Oxford and Cambridge. It is intended for them. Nevertheless, Hobbes knew that, in their preaching, Oxford and Cambridge educated ministers reached a broader audience,

as is evident from the unrest to which he believed preaching had led before the English Civil War. Therefore, in recommending “precepts of reason” and a reworked theology in part III of *Leviathan* that ministers could convey to a broader populace, Hobbes was in fact contributing to a general project of Enlightenment. The point is that in none of his works does Spinoza outline general “precepts of reason” in which the Sovereign is to instruct the people. Spinoza also does not suggest that candidates for the ministry are to receive instruction at Dutch universities for the sake of then transmitting the seeds of rationality to a broader populace.

This claim about Hobbes and Spinoza requires demonstration, which we undertake in a thorough way for the first time. In what follows, we perform a textual analysis, taking into account the relevant works by Hobbes (*Elements of Law* [8], *De Cive* [9], and *Leviathan* [10]) and Spinoza (*Theological-Political Treatise* [11], *Political Treatise* [12], and the *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect* [13]). Not only does Hobbes mention the rudiments of state-supported civic pedagogy more than Spinoza in his works taken as a whole, but, as it turns out, the importance of public education increases for Hobbes, but not Spinoza, as one moves from the earlier to the later works. The relevant scholarship has also not considered this progression in Hobbes’s texts.

The difference between these two philosophers is connected to a larger issue: namely, the degree to which both assessed positively the prospects going forward of popular enlightenment. Hobbes, to a greater degree than Spinoza, was sanguine about the possibility of making human beings more rational and less superstitious over time. He is therefore a better exemplar of what has been characterized as the “Radical,” but not the “Moderate Enlightenment.” Hobbes believed that Enlightenment would happen through teaching exclusively by the state of “precepts of reason.” Further reinforcing this view is the fact that Spinoza, but not necessarily Hobbes, relies on civil religion in his works. Spinoza continues to rely on religion as a political tool even in the aristocratic regime that approaches democracy, as well as arguably in democracy itself. Civil religion, for him, is necessary to offset the fact that people have not become fully rational. Although the possibility of Christianity used as a political tool does exist in Hobbes, so, too, does the alternative of a commonwealth in which no uniform worship at all is present and the private pursuit of economic interest is sufficient social glue.

This article proceeds in six parts. First, we consider the subject of exclusively state-supported civic pedagogy in Hobbes, showing that for him its importance increases as one moves from the *Elements of Law*, to *De Cive*, to *Leviathan*. Second, we provide the corresponding analysis of Spinoza’s texts, demonstrating that he is not focused on public education to nearly the same extent. Third, we show how the underlying issue separating these two political philosophers is the idea of popular Enlightenment. And the disagreement with respect to its realization is deeper than the disagreement over the desirability of public education. Indeed, Hobbes’s assessment of the prospects of actualized Enlightenment is what allows him to be more optimistic about the possibility of effective top-down state education. Hobbes, to emphasize, is a much better example of the radical as opposed to the moderate Enlightenment, and we spend time explaining what is involved. Fourth, we point to a related difference between Hobbes and Spinoza on the question of philosophy. Fifth, we show how Hobbes and Spinoza’s disagreement on individual conscience reinforces the Enlightenment difference between them, which we argue is at the root of their disagreement about educational strategies. And sixth, moving into contemporary applications, we show how Thomas Jefferson’s strategy with respect to education is significantly closer to that of Spinoza than Hobbes. This makes sense, given that we know the third President read the Jewish Dutch philosopher and found both his republicanism and naturalism attractive. Jefferson’s strategy, in replicating the pillars of Spinoza’s own pedagogical approach, consists of providing a public education geared towards the cultivation of a wisdom- or curiosity-pursuing elite, and not insisting on attempting to constitute them in an exclusively top-down manner. This vision of instruction calls on multiple levels of government, as well as private bodies, to contribute to the larger project of civic education.

At the outset, it may be worth addressing a standard objection that is sometimes raised when thinkers from another century are mined for the sake of insights that can be applied to contemporary issues and public policy questions, even if the framework gained (as is the case here) is general and broad. In this case, Hobbes and Spinoza both live and write in the 17th century. This is before the advent of mass society after the French Revolution, which emerges with the abolition of legally privileged groups and orders of different kinds, and which necessitates a confrontation with the question: how is the whole of society, a public in existence for the first time, to be educated? A case can be made that modern theorists of public education, from Horace Mann to James Dewey, are responding to the imperatives presented by the onset of these conditions, i.e., the emergence of mass society. If Thomas Hobbes and Baruch Spinoza wrote before these major structural transformations, how can any of their works shed light on early 21st century education related challenges?

Here, a few points are in order. First, it may be true that neither of these two thinkers lived long enough to see a social order that we take for granted (without special legal privileges for a multiplicity of different guilds, trade associations, and orders). Nevertheless, Hobbes and Spinoza laid a foundation for it in more than one way, and so their work can be characterized as containing the seeds of that society's growth and development over time. This is especially true in considering the radical equality in the state of nature that Hobbes theorizes as the foundation of his social order, to be discussed below, as well as Spinoza's status as the first modern theorist of democracy (whose relevance to any number of contemporary questions is further illustrated by his appropriation on the part of a generation of Marxist and post-Marxist thinkers responding to the challenges of 1968 [14–17]).

Second, Jean Jacques Rousseau also lived and worked in the 1700's, before the revolutions at the end of that century that led to the birth of mass society, but still his educational writings are routinely used for the sake of adding depth to recent pedagogical debates taking place hundreds of years later. Thus, Kenneth Wayne has written about the radicalism of Rousseau's ideas about education and their application to present-day conversations [18]. Willem Koops has connected Rousseauian educational ideas to Jean Piaget's 20th century discovery of ongoing pedagogical practices [19]. And Richard White, writing recently in the *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, has further made the case for the relevance of Rousseau's instructional ideas based on the centrality of compassion in his works [20].

Finally, related to, but also apart from, a specifically educational context, the applicability of the thought of those writing pre-1800 to later debates is illustrated especially well by John Locke. Thus, John Dunn asserts that Locke's *Letters on Toleration* provide a "starting point for reflection" on contemporary puzzles [21]. (Kindle Edition x) Consistent with this insight, Lee Ward provides a spectrum of interpretations of Locke's "innovative educational theory," [22] (Kindle Ed Loc 110) with multiple scholars insisting on the continuing relevance of the author of the *Second Treatise of Government* to numerous contemporary developments. Additional evidence comes from the work of Peter Schouls, who believes Locke's reflections on autonomy and self-mastery remain relevant to the kinds of fulfillment human beings can attain¹ [23]. Herman Tavani explores Locke's view on property, related to the idea that "enough and as good" needs to remain for others who wish to draw on the resources of the commons; he argues that this standard provides an "adjudicatory" mechanism for evaluating claims against intellectual property in the context of the "information commons" [24] p. 87. And Lee Ward provides a compelling argument for Locke's theory in international relations, with an emphasis on self-government as the "moral basis" for international relations replacing sovereignty [25] p. 691. The state of nature, Ward argues of Locke, "is the permanent condition of international relations"². Finally, in this hardly all-inclusive list, David McCabe positions Locke in the debate over separation of church and state, with implications for contemporary liberalism [26]. To conclude, yes, Hobbes and Spinoza wrote in a different era. Yet this hardly disqualifies them from teaching us a great deal about what is relevant to current educational paradigms and debates.

2. Rudimentary Public Education in Hobbes

In the *Elements of Law*, *De Cive* and *Leviathan*, public education consists of precepts that must be respected for the sake of maintaining civil peace and avoiding the state of nature. They deal with everything from the necessity of holding sovereign conscience above that of the individual, to the right of the sovereign to determine property rights, to the impossibility of dividing sovereignty. In mid-17th century England, these articles that Hobbes spells out explicitly constitute the civic education that he deems to be a precondition of peace.

One point is especially clear: as one progresses through the non-theological parts of Hobbes's three theological-political treatises, from *The Elements of Law*, to *De Cive*, to *Leviathan*, the presence, as a structural feature of the polity, of sovereign teachers who teach the articles steadily increases³. Hobbes's *De Homine* also contains a mention of the possibility of public sovereign teaching [27] and it is possible that Spinoza saw it [28] p. 35. Sovereign public teaching and the universities as an important institutional setting in which it occurs are important themes in Hobbes's *Behemoth* [29] p. 58 as well⁴, but there is almost no chance that Spinoza knew of the work [30]. However, the progression from *The Elements of Law*, to *De Cive*, to *Leviathan*, is unmistakable.

Indeed, a significant number of thinkers have recently called attention to the importance of state-supported education in Hobbes's thought. Insofar as even theorists who do not prioritize the role of the civil sovereign in the long process of Hobbesian education may have to admit its necessity in the early stages, the contents of the article are not necessarily inconsistent with any of their work [31–37]. The claim is not that Hobbes intended for the sovereign to publicly teach the people all the precepts of reason listed below. The claim is not that he even expected the common people to understand the derivation of these precepts, which are also referred to as laws of nature. Rather, the civic precepts, as well as the derivation of the nineteen laws of nature, are to be taught to sovereign teachers at the universities⁵.

These teachers will then go on to teach the articles to the common people⁶. This instruction may take place in an attenuated form⁷, and the state activity of teaching does not, by any means, exclude other venues of education⁸. But however attenuated, in the end, the form in which the public affirmation of these propositions of reason is to occur, the Hobbesian state is still to teach them.

2.1. Public Teachers in *The Elements of Law*

The Elements of Law, Natural and Politic was written in 1640 and published in 1650, divided into two parts. The first is Human Nature, or the Fundamental Elements of Politic. The second is De corpore politico, or the Elements of Law, Moral and Politick.

Sovereign public teachers appear only once in *The Elements*. In the eighth chapter of Part Two, "Of the Causes of Rebellion," Hobbes refers to certain seditious opinions when he writes, "All these opinions are maintained in the books of the dogmatics, and divers of them taught in public chairs, and nevertheless are most incompatible with peace and government, and contradictory to the necessary and demonstrable rules of the same."⁹ We reproduce the list, here as well as in the discussion of *De Cive* and *Leviathan*, where Hobbes also sets out seditious opinions, because he insists on presenting them as a list. Moreover, in this way, the contrast between his first two works and *Leviathan*, as well as with the corresponding sections of Spinoza's *TPT* and *PT*—in which Spinoza does not present lists of civic precepts to be taught in public—stands out to a greater extent.

The seditious opinions Hobbes mentions in *The Elements* that must be counteracted by public education are:

1. one need not do anything against his conscience;
2. sovereigns are bound by their own laws;
3. sovereignty can be divided;
4. subjects have property apart from the Sovereign;
5. the people exist apart from the sovereign;

6. tyrannicide is lawful¹⁰.

Hobbes makes clear how such opinions are to be publicly combated in the next chapter, “Of the Duty of Them That Have Sovereign Power”:

“And because opinions which are gotten by education, and in length of time are made habitual, cannot be taken away by force, and upon the sudden: they must therefore be taken away also, by time and education . . . [and] there is no doubt, if the true doctrine concerning the law of nature . . . were perspicuously set down, and taught in the Universities, but that young men, who come thither void of prejudice . . . would more easily receive the same, and afterward teach it to the people, both in books and otherwise, than now they do the contrary.”¹¹

Here, in *The Elements of Law*, Hobbes is clear that the teaching necessary to secure peace must take place in the Universities. On his account, since the Universities are subordinate to the sovereign, they are public entities. As such, any teaching that takes place in them is a matter of public education.

2.2. Public Teachers in *De Cive*

In *De Cive*, Hobbes makes clear that it is the Sovereign’s right to judge noxious opinions and to prohibit public teachers from instructing subjects in them (there is no corresponding section on sovereign rights in *The Elements*). This occurs before one arrives at the list of noxious opinions that must be publicly resisted through education, which involves public teachers in an active capacity. One finds here an intimation of sovereign public teachers of “doctrine”:

“The conclusion therefore follows, by necessary and evident inference, that it is utterly essential to the common peace that certain opinions or *doctrines* [italics] not be put before the citizens.”¹²

The emphasis is on prohibiting certain kinds of public teachers. One does not see Hobbes, at this point, using the state to constitute new ones.

As is the case in *The Elements*, a few chapters later in *De Cive* one is also treated to a list of opinions that are subversive of civil peace, and which must be counteracted through state supported instruction. Here, the list of seditious opinions is longer, and the sovereign teachers are no longer intimidated but explicitly theorized:

- Individuals can judge of good and evil;
- Obeying the Prince can be a sin;
- Tyrannicide can be justified;
- Civil law extends to the Sovereign;
- Sovereign power is divisible;
- Supernatural inspiration always takes the place of natural effort and reason in the acquisition of faith and holiness; and
- There is an absolute right to private property¹³.

The list in *De Cive* consists of seven opinions, whereas that in *The Elements* is made up of six.

The difference is two-fold. First, in *De Cive* Hobbes adds two opinions that do not occur in the list in *The Elements*. These are that obeying the prince can be a sin and that supernatural inspiration always takes the place of natural effort and reason in the acquisition of faith and holiness. Second, in *De Cive* Hobbes drops the opinion from *The Elements* that the people exist apart from the Sovereign. The importance of public education in *De Cive*, therefore, appears already to have increased relative to its role in the *Elements*. Here, to repeat, it is a matter of state teachers actively affirming certain reasonable principles, as opposed to the state merely prohibiting the propagation of other (non-rational) ones.

Hobbes again considers the sovereign duty of teaching civil “doctrine” in chapter thirteen, on “The duties of those with Sovereign power.” Referring to the erroneous principles enumerated in chapter twelve that public education must confront, he writes:

“It is therefore a duty of those who administer sovereign power to root these doctrines out of the citizens’ minds and *gently* [italics mine] instill others. But as opinions are sown in men’s minds not by command but by *teaching* [italics mine], not by threat of penalties but by clarity of *argument* [italics mine], laws to resist this evil should be directed not against the people in error but against the errors themselves.”¹⁴

It is not, to emphasize, just a matter of prohibiting doctrines from being taught, as in the first passage that deals with teaching in *De Cive*. Here, the reference is to public instructors who will teach actively.

In the rest of the passage, Hobbes writes of the need for a distinct and learned class of teachers who are Oxford and Cambridge educated. These sovereign instructors will bring about an understanding in the people of their civil duty:

“Hence, vice versa, *anyone who wants to introduce a sound doctrine has to begin with the Universities* [italics mine]. That is where the foundations of civil doctrine, which are true and truly demonstrated, have to be laid; after the young men are steeped in them, they can instruct the common people in private and in public.”¹⁵

As in *The Elements*, these state officials who actively teach will do so at the Universities.

The public instructors in the section on sovereign duty in *De Cive*, in relying on natural reason, focus on civil “doctrine,” as did the state-supported public teachers in *The Elements of Law*. But they are intimated [38] on one occasion in *De Cive* and are explicitly theorized on another¹⁶. The importance of public education has therefore increased in moving from the *Elements* to *De Cive*.

2.3. Public Teachers in *Leviathan*

Sovereign public teachers of civic precepts are intimated on two occasions and explicitly theorized on two separate occasions in the first half of *Leviathan* alone. This indicates, significantly, their increased importance relative to *De Cive* and *The Elements of Law*. One is provided a glimpse of sovereign public teachers almost from the very beginning of part II of *Leviathan*, in the chapter (XVIII) “Of the Rights of Sovereigns by Institution.” Hobbes includes the right of making war and peace, distinguishing the honorable from the dishonorable, and he lays down rules of propriety¹⁷. The central right is one of judging—“of what opinions and doctrines are averse, and what conducing, to peace; and consequently, on what occasions, how far, and what men are to be trusted withal, in speaking to multitudes of people, and who shall examine the doctrines of all books before they be published.”¹⁸ Some of the men “trusted withal, in speaking to multitudes of people,” are undoubtedly public teachers.

Hobbes also has a list of opinions tending to the dissolution of the commonwealth in chapter twenty-nine of *Leviathan*. They will have to be countered through sovereign public education:

1. Private judgment of good and evil is licit;
2. Not heeding your conscience is sin;
3. “That faith and sanctity are not to be attained by study and reason, but by supernatural inspiration or infusion”;
4. The sovereign power is subject to civil laws;
5. There is an absolute right of property; and
6. The Sovereign power can be divided.

Given that such false teachings will have to be publicly countered with the correct ones, the list in chapter twenty-nine of *Leviathan* constitutes Hobbes’s second subtle indication, in the first half of *Leviathan* alone, of sovereign teachers. The list in *Leviathan* is back down to six opinions, as in *The Elements*, but those retained reflect the same emphasis on conscience as those in *De Cive*. There are two opinions dealing directly with conscience (the first and second), and immediately after them comes the author’s dismissal of supernatural inspiration and infusion¹⁹.

Hobbes refers more concretely to the sovereign public instructors in other places in part II, even as he does not designate them in this way²⁰. In chapter twenty-three, “Of the Public Ministers of Sovereign Power,” after having discoursed in chapter twenty-two “Of Systems Subject, Political, and Private,” which he calls the “similar parts of a commonwealth,” Hobbes turns to “the parts organical, which are public ministers”²¹. He names several different kinds. The third category of public ministers are those “that have authority to teach (or enable others to teach) the people their duty to the sovereign power and instruct them in the knowledge of what is just and unjust, thereby to render them more apt to live in godliness and in peace amongst themselves, and resist the public enemy.”

Chapter XXX of *Leviathan* then provides even more of an emphasis on sovereign state instructors. Here, Hobbes says explicitly that the office of the Sovereign consists of procuring the safety of the people through “public instruction, both of *doctrine* [italics mine] and example,” and “the making and executing of good laws, to which individual persons may apply their own cases.”²² No doubt is left that instruction by the agents of Leviathan in civil doctrine comes first. Hobbes further writes that the minds of the people “are like clean paper, fit to receive whatsoever by public authority shall be imprinted in them”²³. He mentions teaching, preaching, and the law as determining how his own teaching will be imprinted. In the Latin edition of *Leviathan*, published in 1668, Hobbes further professes incredulity at the possibility that “*learned* [italics mine] men do not make themselves understood, preaching and teaching those things which agree exquisitely with natural reason”²⁴. The importance of state teachers in Hobbes who will instruct subjects in public thus only continues to increase.

Indeed, Chapter XXX of *Leviathan* features what is aptly characterized as a Civil Decalogue. The ten civil teachings are, in order:

1. not to love other forms of government;
2. not to follow a fellow subject into disobedience;
3. not to speak ill of the sovereign;
4. to appear regularly at the time appointed by the Sovereign for civil instruction;
5. to honor their parents;
6. not to kill;
7. not to commit adultery;
8. not to steal;
9. not to bear false witness; and
10. to have a conscience free of unjust designs and intentions.

Hobbes’s even greater reliance on the language of sovereign “teaching,” as compared to *The Elements* and *De Cive*, indicates the greater importance that the Sovereign-created public teachers of civic precepts have attained. The Decalogue will be taught at English universities.

“But are not (may some man say) the universities of England learned enough already to do that? [provide right teaching for youth] or is it you will undertake to teach the universities? Hard questions?

But to the latter question, it is not fit, nor needful, for me to say either aye or no; for any man that sees what I am doing may easily perceive what I think.”²⁵

Given that Hobbes saw the universities as seedbeds of sedition and that he refers, in the previous paragraph, to the divines who received their education there and who sowed the seeds of rebellion²⁶, he calls in the italicized sentence almost certainly for a measure of sovereign instruction of the universities [39]²⁷. This is also consistent with Hobbes’s recommendation in “A Review and Conclusion” at the end of *Leviathan*, where he writes the following:

“Therefore, I think it [“this whole discourse” of *Leviathan*] may be profitably printed, and more profitably taught in the Universities . . . ”²⁸

Throughout *Leviathan*, in other words, the author’s commitment to having his civil science taught in the universities, which are public institutions, remains in evidence, and

the commitment to state education that requires the active involvement of public teachers has therefore only increased for Hobbes in *Leviathan*, relative to the conceptualization in *Elements* and *De Cive*.

3. Rudimentary Public Education in Spinoza

When it comes to state public teachers of civic precepts that are necessary for sovereignty to remain intact, there is no progression in Spinoza's works, at the universities or elsewhere, as one travels from the *Theological-Political Treatise* (TPT) to the *Political Treatise* (PT) and the *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect* (TEI). Spinoza does mention the importance of state supported pedagogy in the *Treatise*, but the steps towards increasing importance in Hobbes's works are not in evidence. A case has recently been made for the *Ethics* as a political work [40] but given its complexity and ample material available in the TPT and PT, we do not consider the book at this point²⁹. Given that Spinoza certainly read the *Leviathan* and *De Cive* and may have studied the *Elements*³⁰, the textual fact in question is one of interest.

Less has also been written about Spinoza than Hobbes on education by the state. This can be emphasized without providing a detailed comparison of all their relevant views on the subject. The author of a 1911 dissertation thus observed that, for Spinoza, "Education to deserve the name must be self-education" [41] p. 83. The theme of education in Spinoza has also been taken up by Genevie Lloyd [42] and P.R. Glass [43] without, however, a suggestion of anything in the way of sovereign teachers of public civil doctrine.

Spinoza also does not mention sovereign reform of the universities in the TPT, *Ethics*, or the PT, which for him are public institutions under the Sovereign in the same way that they are for Hobbes. Using civil power to reform the university, the locus par excellence of teaching and education is thus not an integral part of his project. He does not provide lists of the specific teachings or erroneous principles to be combatted in public, even as he dismisses the same principles. The interesting question becomes why, for Spinoza, providing itemized instructions to civil educators is not a priority.

3.1. Public Teachers in the Theological-Political Treatise

Spinoza's *Theological-Political Treatise* (TPT) was published in 1670. Unlike *Leviathan* or Hobbes's other theological-political treatises, it begins with a consideration of theological subjects and themes. The last five chapters of the TPT can read as if they were a separate work. There, Spinoza turns to natural right and to politics more narrowly understood.

Spinoza leaves little doubt in chapter five of the TPT, immediately following the discussion of the divine natural law in chapter four, that a public teaching conveyed to an entire nation will not be purely rational:

So men prefer to be taught by experience rather than engage in the logical process of deduction from a few axioms. Hence it follows that if anyone sets out to teach some doctrine to an entire nation, "he must above all adapt his arguments and the definitions relevant to his doctrine to the understanding of the common people, who form the greatest part of mankind [italics mine]."³¹

To emphasize in the context of this passage, Hobbes does not insist that the common people be taught all the relevant steps of the deduction of the laws of nature, but he does not go so far as to maintain that a sovereign teaching of civic precepts must rely entirely on an appeal to experience.

An important caveat is that Spinoza does include, in his works, passages to the effect that people can be rendered more reasonable. People are not, for him, always and inevitably a "mob." This is especially evident in his earlier work, the TPT, in which a passage supporting freedom of conscience appears³². Even in the *Political Treatise*, which reflects a greater "realism," Spinoza writes that institutions can prevent people from becoming rational, whereas open debate and publicity can sharpen everyone's intellect³³.

Nevertheless, it is also the case that at no point in his works does Spinoza include a statement about human equality that is comparable to the one Hobbes makes in the *Leviathan* in describing the state of nature. There, Hobbes writes that human equality is *more*

evident with respect to the intellect than it is with respect to physical abilities. Furthermore, at no point in his works does the author of *Leviathan* make the kinds of observations about the superstitious multitude that Spinoza presents in his works—from the introduction to the *TPT* to the *PT*. It is not, therefore, that Spinoza refuses to see a “reasonable multitude” as a possibility or that he considers mob-like behaviour to represent the “essence” of people generally. It is just that he does appreciate a potential within a group of people for mob-like behaviour, to which he calls attention repeatedly in his texts, in a way that Hobbes does not.

3.2. Public Teachers in the Political Treatise

The *Political Treatise* (*PT*) is Spinoza’s last work, published in 1677. Academies or universities are mentioned only once in the *Political Treatise*, in the very last paragraph of the second chapter on aristocracy. Spinoza writes:

“Academies founded at public expense are established not so much to encourage natural talents as to restrain them. But in a free commonwealth, arts and sciences will be best fostered if anyone who asks leave is allowed to teach publicly at his own expense and with his own reputation at risk. But these and similar topics I reserve for another occasion, for my intention here has been to confine myself to matters relating only to aristocratic government.”³⁴

The author does not keep his promise. Reform of the university curriculum is not discussed. It is striking that here, in the *Political Treatise*, one would expect the institution of sovereign teacher of “doctrine” or civic precepts to take shape if for Spinoza it is, in fact, important. Yet it does not appear. Public education in civic precepts is simply not theorized to remotely the same extent in Spinoza as it is in Hobbes.

3.3. Public Teachers in the Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect

The *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect*, published in 1677, is one of Spinoza’s more difficult works. Significantly, it mentions a general “theory of education.” This is for the sake of understanding the “true good” (above), which involves a grasp of how human beings are a part of the natural order, rather than uniquely privileged within it. Indeed, the assistance of both “Moral Philosophy” and the “Theory of Education” is invoked. The rest of the *TEI* moves to investigate how certain knowledge related to the true good may be gained³⁵.

The right method is important, and, although the details of Spinoza’s method lie outside the scope of the paper, the use of ideas as instruments to guide further investigation is also an important factor. An additional component is understanding as many different possible natural objects as possible. All told, Spinoza provides four different kinds of “knowledge.” They range from “perception arising from hearsay” to perception that relates to the “essence” of natural objects [13]. Given the complexity of Spinoza’s project and the proposed method, one would expect universities to play a major role in its dissemination and translation with a broader public in mind.

Yet, consideration of the context in which Spinoza mentions a “theory of the education” makes it clear that an institutional setting along the lines of Hobbes’s universities is not explicitly provided. It is not clear in the *TEI* where a sovereign teaching in precepts of reason, which could spread outwards to the generality of human beings, is to occur. This would seem to reinforce Glass’s point (above) that education for Spinoza is self-education. The *TEI* therefore confirms the difference between Spinoza and Hobbes that is evident in the *TPT* and in the *PT*.

4. The Enlightenment Difference between Hobbes and Spinoza

The effect of the above is to situate Hobbes as a better example than Spinoza of what has come to be known, since Margaret Jacob published her provocative 1981 book [44], as the Radical rather than the Moderate Enlightenment. Although the characterization of Enlightenment remains contested on a number of levels, three factors that distinguish the Radical from the Moderate articulation of related ideas and institutions are: (a) the

proposition that people can be rendered fully rational through education and reform of institutions; (b) an unwillingness to consider as legitimate the checking and balancing of sovereign power; and (c) the willingness to consider complete secularization a neutral, if not positive, development for politics. If examples of Radical Enlightenment thought include the authors of *Trois Imposteurs* to whom Jacob calls attention, Diderot, and d'Holbach, representatives of Moderate Enlightenment include Isaac Newton, John Locke, and the American Founders [45–49].

Spinoza may be the candidate whom it is easier to characterize as representing the Radical wing of the Enlightenment, if only because of Jonathan Israel's books and articles and the philosopher's explicit defense of free speech [50–53]. However, Israel's work has been successfully critiqued on a number of grounds, not least for adhering to a teleological notion of history [54]. Our research builds on research specifically critiquing the idea that Spinoza is part of the Radical Enlightenment [55] (pp. 266–269). It also extends scholarship according to which Hobbes more straightforwardly belongs to the Radical Enlightenment [56–63].

Indeed, if Spinoza does not depend on a general (and state-education supported) increase in rationality to arrive at peace, what is the alternative? Especially in the *Political Treatise*, Spinoza turns to institutional means that anticipate checks and balances. As is not the case in the *TPT*, he provides a wealth of institutional detail in the regime chapters of the *Political Treatise*. Thus, in the monarchy, preeminent among the institutions discussed is the militia. It is to be comprised exclusively of citizens, with commanders at the highest level serving no longer than a year³⁶. Fields and houses are to be public property³⁷. The king is also to have councilors, and these are to be numerous³⁸. The council turns out to be functionally coequal with the king because, as one learns in the second chapter on monarchy, the king's right extends only to selecting between the opinions that it proposes. The king has no decree power, and in fact he cannot even "give any judgment contrary to the view of the entire council"³⁹. The monarch also has no prerogative to rescind laws of his own making⁴⁰. Moreover, the orders or decrees of the king that do become laws, in whatever attenuated sense they should be considered his own, must be made public, and it is the council that is to oversee publicity⁴¹. From these institutions, Spinoza writes, will result safety for the monarch and peace for the multitude⁴².

The two different kinds of aristocracy, as the reader continues to see a lack of reliance by the author on a state-supported general increase in rationality, are the ones in which a single city is hegemonic, and the one in which power is shared between several cities. In addition to the supreme council or "sovereign power," as Spinoza refers to this body⁴³, "there is a subordinate council of syndics charged with upholding the constitution and calling to account delinquent ministers⁴⁴, a senate that will conduct public business⁴⁵, and consuls to convoke the senate and stand in when senators are not in session⁴⁶. In the aristocracy in which power is shared among several cities, which is "preferable to the former,"⁴⁷ more or less the same institutions occur albeit with minor variations, and Spinoza reiterates in the final paragraph that "in this kind of state, freedom is shared by more of its members"⁴⁸. The last chapter on aristocracy contains a characterization of the council of syndics as analogous to the Roman dictatorship⁴⁹. Its function, in other words, is that of a kind of executive.

Strikingly, the various institutional measures proposed in the *PT* and described above are missing from Hobbes' account, where the emphasis is on the monolithic state that confronts and teaches the individual. This absence is a further reinforcement of Hobbes's, but not Spinoza's, reliance on state-sanctioned education oriented towards rationality to ensure the long-term stability of the social order. In working towards this stability, Hobbes relies on state teachers, but not on institutions; Spinoza relies on institutions, but not on state teachers.

It is a contrast that has been noted in a classic article comparing Hobbes and Spinoza. The Jewish-Dutch philosopher, according to Douglas J. Den Uyl and Stuart D. Warner, certainly recognizes that knowledge will lead to enlightenment.

But Spinoza is less optimistic than Hobbes that knowledge can be generally disseminated or generally followed. Spinoza's solution to the problem is a forerunner of a standard conviction of progressive theories—to establish a system. If a system can be devised whereby defective social mechanisms are to be replaced by more appropriate ones, then progress will be virtually guaranteed because the system will run itself [64].

In other words, there are elements of establishing a system in Spinoza's political thought, if by this is understood institutions that channel and contain the passions of the multitude [See above discussion]. These elements are not present to the same extent in Hobbes's works [See above discussion].

The same dynamic is further illustrated by Spinoza's, but not Hobbes's, definite reliance on civil religion as an instrument to moderate what he considers the potential passions of a multitude. This strategy is in evidence in chapter fourteen of the *TPT*, where Spinoza presents a civil religion that consists of seven articles that must be accepted for the sake of obedience. According to Spinoza, they represent the distillation of the teaching of both the Jewish and Christian scriptures, which he holds can easily be grasped, and which do not extend to debates over the truth content of speculative opinions. Admittedly, Jean-Jacques Rousseau does not mention Spinoza by name in his classic discussion of the subject in "Civil Religion," the famous chapter in the *The Social Contract* [65] (pp. 248–249). But the six articles of civil faith that Rousseau presents in it bear a distinct similarity to Spinoza's own.

Now, is Spinoza's civil religion to be taught by the state? Yes. Not in a monarchy, in which the philosopher distrusts the alliance of the king with superstitious ideas and forces; but in an aristocracy, it is the nobles who are responsible for the civil religion in the context of a national church. Spinoza takes a step towards the separation of church and state when he writes that aristocrats themselves will not be responsible for preaching. Preaching will be left to the commons. However, the state remains responsible for civil religion.

The state-run civil religion that Spinoza theorizes operates on more than one level. The first and seventh articles, in speaking of divinity that is capable of judgment, do not rely on the pantheism Spinoza would have considered to be consistent with a modern scientific account of nature. Rather, they depend on the notions of transcendental divinity that he saw as an obstacle to the construction of civil sovereignty in the 17th century. Spinoza's use of religion as a political instrument, therefore, is in fact intended to reach different audiences, but the management of superstition remains a paramount objective.

Certainly, it is possible that Hobbes would have used the reworked Christianity of part III of *Leviathan* as a political tool. As indicated above, Hobbes does write in *Leviathan* that the entirety of the work may be imposed on the Universities, including the reworked Christianity of parts III and IV. Nevertheless, Hobbes declines to feature, as does Spinoza in chapter fourteen of the *TPT* or Rousseau in the critical chapter of the *The Social Contract*, a separate section that deals exclusively with the subject of civil religion⁵⁰. And the important passage in chapter thirty-one of *Leviathan* maintains that public worship must be uniform, if the commonwealth is to be said to have a religion at all. This leaves open the very real possibility that the commonwealth, as a whole, is not to have a religion.

How to explain Hobbes's explicit reliance on a state-supported pedagogy focused on precepts of reason, as contrasted with Spinoza's affirmation in its place of the importance of institutions and civil religion? In 1953, in *Natural Right and History*, Leo Strauss wrote the following about Hobbes:

"Hobbes' expectation from enlightenment seems to be contradicted by his belief in the power of passion, and especially of pride or ambition. The contradiction is solved by the consideration that the ambition which endangers civil society is characteristic of a minority: of 'the rich and potent subjects of a kingdom, or those that are accounted the most learned'; if 'the common people,' whom necessity 'keepeth attent on their trades, and

labour,' are properly taught, the ambition and avarice of the few will become powerless [66] p. 200 fn 44."⁵¹

This observation occurs in the discussion on the overcoming, through political means, of the fear of hell fire or God, where Strauss writes that Hobbes seeks disenchantment through the advance of science⁵². Strauss does not provide a similar characterization of Spinoza [67–69]⁵³. This points to the possibility that Hobbes and Spinoza's projects—as further indicated by the disparity we have uncovered with respect to the presence and absence, respectively, of sovereign teachers in their works—are different indeed.

5. Spinoza on Education and the Philosophic Elite

Can additional light be shed on the dynamics of institutional public education, in relation to Radical Enlightenment, by considering these philosophers' approaches to the life of the mind? Spinoza, in his day, was certainly considered to be more philosophical than Hobbes. His biographers recount that he would like to spend as long as three weeks at a time at home, not going out, alone with his thoughts [70,71]. If Hobbes thrived on society and was in his element tutoring the sons of England's aristocracy, Spinoza, who had been rejected by a community upon being excommunicated by his synagogue, seemed to flourish in solitude. It was Spinoza, after all, not Hobbes, who wrote the *Ethics*.

The difference is reflected in their writings. A key point separating the thought of Hobbes from that of Spinoza is the position staked out by Hobbes on the fundamental equality of human beings with respect to gifts of the intellect. His famous statement in chapter fifteen of *Leviathan* is of a piece with the belief that the common people can be brought to enlightenment, or, over time, become rational:

"And as to the faculties of the mind I find yet a greater equality amongst men than that of strength. For prudence is but experience, which equal time equally bestows on all men in those things they equally apply themselves unto"⁵⁴.

This is, without a doubt, a radically democratic foundation, even as Hobbes's political superstructure favours one individual who as monarch rules from the top.

In the *Political Treatise*, however, in the very next paragraph after the one above in which Spinoza sets out the scientific character of his treatment of politics, the philosopher provides the specific reason why a scientific treatment of politics will not entail the general dissemination of knowledge:

"We showed too, that reason can, indeed, do much to restrain and moderate the passions, but we saw at the same time, that the road, which reason herself points out, is very steep; so that such as persuade themselves, that the multitude or men distracted by politics can ever be induced to live according to the bare dictate of reason, must be dreaming of the poetic golden age, or of a stage-play"⁵⁵.

Although the *Political Treatise* can, with some plausibility, be described as more aristocratic than the *Theological-Political Treatise*, given that aristocracy in the former is a viable regime and that emphasis on state involvement in civil religion is greater (a point, however, that is disputed by one influential commentator [72] (pp. 123–128), the distinction between the few who are wise and the many who are vulgar is just as pronounced in Spinoza's earlier work as it is in the unfinished treatise on politics. It is this distinction related to philosophy, we would like to argue, that goes to the heart of why Spinoza is a more moderate Enlightenment thinker than Hobbes, and that ultimately explains the greater scepticism of Spinoza towards even the rudiments of state-supported education for the sake of increased public rationality.

There is, of course, Spinoza's statement in the preface of the *TPT*:

"I know how deeply rooted in the mind are the prejudices embraced under the guise of piety. I know, too, that the masses can no more be freed from their superstition than from their fears"⁵⁶.

This must be considered alongside his statement in chapter five of the *TPT*:

From what we have already demonstrated, it undoubtedly follows that knowledge of these writings and belief in them is in the highest degree necessary for the common people who lack the ability to perceive things clearly and distinctly⁵⁷.

Other passages to the same effect exist and need not be multiplied indefinitely. But the ones in the *TEI* are especially striking. It quickly becomes apparent that Spinoza does not believe all human beings can be elevated, even in principle, to the perception involved in the fourth kind of knowledge. In pursuing the sciences, he writes, it is therefore necessary:

“To speak in a manner intelligible to the multitude, and to comply with every general custom that does not hinder the attainment of our purpose [13].”

This passage, without essentializing the multitude, makes clear that for Spinoza the understanding of most human beings is in a significant sense deficient. There is no indication of an expectation that the multitude will leave behind superstition entirely. Rather, Spinoza seems to focus on the “advantages” that can be gained from not incurring the hostility of the mob; a “friendly” audience is key. Although the multitude is to be prepared for the “reception of the truth,” rhetorical and possibly substantive adjustments with respect to the content of what is communicated may be necessary because broader groups of people are not epistemologically equipped to appreciate rationality in its pure form.

Towards the end of the *TEI*, Spinoza’s difference with respect to Hobbes on these issues is made clearer still. Spinoza, describing those who disagree with his method of arriving at truth, writes the following:

“If there yet remains some skeptic, who doubts of our primary truth, and of all deductions we make, taking such truth as our standard, he must either be arguing in bad faith, or we must confess that there are men in complete mental blindness either innate or due to misconceptions—that is, to some external influence. Such persons are not conscious of themselves [13].”

Spinoza, to put the significance of the passage in perspective, goes further than he did above; “mental blindness,” a term that Hobbes never uses, is referenced, and although Spinoza allows that it may be “due to misconceptions”—and therefore something that an education by the civil sovereign in precepts of reason can address—the possibility of natural differences is also raised. Considered alongside Spinoza’s descriptions of the philosopher, a type who stands apart from the generality of human beings, the passages above reinforce the argument that it is Spinoza’s, not Hobbes’s, understanding of Enlightenment that is more moderate, insofar as it remains open to a greater degree to the possibility and reality of human difference.

Spinoza’s textual references to the philosopher are evident in chapter 4 of the *TPT*, whose subject is the “Divine Law.” Here the Dutch philosopher refers to an affective or cognitive state that he describes as the “intellectual love of God.” He writes, “it follows that our supreme good and perfection depends solely on the *knowledge* [italics mine] of God.”⁵⁸ Later, Spinoza adds that “the love of God arises from the knowledge of god, a knowledge deriving from general axioms that are certain and self-evident, and so belief in historical narratives is by no means essential to the attainment of our supreme good.”⁵⁹ Throughout the chapter, he refers to the “supreme good and blessedness” as well as the “perfection”⁶⁰ of human beings who seek to understand the divine through the study of natural phenomena. Similar passages are also in evidence at the end of the *Ethics*, where the writer holds that the intellectual love of God provides a kind of immortality⁶¹.

At no point in his works does Hobbes include this language of eros—related to perfection, blessedness, and a supreme good—of which Spinoza makes use in describing the study or contemplation of nature. Indeed, Hobbes writes in a famous passage of *Leviathan* that a highest good, or *summum bonum*, for human beings simply does not exist. There is instead the “pursuit of power after power, that ceaseth only in death.”⁶² Hobbes also makes negative statements about philosophers in history that Spinoza does not⁶³. To the extent that the philosopher as Spinoza presents him or her could be a challenge to the authority of the people, Hobbes’s refusal to theorize human types of this kind, based on a more robust commitment to equality, aligns him more directly with the Radical Enlightenment.

6. Hobbes vs. Spinoza on Conscience and the Radical Enlightenment Difference

This contrast related to Radical Enlightenment is further reinforced by Hobbes and Spinoza's views on conscience. Despite the thought-provoking passages on Independency in chapter forty-seven of *Leviathan*, the weight overall of the English philosopher's work clearly leans in the direction of holding that conscience understood as private opinion of good and evil has little value, and that it should not constitute the basis of action when authoritative public views of right and wrong are provided by the commonwealth. Spinoza, on the other hand, leaves a more significant opening for individual assessment of right and wrong, and action based on it, even as this clearly leads to conceptual tension with his overall framework of sovereignty. Therefore, insofar as it is plausible to see later modern thought privileging positive liberty and citizenship over individual rights to a greater extent than earlier articulations of modernity [73–77], it is conceivable to imagine Hobbes as the one pointing to more radical possibilities.

Note, rejection of the view that it is a sin to disregard one's individual opinion of good and evil is present in all three of Hobbes's major works of political theory, as discussed above [See above discussion]. The value of individual conscience understood in this way is *not* to be taught in any of the Universities, alongside any of the precepts of reason. Indeed, throughout his writings, the author of *Leviathan* consistently holds that a right to follow private interpretations of morality is inconsistent with sovereignty⁶⁴. This makes sense: for Hobbes, there were ample historical reasons to distrust private judgment. Hobbes confirms this position from the *Elements*, *De Cive*, and *Leviathan* through the account of Civil War in Behemoth. That conflict was caused by Aristotelian political philosophy's mistaken notions of freedom⁶⁵, but Hobbes also pinpoints the Protestant principle of individual conscience, which was appealed to by demagogic preachers⁶⁶. Their rhetoric inflamed passions and stoked up the mob.

Recent literature does exist to make the case for a tolerationist Hobbes, one who characterizes diverse individual religious beliefs *and* practices, from the potential of the commonwealth, as civically neutral or even positive⁶⁷ [78–81]. An especially important passage in *Leviathan* emphasized to this effect occurs in chapter forty-seven, as the author considers knots on the freedom of conscience that are successively undone, culminating in the Independency of England in the 1650's⁶⁸. But the pushback against tolerationist interpretations has been pronounced, in illustrating that they do not sufficiently take into account the historical character of Independency. The denominationalists in question, as Jeffrey Collins has shown, did support a measure of toleration, but it was limited and relative to the historical era. Magisterial Independents, so called and unlike other kinds, were tolerant to an extent, but they also had no problem with not separating church and state⁶⁹ [82]. In the passage in chapter forty-seven of *Leviathan*, it is not clear which strain of Independency Hobbes has in mind. Further arguments point out that individual conscience in the framework of *Leviathan* is not sustainable, given the conceptual structure of Hobbesian sovereignty as a whole [83].

A far more positive evaluation of private normativity, as already demonstrated in the previous section, occurs in Spinoza's works, in his characterization of the philosopher. This positive assessment recurs, arguably with more immediate political consequences, in the description of the free citizen in chapter twenty of the TPT. Here, as Spinoza describes the modern commercial republic, he explicitly theorizes freedom of speech, and his derivation of the right is arresting:

“So while to act against the sovereign's decree is definitely an infringement of his right, this is not the case with thinking, judging, and *consequently* [*italics mine*] (*consequenter*) with speaking, too, provided one does no more than express or communicate one's opinion, defending it through rational conviction alone, not through deceit, anger, hatred, or the will to effect such changes in the state as he himself decides⁷⁰.”

Acting, in the passage above, is at first separated from thinking and speaking. This is arresting because, as one considers the ways in which a well-crafted and articulated

opinion can undermine a sovereign power, the reality that speech is action is not difficult to acknowledge.

The “consequently” stands out as important precisely because it is not at all self-evident that spoken words are in the same category as internal thoughts and judgments. And, if speech is action, the linking of speech to thinking and judging contradicts the first part of the sentence, where action against the sovereign’s decrees is strictly prohibited⁷¹. As Spinoza continues to build on these ideas in chapter 20 of the TPT, he writes that not only is it “impossible to deprive men of the freedom to say what they think,” and not only can “this freedom be granted without detriment to public peace, to piety, and to the right of the sovereign, *but . . . it must be granted if these are to be preserved*”⁷² [italics mine] (*sed ad haec omnia conservandum, etiam debere concedi*). Indeed, Spinoza writes in stirring terms of the corruption that begins to eat away at the commonwealth when the right of honest and noble men to speak their mind is not recognized⁷³. This dynamic can lead to sedition⁷⁴, which is all the more reason for authorities to uphold the connection between freedom of thought and freedom of speech. Unlike Hobbes, who does not theorize the value of free speech a single time in his works, Spinoza in chapter twenty of the TPT affirms the worth of private normativity or conscience. Flowing from their value, as another commentator has also noted [84], he sees the desirability of free citizens articulating and acting on their consciences through speech⁷⁵.

Spinoza is clear that the prerogatives of civil sovereignty remain paramount. This has led influential commentators to dismiss the possibility that he is straightforwardly a liberal⁷⁶. Rosen, in doing so, points to the absolute framework in which Spinoza does not take the conscience-respecting step of separating church and state, and in which the focus of freedom of speech is not individual rights, but the protection of the philosopher [85]. This seems confirmed in the TPT when Spinoza submits his own work for approval to the civil authorities, making clear that he will not seek publication should any part be deemed inconsistent with the laws or piety⁷⁷. This tension, the co-existence of the liberal (conscience-supporting) moment in an overarching framework of sovereignty, has also led Ron Beiner to refer to what may simply be irreconcilable elements in Spinoza’s work [86]. However, if at all, those are finally harmonized, Spinoza unlike Hobbes provides a concrete example, in the legitimate motivation by private opinion of action in the form of speech, of individual conscience that plays a stabilizing role and bears civic fruit.

This may further explain why Hobbes is not open, as demonstrated in the previous section of this article, to the philosopher as a human type that the regime should protect [87]. Both philosophers and religious authorities appeal to an understanding of the good that is not under the supervision and control of the civil sovereign, a constructed power so many thinkers in the 16th and 17th centuries consider necessary to securing safety and the peace. It may be the case that the kind of religious leader Hobbes describes in *Behemoth* is a politicized version of the philosopher, indulging private evaluations of the good based on which he may, or may not, find it worthwhile to venture into the public square using a rhetoric of subversion. To be clear, it is not necessarily that Hobbes believes every elite committed to private opinions will ultimately engage publicly in this way. But perhaps the experience of War, and the possibility of civil breakdown with which he was all too familiar, makes him reluctant to theorize any group of this kind.

Now, Hobbes still relies on “conscience,” but in a different and positive sense of the word: here, it is necessary to reach for the first and proper meaning that Hobbes unpacks in his history of the term, which he presents in chapter seven of *Leviathan*⁷⁸. This is, namely, a knowing-with, or a collective, as opposed to an individual, knowing. The Latin words, related to *con*, meaning “with,” and *scio*, “to know,” help us with this concept. This dynamic in Hobbes, related to rhetoric with connections to the thought of Hegel and Heidegger, has been explored by Karen Feldman [88] and more recently by Amy Gais [89] and Guido Frilli [90].

But what, exactly, is it possible to know together? Based on Hobbes’s description of reasoning in chapter 5 of *Leviathan*, confident conclusions about any subject would seem

attainable. Chains of deductive reasoning are involved, which Hobbes likens to addition and subtraction. The key is that the starting point is agreement on the definitions of words, and this consensus necessarily involves others⁷⁹.

In the commonwealth, as this proper (and collective) understanding of Hobbesian “conscience” is unpacked, it is the civil sovereign who has the authority to define all terms upon which it is necessary to secure accord to hold the state of nature at bay. These words include, “good, evil, lawful, and unlawful in the actions of subjects,” as well as specific terms that convey honor and dishonor⁸⁰. These sovereign definitions are the starting points of authorized deductive reasoning in the commonwealth. Based on them, we can know with our representatives the policy steps needed to advance different goods and goals.

Of course, and perhaps to avoid the appearance of arbitrariness, Hobbes holds that the starting point of deductive chains that instituted the sovereign in the pre-political state was *not* an arbitrary agreement, but, rather, self-evident truths based on human nature. First and foremost among these is “that peace is good; and therefore also the way or means of peace (which, as I have shewed before, are *justice, gratitude, modesty, equity, mercy,* and the rest of the laws of nature) are good (that is to say, *moral virtues*), and their contrary vices, evil.”⁸¹ As one commentator [91] has summarized it: “The definitions which Hobbes uses are self-evident. This means that . . . they cannot be inferred from the facts . . . Reasoning from self-evident truth is science and, therefore, exact and certain.”⁸²

And Hobbes considers yet another mode of “knowing together” in *Leviathan*—this one based not on definitions imposed by the Sovereign or self-evident truths, but, instead, experience. Thus: “I have derived the rights of sovereign power, and the duty of subjects, hitherto from the principles of nature only; such as experience has found true or consent (concerning the use of words) has made so; that is to say, from the nature of men, known to us by experience, and from definitions (of such words as are essential to all political reasoning) universally agreed on.”⁸³ This statement is made at the beginning of part III of *Leviathan*. Here, the author seems to provide an alternative ground for government to the rationalistic and deductive foundation of the first half of the work.

Certainly, it makes sense for experience to matter given Hobbes’s empiricism, which he sets forth in the opening paragraphs of *Leviathan*: All thoughts that human beings have come from the senses, which register the impacts of external stimuli⁸⁴. It is even conceivable that this kind of “knowing with,” going back to a foundational understanding of thoughts as the after-effect of particles hitting the organs of sense, could extend to the possibility of regularized manipulation of the external world in keeping with the scientific method. This is possible, although it does not follow necessarily. Hobbes was not enthusiastic about the conduction of experiments, as his disagreement with Robert Boyle, who contributed to the development of the air-pump, illustrates [92]⁸⁵.

But whether the conscience Hobbes envisions is deductive or empirical is not, ultimately, the point. Whether an empirical conscience is based on experience, or scientific method or some combination of the two, is also not relevant to the larger issue. One thing for Hobbes is clear. This is that shared knowledge that is authoritative, or conscience in the public sense, is preferred to any kind of individualized comprehension. The two are not held in tension—the collective understanding is undoubtedly preferred.

As it turns out, Spinoza also allows for conscience, or a knowing together (although he does not use this vocabulary)⁸⁶. This is in addition to his valorization of individual political judgment, and the action of speaking that it can legitimate. Thus, the same sovereign for Spinoza who does not institute a separation of church and state, and who accepts the need for public control of expression despite significant allowances made for free speech, also engages in the project of the sovereign definition of words. The very title of chapter 19 of the TPT is suggestive in this regard: “It is shown that the right over matters of religion is vested entirely in the sovereign, and that the external forms of worship should be such as accord with the peace of the commonwealth, if we would serve God aright.”⁸⁷ To emphasize, unlike Spinoza’s freedom-of-speech moments in chapter twenty of the TPT,

these suggest that, since words are external and can potentially impact the peace of the commonwealth, sovereign regulation applies—resulting in definitions of key terms that include right, justice, and piety.

And, just as Hobbes engages in deductive reasoning starting from these kinds of definitions, so, too, does Spinoza. Ed Curley [93] and Steven Smith [94], in addition to others, have both called attention to the geometric, step by step quality of deductions in the *Ethics*. All five of the Books in that volume start from definitions, and then proceed to reason step by step to arrive at political and metaphysical truths. This is especially evident in Book IV of the *Ethics*, which can be interpreted as setting up a democratic community based on ongoing “demonstration”⁸⁸.

To be clear, interpretations of Spinoza also exist according to which he endorses the equivalent of a “con-science,” or knowing together, based on a shared understanding of the material world brought about by experiments carried out by the community of scientists, specifically [95]. (These interpretations are doubtless more counterintuitive than is the case when they are applied to Hobbes, to the extent that they presume a naturalism or physicalism on Spinoza’s part, when what a straightforward reading of his work continues to suggest for many is the primacy of ideas and concepts in the make-up of reality⁸⁹ [96–102]. But the literature connecting Spinoza to naturalism, and to specific sets of scientific experiments, has in fact impacted these debates⁹⁰. Materialist readings can also make sense given Spinoza’s circle of scientific correspondents and friends⁹¹, which further demonstrates the ability of his texts to sustain an understanding of shared knowledge that flows from the scientific pursuit of a greater awareness of mechanisms in the natural world.

But the point with Spinoza, whether collective conscience is best understood as deductive, or as empirical and involving the methodology of the natural sciences or not, is that a valid sphere of individual conscience also exists. The two are held in balance (in tension)—a kind of co-existence of consciences not displayed in the works of Hobbes. The ultimate significance of all this can no doubt be interpreted in different ways. One possibility is that it is a further reinforcement of how democracy for Spinoza allows the philosopher to flourish, simply by leaving him alone⁹². But the major takeaway, as later waves of modernity, to emphasize again, are associated with a positive freedom that pays less heed to the conscience of the individual, is that Hobbes can be interpreted to point more readily to Radical Enlightenment than Spinoza.

7. Thomas Jefferson’s Spinozist Framework for Elite Education

To the extent that Spinoza’s philosopher is not a product of a specific program of sovereign education that aims at general rationality, it is possible that this individual who is passionate about contemplation exists, or emerges, at different times and in varied political contexts. It is here that one can understand better the contours of a public education of which Spinoza might approve, even as he does not prescribe a single institutional context for it, with implications for the present day. It is conceivable that Spinoza, rather than proposing the rudiments of an exclusively state-supported public pedagogy intended to increase rationality in general, might champion a sovereign system that encourages the philosopher and allows for him or her to appear. Spinoza, in other words, might value a system that, first and foremost, does not hinder the emergence of a wisdom-pursuing elite. This framework would aim to clear away specific superstitions, but it would not prescribe the exact content of rationality that will manifest itself in a diversity of forms.

To be clear, in what follows the suggestion is *not* that Jefferson envisioned that the most talented individuals, who made it through the multiple steps of publicly funded education, including University learning, would necessarily be full-blown philosophers capable of a life of intense and solitary contemplation. But recent work on Spinoza has shown the importance in his texts of the idea of *degree*—thus, whether or not a being is active or passive is not necessarily a binary consideration. It is in fact possible for any part of the natural world to be somewhere *in-between* [103,104]. The products of Jefferson’s decentralized public education will not necessarily be philosophers, exclusively, but in their

love of wisdom and attachment to the pursuit of knowledge oriented towards a common good, they will reflect the philosophic ideal to a greater degree.

We know that Thomas Jefferson read Spinoza [105] p. 248. He also references him directly (“Spinosa”) in a letter to Adams dated 11 April 1823 (interestingly enough, the context is not education but a discussion of cosmology—Jefferson states his disagreement with what he characterizes as Spinoza’s view of the eternity of the world) [106] p. 591. Strikingly, the third President’s proposal for education has parallels to a larger framework of Spinozist thought, even if the 17th century philosopher does not refer to concrete pedagogical proposals, in three areas: first, Jefferson affirms the importance of a wisdom-loving elite in democratic republican politics. Second, he proposes to use the state to cultivate it. Third, he wishes to bring about that cultivation through a series of institutions working together, but not forming a single centralized civil authority. Rather, they constitute a network of public institutions at different levels, complimented by private associations and families. Let us consider these areas one by one.

First, agreeing with Spinoza, Jefferson without a doubt recognized the importance of a philosophic elite. In support of this possibility, James Conant noted that it is easy to “pounce” on some of Jefferson’s characterizations in his discussion of education as “aristocratic” [107] (pp. 7–8) [108] p. 49. And concrete evidence is found in the text of Jefferson’s 1779 “A Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge” in Virginia, which proposes a tripartite system of public education, increasingly exclusive, at the primary, grammar, and University levels⁹³ [109]. The Bill reads: “whence it becomes expedient for promoting the publick happiness that those persons, whom nature hath endowed with genius and virtue, should be rendered by liberal education worthy to receive, and able to guard the sacred deposit of the rights and liberties of their fellow citizens.”⁹⁴ In Jefferson’s letter to Adams of 28 October 1813, in which he discusses his plan for the 1779 bill, the concept of this specific kind aristocracy is also front and center. Remarks Jefferson, “experience proves that the moral and physical qualities of man, whether good or evil, are transmissible in a certain degree from father to son” [110]⁹⁵. From here, he concurs with Adams that “there is a natural aristocracy among men” that opposes the “artificial aristocracy founded on wealth and birth,” with the natural aristocracy distinguished by wisdom. Jefferson further asks, “May we not even say that that form of government is the best which provides the most effectually for a pure selection of these natural aristoi in the office of government?”⁹⁶

For additional understanding of how Jefferson perceived the connection between his envisioned basic education and wisdom and philosophy, the letter to Peter Carr, 10 August 1787, depicts the basic areas of education in which he believed the young man should take an interest. In addition to the sciences, Jefferson suggested languages, in particular “Italian” and “Spanish,” reflecting pragmatic recommendations given relations with Spain in particular. But there was also, and more significantly, “religion,” “moral philosophy;” and the “wisdom” that only travel could provide [111]. The elite Jefferson envisioned, as playing a unique role in the affairs of the republic, would be distinguished by learning and a love of wisdom.

Indeed, the third President opposed social hierarchies and inequalities that he saw as inconsistent with republicanism (this despite his own support of the vast socio-economic differences that the institution of slavery preserved)—yet, as one recent commentator has observed, this did not mean that he did not affirm what he understood as natural inequality, in a way that is jarring to a modern democratic sensibility: “Such a narrowly defined meritocratic system does not align well with modern democratic understandings of the goals of education in our society” [112]. In the end, natural aristocracy is still aristocratic.

Second, in terms of the broad agreement with Spinoza’s educational philosophy, Jefferson’s willingness to use civil authority to encourage these *aristoi* is not in doubt. His bill for “A Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge,” 18 June 1779 has already been mentioned; there was also the “Bill for Establishing a System of Public Education,” ca. 24 October 1817. Developing individuals of “talents and virtues” from less affluent strata of

society, who otherwise would not have the means to educate themselves, would take place “at the common expense” [113]. Jefferson did not, in fact, hesitate to use the power of the state to remake universities or establish them. Scholarships were provided by the state of Virginia for “his selected few in the residential grammar schools and the university” [109].

And third, with respect to overlap between Spinoza and Jefferson’s educational thought, and directly furthering his goal in this area, Jefferson believed that a decentralized system involving public and private power centers was best. Conant argues for Jefferson’s project representing the attempt to bring about universal education. Yet, it was “only free *elementary* education he [Jefferson] had advocated.”⁹⁷ Critically, Jefferson did not view the State and Federal governments as one and the same. His plans, both the 1779 and the 1817 bills, are focused on the commonwealth, and while Jefferson’s vision was that Virginia would be an example for other states, it was not a national plan. It is also striking that during the time when Jefferson wielded the most political power as President, his plans nowhere surfaced on the national stage.

Indeed, in comparing Jefferson’s bills and Locke’s *Report to the Board of Trade of 1697*, Locke’s influence on Jefferson regarding the education of the poor is evident, as is the distrust of public authorities to manage said education exclusively. Jefferson certainly does not include the more rigorous applications of discipline or the “callous” language of the *Report*⁹⁸ [114]. But specifically, the policy apparatus in both entrusts local government with the management of education (in either wards or parishes). Both programs also provide specific education for the poor⁹⁹.

And similarly to Locke, Jefferson appears to locate the authority for education with the parents. As alluded to earlier, Jefferson in his preparations for the 1817 “Bill for Establishing a System of Public Education” sent a copy to Joseph B. Cabell, in which he addressed, in a footnote, the possible concern over fathers denying the free education to their children that the bill would provide¹⁰⁰. “How far does this right and duty extend?—to guard the life of the infant, his property, his instruction, his morals? The Roman father was supreme in all these: we draw the line, but where?—public sentiment does not seem to have traced it precisely.”¹⁰¹ Despite the ambiguity, Jefferson deems it prudent not to force a father, believing that societal pressures would motivate those more reluctant. These comments suggest that, at the very least, Jefferson did not see an encroachment by the state on the family in *this* case. He might not insist on a line as clear as the one Locke had put in place, but he was nevertheless concerned about the proper demarcation of parental and governmental authority in education.

Given his concerns about federal overreach, it is not surprising that Jefferson would “connect freedom and responsibility, with republican citizenship.”¹⁰² To secure it, Jefferson believed that a specific kind of public education system was paramount. And in proposing it, he featured three prongs of a state pedagogical strategy whose broad outlines we have categorized as Spinozist, not Hobbesian. They are: (1) a recognition of the need for elite wisdom, or at least its pursuit, even in democratic conditions; (2) a commitment to the use of civil authority to encourage this group, or at least not to hinder it; and (3) an openness to relying on different levels of authority, both public and private, in doing so. To be clear, this is not a genealogical case that shows which parts of the *Theological-Political Treatise* or *Political Treatise* did, or did not, impact Jefferson. But what is suggestive is the overlapping affinities in strategy recommended by these thinkers, with general implications for contemporary policy choices.

8. Conclusions

This paper has demonstrated that Hobbes, but not Spinoza’s, political theory contains the rudiments of a top-down state-supported public education that aims to increase rationality across society. This is evident in the increasing prominence of sovereign teachers of civic precepts, as one progresses through Hobbes’s three theological-political treatises, *The Elements of Law*, *De Cive*, and *Leviathan*, respectively. Although one cannot be certain that Spinoza studied *The Elements of Law*, there is no doubt that he did read both *De Cive*

and *Leviathan*. The progression in Hobbes's thought outlined is therefore one of which Spinoza may have been aware in its entirety, and one that he certainly saw in part.

After demonstrating the presence of a rudimentary system of exclusive state education in Hobbes's works, instructing the common people in civic precepts that are also articles of reason, this paper moved to consider the absence of such a system in three of Spinoza's books where it might be expected to appear: the *Theological-Political Treatise*, the *Political Treatise*, and the *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect*. Rather than attempt to elevate human beings to a higher level of rationality, Spinoza especially in the *Political Treatise* recognizes the ongoing problem of various passions and introduces elements of a proto separation of powers. Spinoza's, but not Hobbes's, continued reliance on civil religion, or the use of religion as a political instrument, points to the same dynamic. Thus, Hobbes's openness to a commonwealth in which there is no need for religion indicates his greater optimism that people generally, in receiving education and as a result of engaging in bourgeois pursuits, will leave superstition behind entirely. Ultimately, Hobbes's greater reliance on rudimentary public education, coupled with his decreased reliance on civil religion and his lesser willingness to consider the need for a system of checks and balances, suggests that he is a better exemplar than Spinoza of Radical Enlightenment.

To the degree that Spinoza does appear open to public education, the end is different. Rather than reaching the general rationality of human beings, or Hobbes's goal, Spinoza has in mind to a greater extent the "philosophers," or, broadly speaking, a natural aristocracy that pursues wisdom, as we demonstrated in Section 4. If that is the case, then his hesitation to write on public education to the extent Hobbes does is somewhat understandable: philosophers, or natural aristocrats, exist in every regime. They may emerge and, in the process, need encouragement and some cultivation, but attempts at exclusively top-down constitution may prove counterproductive or simply ineffective. Perhaps, Spinoza would have considered the possibility that a formal and exclusively centralized system is even a factor hindering their development.

This elite in Spinoza, but not Hobbes's works (Section 5), will also be able to act on its conscience—further confirming the Enlightenment difference between the two thinkers. In considering implications for education policy choices that we make today, the analogies between Baruch Spinoza and Thomas Jefferson's pedagogical strategies clearly emerge (Section 6). In broad terms, both thinkers agree that a republican–democratic order does need a natural elite or aristocracy to function well; neither one hesitates to employ state power in order to support it; but both Jefferson and Spinoza also rely, or would depend, on a multi-pronged strategy that makes use of several layers of governance and potentially private associations in its educational work. These are not yet concrete policy recommendations; but what has emerged is a framework, which from the perspective of responsibility and excellence may help us better think through different alternatives¹⁰³.

If, for the first early modern theorist of democracy, sovereign education geared towards a natural aristocracy would have been a welcome idea, perhaps we, too, can consider whether in the current age Spinoza does not address us with renewed relevance. Going forward, this would involve finding areas of contrast and overlap with the educational thought of John Dewey. In allowing for a significant degree of non-centralized or local constitution of the elite, the broad principles of Spinoza's framework may be in significant tension with those of the American reformer. Dewey rejected any degree of local control [115] (pp. 1147–1150). Dewey also would have been skeptical of any elites that furthered divisions and negatively impacted the unity of democracy. On the positive side, Dewey did not believe in standardized or utilitarian education, which Spinoza certainly did not promote, either (see Dewey [116–119]. See also Rogers [120,121]).

A public education system that protects and encourages, without believing that it can straightforwardly produce, a natural aristocracy, could represent a welcome development. As Catherine and Michael Zuckert have pointed out, elitism has hardly been a sinister right-wing concept in American political history: the Federalist and the political scientist Dahl are but two examples of a responsible positive estimation of the role of elites [122].

With purely ethno-nationalist claims to rule on the rise, perhaps a measure of elitism, based on the virtues of an emergent natural aristocracy not constituted in a top-down way by state institutions, and open to the guidance of philosophy in pursuit of the common good, is needed.

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Notes

- 1 Schouls focuses on what he sees as the primary thrust of Locke’s thought: the relationship between the potentially autonomous student and the authority of the teacher. See Schouls [23] p. 174.
- 2 See Ward [25] p. 692.
- 3 To be clear: these teachers are not themselves the Sovereign, but Leviathan has authorized them to teach.
- 4 As character “A” states in Dialogue 1, “The core of rebellion, as you have seen by this, and read of other rebellions, are the Universities; which nevertheless are not to be cast away, but to be better disciplined.” Hobbes [28] p. 58.
- 5 Of the above, Bejan is the most comfortable with a coercive role for the sovereign in education. Button is the least comfortable, placing the emphasis on culture: “But public reason in Hobbes represents more than the coercive power of public law authorized by the people—it represents the beliefs, norms, and virtues that will, over time, form the very meaning of citizenship in a commonwealth.” Bejan [31] p. 47.
- 6 Johnston [37] p. 89 argues that in *Leviathan* Hobbes aims to educate directly the middle-class reading public, without recourse to sovereign teachers.
- 7 Vaughan [33] in particular thinks that the content of Hobbesian education is minimal, consisting of a negative version of the Golden Rule (“do not that to another, which thou wouldest not have done to thy selfe”), fear, and the reduction of religion to a law of the state.
- 8 Bejan [31] discusses the universities, churches, and family as sites where the education takes place.
- 9 Hobbes [8] (Part II, p. 165).
- 10 Hobbes [8] (Part II, pp. 165–168).
- 11 Hobbes [8] (pp. 176–177).
- 12 Hobbes [9] p. 80.
- 13 Hobbes [9] (pp. 131–137).
- 14 Hobbes [9] p. 146.
- 15 Hobbes [9] (pp. 146–147).
- 16 See Oakeshott [38] p. 57: “In politics, then, every enterprise is a consequential enterprise, the pursuit, not of a dream, or of a general principle, but of an intimation.”
- 17 Hobbes [10] p. 114–115.
- 18 Hobbes [10] p. 113.
- 19 Hobbes does not explicitly mention the opinion that tyrannicide is illicit, for an obvious reason: by the time of writing Charles I had been beheaded.
- 20 Hobbes is anxious to avoid the impression that he is creating the need for expertise of any kind.
- 21 Hobbes [10] p. 155
- 22 Hobbes [10] p. 219
- 23 Hobbes [10] p. 221
- 24 Hobbes [10] p. 222 fn. 3
- 25 Hobbes [10] p. 226.
- 26 Hobbes [10] p. 225.

- 27 Serjeantson [39] provides an excellent discussion of relevant University institutional dynamics.
- 28 Hobbes [10] p. 496
- 29 Spinoza [40]. A relevant selection of passages on political community in Book IV, entitled, “Of Human Bondage,” includes IVp18s, IVp35s, IVp37s2, and IVp73d.
- 30 Sacksteder [29] p. 33 thinks that Spinoza did not read *The Elements of Law*, but allows for the possibility that he may have been “haltingly and in segments, or in translations and summaries provided by friends.”
- 31 Spinoza [11] p. 66
- 32 Spinoza [11] p. 103
- 33 Spinoza [12] (pp. 90–92)
- 34 Spinoza [12] p. 119
- 35 Spinoza [13] (Available online: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1016/1016-h/1016-h.htm#para1> (accessed on 15 December 2021).
- 36 Spinoza [12] p. 67. Spinoza speaks of the militia commander “of one entire clan,” only defining “clan” in the next paragraph as a division within every city, with groups of townsmen set apart by names and badges. Militia clan commanders are also only selected in a time of war—see p. 67. See also p. 83.
- 37 Spinoza [12] p. 67.
- 38 Spinoza [12] p. 68.
- 39 Spinoza [12] p. 79.
- 40 Spinoza [12] (pp. 76–77).
- 41 Spinoza [12] p. 69.
- 42 Spinoza [12] p. 66.
- 43 Spinoza [12] (pp. 96, 101).
- 44 Spinoza [12] (pp. 104–105).
- 45 Spinoza [12] p. 106.
- 46 Spinoza [12] (pp. 112–113, 117).
- 47 Spinoza [12] p. 120.
- 48 Spinoza [12] p. 127.
- 49 Spinoza [12] p. 130.
- 50 Rousseau’s civil religion, of course, is meant to counteract what Rousseau sees as the chief vice (and danger to stability) of intolerance.
- 51 Strauss [69] p. 198. Although the Hobbes section in Strauss [69] (Chapter v(A) is a reprint of Strauss [66], the cited footnote does not occur in the original article.
- 52 Strauss [69] p. 198.
- 53 Strauss does not make a comparable statement to this effect in Strauss [5,68,74], or in the famous preface to the English translation of Strauss [5].
- 54 Hobbes [10] p. 75; See also Hobbes [9] Hobbes [9] III p. 13.
- 55 Spinoza [12] p. 289.
- 56 Spinoza [11] (pp. 7–8)
- 57 Spinoza [11] p. 67
- 58 Spinoza [11] p. 50
- 59 Spinoza [11] p. 51
- 60 Spinoza [11] p. 50
- 61 Spinoza [40] See Book V Prop 31, 33, 37, and 38.
- 62 Hobbes [10] p. 58
- 63 Hobbes [10] p. 476
- 64 Hobbes [10] (pp. 113, 212) and above.
- 65 See Hobbes [28] pg. In *Behemoth*, where character “A” holds, “And it [the use of ministers in civil government] was no sooner effected, but they were defeated again by the other sects, which by the preaching of the Presbyterians and *private interpretation of Scripture* [italics mine], were grown numerous.” (pp. 21–22) Private interpretation of Scripture is again presented as subversive of civil order a few pages later, where the preaching of individual assurance of salvation is a danger p. 25, and in Dialogue 4, wherein is found an explicit endorsement of Erastianism, or the subordination of church to state p. 172.
- 66 See Hobbes [28], where the combination is not in doubt: “Whereas the divinity of the clergy in this nation, considered apart from the mixture (that has been introduced by the Church of Rome, and in part retained here) of the *babbling philosophy of Aristotle* [italics mine] and other Greeks, *that has no affinity with religion* [italics mine], and *serves only to breed disaffection, dissension, and finally sedition and civil*

war [italics mine] (as we have lately found by dear experience in the differences between the Presbyterians and Episcopalians), is the true religion." (pp. 23 and 95, 40, 41, and 55)

67 Given some of the literature cited above, this even became, for a time, near orthodoxy in Hobbes studies.

68 Hobbes [10] p. 482

69 Kabala [82], in dialogue with Collins [78,79], has thus shown that the Cromwellian state church of the 1650's envisioned and came close to, even as it did not ultimately institute, a required and governmentally enforced confession of faith.

70 Spinoza [11] p. 224

71 See Spinoza [40]: That speech is often a consequence of thought or appetite is stated clearly in the *Ethics*: "But experience teaches all too plainly that men have nothing less in their power than their tongue, and can do nothing less than moderate their appetites" (EIII P2 Schol ii). If thinking and judgment do not derogate from sovereignty, speech may not either, *as a consequence*, simply because the one is no more in the power of the sovereign to control than are the other two.

72 Spinoza [11] p. 229

73 Spinoza [11] p. 227

74 Spinoza [11] p. 226

75 See Beiner [84]. Beiner has also pointed to the reality of conscience in Hobbes that includes judgment, and not just about religious matters.

76 See Melamed [55].

77 Spinoza [11] (pp. 229–230)

78 Hobbes [10] p. 36

79 Hobbes [10] (pp. 22–23)

80 Hobbes [10] p. 114, 115

81 Hobbes [10] p. 100

82 Kaplan [91] p. 392

83 Hobbes [10] p. 245

84 Hobbes [10] p. 6

85 The application of the scientific method can perhaps be seen as a combination of "conscience," understood as the epistemological validity of private hunches or beliefs that scientists at least need to feel free to follow, and public "conscience," or knowing together, that is the outcome when results are publicized, and feedback and criticism from a wider community of scholars ensure adherence to standards of inquiry. This simultaneously individual, as well as shared, conscience that seems on display in the pursuit, through experimentation, of knowledge of the natural world, may help explain a puzzling passage in Hobbes' *Leviathan*, where it may seem that the author is endorsing private conscience: Hobbes bemoans those who "extend the power of the law, which is the rule of actions only, to the very thoughts and consciences of men, by examination and inquisition of what they hold, notwithstanding the conformity of their speech and actions"—see Hobbes [10] p. 466. This statement is especially perplexing given that Hobbes, in the immediate context of the passage, seems to refer to *religious* opinions. Yet Beiner [84] p. 1114 believes that the connection when the broader context is taken into account, does point to private intellectual opinions and natural scientific ones specifically: "The main reason why one must stand up for conscience is that clerical authorities are not content merely to exercise dominion over the souls of their own adherents; they also insist on *policing* inner conviction in the society as a whole. Therefore, what is ultimately at stake for Hobbes in the politics of conscience is the issue of *intellectual* [italics in original] integrity and the *possibility for scholars, philosophers, and scientists to think freely in penetrating the secrets of nature*" [italics mine]—see Beiner [84] (pp. 1113–1114). In other words, the connection to public knowledge, *con*-science in the collective sense, remains in place.

86 Also noticed by Beiner [84] p. 1120

87 Spinoza [11] p. 212

88 See Smith [94] p. 19

89 The last is just one example of a post-Marxist approach to academic engagement with Spinoza that is consistent with materialistic readings, the full list of which is too extensive to reproduce here. See Douglas [101], who in discussing varieties of naturalism including methodological naturalism that it is possible to outline in Spinoza, makes a good point that naturalism does not necessarily reduce to materialism or "physicalism," so caution is in order (pp. 79–82).

90 See Duffy [102]. The author provides a discussion of the correspondence with Boyle, in which Spinoza expresses positive views of experiments.

91 These friends included Henry Oldenburg, Lodewijk Meyer, and Albert Burgh.

92 See Kabala [87] (pp. 121–141)

93 Primary education would be universal for the first three years, followed by a more exclusive (public) grammar school education, and culminating in the most elite (public) instruction at a university. Available online: <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-02-02-0132-0004-0079> (accessed on 15 December 2021).

94 See Jefferson [109].

- 95 See Adams and Jefferson [106] p. 387
- 96 See Adams and Jefferson [106] p. 388
- 97 See Conant [107] (pp. 7–8). Also Arrowood [108] p. 49
- 98 Indeed, Jefferson referred to the process of his policy in culling the geniuses from the poor as raking from the “rubbish annually . . . twenty of the best geniuses, half of whom would be sent to university at William and Mary—see Thomas Jefferson [114] p. 100. Schouls [23] provides a sympathetic interpretation of Locke’s proposal on the poor, as does Ward in his treatment (25), citing the “misread” understanding of workhouses and his language toward the poor, which modern readers frame in the context of a Dickensonian era of child abuse, exploitation, and neglect—see Schouls [23] p. 180 fn. 4.
- 99 While Ward [22] does not make the connection between these two policy documents, he notes that in Locke’s education writings he desires to extend education to the poor. Locke’s policy is the outgrowth of that desire. Though Locke and Jefferson’s purposes for educating the poor differed, Locke, for instance, did not emphasize the existence of natural gifts that needed to be sifted from the poor; rather, he believed “proper” education was beneficial for the human condition, and its absence was the reason for much human suffering. See Ward [22] (Loc 319, 4274ff, 4856).
- 100 Conant [107] p. 11. An example of the draft can be found in Conant Appendix XV.
- 101 Conant [107] p. 11.
- 102 Carpenter [112], p. 3
- 103 Thinking through, with an eye to future research, which concrete policies follow from or are consistent with this framework will be the next step.

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