

HOBBS'S THEORY OF STATE. THE STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION OF STATE AS THE KEY TO ITS ENDURING

JAROSŁAW CHARCHUŁA

Jesuit University of Philosophy and Education Ignatianum

Abstract: Thomas Hobbes bequeathed to us a comprehensive system, the interpretation of which remains a matter of disagreement even today. In his political theory, he pays most attention to the state community. He deliberates over the reasons for its origin, its decline and fall. Among the more detailed issues dealt with in his reflections, the more important ones are the following: the concept of the state of nature, human motivation, the state of war and peace, as well as considerations concerning the social contract. In order to be consistent in his argument, Hobbes also deals with the analysis of the structures of the state, the division of power and with the functions a state should perform. Due to these deliberations, he finally arrives at the secret of the state's durability. Though it is certainly the case that, since his times, the socio-political situation and circumstances have changed, many of the solutions postulated by Hobbes have not lost their value.

INTRODUCTION

From the moment people started analysing the principles of social life, many theories have been created concerning its origin and organisation. Many thinkers, and from various epochs, directly or indirectly, have dealt with the question of social life, including the issue of the state. Thomas Hobbes has an important place among them. This English philosopher has left a comprehensive system, the interpretation of which remains a matter of disagreement even today. The main works by Hobbes, in which he presents his assumptions, are: *The Elements of Law: Natural and Politic*, first printed between 1649 and 1650; *De cive*, published in 1642; *De corpore* (1655), and *De homine* (1658), which together constituted one, two-volume work, *Elementa philosophica*; and, also, *Leviathan*, which appeared in print in 1651.

Researchers analysing Hobbes's social thought, emphasise the complexity of its structure and warn against superficial and hasty assessment of its content. Thomas Hobbes was a very original thinker, who did not hesitate to search for new solutions, and at the same time possessed the ability to present logically the arguments defending his position. All this contributes to the fact that he is considered quite a controversial author. He was vigorously attacked already by his contemporaries for his theories. The solutions he proposed have aroused great interest and are still the subject of numerous discussions and controversies. The over fifty monographs devoted to Hobbes, which have been published so far, testify to this. Most of these monographs are in English, but there are also some in French, German, Polish, as well as Czech and Russian.

In his political theory Hobbes devotes most attention to the state community. He deliberates over the reasons for its origin, and the conditions which must be fulfilled for such a community to exist. He also analyses the reasons for its decline and fall. He deals with the questions of power and strength of community. In the works of this English philosopher we can also find deliberations over the aims for which the state was created, what its essence is and what its functions are. The above are the issues discussed in this present article, and they are presented in three main parts; each part discusses individual, detailed questions and contains an attempt at an assessment of their importance for the whole of Hobbes's system. Obviously, because of the limited space for this article, it will deal only with the most essential questions, which have key importance for the entirety of the system.

THE ORIGIN OF SOCIAL LIFE

It has not always been the case that people have lived in an organised community. According to Hobbes, a regularised society was preceded by a pre-state condition, also called 'the state of nature'. Hobbes maintains that in the state of nature, war is something indispensable and necessary. However, it is not because war is perceived as something positive and aimed at as a goal in itself. Men do not desire war for war's sake or fight for the sake of fighting. For men, war is not a value in itself, it merely enables them to attain certain benefits. People are in constant conflict with one another, which is the more savage because it looks as if it were a war of 'every man, against every man' (Hobbes 1991, XIII. 62)¹. Because of all this, it is uncertainty and fear that are dominant.

¹ i.e. *Leviathan*, Chapter XIII, Number 62.

War in the pre-state condition is, according to him, caused by passions innate in man. It is these passions which push him to the actions which endanger other people and are the reason for conflict. It is because of these passions that people remain in a permanent state of war. This state is very disadvantageous for man because it makes comprehensive development impossible. This is why it is desirable for men to leave this state as soon as possible. The very nature of man supplies such possibilities: man is bestowed with passions and reason. Some passions push man towards war, while others motivate him to strive for peace, the latter ones being 'fear of death; desire of such things as are necessary to commodious living; a hope by their [mens'] Industry to obtain them' (Hobbes 1991, XIII. 63). While passions set a certain direction, or aim, for actions, reason presents the ways of achieving it. It is reason which discerns the best way to achieve an aim effectively. These conditions, according to which it is possible to build peace, are certain norms; they are discerned by reason and called by Hobbes the laws of nature (Hobbes 1651 a, II. 1 – 3)². The definition of these laws as presented by Hobbes is: 'a law of nature [...] is a precept, or general rule, found out by reason, by which man is forbidden to do that which is destructive of his life, or takes away the means of preserving the same' (Hobbes 1991, XIII. 64). As for the interpretation of this issue, it should be mentioned at the beginning that the word 'law' in this context is free from any theological or even metaphysical connotations. It is a kind of obligation following from rational volition to preserve one's life. It is not an objective law to which a man is subject by the fact of being created. Hobbes formulates it as certain rules defining the means for the mutual existence of people. These rules are discerned by reason and enable people to leave the state of war and attain peace.

Among all laws of nature presented by Hobbes, the first three are of greatest importance. At the top of the list is the law stating that man can seek his own advantages through war only if all attempts to achieve peace have failed (Hobbes 1991, XIII. 64). According to this rule, an armed conflict is an ultimate means and it may be used only when all other options have failed. However, the aim of all human activity should be, first of all, peace. Essential here is not only the attainment of peace, but also its preservation for as long as possible.

The second important law, which seems to derive from the previous one, tells man to divest himself of his innate right to all things in order to achieve peace (Hobbes 1991, XIII. 65). He obtained this right by virtue of the fact that nature has made men equal. Consequently, human appetites and desires are alike. Of course, it is not possible to satisfy all of these desires. And this is why

² i.e. *De Cive*, Chapter II, Numbers 1 – 3.

— as has been presented earlier — a conflict arises and people plunge into the state of war. Hobbes claims that the only chance for humans to develop is peace, and the condition needed to achieve and preserve peace is for man to renounce this right to everything. This rule obliges man to do so only if other people are also willing to make concessions. Otherwise he would be exposed to becoming the prey of others. His actions would no longer be the rational pursuit of peace, but a pure mindlessness.

A man divesting himself of this right may resign from various things, but he is forbidden to get rid of what is the most important, namely the means necessary to secure and preserve life. To act otherwise would be contrary to the rational will to survive, which forces man to seek peace. It would be an absurd situation, because a man who strives for peace in order to save his own life would have to resign from his own life in order to preserve peace. This is why Hobbes claims that one can divest oneself of various rights, but not of the ones which protect and secure life. There is no benefit which would compensate for the loss of life: a man would not be able to enjoy anything if he were not alive.

The next law of nature, the third, tells man to observe the accepted covenants (Hobbes 1991, XV. 71). It would be advisable now to present the very definition of a covenant, otherwise further considerations would be hung in a kind of terminological mid-air, which would make the analysis of successive issues impossible. According to Hobbes, a covenant, or contract, is just a mutual transference of rights (Hobbes 1651 a, II. 9). It means that one man does not hinder another in his use of his natural right to all things. While divesting oneself of one's rights and transferring them to another, we do not bestow upon him, however, anything he did not actually possess earlier. We just enable him to make use of his own privilege to possess anything he desires. In other words, the transference involves only restraining oneself from hindering another. This cessation of hindering another man may be caused by the hope of obtaining other benefits. Then we have to do with a kind of exchange or trade: we resign from one thing in order to achieve another. The next important issue, which should be emphasised in this context, is the notion of a covenant, or rather a pact. This takes place when one of the parties transfers the moment of fulfilling a commitment to the future. Apart from the three laws of nature presented above, Hobbes created a list of sixteen more laws. However, they are less significant in his whole system and will not be discussed here. They constitute a kind of supplement to the above three.

As was mentioned, the laws of nature are certain rules which are discerned by reason. They are to serve as conditions upon which peace should

be made. Striving for peace is necessary because peace provides the only chance for man to develop. Remaining in the permanent state of war deprives people of this possibility and dooms them to underdevelopment in certain important spheres of life. According to Hobbes, people are aware of the inconveniences of the state of nature, in which a constant struggle prevails, and this is why they desire to escape from this state. This desire is strengthened by the innate instinct to survive. Despite these strong stimuli, however, man is not able to leave the state of war on his own, as by nature he is too weak to do so. He has no force to obey these discerned rules. Despite the fact that he would like to end the war and live in peace, he succumbs to his inclinations, which, consequently, leads him to fight constantly.

The author of *Leviathan* claims that in such a situation the only chance is to 'erect such a Common Power, as may be able to defend against the invasion of foreigners, and the injuries of one to another; [...] the only way to do this is to confer all their power and strength upon one Man, or upon one Assembly of men, that may reduce all their Wills, by plurality of voices, unto one Will' (Hobbes 1991, XVII. 87). This means that people, for their own good, should renounce their natural right to possess everything and transfer this right to one person or one group which they would make their representative. Then, such a group could make decisions on their behalf and, for the good of everybody, manage the entirety of the goods possessed by them.

Such a solution could, according to Hobbes, unify people and help them overcome their egoism. Such common unity is something more than merely restraining oneself from hindering another; it is a kind of unification in the pursuit of a goal. We can say that it is a kind of common defining of a goal which takes place through a representative. This is why it is important that the people should renounce their personal ambitions and that the 'real Unity of them all, in one and the same Person' (Hobbes 1991, XVII. 87) should emerge. According to Hobbes, this kind of integration is possible only when 'made by Covenant of every man with every man' (Hobbes 1991, XVII. 87). In such a pact one man commits himself to transferring his right to govern his person to a chosen representative, under the condition that all other people would transfer their rights on the same grounds. When this happens, then 'the multitude so united in one person, is called a Common-Wealth [...]. This is the generation of that great Leviathan, or rather [...] of that mortal god to whom we owe our peace and defence' (Hobbes 1991, XVII. 87). According to Hobbes, this is how the state, also called the commonwealth, came into being. It should be mentioned here, that Hobbes, in talking about a unification of people into one person, does not want to imply that this multitude constitutes a person in itself. He stresses that these are individuals united in a common goal, who have entrusted the

authority over themselves to one person. This person is called the sovereign. The sovereign has the right to command all his subjects by virtue of the covenant concluded by them.

The sovereign alone is, of course, not able to fulfill all the duties entrusted to him and that is why he has to institute proxies who will deal with them on his behalf. This requires the appointment of many people to various state posts. A whole system is created which must be governed by clear principles. The way of functioning of this system will be the subject matter of the second part of this article.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE STATE

According to Hobbes, people concluded the covenant and united into a commonwealth because the state of nature was too bothersome for them. They did not feel safe and were unable to satisfy all their needs. Owing to reason, they discovered the laws of nature on which they could build peace. It was their only chance for survival and appropriate development. The discovery of these laws gave them the possibility to unite and cooperate. Common action under the leadership of a sovereign was possible owing to the covenant concluded by all the members of a commonwealth.

The English philosopher, in his considerations concerning the sovereign, presents a long list of rights to which the latter is entitled by the virtue of the covenant. First of all, he has the right to make laws, appoint officials, declare war and sue for peace, distribute rewards and punishments (Tokarczyk 1998, p. 106). Such broad privileges of the sovereign are indispensable because of the power the state must possess in order to protect its citizens effectively. This power is essential for the effective functioning of the commonwealth. Thanks to it the state may exercise coercion over individuals and force them to perform certain actions.

This power is an indispensable condition, which is reflected in Hobbes's words that there is no state without the right of coercion (Hobbes 1651 b, IX. 9). Coercion is necessary because people by nature are hostile towards each other and everybody cares only for his own good. Thus, if the state does not possess sufficient strength to be capable of exercising coercion, it would not be able to function at all. We can even say that coercion is a constitutive condition of a state community, since without it the very existence of the commonwealth would be doubtful (Wudel 1971, pp. 203-204). Although Hobbes stresses so much the need to exercise coercion, he does not leave any doubt that it is not a goal in itself. Coercion is just a means to secure

the safety of the citizens. It is meant to make the authority more efficient and help in exacting duties imposed on the members of the community. Coercion, in other words the sword of justice, which is sometimes also called visible power or the yoke of the state, is what authenticates all the activities of the authorities (Wudel 1971, p. 203). The possibility for the state to use force against an individual, who is its member, is important in as much as it constitutes an effective defense against undesired actions. In such a situation the very threat of punishment causes fear and prevents harmful behaviour. The stronger the state is, the greater the possibilities for its influence. This, in turn, is reflected in the behaviour of the members of the community. They tend less to oppose the authority when it has at its disposal considerable power which may quickly be used. Nevertheless, Hobbes says that for better efficiency power should be united with reason (Hobbes 1991, XVIII. 88 – 93). This kind of unity ensures that such actions by the authority are not only the manifestations of force, but are aimed towards the good of the people. It is this good that should be the determinant of all the activities of a sovereign. It is important for the sovereign to follow this good, especially while making laws. Thanks to this, the laws made by him will better serve the people.

The elements of Hobbes's theory presented so far may suggest the conclusion that he was an advocate of sovereign power, not limited by anything and directed solely to its own good. To prevent such unfounded and erroneous interpretations, it is advisable to present a kind of synthesis of the statements of this English thinker. When he postulates the absolute character of the sovereign's power, he does it for the sake of the power of the state and not the private good of the ruler. The power of the state is so important for him because owing to this power the state can effectively protect its members. Undivided power enables quick decision making, which is extremely important in critical situations, such as when facing the threat of a war. In such moments, immediate and resolute action is crucial. Such a manner of decision making is regarded by Hobbes as the most important, though not the only, condition of a powerful state. Another important condition is the choice of proper officials and control over them (Hobbes 1991, XXX. 183 – 184). The English philosopher pays special attention to the adequate punishment of everybody who has broken the law. He postulates greater severity for people somehow connected with the authority, since he thinks that any form of leniency in such a situation may be understood as an informal approval of such behaviour. This could have catastrophic results for the state because the members of the society would understand it as an encouragement to act against the law. The author of *Elementa Philosophica* claims that unlimited sovereign power is the best solution, though not the ideal one, for he perceives certain dangers connected with

it. Among them the greatest are: subjectivism of decisions, improper care for the good of the people and too a weak control over the officials. However, in writing about these, Hobbes maintains that these costs are little as compared to the benefits brought by such a form of government.

In his analysis of the issues related to state authority, the author of *Leviathan* presents its divisions. According to him, there are three possible forms of governing a state. They are determinants of the three types of state. When the sovereign is one person, then we have a monarchy; when it is a group of people who govern, we have an aristocracy; when citizens at large govern, then it is democracy (Hobbes 1651 b, VII. 1). From among these three types of the state, Hobbes considered monarchy as the most efficient, writing that it is always ready to perform any actions which are required on the part of the authority (Hobbes 1651 b, VII. 13). Its advantage lies in the fact that the sovereign is one person, who can make decisions quickly. There is no need to summon assemblies, since one person has the right to decide about anything. Its advantage is also connected with lower costs, as one sovereign needs far less than a whole assembly. Besides, a monarchy will never be self-contradictory because one man does not have divergent interests. In this respect, aristocracy and democracy are far inferior to monarchy. Furthermore, in favour of the monarchy there is also the fact of there being less subjectivism in decision making for, according to Hobbes, subjectivism increases with the number of people making decisions. He stresses the fact that the most important determinant of the types of a commonwealth is the very essence of the system of government, and not its outer form (Hobbes 1991, XIX. 94 – 99). For it happens sometimes that a state which has a government which is democratic by name, in reality is just a monarchy. This is why, in order to make an adequate assessment of the state, we should not be limited in our considerations to the analysis of its outer form of government, because this can be misleading and deceptive.

Writing about the obedience of the citizens towards their sovereign, Hobbes maintains categorically that in each type of state it should be the same. According to him, it is impossible to logically justify the view that one of these three types of state should merit greater submissiveness from its members. For, each of them originated by virtue of a social contract among the people who wanted to unite, hoping that in this way they would be able to live safely and peacefully. Then, since in each case, owing to the covenant, there takes place a transition of natural rights and an act of submission towards the sovereign, we cannot possibly imagine that any of these systems of government should be more respected than others. According to Hobbes, this would be illogical and groundless. What is more, it could result in very negative consequences for it is not difficult to guess that the

majority of people would like to live where the authority is the weakest, forgetting completely that the state builds its power first of all for the sake of the welfare of its members, not for other purposes. It is thanks to this power that the state can protect its members effectively and create favourable conditions for their good development.

In the context of the above considerations it would be advisable to present one more question dealt with by Hobbes in his works. He writes that, contrary to what had been postulated by the ancient writers, neither anarchy, nor tyranny, nor oligarchy, are systems of government (Hobbes 1651 b, VII. 2 – 3). According to him, these are just names assigned by opponents of a given system because they do not accept it or they do not like the person of a sovereign. In other words, these are just various opinions of the citizens about the authority (Hobbes 1651 b, VII. 2). According to the author of *Leviathan*, it is impossible to prove in any logical way that any of these three terms could define a system of government. For example, anarchy is supposed to describe a state in which there is no government. If so, then we cannot talk about any state at all. A commonwealth cannot exist where there is no sovereign who has the right to exercise coercion, since then the non-state would be a type of state (Hobbes 1651 b, VII. 2).

As far as aristocracy is concerned, calling it 'oligarchy' is a mistake, since the rule of the 'optimates', that is, the best people, is called the rule of the few (Hobbes 1651 b, VII. 2). This misunderstanding is due to the fact that various people perceive different things as good and desirable. What is just for some people, in some circumstances, does not have to be so for others. Writing about monarchy, the author of *Leviathan* argues that it is wrongly called tyranny. This happens because many people react to the rule of a sovereign too emotionally. They do not agree with his policy and this is why they ascribe such a name to it. Hobbes argues that such behaviour is improper, because it is reason, not emotions that should direct people's actions.

THE FUNCTION OF THE STATE

Now, having presented the issues related to the structure of the state and its types, we can proceed to another important element of Hobbes's political theory, namely the question of the functions which should be performed by the state. For the English philosopher, the basic duty of the authority is the care of the people (Hobbes 1991, XXX. 175). According to him, the sovereign in his actions should take into consideration the interest of the citizens. First of all, he should secure their safety, since this is the most important reason for the

institution of a commonwealth (Hobbes 1991, XVII. 85). In other words, the welfare of the people is broadly understood as the safety of the members of the community (Wudel 1971, p. 204). It is not only a matter of protection against external dangers, but also internal ones, since the things which, to a large extent, make peace impossible are precisely human passions. This is why the state has to protect its citizens from one another. Only when safety is secured, is it possible to try to improve the standard of living. It is also the duty of the state to create opportunities of development for the greater number of its citizens. The author of *Elementa philosophica* clearly underlines that care for the welfare of the state cannot be just an empty declaration, but must be realised through concrete actions. The citizens should feel that the sovereign takes care of their fate and does everything he can to improve it. We can even say that all the duties of the authority are the rights of the members of the society (Wudel 1971, p. 204). It is a sum of the rights which they possess and are entitled to use, or even are obliged to use by virtue of the law of nature, which instructs them to do everything that is necessary to preserve and protect life.

In analysing the welfare of the people, Hobbes presents its two forms: the general and the particular (Wudel 1971, p. 204). The first refers to the function of the commonwealth as a whole, the second to particular spheres. The general version refers to the functions of the state treated jointly and the particular version to the nominal elements of the first. The welfare of the people in a broader sense is realised in the four particular functions. These are the tasks concerning: external defense, internal peace, economic function and the function concerned with the field of the freedom of the citizens (Wudel 1971, p. 205).

Hobbes was, in a way, a realist and assumed that the feeling of disapproval for authority would appear among the citizens. He did not see it as a great danger, though, because a sovereign who has a sufficient force at his disposal is able to secure peace (Hobbes 1651 b, VI. 11 – 12). However, it is important to secure it not only by means of force but, first of all, by rational argumentation, since nothing appeals to the people as much as logical and reasonable explanation. The author of *Leviathan* does not deprive the citizens completely of their freedom of thought, but leaves them some freedom in public expression of their opinions. Anywhere where the legal rule allows for some freedom of action, or where there is no definite pattern of behaviour, people have complete freedom. In other words, the silence of law is the limit of the freedom of the subjects (Hobbes 1991, XXI. 109). This is so because an activity not described by law cannot be considered as breaching it. Thus, what is not forbidden is permitted.

All of the above-discussed functions of the state have a great impact on its durability. The better the authority fulfils its functions, the greater is the

stability of the commonwealth. Satisfaction of the citizens is a very important factor here. Benefits must be greater than losses. The members of the community must feel that the state is indispensable for them. If the citizens' needs are not properly satisfied by the authorities, the existence of the community is uncertain. The longer such a situation lasts, the more the stability of a state is endangered. For Hobbes it is obvious that Leviathan, in order to exist, must fulfill certain functions. Otherwise, it would share the fate of other useless things created by man and will simply disappear (Hobbes 1991, XXIX. 167). The English philosopher considers such a possibility quite openly. For him it is beyond discussion that citizens who do not feel safe in a state are one of the most important reasons of its disintegration (Hobbes 1991, XXI. 114).

Before we proceed to other elements which endanger the continuity of a commonwealth, it would be advisable to discuss the destruction of the state in general. This is essential because the author of *Leviathan*, in using this term, understands it in two ways, depending on context. In one sense, and this is its literal meaning, he means a complete collapse, while at other times he means just a certain change of the old state into the new (Wudel 1954, p. 231). Firstly, our analysis will focus on the former meaning, since Hobbes gives it the most attention. The first important element discussed here will be the number of citizens in the state. The greater the number, the better a state's defence is. States with small communities become easy prey for their neighbours because they are not able to defend themselves effectively. Hobbes thinks that the smaller the number of citizens in a state, the shorter its existence is (Hobbes 1991, XXV. 136). Since every sovereign, when seeing weakness in his partner, tries to make use of it for his own benefit as soon as possible, he conquers the other state.

Another thing that, according to the English philosopher, has an impact on the durability of the state is the satisfaction and engagement of the citizens. This is why a sovereign should try to obtain the favour of the greatest part of the community, thus making it easier for him to govern the state. According to the author of *Leviathan*, there are two main reasons for social discontent. The first is the lack of balance between the duties and privileges of the citizens. The other is poverty. As far as the first issue is concerned, it has already been discussed, so we are not going to expand on it here. As for poverty, the English thinker discusses many of its aspects. We are not going to analyse all of them here, as it would miss the point of the paper and make it unnecessarily long. Only the most important ones will be presented.

According to Hobbes poverty is the lack of the things necessary to preserve and develop life (Hobbes 1651 b, XII. 9). People suffer very acutely from any deficiency in basic needs which directly influence their existence. That is why

the author of *Elementa Philosophica* encourages the sovereign to do everything possible to reduce poverty. He even proposes to pay the least wealthy a kind of allowance which will enable them to live a dignified life (Hobbes 1991, XXX. 181). In this context it is desirable to mention a certain statement by the English philosopher, which will better illustrate his attitude towards the whole issue. He says that poor people usually transfer the guilt from their own laziness and wastefulness to the system of government in the state, as if their private affairs were ruined by public allowances (Hobbes 1651 b, XII. 9).

Hobbes pays a lot of attention to the issue of poverty and citizens' dissatisfaction, because these are essential elements of the state's durability. However, he thinks that poverty, and the lack of acceptance for the activities of the authorities, do not have to lead to an open rebellion. Everything depends on the reaction of the sovereign to any worsening situation. If the citizens gain the conviction that he does everything possible to secure their existence, internal peace will be preserved (Tokarczyk 1998, pp. 107-108). Of course, this does not mean a complete elimination of the threat, but rather that the authorities gain some time. Further preservation of the state will depend on other measures being taken by the authorities, and on the authorities doing anything they think appropriate to save the community. Each activity of the authorities which leads to the desired end and contributes to the rescue of the state is just and in accordance with the law (Wudel 1971, p. 238).

Such a freedom of action of the sovereign is justified, by the English philosopher, by the argument that the worst thing that can happen to the members of the community is the outbreak of a civil war (Hobbes 1991, XVIII. 93 – 94). According to him, people then start behaving in a way similar to that in the state of nature. Everybody fights with everybody and no power can counteract this. It is worth recalling his words, when he says that 'the estate of man can never be without some incommodity or other; and that the greatest, that in any form of government can possibly happen to the people in general, is scarce sensible, in respect of the miseries, and horrible calamities, that accompany a Civil War' (Hobbes 1991, XVIII. 94). The author of *Leviathan* postulates that regardless of the level of arduousness of a state, its destruction should be prevented.

CONCLUSION

Studying the works by the English philosopher we can see that he was not ignorant of the problems of his times. The subject-matter of his writings testifies to how much attention he devoted to these problems. He considered very seri-

ously the questions raised by science and wanted to arrive at the best answers. Though he dealt with questions similar to those dealt with by his contemporaries, he distinguished himself by the originality of the solutions he presented. The conclusions that he reached were often surprising, but this is why they were revolutionary and creative. Thanks to this they were an inspiration for other thinkers and motivated them to greater effort in the search for different ways. Hobbes' conception – imprinted in the whole political theory created by the English representatives of classical liberalism – is still very influential in the field of philosophical reflection connected with the state. Although, undoubtedly, the conditions and socio-political situation have changed, many of his proposals have not lost their value. This is why coming back to the classics may be a creative inspiration in a discussion on important current issues.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Hobbes T., 1991, *Leviathan*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hobbes T., 1651 a, *De Cive*, <http://socserv2.socsci.mcmaster.ca/~econ/ugcm/3ll3/hobbes/hobbes1>, (18 January 2010).
- Hobbes T., 1651 b, *De Cive*, <http://socserv2.socsci.mcmaster.ca/~econ/ugcm/3ll3/hobbes/hobbes2>, (18 January 2010).
- Tokarczyk R., 1998, *Hobbes. Zarys żywota i myśli*, Lublin, Wyd. UMCS.
- Wudel W., 1971, *Filozofia strachu i nadziei. Teoria społeczna Tomasza Hobbesa*, Warszawa, Wyd. Książka i Wiedza.