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More Revisions in Realism: Hobbesian Anarchy, the Tale of the Fool, and International Relations Theory

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Abstract

Thomas Hobbes has been hailed as a major intellectual precursor of realist theory among international relations scholars. Such veneration has brought about ample reactions from various scholars who aver that the use of Hobbes and his vision of anarchy as analogies for building greater theories of international relations is problematic at best. Yet while such critiques of the realist analogy have been abundant, they have devoted scant attention to important passages in the *Leviathan* (i.e., the tale of the fool in Chapter 15) that would produce greater clarity about Hobbes' logic regarding the state of nature. Indeed, a careful textual analysis of the tale of the fool demonstrates that Hobbes' vision of anarchy is even more problematic, than previous critiques suggest, as an analogy for a state of war (i.e., as an environment void of cooperation). Indeed, the tale strongly reinforces critical scholarship that embraces ample opportunities for cooperation (covenants) in a Hobbesian state of nature (i.e., without a Leviathan to impose order). The precise Hobbesian logic evident in this tale, in fact, reflects both strong neoliberal and constructivist elements in what many would consider a least-likely place: in Hobbes' vision of anarchy. So while Hobbes has been hailed as the first early modern realist, he could also be cited as the first early modern neoliberal and constructivist. In this respect, Hobbes' own synthesis of elements of realism, constructivism and neoliberalism holds much promise for inspiring a new and more sophisticated vision of international relations: *Cosmopolitik*.

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1. Introduction

Hobbes has been hailed as one of the major intellectual precursors of realist theory among international relations scholars.¹ But while his place in the realist circle of honor is secure, a good many revisionist salvos have been marshaled from an international relations perspective and have challenged the use of Hobbesian anarchy as an analogy for building greater theories of international politics. But while these revisionist works have taken the realists to task over the validity of interfacing Hobbes' work on individuals in a state of nature with the greater world of international politics, this literature has paid scant attention to important passages within the *Leviathan* (in the tale of the fool in Chapter 15) that would more vigorously vindicate their greater critiques of the use of anarchy.² This article seeks to fill this gap by doing a close textual analysis of these passages and discussing implications for traditional realist interpretations of Hobbesian anarchy. These passages demonstrate that indeed even in his logic pertaining to the behavior of individuals in anarchy (Chapters 13-15 in *Leviathan*), Hobbes embraces pervasive possibilities for cooperation. In demonstrating these pervasive possibilities, the analysis also suggests that the processes of interaction in anarchy very much vindicate the work of constructivists and neoliberal institutionalists, who have themselves embraced possibilities for cooperation in the anarchic system of international politics. Hence, while Hobbes may be seen as the first early modern realist, he could also be construed as the first early modern constructivist and neoliberal institutionalist. In this sense, Hobbes' own synthesis of elements of realism, constructivism and neoliberalism holds much

¹ Hobbes' treatment of anarchy is at the very core of the realist paradigm. Smith (1986, p. 13) puts it succinctly: Hobbes' "analysis of the state of nature remains the defining feature of realist thought. His notion of the international state of nature as a state of war is shared by virtually everyone calling himself a realist." On the influence of Hobbes' conceptualization of the state of nature on realist thought, see also Bull (1977, pp. 24,25), Wendt (1999, p. 252), Milner (1991, p. 69), Williams (2005, p. 19), Johnson (1993, pps. 205-208), and Hanson (1984).

² This analysis will not make cumbersome distinctions among the ever expanding menu of realist theories, which has become more of a battleground over the past two decades than a unified vision of international relations. Since the focus of this analysis is on the state of anarchy and prospects for cooperation, it would pertain to fundamental tenets that bridge disparate so-called variants of realism. I use the generic term realism to convey these pervasive tenets across visions of realism. The literature on the theory of realism is quite large, but some useful analyses of the realist debate can be found in Doyle (1990), Keohane (1986), Johnson (1993), Buzan et. al. (1993), Beer and Hariman (1996), Williams (2005), and Brooks (1997).

promise for inspiring a more integrated vision of international relations (Cosmopolitik), one which synthesizes strands from the three paradigms to form a more useful theoretical platform for understanding international relations in the modern world system.

This article is organized as follows. Section 2 marshals a textual analysis of the tale of the fool and discusses its implications for Hobbesian logic pertaining to anarchy. Section 3 considers the implications in the context of international relations theory. Section 4 issues brief concluding thoughts about moving toward a new understanding of international relations based on the lessons from this analysis of Hobbes.

2. Revisions in Hobbes: The Real State of Nature

It would be too easy to undermine the realism of Hobbes by simply looking beyond his actual discussion of anarchy in Chapters 13-15 of the *Leviathan*. Indeed it would be all too simple to cite the fact that a majority of the analysis in his magnum opus *Leviathan* and *De Cive* really applies to a world of morality and religion. In this respect, the works are indeed a reaction to Hobbes' own time. In a period of civil war in England, Hobbes' life was very much shaped by violence. His classic works coincided with tumultuous events of civil unrest and political instability, and are clearly addressed to the quest for order based on law and stable government in civil society. His first philosophical work, *The Elements of Law*, came out shortly after King Charles dissolved Parliament in 1640. His *De Cive* was published in Paris as civil war broke out in England in 1642. He began work on the *Leviathan* about the time the civil war was ending in a Royalist defeat in 1646, which also coincided with a period in which he became a royal tutor to the Prince of Wales in Paris, later King Charles II. So while Hobbes has become so famous for his work on anarchy among realists, it was the quest for the foundations of civil order that most characterizes his work. Indeed, the chaos of civil war in England cast a strong shadow over his collected writings.³ Hobbes' *Leviathan* itself is not principally about anarchy but more about the commonwealth. Anarchy is an unpleasant state of transition that must be superseded to arrive at a civilized state of existence. The *Leviathan* takes issue with the foundations of the commonwealth, a manifestation of the advent of civil society, in which the imperatives and principles of anarchy no longer hold. Hence, after leaving his discussion of anarchy in Chapters 13-15, he goes on to speak of

³ Considering Hobbes' own life experiences in the tumultuous political environment of his homeland, there is little surprise in his general orientation of political conservatism (Kavka 1986, p. 4). In light of his own vision of the importance of writing history (to understand the past so as to better deal with problems in the present), his *Behemoth* (a history of the civil war) is demonstrative of the proximity of his own political experiences and his political thought (Lloyd 1992, p. 191). Accusations that his conservatism and treatises were nothing more than apologist endeavors for the Stuarts probably overstate his own ties and allegiance to the royal family, which occurred years after he had already become quite active as a writer ("Chronology of Hobbes' Life" in Hobbes [1668] 1994, p. L). On the work of Hobbes in historical context, see Lloyd (1992).

the commonwealth in the context of constructivist and neoliberal categories: cooperation, law, rights, morality and even religion. Culling passages about moral and legal obligations of citizens of the commonwealth, as well as religious restraints against monarchical tyranny, would hardly be a valid condemnation of scholars who have embraced the compelling logic of Hobbes' realism as demonstrated in his analysis of the state of nature in Chapters 13-15 of the *Leviathan*.

But to say that Hobbes was above all concerned with the foundations of civil society as embodied in law, morality and religion is not to incriminate the realists with respect to having misunderstood Hobbes. Few realists would in fact disagree on this point. But the realist is not interested in what happens in a state of civil society, since for them this civil state does not represent an analogy for the international system. What does represent a viable analogy is Hobbes' analysis of the state of anarchy, and hence any such judgment of the work of Hobbes as anticipating realism would have to unfold within this context.

If we are going to claim any vindication about Hobbesian respect for non-realist categories, it must be within those very core discussions about anarchy that have been hailed by IR realists as inspirations for their theoretical leanings. In essence, the method employed here would be one of crucial-case textual analysis, where cases are selected because of their especially salient characteristics. Such a method would generate more compelling inferences notwithstanding low-n settings because of the especially indicative nature of the cases selected. So in this particular instance, if indeed Hobbes himself embraces elements of neoliberalism or constructivism, we should least expect to find any such support for these ideas in the principal passages from *Leviathan* on anarchy. But finding such support in these passages would reveal an especially compelling vindication for revisionist claims (i.e., this would comprise a "least-likely" case in the terminology of crucial-case methodology).⁴

In Chapter 13 of the *Leviathan*, the realist appears to be on sturdy ground, especially in light of Hobbes' literal account of anarchy therein. The elegance of the theoretical implications is no doubt moving, especially in the precision with which Hobbes develops his logic. From a simple premise, that there exists no power above humankind to keep men in awe (i.e., no Leviathan), human interactions will devolve into a sort of chaos in which no one is spared the risk of death or violence. In a sense, Hobbes disconfirms his own logical structure early on by beginning Chapter 13 of *Leviathan* with the assumption of equality as being instrumental in creating a war among all. Equality is not a precondition of war since he accounts for possibilities of alliances of convenience as a means of knocking off stronger members of the community (L, XIII, 1).⁵ Hence even inequality still leads to a state of mutual vulnerability. As a result the logic is even more

⁴ On the crucial-case method see, Eckstein (1975); Gerring (2004); and King, Keohane and Verba (1994, pps. 209-212).

⁵ The notation style (L,XIII,3) will be used: with the first term (L) representing the book (in this case, the *Leviathan*), the second term representing the chapter, and the last term representing the section. The edition of *Leviathan* selected is Hobbes ([1668] 1994).

elegant in that one simple assumption (“where men live without a common power to keep them all in awe”) leads to a “war of every man against every man” (L, XIII, 8 and 9). In this state of anarchy, there appear to be no constraints against the use of violence as mutual vulnerability can only be removed if all menacing actors are eliminated. Hence, each individual face incentives which suggest that all others must be destroyed. Morality and ideas of right or wrong have no place here: instead “force and fraud” become “the two cardinal virtues” (L, XIII, 13).⁶ The parallels to international relations are striking, as striking as the cold elegance of Hobbes’ logic in Chapter 13. Having no Leviathan or supra-national force to keep all nations in awe makes the world a menacing place, and this has predictable implications for state behavior. Hobbes’ account of anarchy is all the more striking because it is one of the first structural accounts of human relations in modern political theory: i.e., as independent of inherent traits and internal motivations. Prior dispositions or socialized behavior leading to variations in the particularistic characteristics of actors matter little. In anarchy, even a group of inherently ethical people would soon devolve into a gang of brutes.

The time-honored game-theoretic mode of modeling strategic interactions in anarchy has been the Prisoner’s Dilemma (Curley 1994, p. xxiv). In this case, there is an overwhelming incentive to exploit others in the community as “force and fraud” become cardinal virtues. Mutual defection is assured because of the dominant strategy leading to a Nash non-cooperative equilibrium. Gestures of cooperation are likely to be met with “fraud,” while defection is likely to be met in kind. Hence the classic preference ordering of the PD game, which is symmetrical across players, presents itself: in a two-person game it would be $DC > CC > DD > CD$.⁷ Hence, given that player 1’s payoffs are on the left, and player 2’s payoffs are on the right, the game unfolds thusly for player 1. In the event that player 2 cooperates (first two preferences), player 1 prefers exploitation to cooperation. In the event player 2 defects (last two preferences), player 1 prefers to act in kind. Since the payoffs are symmetrical, then the same holds true for player 2 and hence the dominant strategy ending in a Nash non-cooperative equilibrium at DD.

A slew of critiques have underscored the problems of using Hobbesian anarchy as a platform upon which to construct a theory of relations among sovereign states.⁸ Hoffman (1981) argues that the vision of anarchy attributed to Hobbes’ is extreme and that in reality a more moderated version is more accurately reflective of international politics. Waltzer (1977) reinforces this idea of extreme visions by criticizing the idea of a complete absence of any normative elements in realist applications of Hobbes. Beitz (1979), Bull (1977, 1981), Vincent (1981), Williams (1996 and 2005) and Milner (1991) question the validity of interfacing Hobbes’ arguments about individuals in anarchy with

⁶ This introduces the famous realist reversion of morality in anarchy: where vices can become virtues and *vice versa*.

⁷ “D” means to defect, while “C” means to cooperate.

⁸ Much has been said about the limitations of Hobbes’ state of nature as an analogy for international relations. Hobbes in fact said little about international relations directly in his writings. For discussions on this point, see especially Bull (1981), Milner (1991) and Hanson (1984).

the greater relations among states in the international system. Bull (1981) and Hanson (1984) continue this critique of faulty analogizing by noting that in his work on anarchy Hobbes was more of a disciple of “peace” than conflict (i.e., anarchy encouraged a transition to civil society and order). Indeed, Hanson (1984, p. 353) notes that Hobbes was in fact one of the “founding fathers of a profoundly unrealistic mode of thought.” Williams (1996 and 2005) maintains that rather than being a showcase for structural realism, rationality, objectivity and utilitarian decisionmaking (all of the characteristics underscored by realists); Hobbesian anarchy is more accurately representative of an ethical and epistemological problem. Malcolm (2002) proposes that indeed even among individuals, a Hobbesian state of nature is not void of “natural law.” Indeed such natural law, driven by reason, opens up possibilities for escaping the deleterious consequences of anarchy which have long been embraced by common interpretations of Hobbes. These possibilities, argues, Malcom (2002), manifest themselves in the logic of Hobbes both in the context of his theory of anarchy among individuals as well as in his theory of international relations.

But while even the revisionist literature in international relations has taken realists to task about the use of Hobbes in building a theory of international politics, there is insufficient process tracing with respect to how Hobbesian anarchy itself, within the context of Hobbes own specific logic about the behavior of individuals in a state of nature, reflects possibilities that favor cooperation. Much of the revisionist literature fundamentally accepts the conventional interpretation of Hobbesian anarchy among individuals, and is more concerned with marshaling arguments about why it is a poor analogy for understanding international relations. Even critiques that have indeed underscored possibilities for cooperation among individuals in a Hobbesian state of nature itself, have fallen well short of chronicling precisely how Hobbes own logic about individual behavior in a state of nature generates such possibilities for cooperation. Vincent (1981, p. 96) speaks of elements in Hobbes’ state of nature that fall “in between” anarchy and civil order, but does not expand on the composition of such elements and how they come to emerge. Bull (1981) cites Warrender’s pioneering revisionist work on the Hobbesian state of nature in suggesting that Hobbes’ own logic of anarchy admits possibilities of moral rules, but he does not expand on this statement and take up its implications for the issue of cooperation in anarchy. Williams’ (1996 and 2005) and Malcom’s (2002) treatments, as noted, attack conventional visions of Hobbesian anarchy that propose a structural-objective process that drives rational action, but never sufficiently trace the specific ways in which cooperation among individuals can arise within Hobbes’ own logic about the state of nature. None of the revisionist works from an international relations perspective looks closely enough at passages recounting the tale of the fool in Chapter 15, but it is precisely here that a clear idea of the mechanics of how possibilities for cooperation (i.e., covenants) can emerge within a state of nature best manifests itself.⁹ Indeed, a careful evaluation of these passages demonstrates a greater

⁹ Interestingly, the revisionist literature from an international relations perspective has paid scant attention to the tale of the fool. Malcolm (2002, p. 438) cites a very short passage from the tale of the fool, but does not concentrate on the tale as a manifestation of a Hobbesian rationale for cooperation under anarchy. Such a careful textual analysis

continuity within the work of Hobbes (both in his logic of civil society as well as in his logic of the state of nature), a continuity that has been somewhat disturbed by the distinction which realists have made between Hobbes treatment of the state of nature and his work on the commonwealth.¹⁰

In demonstrating such a vision of Hobbesian anarchy, we must begin with reason. For Hobbes, humans are born with and develop reason (L, V). Reason, for Hobbes, is an element through which people discover the means of self-preservation.¹¹ These means of self-preservation are called “laws of nature”: essentially modes of action “by which man is forbidden to do that which is destructive of his life or taketh away the means of preserving the same” (L, XIV, 3). Two laws of nature reveal themselves. The first drives humans to “seek peace and follow it” (L, XIV, 4). This first law leads to the second law of nature: “that a man be willing...to lay down his right to all things” (L, XIV, 5). Herein lies the operational rule that brings about the famous Hobbesian contract, which brings forth a Leviathan, as the right to all things is commensurate with human freedom under anarchy. Once given up, humans arrive at a state of civil society and happily exit the chaos of anarchy.

But since men are endowed with reason even in anarchy, then laws of nature dictating self-preservation are applicable in anarchy as well. Even in anarchy, the laws dictating that men “find peace if they can” are compelling. But common interpretations of Hobbes suggest that such peace is unobtainable in anarchy, hence the compelling nature of the corollary to the first law of nature: when humans cannot obtain peace, they should “seek and use all helps and advantages of war” (L, XIV, 4). Is peace obtainable in anarchy? If the answer is Yes, then the entire logical structure of what we have come to understand as Hobbesian anarchy falls.¹² This is because of the role of covenants (mutual

would have in fact further vindicated many of the arguments marshaled in this vein. This is not the case in the work of political theorists, however, who have done careful textual analysis of the tale and discussed its implications for conventional visions of Hobbesian anarchy. On the latter, see especially Kafka (1986), Barry (1972), and Warrender (1957)

¹⁰ A more comprehensive analysis of Hobbes’ treatment of anarchy across his works would be beyond the scope of this article. Various well-regarded Hobbesian scholars do however explore the broader applications of his logic of anarchy across his works. Indeed this body of literature attests to the consistency of Hobbes’ treatment of the state of nature, as an environment in which cooperation could be achieved, across his body of work. For such a broader treatment, see Malcolm (2002), Kafka (1986), Barry (1972), and Warrender (1957).

¹¹ For an illuminating treatment of Hobbes’ logic about reason and how it leads to possibilities for cooperation among individuals in anarchy, see especially Malcolm (2002).

¹² Indeed covenants can emerge from anarchy, as the famous Hobbesian contract that delivers humans from anarchy (creating the commonwealth) demonstrates. The real question framed here is, do we need to be delivered from anarchy completely for cooperation among individuals to emerge and be sustained? In other words, can we have cooperation without a Leviathan?

promises of safety and protection) in Hobbes, which essentially amount to contracts. Peace in anarchy would essentially be founded on such covenants, but such covenants are the very thing that create civil society (in this case it is the covenant or contract among people to give up their liberties to a Leviathan). Covenants are founded on promises; promises invoke obligations; obligations in turn are the foundations of law and morality: all of that which it has been believed could not exist in anarchy in fact will exist if covenants could be achieved in such a state (L, XV).¹³ Hence, allowing for possibilities of covenants in anarchy would create significant tension for realists with respect to the use of Hobbesian anarchy as an analogy for their visions of world politics.

Reading on beyond Chapter 13 in *Leviathan* starkly attests to the fact that peace is indeed attainable in anarchy. The logic derives from Hobbes' tale of the fool in Chapter 15. The chapter begins with a note on the implication of covenants or contracts for human co-existence: they are the foundation upon which the very existence of civil society thrives. From the idea of covenant derives all the legal, moral and ethical constraints that essentially preserve civil society: "the definition of injustice is none other than the not performance of covenant" (L, XV, 3). Hobbes again avers the dependence of the possibility of covenants upon the existence of a Leviathan: a common power to keep all humans from behaving like brutes, the antithesis of civil society. Without such a common power above all humankind, "there is no propriety, all men having right to all things, therefore there is no commonwealth, there nothing is unjust. So that the nature of justice consisteth in the keeping of covenant..." (L, XV, 3). But here, Hobbes perpetrates a monumental shift in his logic of anarchy when he immediately follows section 3 with the story of the fool. The fool is a reference to the Psalms which allude to a heretic who questions whether s/he should be constrained by the laws of a God who does not exist: a clear reference to a state of anarchy.¹⁴ Hobbes presents the fool's logic: "there is no such thing as justice [and hence] every man's conservation and contentment being committed to his own care, there could be no reason that every man might not do what he thought conduceth thereunto, and therefore to make or not make, keep or not keep, covenants was not against reason, when it conduceth to one's benefit" (L, XV, 4). Hobbes further quotes the fool, "The kingdom of God is gotten by violence; but what if it could be gotten by unjust violence? Were it against reason to get it, when it is impossible to receive hurt by it" (L, XV, 4).¹⁵ After a passage in which Hobbes assails the argument on the grounds that such reasoning has heretofore validated a history of mass violence (e.g., religious wars), he goes on to say that "*This specious logic is nonetheless false*" (L, XV, 4—italics added). Of course, if the critique of the fool should stop here it would be easy

¹³ See especially Kafka (1986), Barry (1972), and Warrender (1957) on covenants in anarchy.

¹⁴ In the editor's note on the passage, he cites the Hebrew definition of fool as connoting moral rather than intellectual deficiency. Hence, there is a clear parallel to humans in Hobbesian anarchy: people who have full use of their reason which is oriented around self preservation, without being bound by moral constraints. See Hobbes ([1668] 1994, p. 90, ft. 2).

¹⁵ The reference to violence for God's kingdom is an acknowledgement that war was not unlawful for Christians. See editors note in Hobbes ([1668] 1994, p. 90, ft. 3).

enough to discard it because of the allusion to religion, which exists independently of the state of anarchy. While God exists under conditions of both anarchy and civil society, religion is never introduced as a constraint against the brutish behavior characterizing anarchy. This is most likely to be a function of the brevity of anarchy for Hobbes: a very short transitional state to a civil society in which peoples' religious and moral proclivities could flourish.¹⁶ So such a diatribe against the fool could be dismissed as a mere critique based on some religious issue which is superimposed over, but not integrated into, his fundamental logic of anarchy. But Hobbes continues on. Indeed his critique of the fool goes on to squarely confront this religious barbarism in the context of his logic of anarchy and civil society through his emphasis on the impact of such thinking on possibilities for a covenant, the very thumbscrew upon which the logic of anarchy and civil society turn. The logic unfolds in section 5 of Chapter 15.

“For the question is not promises mutual where there is no security of performance on either side (as when there is no civil power erected over the parties promising), for such promises are no covenants, *but either where one of the parties has performed already*, or where there is a power to make him perform, there is the question whether it be against reason, that is, against the benefit of the other to perform or not.. *And I say it is not against reason*. For the manifestation whereof we are to consider: first, when a man doth a thing which, notwithstanding anything can be unforeseen and reckoned on, tendeth to his own destruction...., yet such events do not make it reasonably or wisely done. Secondly, that in a condition of war wherein every man to every man (for want of a common power to keep them all in awe) is an enemy, there is no man can hope by his own strength or wit to defend himself without the help of confederates (where everyone expects the same defence by the confederation that everyone else does); and therefore, he which declares he thinks it reason to deceive those that help him can in reason expect no other means of safety than what can be had from his own single power. He, therefore, that breaketh his covenant, and consequently declareth that he thinks he may with reason do so, cannot be received into any society that unite themselves for peace and defence but by the error of them that receive him; nor when he is received, be retained in it without seeing the danger of their error; which errors a man cannot reasonable reckon upon as the means of his security; and therefore, if he be left or cast out of society, he perisheth; and if he live in society, it is by the errors of other men, which he could not foresee nor reckon upon; and consequently [he has acted] against the reason of his preservation, and so men that contribute not to his

¹⁶ The reason for this may be driven by Hobbes own life experiences. In framing his quest for a stable state in a period of civil war, anarchy was never considered to be a long transitional period. It was this haste with which Hobbes treated anarchy that may have partially contributed to his logical inconsistencies about the subject, as well as his faulty assumptions and conclusions about real human interaction in such environments (which will be discussed below). See especially Lloyd (1992) on the life and ideas of Hobbes. See also Sommerville (1992) on Hobbes' political ideas in historical context.

destruction forebear him only out of ignorance of what is good for themselves.”
(italics added)

Indeed Hobbes conceives of a situation in anarchy itself where people may enter into a covenant, which comprises exchanging promises, thus creating bilateral obligations to perform. It is clear such a covenant is possible in anarchy because the first sentence in the passage uses the word “or” in distinguishing between a state in which civil society exists (“where there is a power to make him perform”) and a state where it does not, as in anarchy.¹⁷ But it is also clear that for Hobbes, reason, the element that discovers the laws of nature which in turn drive individuals to seek peace (and in his literal account of escaping from anarchy in Chapter 14, this peace is sought through the ultimate covenant creating civil society through the empowerment of a Leviathan), is attributed a role which can indeed bring about some condition of peace (i.e., some co-existence free from violence or exorbitant threat of violence) in anarchy as well.¹⁸ This is evident from Hobbes’ forceful declaration that reciprocity within the context of mutual promises in anarchy is consistent with reason. If this is the case, then the very logic applicable to relations in civil society is also relevant in a state of anarchy.¹⁹ The reason for this is clear when analyzing why the fool should reciprocate.

The fool’s story is precisely about a choice between reciprocating a cooperative gesture or not doing so in a state where defection has no obvious detrimental consequences, like anarchy (i.e., the belief that no divine power exists to punish defection). No stronger admonition of the fool’s choice (which is to defect) can be given

¹⁷ The treatment here closely follows Kafka (1986), Barry (1972), and Warrender (1957).

¹⁸ According to Hobbes’ language, where he speaks of cooperative confederations in this passage, conditions of peace in anarchy are not likely to be conceptualized at the same grand scale that they would be in civil society under a Leviathan.

¹⁹ Of course, the idea of forming a covenant is problematic in anarchy because some initial cooperative gesture may remain unreciprocated, and this possibility itself represents the looming threat that drives the treatment of anarchy in Chapter 13. But it is also evident in Chapter 14 that individuals will in some way overcome this problem in creating a commonwealth and choosing a Leviathan. Hence, while Hobbes does not specify the precise inter-temporal process by which covenants are consummated, there is an acknowledgement that a covenant can indeed be forged in anarchy. Both Barry (1972) and Warrender (1957) envision little difference in Hobbesian logic between a covenant that creates a commonwealth and other types of covenants which may arise in anarchy. This validates Williams’ (1996) arguments that in fact Hobbesian anarchy, contrary to the lessons espoused by realists, represents a set of ethical and epistemological problems. For Williams, cooperation is limited by differing visions of norms regarding orderly co-existence among individuals. The Leviathan actually produces order not by being a coercive presence but by supplying rules around which expectations can converge. In essence, Williams envisions anarchy more as a coordination game. But if indeed certain norms could become compelling in anarchy, then the epistemological problem could be overcome and covenants could form around those norms, as the tale of the fool suggests.

by Hobbes than Hobbes' use of the word "fool" to characterize his choice. The compelling nature of reciprocity begins with Hobbes' own conception of covenant. Non-reciprocity is cast as breaking a covenant ("breaketh his covenant"). Reason reveals compelling laws of nature which consummate some system of peaceful co-existence manifest in a covenant (Malcom 2002). Since such expectations reveal the compelling attraction of a covenant (because of reason and subsequently the laws of nature), the initial gesture of cooperation on the part of the first party to the covenant ("performing" in Hobbes terminology) carries with it all of the moral categories applicable to civil society.²⁰ Under these conditions Hobbesian nomenclature in his treatment of covenants is demonstrative: "bound," "obliged," "ought," "duty," "justice" (L, XIV, 7). But this is one of the many areas where Hobbes' political philosophy and religious beliefs converge. His penchant for reciprocity is highlighted in a biblical passage within the context of consummating a covenant. "This is that law of the Gospel: 'Whatsoever you require that others do to you, that do ye to them'" (L, XIV, 5).²¹

Beyond these moral elements driving reciprocity within covenants in anarchy, the passage clearly reveals a strategic element of cooperation among self-interested actors. If Hobbesian anarchy possesses elements of a variable-sum game with possibilities of Nash non-cooperative outcomes that are debilitating to the players (such as a Prisoner's Dilemma), then Hobbes certainly appears to be aware of it. Indeed Hobbes conceives of a type of game that is different from the Prisoner's Dilemma. So whatever general moral orientations are tied up with the use of reason, they are overlaid with instrumentally rational considerations of cooperation in a condition of anarchy. And this is quite apparent as his response to the fool continues. Toward the middle of section 4 in Chapter 15, Hobbes lays out the logic of the fool in this context.

"but he questioneth whether injustice, taking away the fear of God...may not sometimes stand with that reason which dictateth to every man his own good; and particularly then, when it conduceth to such a benefit as shall put a man in a condition to neglect, *not only the dispraise and revilings, but also the power of other men.* (Italics added)

Possibilities of obligation, and therefore moral elements, in anarchy are reinforced by the use of the terms "dispraise and revilings." The dispraise and revilings are functions of expectations of reciprocity in anarchy. Hence there is admission that cooperation could be forged on the basis of some interactive rule, but the fool sees any such cooperation as non-compelling because of the lack of divine sanction. Here Hobbes is introducing a human element of sanction, but does not yet spell out the precise nature of such

²⁰ Indeed, this injection of morality and incentives encouraging reciprocity into anarchy is hardly a revolutionary assertion among political theorists who have studied Hobbes. On the existence of morality and cooperation in anarchy, see especially Barry (1972), Warrender (1957), and Kafka (1986).

²¹ Malcolm (2002) argues that indeed natural laws appear in anarchy as a result of individuals searching for strategies of co-existence which generate the best possibilities for long-term survival. Reciprocity represents one of those natural laws for Hobbes.

punishment for defection as he does afterward in section 5 (long quotation above). In the passage from section 4 the term "the power of other men" is tied into some idea of punishment for defection as it closely follows the statement conveying that defection leads to negative consequences among those who think like the fool. In addition, it could also be an allusion to religious war, which is discussed in Hobbes in the very next section where he fundamentally avers that such thinking on the part of the fool ties into the fact that Jesus did not make war completely unlawful and hence the fool's logic could very well lead to such an outcome (which, as mentioned above, Hobbes abhorred as a result of his own experiences with civil war in England).²² In both ways, Hobbesian logic converges toward a recognition that environments with possibilities of cooperation leading to some peaceful co-existence can be thrown asunder by defection. And it is this very defection represented by the logic of the fool that Hobbes castigates.

The misguided nature of the fool's thinking is fully evident in the long passage quoted above (section 5). In the passage that begins with "Secondly", it is clear that survival in anarchy emanates from reciprocity resulting in what Hobbes calls a "confederation." This is a very different conceptualization of the idea of cooperative groups in anarchy than we see in Chapter 13. In Chapter 13 the reference to "confederacy" appears to be far closer to some idea of alliance of convenience for the purpose of aggression. To quote Hobbes, "For as to the strength of the body, the weakest has the strength enough to kill the strongest, either by secret machination, or by confederacy with others who are in the same danger with himself" (L, XIII, 1). This alliance of convenience will break down according to Hobbes' description of anarchy in Chapter 13 because the condition devolves into "a war as is of every man against every man" (L, XIII, 7). Clearly the mutual "danger" which Hobbes refers to in Chapter 13 never abates, even when alliances of convenience form, because such alliances are created and extemporized in accordance with the perpetration of violence rather than peaceful co-existence. In Chapter 15, the thrust of the logic portrays confederacy instead as a vehicle for protection "no man can hope... to defend himself from destruction without the help of confederates." Reciprocity as a foundation for such a protective or defensive alliance is manifest in the terminology "where everyone expects the same defense by the confederation that anyone else does."

From here on, the logic in section 5 of Chapter 15 manifests common game theoretic ideas regarding the possibilities of cooperation in variable-sum games. Keeping the fool as the main protagonist, it is evident that his logic does not bode well for his survival in anarchy because even in a world without a divine presence, there are consequences for defection which punish the transgressor. In this case, he can be excluded from the group and therefore be killed ("if he be left or cast out..., he periseth"). The idea of non-iteration, and mutual/symmetrical vulnerability in strategic environments which realists glean from Hobbes in the form of the classic Prisoner's Dilemma appear to be absent in the logic of this passage. Defection on the part of the fool will not destroy the entire group, or even compromise its effectiveness because even after defecting he can "be left or cast out." Hence the symmetry of the classic PD game is

²² See Curley's comment in Hobbes ([1668] 1994), p. 90, nt. 3).

compromised here. But Hobbes also introduces temporal and informational dimensions which also undermine the debilitating consequences of the idea of anarchy that realists have traditionally embraced (i.e., one shot, limited information). It is clear from the ability of the group to cast out defectors that the game does not end there for either, although the consequences of such a divorce are asymmetrical. Indeed the fool will go on to seek another group, which must by definition exist in anarchy because a commonwealth has not yet been formed: if the group Hobbes refers to were singular then it would in fact be that very covenant that forms the commonwealth. But this is not the case as Hobbes articulates the fool's dilemma within the context of anarchy: the fool's decision is about optimal behavior in environments void of punishment from an authoritative power.

The iteration manifests itself in a somewhat modified way. If we think of iteration in strategic situations according to the classic articulation of Axelrod (1984), socialization of defectors comes through iterated play between the same individuals over some period of time which is indeterminate. Hence, socialization takes place through the shadow of the future that infinite iteration generates: it will not pay for an individual to continue defecting when the time horizon is infinite. In Hobbes' case there does appear to be some shadow of the future at work, but iterated play does not manifest itself in games among the same actors. Indeed, the fool would have been cast out of his protective confederation and then must look elsewhere. So assuming some repeated play on the part of the fool, which constitutes moving from group to group, there is nonetheless a draconian shadow of the future imposed upon a defector as continual defection will continue bringing him inferior payoffs because he will be unwelcome into other confederations (assuming he survives the various iterations, which Hobbes believes will not be the case—"he perisheth"). This would serve the same socialization function as iteration in an Axelrodian context. The results would be similar in both contexts: both those that stay in the group and potential defectors would continue to face incentives to cooperate (Kafka 1986, p. 140).²³

Hobbes does admit to the possibility that such a defector might be retained in a confederation out of pure ignorance on the part of the members of the group ("all men that contribute not to his destruction forbear him only out of ignorance of what is good for themselves.") But even here, defectors are on thin ice according to Hobbes because it is an expectation that they should neither "foresee nor reckon upon." The term "reckon" is crucial here as reckoning connotes reasoning. Reason for Hobbes is oriented, as noted above, around self-preservation. This evokes not only a clear understanding of yourself, but also how others will behave in response to your actions. It would be clear to the defector by way of reason that others would not be so ignorant of his threat to them as

²³ Indeed, the strategic imperatives facing actors in anarchy may result in the emergence of norms as vehicles which solve problems of cooperation in game-theoretic situations. Hobbes' own language in the fool's passage, which connotes the existence of normative elements, suggests that the strategic and normative elements of cooperation in anarchy are indeed synthesized. On the emergence of norms as solutions to game-theoretic problems of cooperation, see Taylor (1987) and Ullman-Margalit (1977).

they too have reason. In the Latin version of section 5, Hobbes language is even more demonstrative. “So, either he will be cast out and perish, or he will owe his not being cast out to the ignorance of the others, which is contrary to right reason.”²⁴

But the shadow of the future may not end with the boundaries of anarchy. Indeed, Hobbes’ use of the word “society” in the passage stating that the fool cannot “be received into any society” is also crucial. Hobbes now introduces the possibilities of the emergence of a commonwealth and the fool’s own prior actions in a state of anarchy will have consequences for his inclusion in the commonwealth itself.²⁵ Extending the shadow of the future may make cooperation even more appealing in anarchy if indeed expectations of transition to a commonwealth raise the value of avoiding transgressions among confederations in the prior state of anarchy. In this case, such a possibility might modify the payoffs in the iterated game but would not fundamentally change the form of the strategic interaction. Interestingly, the possibility of some end point in the iteration resulting in the commonwealth could even introduce an element of a chain-store paradox into the process.²⁶ Recognizing finality in a process leading to mutual cooperation within a society may raise the incentives of cooperating at initial stages in anarchy, as there is some heightened expectation that cooperation in anarchy may deliver security (i.e., why take chances when complete safety is just around the corner in the form of the commonwealth?).

The logic propounded by Hobbes in his response to the fool proposes a drastically different process of strategic interaction than the one adopted by realists from his literal treatment of anarchy in Chapter 13. This new game no longer demonstrates the structure of the classic Prisoner’s Dilemma game with extreme vulnerability and no time horizons. Looking once more at the symmetrical ordinal preference ordering of such a classic Prisoner’s Dilemma game (DC>CC>DD>CD), we see that a dominant strategy exists and it results in a Nash non-cooperative equilibrium at DD. This is because of the individual

²⁴ See Hobbes ([1668] 1994), p. 92, nt. 7).

²⁵ This assertion depends on consistency in Hobbes’ use of the term society. In Chapter 13 section 13 he asserts that ideas of just and unjust have no meaning in a state of anarchy. “They are qualities that relate to men in society.” This distinguishes society very strongly from a state of “war” and naturally places it as commensurate with the ascension to a commonwealth. Indeed, Kafka (1986, p. 141) interprets Hobbes’ references to society in Chapter 15 section 5 as manifestations of the idea of commonwealth. Presumably the socialization of defectors will then shift from confederation-exclusion to some enforcement function through law in the commonwealth.

²⁶ Chain-store paradox refers to the outcomes of an iterated Prisoner’s Dilemma game when players are cognizant of the final play. Since we would expect defection in the final play, and we know when that will be, then indeed the penultimate play becomes the final play as there is no benefit in cooperating in the penultimate when you can only expect defection in the final play. The whole process unravels backward, driven by this logic, to the point where players will begin an iterated game by defecting on the very first play. As applied to this Hobbesian logic, the process unravels to encourage cooperation at initial moves in the game.

optimality of defection (no matter what the others do, you are better off defecting). In Hobbes response to the fool, all of this is thrown asunder. In fact, you are left with an entirely different scenario of human interaction. It is questionable whether it is even strategic at all, if the term strategic conveys the existence of viable choices which can be selected in response to the actions of others in a manner that can improve ones fate. In Hobbes' logic, is there an alternative to cooperation in anarchy? Given the argument proposed by Hobbes it is difficult to answer Yes, even under a variety of scenarios. Obviously, the expectations and compelling nature of reciprocity will encourage any player to cooperate rather than defect, because such defection would get them cast out into the wilds of anarchy and they would then have to depend solely on their individual faculties for survival: a state about which Hobbes is not very sanguine (again, casting out is commensurate with "periseth"). The possibility of fooling members of the confederation and exploiting them without bearing the consequences is vitiated by reason, as noted above. Of course, one could try to exploit some confederation in order to acquire some material gain which he or she can carry with them to another confederation. And here Hobbes is silent on whether different confederations actually share information about defectors, so that there may be a possibility of moving from confederation to confederation while accumulating the spoils from the suckers. But this would be a bold move indeed as spoils themselves could not be greater than one could carry upon their person, and the risk of doing so exposes the defector to death (which for Hobbes is certain). But the possibilities of exploiting limited information will surely expire with Hobbes commonwealth (society) endpoint, where groups will no longer be separated and hence can communicate about erstwhile defectors, and subsequently punish them. So clearly, cooperation will dominate defection if the other player cooperates (CC>DC).

But what of a situation where some of the members of the confederation exploit those cooperative individuals who subscribe to Hobbesian reason? Should reciprocity also be the rule here?²⁷ Even here, the idea of opportunity costs makes defection a severe choice under expectations of reciprocity. In a case where members of the confederation are exploiting each other, then surely reason will compel the third-party members (not involved in the exploitation) to cast the defectors out to perish. Even as a reciprocal act, defection will still confer a reputation of being unreliable. But suppose the defectors are numerous enough to create their own protective confederation such that they can reduce individual vulnerability, and hence not be so fearful of being cast out of the confederation? This would be illogical as cooperation must undergird a confederation for it to carry out its protective function effectively, and it would not be expedient to build such cooperation among a group of people that have a history of trying to exploit each

²⁷ As a result of the logic of Hobbes' response to the fool, Curley (1994, p. xxviii) proposes altering the payoffs in Hobbesian anarchy from a Prisoner's Dilemma game to a Stag Hunt where you have a contingent rather than a dominant strategy. A Stag Hunt is a purely reciprocal strategic interaction: preference orderings compel either mutual cooperation or mutual defection (CC>DC>DD>CD). But even this moderation of predation does not go far enough in characterizing the cooperative nature of the game that Hobbesian logic is revealing in Chapter 15.

other. So this splinter confederation would either be killed off or kill itself off.²⁸ This makes defection a losing strategy no matter what anyone else does.²⁹ Even facing the risk of exploitation within a confederation might be preferable to responding in kind and being cast out. One may indeed face death from such exploitation from defectors in the confederation, yet this is not assured. But being cast out raises ones vulnerability even more because the defector loses the support of the group and must rely solely on themselves alone, which for Hobbes means certain death. But even if death is not certain, response in kind may still be inferior because it brands you as a defector, which is sure to get you expelled. Anything short of death introduces probabilistic thinking that would lean toward cooperation. Would I rather be wounded in a confederation or in the wilds of anarchy? Here the choice would be clear. An individual is always better off staying loyal to the confederation no matter what anyone else does.

In sum, the new preference ordering is neither Prisoner's Dilemma nor even a Stag Hunt, but a game of pure cooperation with the following preference ordering: $CC > CD > DD = DC$. Indeed, if one were to decompose strategic thinking in actors according to different modes such as Kafka (1986, p. 142) does; maximin, maximization and disaster avoidance should all deliver the same preference ordering, as all three would be directed toward cooperation as a dominant strategy. The parallels between confederations in anarchy and the commonwealth are most apparent here. In civil society, there can only be one strategy for Hobbes: the dominant strategy of cooperation. Any sort of defection, even as a response in kind to exploitation (assume one kills a person who stole from them) is punished through law. Hence the idea of strategic interaction does not characterize life in the commonwealth as civil society restricts our choices. So too in anarchy does the idea of confederation restrict choices, but in this case more because of possibilities of exclusion than of actual internal institutional sanctions (which are likely to exist as well in such confederations according to Hobbes logic). In the final analysis, life in anarchy does not necessarily have to be "nasty, brutish and short," especially for individuals that value cooperation.

In light of this, one wonders about Hobbes' account of anarchy. Why spin such an elegant tale of the woes of prior states to the commonwealth if it is to be vitiated shortly afterward? Obviously, this is where Hobbes the person is reified in his prose (Lloyd 1992, Chapter 6). As noted, much in the work of Hobbes was a reaction to civil war in England, which made his own life sufficiently tumultuous: Hobbes fled to Paris shortly after the Scots defeated the King's army and captured Northern England. Perhaps this might even excuse what Kafka (1986, p. 126) calls "implausible assumptions and [overstated] conclusions" about political societies. Indeed, even as an historical metaphor

²⁸ It would be difficult to get allies or get other confederations to form a union. If the splinter group tried to aggrandize itself through conquest, then surely they could expect some countervailing coalition to form against them.

²⁹ This assumes that defection is not perceived as just retribution for transgressions within the group. But surely Hobbesian logic would attribute functions of law and enforcement within confederations, as such instruments are applicable under covenants, which confederations represent for Hobbes.

(i.e., which Hobbes never considered to have actually happened), the logic of anarchy in Chapter 13 vindicates Kafka's claims. It appears that Hobbes spent little time on anarchy: Chapter 13 is but a spec on a grand tapestry of philosophy on morality, law, the state, and religion. In this scheme, anarchy comprises a short and unfortunate transitional period to a condition Hobbes most desired: the political stability of a commonwealth. If we look at the logic of anarchy in the way it unfolds in Chapter 13 the premises are highly problematic.

Humans find themselves in some condition without law or state above them to restrain their behavior. In such a condition, behavior would devolve into complete chaos because mutual vulnerability would elevate fraud and violence to cardinal virtues. This would all be ended expeditiously by some covenant among all people, as they would create a commonwealth headed by a Leviathan. Indeed, such a scenario could only be consistent with a creationist assumption that some limited number of humans was dropped on the Earth in a specific geographic location by a divine force at a given point in time. They would have literally had to be dropped because prior existence on Earth would necessitate some sort of group formation for the individuals to grow into adulthood (families, clans). Otherwise no one would survive childhood. Indeed, the size of such a group might indeed mitigate the collective action problems that would interfere with choosing a Leviathan. But even here there is the problem of initiation. Some individual would have to make the first move, which would be impossible in the Chapter 13 version of anarchy since such a gesture would be countered by force or fraud. And if some initial gesture garnered support, why should that become a commonwealth of all rather than some smaller protective confederation? Just the difficulty of choosing a sovereign, the process by which individuals do so remains amorphous in Hobbes, would make confederations more likely than any commonwealth because confederations could function without a Leviathan (especially in smaller groups).

Interestingly, the scenario of Hobbesian anarchy does have striking parallels, in this sense, to civil war in England. The sides were all known to each other and well defined, war was intermittent and ever present, and people shared perceptions that order would be some function of strong authority. And while opinions on the appropriate structure of authority differed (e.g., Parliamentary, Royalist), there was a pervasive sentiment for some restoration of order, and the King had been a traditional focal point for these sentiments at one level of power or another. So under these conditions (well defined groups, full information, limited options for governance) the idea of building a commonwealth was not naive, as it was eventually done in England (Hobbes [1688] 1994, Chronology).

In a large-n setting, Hobbesian logic in Chapter 13 would not lead to the creation of a commonwealth because of the ever-present difficulty of collective action. But even under more favorable conditions of a smaller group, the idea of commonwealth would still be fleeting. You would have to assume away families and therefore clans as well, because prior existence would naturally generate some sorts of confederations (which would be an escape from the consequences of anarchy, thus vitiating the urgency to create a commonwealth across humankind). Similarly you would have to assume away a

division of labor between and among groups. Without such a division, neither families nor clans could arise, hence the building blocks of a commonwealth would not exist either. You would also have to assume that individuals could not vote with their feet, which assumes little abundance of resources on the Earth (people would only have the means of surviving in a place where they are in contact with numerous others). If abundance thrives, however, families and even extended families could opt out of the condition of war by traveling to remote places, and no collective action to form a commonwealth would take place.

Anthropological evidence vindicates this logic. Indeed, studies of pre-industrial societies show that the building blocks of human communities were families. As these families grew into extended families, they could thrive as hunter-gatherer groups. Abundant resources on Earth relative to the size of these groups vitiated the need for larger commonwealths as they found sufficient detachment from other groups possible and comfortable (hardly a war of all against all). Growth of the groups more often manifested itself in the emergence of clans than some consolidation through conquest or mutual cooperation to form larger political jurisdictions.³⁰ But such anthropological evidence should not incriminate Hobbes, nor does the inconsistency introduced by the logic of the fool diminish the importance of the treatment of anarchy within Hobbes' greater political philosophy. It fit well into his intellectual and even political objectives. What is of importance, however, are the lessons that could be drawn from it.

3. Hobbes, Constructivism, Neoliberalism and International Relations

Hobbes faced a fundamental tension in his thinking about anarchy. While it was essentially a reflection of his own either subliminal or more conscious metaphor for civil war in England, once stripped of its veneer of political usefulness, Hobbes was left to consider the problem of attaining peace in decentralized environments (Lloyd 1992). Hobbes certainly could not be accused of not being intelligent or of not having an impressive sense of politics in human societies. So this idea of peace as being indivisible in Chapter 13 did not clash with his intuitive understanding that peace could in fact be divisible. After all, as a person living in society, it must have been clear that all cooperative efforts were not mediated by the King. Indeed, his own life was sufficiently socialized with membership in both the Virginia Company and subsequently the Somer Island Company; as well as his numerous jobs in noble families as a tutor (Hobbes ([1668] 1994, Chronology)). So he certainly understood the concept of peace on a smaller social scale when not moderated by the avenging angel of the Leviathan (possibly with the exception of his job as tutor to the Prince of Wales). It was clear from his political writings that Hobbes sought some sort of peaceful co-existence in human communities above all else: this more than anything characterized the thrust of his political and moral writings. It must also have been clear to Hobbes (in living through a long civil war) that such peace was not necessarily attainable by default, even in a polity with such a long

³⁰ See the collection of essays on pre-industrial peoples in Cohen and Middleton (1977).

tradition of monarchy as England. So for humans facing the possibility of sustain periods without a Leviathan, how would they achieve peace? Theoretically, they would do so by the logic in Chapter 13, but in practice his own obsession with peace combined with his keen political intuition saw an answer at a less grand scale, a scale that was visible all around him his entire life. This tension between theory and reality shows up in the inconsistencies in the treatment of anarchy in Chapters 13 and Chapter 15. So too have modern realists demonstrated this tension between the elegance of the theory they hold so dear and that derives from Hobbes' treatment of anarchy in Chapter 13, and the more fundamental political realities they have witness around them in the world which do attest to the possibilities of pockets of enlightenment (stable cooperation among nations) in a potentially brutish world (a world system without some greater power above nations to keep them all in awe).

Like Hobbes himself, realists have been born into a world that exhibits significant pockets of order, cooperation and authority in differing degrees. Indeed, international relations unfolds within a system where there is no definitive guarantor or security (no international police force), yet this system is also pervaded by cooperation akin to Hobbesian confederations. Alliances, regimes, treaties, international organizations, and cooperative networks are pervasive in the world in which realists have penned their visions of international politics. Hence, the world system has hardly been a war of all against all. In the face of this realization, realists have taken refuge in the deep structure of world politics: that the absence of an overriding authority or Leviathan always renders war a possibility, hence nations have to prepare for a nasty world: the permissive cause of war (Waltz 1959). Or they have seen cooperation itself as a veiled manifestation of the same realist imperative. To quote Morgenthau (1967, p. 25),

“International politics, like all politics, is a struggle for power....Statesmen...may define their goals in terms of a religious, philosophic, economic, or social ideal.....They may also try to further its realization through nonpolitical means such as technical cooperation with other nations or international organizations. But whenever they strive to realize their goal by means of international politics, they do so by striving for power.”

The tautological nature of this reductionism is obvious, but indeed the realist imperative is preserved if all interactions among nation states are in one form or another an attempt to optimize power. But this is an empirical problem rather than a theoretical or epistemological problem. Empirically, the world shows a hybridized nature or *mélange* of both cooperation and conflict. To say that an element of conflict underlies all situations because of anarchy is not to say that this element will dominate behavior or even necessarily characterize the very nature of interactions among nations. Even at a domestic political level governed by some overriding authority, conflict may very well underlie all interactions between individuals as well, as each relationship shares mixed-motive qualities (Milner 1991). To indulge in a cliché, the extent to which the glass is either half empty or half full depends upon perceptions; hence anarchy may very well be what states perceive it to be. In this vein, constructivists conceive of the behavioral manifestations of anarchy as endogenous rather than exogenous. Deductions about state actions in an

environment void of overriding authority cannot be deduced *a priori* from some set of theoretical expectations about rational responses to the absence of an international police force. Rather interactions among states will be an endogenous process conditioned by inter-subjective identities and interests (i.e., each evaluating the interests and identities of themselves and others). These evaluations develop as a function of repeated interactions which reveal increasing information about both (Wendt 1992). So anarchy might very well produce the classical realist expectations of conflict, power optimization, and self help; if and only if inter-subjective evaluations reveal mutual perceptions of hostility and a game that is considered to be zero-sum. But different evaluations could easily lead to cooperation if they reveal perceptions of non-hostile postures among states and perceptions that the game offers positive-sum opportunities.

From an empirical perspective, prospects for cooperation appear to have increased in international politics. With all due respect to the elegance of realist deductive reasoning based on the absence of an international police force, while conflict still manifests itself extensively throughout the globe, world politics have altered in ways that have diminished the incentive to resort to large-scale violence. Weapons of mass destruction, chemical and biological weapons, the growth of interdependence, the emergence of a grand network of institutionalized cooperation and regimes, the growth of democracy, the advent of the information age (where knowledge about actions and motives is more available), globalization, and the proliferation of transnational networks across civil societies have altered incentives about appropriate strategic behavior geared toward attaining national interests in the world polity. Jervis (2002) has noted that such changes in world politics have brought about the emergence of a security community in which war between great powers would be unthinkable.

A number of neoliberal and constructivist scholars have critically scrutinized the application of the realist assumption of anarchy. Among the common critiques is that realist conceptions of anarchy understate cooperative elements in international politics, do not explain change in relations among states, and/or fail to demonstrate sufficient differentiation.³¹ To quote Milner (1991, p. 68) “Even within a positivist framework, this assumption may be degenerative, posing anomalies and inhibiting new insights.” From this tension between the state of world politics and realist theory, neoliberal scholars have explored the utility of cooperation in anarchy.³² They have fixed upon a number of conditions that make cooperation a viable policy even within decentralized environments. These conditions are: possibilities for reciprocity (shadows of the future), reputations for honoring commitments and rules (credibility), consistency in behavior, shying away from unilateral postures, conceiving of state interests in the context of joint utility (mutuality of interests), the number of actors involved, availability of information, linkages, and domestic politics.³³

³¹ See especially Milner (1991), Ashley (1984), Ruggie (1986), and Wendt (1999).

³² On the possibility and utility of cooperation in anarchy see especially Oye (1985), Axelrod (1984), Axelrod and Keohane (1985), Wendt (1992), Jervis (1978), and Taylor (1976 and 1987).

³³ See especially Oye (1985) and Axelrod and Keohane (1985).

These very conditions are manifest in the process of cooperation reflected in Hobbesian confederations. First, international confederations can be vehicles for promoting national interests and protection. Repeated interactions convey information about possibilities for cooperation and promote processes of socialization (i.e., inter-subjective identity formation). Second, functional interdependence makes cooperation important for realizing mutual gains in that nations co-exist within some form of a division of labor. The realist assumption of functional equality does not reflect the real world, hence behaving like a classical Hobbesian brute and relying only on self-help denies nations many advantages consistent with their national interests (Milner 1991). Finally, strategic interdependence renders the fate of nations intertwined in a more fundamental sense than visions of independence in anarchy (Milner 1991 and Schelling 1981). Indeed Brahm (1994, pp. 67-84) reinforces the possibilities of strategic gains through magnanimity (self-restraint, cooperation) even in games that present significant risks of exploitation. In this case, magnanimity represents a strategy that abates post-interaction consequences that might adversely affect a player that imposes sucker's payoffs onto another player (e.g., relent from attaining excessive gains so as to guard against the sucker's ire, which might lead to more devastating reciprocity in kind). As with Hobbesian confederations, all three aspects of the utility of cooperation suggest that there is no fundamental disjuncture between individual and communal goals.

Given the utility of cooperation in anarchy, soft power (which embraces both constructivist and neoliberal categories) becomes a valuable asset in the portfolios that nations construct to enhance their influence in world politics (Nye 2004). Reputation for cooperative behavior consolidates a nation's own confederations, and makes it a valuable ally for others looking for dependable allies. Such reputation makes one less menacing, thus mitigating security-dilemma reactions that might lead to the emergence of adversaries. Respect for rules and norms, both in its domestic and international manifestations, enhances cooperative reputation in maximizing potential allies and supporters, as well as minimizing enemies.³⁴ Such behavior may indeed make one vulnerable to a sucker's payoff, but the perpetrator would render himself/herself diminished in the eyes of other actors. Moreover, it is not clear that policies designed to minimize such outcomes through the mitigation of soft power (taking a harder line as realism might prescribe) would in the long run yield better net benefits than strategies that might accept such risks. Since a harder line position would generate menacing consequences also, it is not at all certain that these will not be worse than the consequences of exploitation. Either way, one will be faced with some risk irrespective of the power orientation one pursues in maximizing influence. In any event, short of outright destruction or conquest, an iterated process would follow any exploitative act, thus creating shadow-of-the-future effects that would discourage such acts (Axelrod 1984). In light of the utility of soft power, any strategy that would discount such

³⁴ In this respect norms will evolve for the purpose of solving strategic problems limiting cooperation. This is consistent with the literature on the emergence of norms as facilitators of stable-cooperative equilibria in game-theoretic situations (Ullman-Margalit 1977 and Taylor 1987).

resources in favor of a strict pursuance of hard power in a classically realist mode very much risks victimization through power illusion (Gallarotti 2004).³⁵

4. Conclusions: Toward a Theory of Cosmopolitik

In the same way that Hobbes own life suggests some resolutions of the tensions between the differing manifestations of anarchy, so too differing paradigms of international relations theory may find that the intersection set among their logics need not be null. Indeed, the idea of complex rationality (i.e., conceptualizing individual utility as dependent on group utility) holds much promise for being able to synthesize visions of realism, neoliberalism and constructivism. For Hobbes, confederations and reciprocity in anarchy ultimately prove consistent with instrumental rationality. And this is a simple derivation from an idea that eventually led to the great contributions of John Nash and other game theorists that illuminated processes in which individual rationality was pursued in strategic environments (i.e., where individual optima could only be achieved within a group structure). In this sense, all of the venerated tenets of realism need not conflict with the fundamental categories of neoliberals and constructivists. The maximization of individual utility, the maximization of influence, the minimization of vulnerability, the absence of definitive authority in the international system, and self-help are all consistent with the group orientations posited by the constructivists and neoliberals. Indeed, in interdependent communities like the international system, truly optimizing these goals for individual nations can be principally accomplished only by conceptualizing individual actions within a group framework. Not doing so can lead to consequences which debilitate rather than benefit. The process is well revealed in Hobbes' tale of the fool. But even self-help can co-exist in a world of complex rationality. Indeed, independent behavior can be fully consistent with an individual nation's fate in an interdependent environment to the extent that it does not significantly diminish the fate of other nations. But this is a common outcome of market behavior: there are times when indeed individual greed is good for the whole community, but there are also instances where such is not the case. Moreover, the maximization of power or influence can also be consistent with all three paradigms. Thinking of power in net-terms (i.e., the power that remains after all the consequences of individual power maximization have been played out), in strategic environments, the only way to indeed maximize power or influence is to pursue power-augmentation strategies that minimize adverse feedback loops, and this can only be done by contemplating power augmentation within a group framework (Jervis 1997).

Indeed complex rationality, as demonstrated in Hobbes' tale of the fool, opens up possibilities for synthesizing the three paradigms. And, more noteworthy, the basis of synthesis comes in the very phenomena that were thought of as being most responsible for polarizing the three paradigms: anarchy and power. Indeed, this also may

³⁵ With respect to the hard-soft power nexus, power illusion is the process whereby states that indulge in excessive strategies of hard power augmentation (i.e., neglecting soft power) can end up weakening themselves significantly. See Gallarotti (2004).

carry crucial-case implications for theory synthesis. If indeed common paradigmatic strands can be forged in what were heretofore considered points of greatest contention, the possibilities for synthesizing theories in less contentious issues may hold all the more promise. Such synthesis would be built on a mutual acknowledgement of the need for more sophisticated and complex understandings of the way international relations unfold in the modern world. This more cosmopolitan vision might itself inspire a new paradigm: *cosmopolitik*. It is interesting that in finding a prolific muse in Hobbes, we would have in effect had to travel back over three centuries to illuminate our understanding of international politics today and in the future. But then this is consistent with another cliché: you have to look back to look forward.

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