

**Thomas  
Hobbes**

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# **Man and Citizen**

*(De Homine and De Cive)*

Edited by  
Richard G. Scott

## **Man and Citizen: (De Homine and De Cive)**

*Thomas Hobbes*

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# Man and Citizen: (De Homine and De Cive)


*Thomas Hobbes*

## **Man and Citizen: (De Homine and De Cive) Thomas Hobbes**

A reprint of the 1972 Doubleday edition. Contains the most helpful version of Hobbes's political and moral philosophy available in English. Includes the only English translation of De Homine, chapters X-XV. Features the English translation of De Cive attributed to Hobbes.

## **Man and Citizen: (De Homine and De Cive) Details**

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### **Mahmoud Haggui says**

How gifted Thomas Hobbes was! I'm not exaggerating but that what comes into my mind when remembering some ideas and quotes from this book. Hobbes stood up against the materialistic philosophy and its interpretation of life, world and human history and society. Unlike Thomas More, Plato and Al Faraby, Hobbes can be defined as a realistic philosopher whose thoughts perfectly affected the Post-Modernity age, He attacked the Idealism, the idea that we can achieve perfection by exert ceaseless effort, and by being more organized and committed. he asserted "Man is not sociable by nature" there is kind of people who hate commitment. He criticized society for putting Soldiers and officers in a higher rank above poets and writers.

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### **Danielle Lott says**

Another must read for IR!

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### **Michel says**

Almost same as "Theological-Political Treatise" of Spinoza.

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### **Mary says**

Hobbes seems to defining eloquence into two camps: that of philosophy and that of passions. "The one is an elegant and clear expression of the conceptions of the mind and riseth partly from the contemplation of the things themselves, partly from an understanding of words taken in their own proper and definite signification. The other is a commotion of the passions of the mind [...] and derives from a metaphorical use of words fitted to the passions." Both exist, but "that is never disjoined from wisdom, but this almost never. But that this kind of powerful eloquence separated from the true knowledge of things, that is to say, from wisdom, is the true character of them who solicit and stir up the people to innovations" ("Dominion" 138). Whew! That's a lot of Hobbes quoting, but it seems to at least create a space for eloquence in the weak sense of communication philosophical principles truly.

(Jeremy: There might be an interesting parallel here to make with Campbell in terms of words' "own proper and definite signification" and your own description of the transient nature of signs and attendant signifiers.)

The question for me is what political assemblies might look like if operating under Hobbes' first group. Obviously he's not in favor of the affective power of language, because this is what "them who solicit and stir up the people" use, but the stolidly philosophical eloquence seems to be important, even if only in "clear expression." (We talked about philosopher kings last time, and I wonder if this might tie into that conversation.)

wickedness is a sensible response to wicked conditions (12)

state of nature is thought experiment, unfound in real life (24-5) Maybe in America (29)

"there must be as many promises [...] as men" (71)

division of labor by moral standing "the commands are shamedful to be done by some, and not by others" (79)

"supreme power is indivisible" (105)

"if [the sovereign] raise no more than is sufficient for the due administration of his power, that is a benefit equal to himself and his subjects" (115)

"in a democracy, look how many demagogues, that is, how many powerful orators there are with the people" (118) and "in a popular dominion, there may be as many Neros as there are orators who soothe the people" (119).

"Another reason why a great assembly is not so fit for consultation is, because everyone who delivers his opinion holds it necessary to make a long-continued speech; and to gain the more esteem from his auditors, he polishes and adorns it with the best and smoothest language. Now the nature of eloquence is to make good and evil, profitable and unprofitable, honest and dishonest, appear to be more or less than indeed they are; and to make that seem just which is unjust according as it shall best suit with his end that speaketh. For this is to persuade; and though they reason, yet take they not their rise from true principles, but from vulgar received opinions" (123)

"there is no reason why every man should not naturally mind his own praise, than the public business, but that here he sees a means to declare his eloquence, whereby he may gain the reputation of being ingenious and wise [...] rejoice and triumph in the applause of his dexterous behavior" (125)

"the subjects are the multitude and (how ever it seem a paradox) the king is the people" (135).

"Now eloquence is two-fold. The one is an elegant and clear expression of the conceptions of the mind, and riseth partly from the contemplation of the things themselves, partly from an understanding of words taken in their own proper and definite signification. The other is a commotion of the passions of the mind (such as are hope, fear, anger, pity) and derives from a metaphorical use of words fitted to the passions. That forms a speech from true principles; this from opinions already received" (138) those who practice the later "can turn their auditors out of fools into madmen [...] this they have from that sort of eloquence, not which explains things as they are, but from that other, which by moving their minds, makes all things to appear to be such as they in their minds prepared before, had already conceived them" (139)

At the beginning of chapter XIV, "Of Laws and Trespass," Hobbes makes a somewhat passing remark about counsel. He says that those who confuse law and counsel are like those "who think it is the duty of monarch not only to give ear to their counselors, but also to obey them, as though it were in vain to take counsel, unless it were also followed" (155). Phwat? Hobbes, did you just say that the monarch can be influenced by something outside of the sovereign, but politically impactful? Let me take a look at that page again: "Counsel is directed to his end that receives it [...] Counsel is given to none but the willing." Counsel, then, doesn't necessarily persuade the sovereign as we might understand rhetoric, but provides another pillar of reasoning for the monarch to consider. In fact, such counsel probably looks a lot like that philosophical eloquence that Hobbes describes above: clear, grounded in rationalist contemplation and divorced from emotional appeals.

This kind of reminds me of Tacitus (who was similarly enamored of the principatus) and his concerns about demagogues' rhetorical sway, but who was, nonetheless, willing to admit that the sovereign could benefit from hearing what advisers had to say.

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