

17.03. Introduction to Political Thought
Lecture Outline: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, chs. 21, 24, 28-30

I. Liberty of subjects

- A. Negative v. positive liberty
 - 1. Negative liberty: absence of external impediments, sphere within which individual is free from interference
 - 2. Critique of positive or republican liberty: liberty as collective self-government
- B. Liberty of subjects consistent with unlimited power of the sovereign
- C. Sovereign's putting to death an innocent subject is iniquity, not injustice (148)
- D. Liberties of subjects include
 - 1. liberty to defend their own bodies, even against those that lawfully invade them
 - 2. liberty to refuse self-incrimination
 - 3. liberty to refuse to fight in war
- E. Greatest liberty of subjects lies in the silence of the laws
- F. When obligation of subjects is dissolved

II. Property

- A. Where no government, no property (in contrast with Locke)
- B. No right of property against sovereign
 - 1. Sovereign may redistribute wealth/intervene in economy to secure peace
 - 2. Sovereign's duty to the poor
 - a. Safety of the people not just "bare Preservation, but also other Contentments of life" (231)
 - b. Public charity

III. Punishment

- A. Basis of sovereign's right to punish: "not given, but left to him" (214)
- B. Aim of punishment
 - 1. Not retribution but rather...
 - 2. "that the will of men may thereby the better be disposed to obedience" (214) or "correction either of the offender, or of others by his example" (240)
- C. Distinguishes between legitimate punishment and acts of hostility
- D. Progressive notion of punishment, picked up by later reformers (Jeremy Bentham)

IV. Sources that weaken or dissolve government

- A. Want of absolute power
- B. Private judgment of good and evil
- C. Subjecting the sovereign to the laws
- D. Attributing absolute property rights to subjects
- E. Dividing the sovereign power
- F. Imitation of neighboring nations, and the Greeks and Romans
 - 1. Advocates use of "solid Reason" over histories of the ancient Greeks and Romans (cf. Machiavelli)

V. Educating subjects