

RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Domestic entanglements: Family, state, hierarchy, and the Hobbesian state of nature

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## Abstract

This article revisits the Hobbesian account of the state of nature and the formation of states, attending to Hobbes's account of the family. Drawing on feminist readings, we find in the *Leviathan* an account of the family as a natural political community. We contend specifically that a focus on conceptions of family life in the *Leviathan*, and in works by Hobbes's early modern peers, points to the role of the family as a site of socialisation in the prelude to early state formation and in the formation of political hierarchies more generally – including, we suggest, the formation of international hierarchies. These accounts have thus far been missing from International Relations theory. Contra conventional IR theoretic readings of the *Leviathan*, the Hobbesian state of nature contains the seeds of both anarchy and hierarchy, as overlapping social configurations. While anarchy emerges clearly in the famous condition of 'war of all against all', hierarchy also exists in Hobbes's depiction of family life as a naturally occurring proto-state setting. On the basis of this contemporary feminist analysis of a classic text, we consider implications for the emerging 'new hierarchy studies' in IR.

**Keywords:** Hobbes; *Leviathan*; Feminism; Family; International Relations Theory; Hierarchy

## Introduction

Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* is among the most central, yet thinly read texts in International Relations' (IR) adoptive canon of political theory.<sup>1</sup> Scholars have long criticised dominant (especially realist) IR readings for focusing too narrowly on rational individuals in an anarchic state of nature, to the neglect of other elements of the text.<sup>2</sup> Drawing on feminist readings, and on work in the history of political thought, we offer a new account of Hobbes's classic text for IR scholars.<sup>3</sup> Usual IR readings of the *Leviathan* render women and family life largely invisible: as

<sup>1</sup>Brian Schmidt, 'On the history and historiography of International Relations', in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse-Kappen, and Beth Simmons (eds), *The Handbook of International Relations* (London: Sage, 2006), pp. 3–23; Michael C. Williams, 'Hobbes and International Relations: a reconsideration', *International Organization*, 50:2 (1996), pp. 213–36; Jack Donnelly, *Realism in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

<sup>2</sup>Williams, 'Hobbes and International Relations'; Michael C. Williams, *The Realist Tradition and the Limits of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Nuri Yurdusev, 'Thomas Hobbes and International Relations: From realism to rationalism', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 60:2 (2006), pp. 305–21; Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace* (New York, NY: Norton, 1997); R. John Vincent, 'The Hobbesian tradition in twentieth-century international thought', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 10:2 (1981), pp. 91–101; Mark Heller, 'The use & abuse of Hobbes: the state of nature in International Relations', *Polity*, 13:1 (1980), pp. 21–32; Hedley Bull, 'Hobbes and the international anarchy', *Social Research*, 48:4 (1981), pp. 717–38; Cornelia Navari, 'Hobbes and the Hobbesian tradition in international thought', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 11:3 (1982), pp. 203–22.

<sup>3</sup>Nancy Hirschmann and Joanne Wright (eds), *Feminist Interpretations of Thomas Hobbes* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2012); Gordon Schochet, 'Thomas Hobbes on the family and the state of nature', *Political Science Quarterly*, 82:3 (1967), pp. 427–45; Richard Allen Chapman, 'Leviathan writ small: Thomas Hobbes on the family', *The*

Richard Allen Chapman writes, ‘Hobbes’s comments on the family do not attract much serious attention.’<sup>4</sup> We recover the central, if often implicit, role of family in the *Leviathan*. Families, Hobbes repeatedly implies, are social hierarchies within the state of nature, preceding and prefiguring the state.

We undertake two related but distinct tasks. First, drawing on feminist and related accounts of Hobbes, we revisit and revise standard IR readings of how the Hobbesian state emerges from the ‘state of nature’, establishing the family as a core component of the Hobbesian narrative. IR’s entrenched readings of the *Leviathan* do not adequately explain how, on the Hobbesian account, actors transition from the state of nature to the stable domestic hierarchy of the commonwealth. Such readings find the state of nature populated by atomistic, implicitly male actors, suddenly transcended by sovereign rule.<sup>5</sup> This is implausible as explanatory theory: it is silent on how actors prevent free-riding, agree terms of rule, and commit to defending the commonwealth, once established. However, it is also implausible as a reading of Hobbes, who, we show, prefigures the commonwealth with an account of pre-state family life, providing a quasi-natural model for later, much larger social aggregation. Rather than a simple distinction between domestic hierarchy and international anarchy, Hobbes implies a surprisingly supple process story, whereby hierarchy can be thought of as emerging locally and gradually.<sup>6</sup> Why has this reading gone unnoticed in IR? Hobbes scattered his remarks about the family throughout the *Leviathan*, providing no systematic treatment. However, he was not alone in emphasising it: We show early modern political theorists commonly emphasised the family as proto-political order. Far from treating it as a marginal concern, Hobbes may have taken its centrality for granted.

Second, having recovered this reading of Hobbes, we draw on these insights to engage in theory building, reframing on revised Hobbesian terms an emerging area of importance in IR: international hierarchy. The Hobbesian family is a hierarchy already present within the state of nature, and one that will persist after the founding of the state. On this view, social hierarchies are endemic: persistent, many, and varied features of the sociopolitical landscape. His account offers, we argue, a useful theoretical resource for analysis of hierarchies in world politics. We focus specifically on the role of Hobbesian hierarchies in three core areas: hierarchies’ durability, nestability, and propensity to generate violence.

A revised reading of Hobbes goes to core areas of concern for IR theory. On one hand, a conventionally Hobbesian state of nature is central, tacitly or explicitly, to realism and related IR theories. On the other, since at least Hedley Bull, many IR theorists have seen the ‘domestic analogy’, between individuals in the state of nature and states in anarchy, as theoretically and empirically flawed.<sup>7</sup> On our reading, the domestic analogy becomes two related but distinct

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*American Political Science Review*, 69:1 (1975), pp. 76–90; Philip Abbott, ‘The three families of Thomas Hobbes’, *The Review of Politics*, 43:2 (1981), pp. 242–58; Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988); Joanne Wright, ‘Going against the grain: Hobbes’s case for original maternal dominion’, *Journal of Women’s History*, 14:1 (2002), pp. 123–48; Joanne Boucher, *The Making and Breaking of Affectional Bonds* (London: Tavistock, 1979). Relatedly, Kahn reads the *Leviathan* as existing ‘in dialogue with the contemporary problem of romance’. Victoria Kahn, ‘Hobbes, romance and the contract of mimesis’, *Political Theory*, 29:1 (2001), pp. 4–29.

<sup>4</sup>Chapman, ‘*Leviathan* writ small’, p. 77.

<sup>5</sup>MacPherson treats the state of nature as a metaphor enabling the reader to imagine life without government, not an actual history period. C. B. MacPherson, ‘Introduction’, in Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (New York, NY: Penguin, 1981). His view contrasts with Schochet’s reading, which claims the state of nature ‘actually existed’. Schochet, ‘Thomas Hobbes on the family and the state of nature’, p. 442. See also Heller ‘The use & abuse of Hobbes’; Chapman, ‘*Leviathan* writ small’, p. 77.

<sup>6</sup>Indeed, we find such accounts were common among his early modern peers – see below.

<sup>7</sup>Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society* (London: Pan Macmillan, 1977), pp. 44–9. Hobbes scholars in the history of political thought appear to find the analogy nowhere in his works. Malcolm notes that standard readings of Hobbes in political theory generally gloss over international matters briefly, as issues marginal to his thought. Noel Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 543–5. Malcolm, Armitage, and Christov all dismiss standard IR realist readings of Hobbes. David Armitage, *Foundations of Modern International Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 59; Theodore Christov, *Before Anarchy: Hobbes and his Critics in Modern International Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

analogical moves: between the state of nature and international anarchy – within which actors must fend for themselves – but also between the domestic social hierarchies of family and state. This reading makes possible an account on which, by analogy, properties of both anarchy and hierarchy recur in international order. Domestic analogy adherents and critics alike may thus underplay its scope of analytical value in assessing not just consequences of anarchy, but also forms of hierarchy.

We proceed as follows. We begin by considering standard IR readings of Hobbes, and a central problem arising from them: the transition from the state of nature to the hierarchy of the commonwealth. Then, drawing on work in feminist political theory and the history of political thought, we unpack a reading that emphasises the family as pre-state social compact. We then turn to context, in two ways: first by considering contextual methodological constraints on interpreting Hobbes and second by locating him among his early modern peers. With all this in mind, we turn to consequences for IR theory, focusing on international hierarchies.

### The *Leviathan* in IR

On the standard IR reading, the Hobbesian state of nature is one of constant actual or potential violence. Absent overarching authority to limit behaviour and mediate disputes, quarrels naturally arise out of competition for security, wealth, and glory, making violence or the threat of it constant. The result is a ‘condition which is called Warre ... the nature of [which] consisteth not in actual fighting but in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary’.<sup>8</sup> On the Hobbesian account, a Leviathan – an exclusive sovereign authority with institutions of governmental power – can establish a ‘commonwealth’ or state out of the state of nature.<sup>9</sup> Armed with force ‘sufficient to compell performance’, the Leviathan binds commitments, snuffs out internal violence, and rebuffs outside threats.<sup>10</sup>

For IR theorists – chiefly realists – stability between individuals within the Leviathan makes possible great instability without, between states.<sup>11</sup> Realists treat Hobbes’s state of nature as analogous to international anarchy. Both comprise self-interested, atomistic actors, for whom security is elusive and prospects of cooperation are limited.<sup>12</sup> The state of nature, in which relatively equal individuals live in constant fear of each other, is replicated internationally upon the widespread creation of commonwealths. Hedley Bull terms this parallel reading the ‘domestic analogy’.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, it was this equivalence that Bull was centrally concerned to critique.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Thomas Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, ed. Noel Malcolm, 3 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), vol. 2, p. 192.

<sup>9</sup>The word ‘state’ presents nomenclatural issues. As Skinner shows, the word fully acquired its current meaning during this period. For Hobbes, the commonwealth was the body politic over which a sovereign ruled; the Leviathan was the institutionalised apparatus of government by which that authority was executed. We intend ‘state’ in its current sense throughout, unless otherwise noted. Quentin Skinner, ‘A genealogy of the modern state’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 162 (2009), pp. 325–70.

<sup>10</sup>Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 210. The Leviathan may originate as a voluntary contract among individuals but need not: it can be founded either by voluntary authority or by force.

<sup>11</sup>Williams, ‘Hobbes and International Relations’.

<sup>12</sup>Williams, *The Realist Tradition*; Williams, ‘Hobbes and International Relations’; Yurdusev, ‘Thomas Hobbes and International Relations’; Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*; Vincent, ‘The Hobbesian tradition’; Heller, ‘The use & abuse of Hobbes’; Bull, ‘Hobbes and the international anarchy’; Navari, ‘Hobbes and the Hobbesian tradition’.

<sup>13</sup>Bull’s purpose was ‘to determine the limits of the domestic analogy, and thus establish the autonomy of international relations’. Hedley Bull, ‘Society and anarchy in International Relations’, in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds), *Diplomatic Investigations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), pp. 35–50 (pp. 35–6). He aimed to show domestic and international politics were differentiated by more than the presence or absence of hierarchy. Alternately, for Jahn, the state of nature theoretically reframes the problem of cultural diversity (which had confronted early modern Europe in its encounter with the Americas), by reducing difference to the *problematique* of anarchy. Beate Jahn, *The Cultural Construction of International Relations: The Invention of the State of Nature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000).

<sup>14</sup>Recourse to Hobbes himself tells us strikingly little. Existing accounts in IR (Williams, ‘Hobbes and International Relations’) and in the history of political thought (Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, pp. 432–5; Armitage, *Modern International*

Realist readings of the *Leviathan* leave us with several puzzles. First, in the state of nature individual interests appear at odds with those of the group.<sup>15</sup> How then do individuals move from fear of the other to partnership? Hobbes himself notes self-preservation is the one right individuals do not abrogate upon joining a commonwealth: ‘if other men will not lay down their Right, as well as he; then there is no Reason for any one, to devest himselfe of his: For that were to expose himselfe to Prey ... rather than to dispose himselfe to Peace.’<sup>16</sup> Founding a state requires people renounce their right to act as they please. Everyone must do so at the same time, lest each be threatened by whoever does not. Harvey Mansfield explains:

[Individuals cannot] escape from the state of nature, when to do so they need a common power that, by definition, is absent from the state of nature. Hobbes seems to place men in a vicious circle when he supposes them in the state of nature: a common power is ... both condition and consequence of the escape.<sup>17</sup>

The establishment of the Leviathan appears to require the prior existence of precisely the coercive capacity it is established to create. Michael C. Williams summarises: ‘in a condition of self-help and anarchy, who contracts first?’<sup>18</sup> Moreover, how would the covenanting parties agree on a form of government? Hobbes envisions that the sovereign can be an individual – a monarch – or a group, either elected by force or by birthright.

What is more, the problem of individual commitment to the commonwealth appears to persist, in modified form, past its founding – chiefly in the context of national defence. A state undefended against threats from without will be unable to preserve itself, and thus unable to provide the domestic peace for which it was created.<sup>19</sup> And yet, the commonwealth, as such, has no natural body with which to defend itself, save those of the individual subjects constituting it: ‘And when the Defence of the Common-wealth, requireth at once the help of all that are able to bear Arms, everyone is obliged; because otherwise the Institution of the Commonwealth, which they have not the purpose, or courage to preserve, was in vain.’<sup>20</sup>

The obligation to defend the commonwealth conflicts with the individual drive for self-preservation. Hobbes frames this as an obligation that subjects hold towards the Leviathan but does not explain how they are bound by it. We would expect them to flee in the heat of battle, ruining hope of national security.<sup>21</sup> Hobbes recognises as much: ‘when Armies fight, there is on

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*Thought*, p. 59; Christov, *Before Anarchy*) emphasise that Hobbes’s own references to things international are rare, opaque, and subject to multiple interpretations. There is however considerable evidence Hobbes and other social contract theorists derived conceptions of the state of nature in part from colonial knowledge of the Americas. Pat Moloney, ‘Hobbes, savagery, and international anarchy’, *American Political Science Review*, 105:1 (2011), pp. 189–204; Stephanie B. Martens, *The Americas in Early Modern Political Theory: States of Nature and Aboriginality* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016); Jahn, *The Cultural Construction of International Relations*.

<sup>15</sup>Williams, ‘Hobbes and International Relations’, p. 225.

<sup>16</sup>Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 200. Every person, according to Hobbes, maintains the natural right, both in the state of nature and in the Commonwealth, to ‘use his own power ... for the preservation of his own Nature; that is to say, of his own Life; and consequently, of doing any thing, which in his own judgement, and Reason, he shall conceive to be the aptest means thereunto’ (*The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 198).

<sup>17</sup>Harvey Mansfield, ‘Hobbes and the science of indirect government’, *The American Political Science Review*, 65:1 (1971), pp. 97–110.

<sup>18</sup>Williams, ‘Hobbes and International Relations’, p. 225.

<sup>19</sup>On state death in IR, see Tanisha Fazal, *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).

<sup>20</sup>Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 340.

<sup>21</sup>Bull, ‘Hobbes and the international anarchy’, pp. 723–4. This follows from Hobbes’s third and fourth laws of nature (ch. 15). The third law stipulates, ‘men [must] perform their Covenantes made’ (*The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 220, emphasis original). In other words, contracts cannot be revoked. The fourth law concerns gratitude: ‘That a man which receiveth Benefit from another of mere Grace, Endeavour that he which giveth it, have no reasonable cause to repent him of his good will’ (*The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 230, emphasis in original). In other words, citizens agree to defend those things from which they derive benefit.

one side, or both, a running away; yet when they do it not out of treachery, but fear, they are not esteemed to do it unjustly, but dishonourably. For the same reason, to avoyd battell, is not Injustice, but Cowardise.<sup>22</sup> Hobbes suggests the state may coerce its subjects to serve under arms.<sup>23</sup> However, Williams concludes coercion alone will not do: ‘no government is powerful enough to regulate totally the lives of recalcitrant citizens or compel them continually to obey’.<sup>24</sup>

The two problems – state formation and national defence – are distinct, but at root they point to the same basic social problem: that of compelling individuals to constitute themselves as a collective whole. In the language of contemporary social science, Hobbes’s subjects are rational actors, with incentives to defect, producing in effect a collective action problem.<sup>25</sup>

A third problem is methodological, to do with the form of Hobbes’s argument. He describes the state as an analytic construct: an ‘Artificiall man’ and sovereignty as an ‘Artificiall soul’.<sup>26</sup> These formulations are to be taken seriously, not just as analogies between individuals and the state, but as a juridical framework for explaining what the state *is*: its ontological status is thus at stake. Hobbes’s account of the state rejects two broad conceptions dominant in his day, one monarchical or absolutist and the other rooted in popular sovereignty. The former vested state authority in the monarch, often through the divine right of kings: the state thus became reducible to the sovereign. The latter vested sovereign authority in the collective body of the people, the will of the masses – thereby reducing the state to its people. Hobbes rejected the former as arbitrary and the latter as tantamount to chaos. He offered instead an account of the body of the state as a *fiction*.<sup>27</sup> The populace must alienate their individual wills not directly to a sovereign, but instead to one another, thereby creating an imaginary person – a collective entity, over which the sovereign could render his or her legitimate authority. The legitimacy of the sovereign is then vested in the state as fictional person: a narrative that creates the body of the commonwealth *ex nihilo* out of its members’ individual wills, welding them together as a sovereign unity, under the authority of a single ruler.<sup>28</sup> This raises the question of how the shared fiction of the state comes to be believed – that is, how the people come to identify *as* a people, rightly ruled together, by a sovereign, within a commonwealth. The state faces a distinctive rhetorical problem: how to render itself real to its constituents.

<sup>22</sup>Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 338.

<sup>23</sup>See fn. 21.

<sup>24</sup>Williams, ‘Hobbes and International Relations’, p. 220.

<sup>25</sup>Another, very different social-theoretic tradition treats individual self-interest as itself a social construct. On these accounts, collective actions problems arise not from a state of nature, but through the constitution of individuals *as* individuals by the broader social order. Such approaches are found in relational sociological approaches, and in pragmatist social and political philosophy. Dewey sums up the approach neatly: ‘Society, as a real whole, is the normal order, and the mass as an aggregate of isolated units is the fiction.’ Such approaches render collective action problems moot. For Hobbes, in contrast, binding the individual into the polity is the central, overarching problem of social order. John Dewey, ‘The ethics of democracy’, in *The Early Works of John Dewey, 1882–1898* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969), 1:227–50, p. 232. For a relational critique of IR, predicated on its Hobbesian individualism, see Charlotte Epstein, ‘Theorizing agency in Hobbes’s wake: the rational actor, the self, or the speaking subject?’, *International Organization*, 67:2 (2013), pp. 287–316. Epstein offers a linguistic, non-individualist reading of Hobbes.

<sup>26</sup>Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 16.

<sup>27</sup>Skinner, *Hobbes and Republican Liberty*, pp. 347–8. This part of our reading tracks Skinner’s closely.

<sup>28</sup>The *practice* of that authority may only nominally be the sovereign’s. Several recent readings suggest a distinction can be drawn between the state, in which sovereign authority is formally and conceptually vested, and government, which carries on the quotidian work of administration. While the latter is tasked with the activity of governing; the former carries the ontological status of statehood: the unified identity of the body politic, taken as a whole. For Hobbes and many of his contemporaries, the two need not be the same. Skinner, ‘A genealogy of the modern state’; Richard Tuck, *The Sleeping Sovereign: The Invention of Modern Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

## Family and commonwealth

We find a Hobbesian answer to these problems in the role for the family. A prominent minority of political theorists, particularly feminists, point to a central role for the family in the *Leviathan*.<sup>29</sup> Gordon Schochet notes references to the family ‘scattered throughout Hobbes’s writings’.<sup>30</sup> Taken together, they offer insights into the puzzles identified above.

Hobbes analogises the family expressly to a political community. The family has the rough-and-ready institutional form of a commonwealth – a hierarchy construed as contractual. Absent an institutionalised commonwealth, the family stands in for one, however imperfectly: ‘By this it appears, that a great Family if it is not part of some Common-wealth, is of it self, as to the Rights of Sovereignty, a little Monarchy.’<sup>31</sup> Both have authority enforced by threat of violence. The commonwealth causes subjects to submit ‘as when a man maketh his children to submit themselves ... to his government ... being able to destroy them if they refuse’.<sup>32</sup> They are justified on much the same grounds, providing security against the privations of the state of nature. The family is also a precursor to the commonwealth itself, ‘functioning as a prelude to civil obedience’.<sup>33</sup> The family’s role in Hobbes’s argument is dual. It both instantiates a model for the state (the Leviathan ‘writ small’<sup>34</sup>) and prepares individuals to join the state as subjects: ‘we all begin under the natural authority of our parents’.<sup>35</sup> Thus, the family both socialises (educates) us to accept sovereign authority and provides us a model of what the eventual power of the state will be.

Hobbes appears to understand the family contractually.<sup>36</sup> Parents have, in principle, a choice, being able to care for their children or abandon them. ‘No one is born into the state of nature. All children have at least one parent, and if they survive at all it is due to the protection of that parent.’<sup>37</sup> Where parents provide care, their children owe obedience.<sup>38</sup> However, as Carole Pateman notes, this is implausible as an account of parenthood in practice.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>29</sup>Hirschmann and Wright (eds), *Feminist Interpretations of Thomas Hobbes*; Schochet, ‘Thomas Hobbes on the family and the state of nature’; Chapman, ‘Leviathan writ small’; Abbott, ‘The three families’; Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*; Wright, ‘Going against the grain’; Gordon Schochet, ‘Intending (political) obligation: Hobbes and the voluntary basis of society’, in Mary Dietz (ed.), *Thomas Hobbes and Political Theory* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1994), pp. 55–73; Carole Pateman, ‘“God hath ordained to man a helper”: Hobbes, patriarchy and conjugal right’, *British Journal of Political Science*, 19:4 (1989), pp. 445–63; Joanne Boucher, ‘Male power and contract theory: Hobbes and Locke in Carole Pateman’s *The Sexual Contract*’, *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 36:1 (2003), pp. 23–38; Nancy Hirschmann, ‘Gordon Schochet on Hobbes, gratitude, and women’, in Hirschmann and Wright (eds), *Feminist Interpretations of Thomas Hobbes*, pp. 125–48.

<sup>30</sup>Schochet, ‘Thomas Hobbes on the family and the state of nature’, p. 430.

<sup>31</sup>Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 314.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 262.

<sup>33</sup>Christov, *Before Anarchy*, p. 89.

<sup>34</sup>Chapman, ‘Leviathan writ small’, p. 76.

<sup>35</sup>Christov, *Before Anarchy*, p. 90.

<sup>36</sup>This ‘consent’ is tacit – infants cannot grant permission. Joanne Wright, *Origin Stories in Political Thought: Discourses on Gender, Power, and Citizenship* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2004), p. 18. However, Hobbes equates conquest and enforced submission to consent: ‘Submission to overwhelming power in return for protection’, Pateman writes, ‘Whether the power is that of the conqueror’s sword or of the mother’s power over her newly born infant, is always a valid sign of agreement for Hobbes.’ Pateman, ‘“God hath ordained to man”’, p. 454.

<sup>37</sup>Chapman, ‘Leviathan writ small’, p. 89.

<sup>38</sup>Schochet, ‘Intending (political) obligation’; Wright, *Origin Stories in Political Thought*; Pateman, ‘“God hath ordained to man”’, p. 453.

<sup>39</sup>Hobbes’s contractual conception of the family has sometimes been characterised as an ‘empty shell’. Abbott, ‘The three families’. In one often quoted section of *De Cive* (*On the Citizen*) Hobbes refers to ‘men as if they had just emerged from the earth like mushrooms, and grown up without any obligation to each other’. Thomas Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, ed. Richard Tuck and Michael Silverthorne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 102. But Hobbes insists the formulation of naturally individuated persons is ‘as if’, suggesting an analytical construct rather than a true characterisation of humanity in a state of nature. These mushroom men ‘reside in the mind alone and have never actually existed’. Christov, *Before Anarchy*, p. 57. For a reading of the Hobbesian state as an analytical construct, necessarily and intentionally distinct from empirical reality, see Christopher Scott McClure, ‘War, madness, and death: the paradox of honor in Hobbes’s *Leviathan*’,

[G]iven Hobbes' assumption that all individuals are completely self-interested, there seems no reason why any woman (or man) would contract to become a lord over an infant. Infants would endanger the person who had right over them by giving openings to their enemies in the war of all against all.<sup>40</sup>

Indeed, while Hobbes's account of the family is contractual in the abstract, he recognises a natural affinity, a familial emotive bond, when he writes of 'the natural inclination of the Sexes, one to another, and to their children'.<sup>41</sup> Like children, individuals are too weak to secure themselves in the state of nature. As family protects children, so the commonwealth secures individuals.<sup>42</sup> The state derives its authority by ensuring the survival of its citizens. The family does much the same, ensuring its collective survival through parental protection of children. Inversely, family and commonwealth alike ensure obedience.

Moreover, both state and family engender obedience first through education, not coercion. Hobbes claims 'signes of honour', obedience, and political stability are taught in the family.<sup>43</sup> State indoctrination, Chapman argues, finds its original form in familial life: 'Family education is political education; children will be amenable to sovereignty in the state because they were taught the principles on which it rests at home.'<sup>44</sup> Williams observes that 'Only if the people understand why the polity must be ordered as it must, and only if they continue to view the sovereign as a legitimate authority and trust in its judgment, can a political order be secure.'<sup>45</sup> Family life provides structure and discipline, thereby regulating people's interactions. On Nancy Hirschmann's reading, these 'habituates men and women to obedience and curb their natural hostility and distrust'.<sup>46</sup> The Hobbesian family socialises children into commonly held societal values and norms. In so doing, the family links a small population together, and one generation with the next.

The role of the family in education continues once the state is established. '[E]ducation becomes the key in transmitting political continuity over time. And parents play a vital role in providing children with such an education', Ingrid Makus writes.<sup>47</sup> In educating their children, parents are to teach

that originally the Father of every man was also his Sovereign Lord, with power over him of life and death; and that the Fathers of families, when by instituting a Common-wealth, they resigned that absolute Power, yet it was never intended they should lose the honour due unto them for their education.<sup>48</sup>

Here we find the Hobbesian family distilled: the role of sovereign is instantiated first within the family and is later taken over on a larger scale in the state. The family yields sovereignty to the state, but in so doing retains the 'honour' linked to its status as a pre-existing social order,

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*The Journal of Politics*, 76:1 (2014), pp. 114–25. As McClure and others imply, Hobbes's purpose in this formulation was linked to civic education or indoctrination as much as explanation. The *Leviathan* is a pedagogical as much as theoretical text, aimed to socialise the individual reader into the commonwealth. See Theresa M. Bejan, 'Teaching the *Leviathan*: Thomas Hobbes on education', *Oxford Review of Education*, 36:5 (2010), pp. 607–26.

<sup>40</sup>Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, p. 49.

<sup>41</sup>Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, p. 140.

<sup>42</sup>Schochet, 'Thomas Hobbes on the family and the state of nature'; Chapman, '*Leviathan* writ small'; Ingrid Makus, *Women, Politics, and Reproduction: The Liberal Legacy* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1996), p. 38; Wright, *Origin Stories in Political Thought*; Teresa Brennan and Carole Pateman, "'Mere auxiliaries to the commonwealth": Women and the origins of liberalism', *Political Studies*, XXVII:2 (1978), pp. 183–200.

<sup>43</sup>Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 528; Chapman, '*Leviathan* writ small', p. 75.

<sup>44</sup>Chapman, '*Leviathan* writ small', p. 89; see also Makus, *Women, Politics, and Reproduction*, p. 38.

<sup>45</sup>Williams, 'Hobbes and International Relations', p. 220.

<sup>46</sup>Hirschmann, 'Gordon Schochet on Hobbes', p. 138.

<sup>47</sup>Makus, *Women, Politics, and Reproduction*, p. 38.

<sup>48</sup>Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 528. On the pedagogical role of the state, see fn. 43 above.

and site of ongoing education. The family both creates the obedient subjects states need and consolidates the state as political community.<sup>49</sup>

The family is, thus, both an analogy for the state – an illustration of how it can be made operable, out of the state of nature – and a precursor to it. For Hobbes, family life stands midway, conceptually and developmentally, between the individualistic state of nature and the made unity of the commonwealth. A family alone in the state of nature, absent a state to protect it, is not secure: ‘But yet a Family is not properly a Common-wealth; unlesse it be of that power by its own number, or by other opportunities, as not to be subdued without the hazard of war.’<sup>50</sup> Aloysius Martinich summarises:

To the extent that the family is not large enough to preserve itself against invaders, it is in the state of nature. Two, three, four, and even more people banded together do not constitute a civil state, because their power in the state of nature is easily equaled by a similar number of people who are coordinating their behavior to attack the family. A civil state requires a critical mass of power that will ensure stability against external enemies over an extended period of time[.]<sup>51</sup>

Nonetheless, the internal social hierarchy that will eventually typify the commonwealth is already present in it. As Hobbes indicates in *de Cive*, in the family, ‘there is a kind of *little kingdom*. For to be a *King* is simply to have *Dominion* over many *persons*, and thus a *kingdom* is a *large family*, and a *family* is a *little kingdom*.’<sup>52</sup>

While Hobbes does not say as much, the question of why subjects risk their lives to defend the commonwealth may also be resolved in part with reference to family life. While individual self-preservation may conflict with the obligation to defend the commonwealth, the parental impulse to protect one’s children seems more durable. Hobbes finds parents sacrificing themselves for their children. The covenant to risk oneself for one’s children is endemic to parenthood, especially motherhood: ‘pregnancy makes women vulnerable to attack; having infants makes women even more vulnerable to attack; women want to care for their children even though it makes them vulnerable’.<sup>53</sup> Family life in the state of nature makes defence cooperation necessary. Moreover, it is buttressed by ‘the natural inclination’ of its members to one another.<sup>54</sup> Hobbesian parents and children, Hirschmann shows, are connected by more than transaction and contract: a natural ‘confederacy’ between mothers and their children, without which familial relations would rapidly deteriorate.<sup>55</sup> While this bond is largely implicit in the *Leviathan*, Hirschmann argues the state of nature is simply implausible without it.

An emphasis on the family as a site of political order also helps explain how the fiction of the state is made real for its subjects. The state provides an analogy by which subjects can understand the hierarchical authority structure of the commonwealth. If the family is the state ‘writ small’, then in family one lives an analogy of what the fictional commonwealth might become.<sup>56</sup> It can be imagined as real because the family is real already. The family acts as a site of political

<sup>49</sup>In this way, family helps lay groundwork for what Anderson would later term an ‘imagined community’: a collective far too large for all its members to be immediately familiar with one another. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983). An eventual imagined community is possible, Hobbes implies, because a much smaller but very real one has already been present to the subject, from birth.

<sup>50</sup>Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 314.

<sup>51</sup>A. P. Martinich, *A Hobbes Dictionary* (Cambridge, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 1995), pp. 117–18.

<sup>52</sup>Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, p. 102, emphasis in original.

<sup>53</sup>Hirschmann, ‘Gordon Schochet on Hobbes’, p. 134.

<sup>54</sup>Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, p. 140.

<sup>55</sup>All that said, Hirschmann (‘Gordon Schochet on Hobbes’, p. 137) concludes children are a source of power for mothers: ‘a child would not need to be very old to serve as useful confederates, after all; a two-year-old could distract an adult, a five-year-old could steal unobtrusively’. This provides a strategic advantage over those without such ‘confederates’.

<sup>56</sup>Chapman, ‘*Leviathan writ small*’, p. 76.

indoctrination into the idea of shared, institutionalised life. The fictional person of the state – the unified juridical persona that becomes subject to sovereign rule – can be inculcated into individuals because they have been socialised already by family bonds.

## Historicising Hobbes

How should we locate this reading in the history of political thought? This section and the following briefly locate Hobbes in historical context, with the aim of determining what sorts of ideas, in what ways, can be reasonably drawn on for contemporary theory building. At several centuries removed, Hobbes and his fellow early moderns are in many ways foreign to contemporary sociopolitical life. That being said, this cultural or political distance is less acute than one might expect: Hobbes still has lessons for us today.<sup>57</sup>

The word ‘family’ is exemplary here. It has a relatively flexible historical meaning, and almost certainly signified something different for Hobbes than it does for early twenty-first-century readers. He cannot have meant by the word the post-industrial, nuclear family of the contemporary global north. He appears to intend a bounded, immediate family unit – one defined by two parents (mother and father) and their (likely biological) children. In current terms, this is extraordinarily exclusive, taking in none of the changes to family life in the developed West in the postwar period alone.<sup>58</sup> Inversely, the bounded family unit Hobbes implies differs from larger family or clan networks found in other cultures and sociopolitical settings.<sup>59</sup> His implied sense of the family is exclusive in two senses: it omits both family units not fitting this description (father, mother, children) and larger family networks.<sup>60</sup> That being said, we argue below his account has implications for assessing the ‘nestedness’ of larger familial networks.

More broadly, there are considerable limits to a laudatory feminist reading of Hobbes. As Hirschmann and others have argued, while Hobbes may have been blind in some respects to sex differences – for example, he seems unconcerned in principle with the gender of the sovereign – he is also blind to sexism.<sup>61</sup> He refers to fathers as ‘absolute Sovereigns in their own Families’.<sup>62</sup> Hobbes rarely, if ever, makes explicit the distinctive ways the privations of war and the state of nature are visited on women and children. In practice, modern political life is shot through with

<sup>57</sup>Tellingly, Mansfield, Skinner, multiple feminist interpreters, and others we cite above, come from varying interpretive traditions in the history of political thought, but nonetheless converge on the family as an issue. These aspects of Hobbes’s text appear to resonate across contextualist and non-contextualist readings alike. For a discussion of the relative persistence of some theoretical categories on a contextualist account, with an eye to reading Hobbes and his peers, see Alison McQueen, *Political Realism in Apocalyptic Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 17–20.

<sup>58</sup>This is without considering longer-term shifts in, for example, motivations for marriage. See a synoptic historical account in Stephanie Coontz, *Marriage, a History: How Love Conquered Marriage* (New York, NY: Viking, 2005). Perhaps more to the point, family life has long been varied – we do not intend to posit the prior existence of a ‘traditional family’ model, from which practice has only recently diverged. See, for example, Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1993).

<sup>59</sup>All that said, variation across family structures appears not to be unlimited. Anthropologists, while disinclined to emphasise persistent, cross-contextual structures, nonetheless note the potential persistence of kinship as such over time. Indeed, kinship has experienced a revival as a core analytical category in anthropology. Janet Carsten (ed.), *Cultures of Relatedness: New Approaches to the Study of Kinship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Linda Stone (ed.), *New Directions in Anthropological Kinship* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001); Marshall Sahlins, ‘What kinship is (Part One)’, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 17:1 (2011), pp. 2–19. Hobbes does not specify the family’s structure. While he likely had in mind a delimited family unit, not an extended kinship network, we should not retroactively project an industrial-era nuclear family into his state of nature.

<sup>60</sup>Similarly, we use the word ‘gender’ in its contemporary sense of something essentially social or performative. See, for example, Candace West and Don H. Zimmermann, ‘Doing gender’, *Gender & Society*, 1:2 (1987), pp. 125–51. The word appears nowhere in Hobbes – he uses the word ‘sex’ only, by which he appears broadly to mean biological sex, assigned at birth. We thus avoid talk of gender above, to avoid anachronism, but employ it below, in the context of (unavoidably anachronistic) theory building.

<sup>61</sup>Hirschmann, ‘Gordon Schochet on Hobbes’, p. 126; Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, pp. 308–10.

<sup>62</sup>Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 368.

the gendered analogies Hobbes implies between family and country. Soldiers, so often termed ‘brothers in arms’, regularly fight, putatively, to protect women and children.<sup>63</sup> The linkage extends beyond wartime, to the metaphor of subjects as the sovereign’s children – a conception captured in talk of a ‘motherland’ or ‘fatherland’. Hobbes’s position on all this is uncertain. Pateman pointedly reads Hobbes as patriarchal, but ambiguously so. On the one hand, the father usually has an absolute right of rule within the family.<sup>64</sup> On the other, we are told this emerges from contract, not nature, and that in nature women sometimes enjoy rightful power over their children.<sup>65</sup> He plainly has a patriarchal family order in mind but was ambivalent as to its origins.

These are important reasons not to unproblematically conflate the family Hobbes describes with current family dynamics, in the West or elsewhere. Nonetheless what matters for our purposes is the analogy between the Hobbesian family and the Hobbesian state, and the analytical value to be derived from it for contemporary purposes.<sup>66</sup> We turn to these applications below. First, however, we address Hobbes’s theoretical context – the use of the family as political metaphor among early modern political theorists more broadly.

### The family as social hierarchy in early modern political thought

This section surveys the family-state analogy elsewhere in early modern political thought. Doing so helps us answer a question: why is the central status of family in the *Leviathan* so often and easily overlooked? Hobbes, it appears, often assumes the centrality of family, rather than explicitly stating it. He likely does so owing to the early modern context in which he wrote – one in which conceptual linkages between family and state were common. Many leading theorists of the period, across multiple schools of thought, analogised the family to the state. For example, the royalist commentator Adrian Saravia noted an ‘assimilation of *familial* to *political* life’.<sup>67</sup> Hobbes’s interlocutors Robert Filmer and John Locke did so as well, albeit to different ends.<sup>68</sup> For Richard Cumberland, ‘The first appearance of Civil Government is to be seen in a Family.’<sup>69</sup> Thomas More presented his *Utopia* on similar terms: ‘the whole island is like a single family’.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>63</sup>This is the ‘myth of protection’: a ‘familiar rescue romance’ whereby men, and by extension states, take on the role protector of defenceless women and children on the home front. Laura Sjoberg, ‘Gendered realities and the immunity principle: Why gender analysis needs feminism’, *International Studies Quarterly*, 50:4 (2006), pp. 889–910; J. Ann Tickner and Laura Sjoberg, ‘Feminism’, in Timothy Dunne, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith (eds), *International Relations Theory: Discipline and Diversity* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 196–212; Jan Jindy Pettman, ‘Feminist International Relations after 9/11’, *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, X:2 (2004), pp. 85–96. It becomes a powerful tool in legitimating states’ use of force, and in enlisting its citizens to it.

<sup>64</sup>Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, pp. 44–50. Importantly, Pateman’s larger project is a critique of Hobbesian contract as a form of domination between the sexes.

<sup>65</sup>For Hobbes, in the state of nature, absent a marriage contract, dominion over a child falls to their mother, not father, for ‘it cannot be known who is the Father, unless it be declared by the Mother: and therefore the right of Dominion over the Child dependeth on her will, and is consequently hers’. Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 310. Inversely, should she abandon the child, and another care for it, dominion falls to that caretaker, to whom the child owes survival.

<sup>66</sup>The broader debate surrounding contextualism in international and political thought exceeds the scope of this article. For a defence of contextualism in the history of international thought, see Duncan Bell, ‘Language, legitimacy, and the project of critique’, *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 27:3 (2002), pp. 327–50; Richard Devetak, ‘“The battler is all there is”: Philosophy and history in International Relations theory’, *International Relations*, 31:3 (2017), pp. 261–81. As Epstein notes, the appropriation and repurposing of Hobbes and his ideas is, for better or worse, endemic to the discipline. Epstein, ‘Theorizing agency in Hobbes’s wake’, p. 289.

<sup>67</sup>Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and Government, 1572–1651* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 261.

<sup>68</sup>Robert Filmer, *Patriarcha and Other Writings*, ed. Jóhann P. Sommerville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 1–11; John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Peter Laslett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 303–18. For Locke on family politics, see Pfeffer, who finds Locke (like Hobbes) saw the family as a site of political education. Jacqueline L. Pfeffer, ‘The family in John Locke’s political thought’, *Polity*, 33:4 (2001), pp. 593–618.

<sup>69</sup>Richard Cumberland, *A Treatise of the Law of Nature*, trans. John Maxwell (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 2005), p. 245.

<sup>70</sup>Thomas More, *Utopia*, eds George M. Logan and Robert M. Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 59.

More obliquely, Francis Bacon, in his unfinished utopian novel *The New Atlantis*, described at length a 'Feast of the Family', which seems broadly political in its symbolism and implications.<sup>71</sup> The practice seems to have been widespread, across a range of theoretical and ideological tendencies.<sup>72</sup> Framing the family as a precursor political community was neither peculiar to Hobbes nor marginal to the period – indeed, it appears to have been the norm.<sup>73</sup>

This is perhaps clearest in the work of the French political theorist Jean Bodin, an influence on Hobbes and other early modern theorists.<sup>74</sup> Bodin explicitly understands families as natural, hierarchical structures.<sup>75</sup> His view of family politics is more explicit and systematic than Hobbes's. For Bodin, in his *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, the family is not just a microcosm, but also a constituent unit of the commonwealth.<sup>76</sup> His commonwealth consists not of individuals, but of families: 'A commonwealth may be defined as the rightly ordered government of a number of families, and of those things which are their common concern, by a sovereign power.'<sup>77</sup> That 'rightly ordered government' both oversees families and is patterned after them:

[O]ur definition of the commonwealth refers to the family because it is not only the true source and origin of the commonwealth, but also its principle constituent. ... Thus the well-ordered family is a true image of the commonwealth, and domestic comparable with sovereign authority. It follows that the household is the model of right order in the commonwealth. And

<sup>71</sup>Francis Bacon, *The Major Works*, ed. Brian Vickers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 472–5. Hobbes was Bacon's translator and note taker, early in his career, and knew Bacon's work well. Robin Bunce, 'Thomas Hobbes' relationship with Francis Bacon – an introduction', *Hobbes Studies*, 16:1 (2003), pp. 41–83.

<sup>72</sup>It also spread to monarchs themselves. James I/VI, in his political works, wrote that, 'By the Law of Nature the King becomes a naturall Father to all his Lieges at his Coronation', with a variety of rights and obligations following. Subjects' obedience then 'ought to be to him, as to Gods Lieutenant in earth ... louing him as their father'. James I, *The Political Works of James I* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1918), pp. 55, 61. The meaning differs in some respects, but the analogy remains. Rousseau is exceptional in stressing the limits of the analogy, in his third discourse. He nonetheless notes the analogy was common. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Basic Political Writings*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1987), pp. 111–12.

<sup>73</sup>Nor are such analogies uniquely early modern. Aristotle considers precisely this analogy at the beginning of his *Politics*, if only to immediately reject it. Aristotle, *The Politics and The Constitution of Athens*, ed. Stephen Everson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 11. Perhaps tellingly, family-polity analogies appear not to be central in works by women during the period. Talk of family is relatively rare in the political writings of (for example) Moderata Fonte, Lucrezia Marinella, and Marie le Jars de Gournay. See Moderata Fonte, *The Worth of Women: Wherein Is Clearly Revealed Their Nobility and Their Superiority to Men*, trans. Virginia Cox (Chicago, IL: University Of Chicago Press, 1997); Lucrezia Marinella, *The Nobility and Excellence of Women and the Defects and Vices of Men*, trans. Anne Dunhill (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000); Marie le Jars de Gournay, *Apology for the Woman Writing and Other Works*, trans. Richard Hillman and Colette Quesnel (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2002). Possibly, they understood the family as a site of potential or actual oppression and were disinclined to endorse it as a model for political order. See Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, discussion below.

<sup>74</sup>Bodin, long associated with French absolutism (Julian Franklin, *Jean Bodin and the Rise of Absolutist Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973)), has recently been re-evaluated as an early constitutionalist. See for example Daniel Lee, "'Office is a thing borrowed": Jean Bodin on the right of offices and seigneurial government', *Political Theory*, 41:3 (2013), pp. 409–40; Tuck, *The Sleeping Sovereign*, pp. 1–63. He receives little attention in IR – exceptionally, see Christian Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 95–9; Luke Glanville, *Sovereignty and the Responsibility to Protect: A New History* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2013), pp. 34–7.

<sup>75</sup>Hobbes read Bodin (Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, p. 458), and cited him 'respectfully'. Quentin Skinner, *Hobbes and Republican Liberty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 192. Like Hobbes, Bodin wrote his major work in the shadow of civil conflict: Hobbes in the aftermath of the English civil war, Bodin in response to the French Heguenot revolts of the previous century.

<sup>76</sup>We rely on Tooley's partial translation. Jean Bodin, *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, trans. M. J. Tooley (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955). The more recent Franklin translation comprises only a few chapters of the original voluminous work, and excises discussion of the family. Jean Bodin, *On Sovereignty*, trans. Julian H. Franklin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

<sup>77</sup>Bodin, *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, p. 1.

just as the whole body enjoys health when every particular member performs its proper function, so all will be well with the commonwealth when families are properly regulated.<sup>78</sup>

In both, right relations between constituent units are necessary for the good functioning of the whole. The account occurs at the outset of Bodin's treatise, immediately following his definition of the commonwealth, and before his detailed exposition of politics, suggesting he understood the analogy as foundational to his account of political life as such.<sup>79</sup>

What then makes the state different from the family and other social hierarchies? Bodin's state 'was, unlike all these other bodies, fully independent'.<sup>80</sup> The key word here is sovereignty. Pre-eminence is central to Bodin's conception of the state, which he defined in terms of 'absolute and perpetual power vested in a commonwealth'.<sup>81</sup> Sovereignty, for Bodin, defined as rule without higher earthly authority, makes the state unique.<sup>82</sup> Family prefigures the state, but the family unit, or even extended family network, can always in principle be subject to external authority. Only sovereigns, by definition, cannot.<sup>83</sup>

Hobbes and Bodin differed in important respects. Bodin describes neither a state of nature nor an explicit social contract. He theorises not state formation, so much as rightly ordered government in its completed condition. But on family life, they had much in common – as indeed did other theorists of the period. For all of these theorists, to varying degrees, the family served as both an analogy and a precursor to the authority of the state.<sup>84</sup>

### Hobbesian families and international hierarchies

These accounts in Hobbes and other early modern theorists are worth documenting in their own right. However, they also provide fertile ground for theory building about hierarchies in historical and contemporary world politics. Here, we emphasise three key features of social hierarchy, instantiated in both the family and international relations: its persistent or enduring quality, across historical contexts; its persistently nested or layered quality, in which authority diffuses through multiple hierarchies rather than being vested exclusively in a single figure; and its capacity to perpetuate violence against subordinates. Below, we take these briefly in turn.

First, and most straightforwardly, domestic – familial – social structures point to hierarchies that, while varied across contexts, also tend to be deeply enduring or recurrent. Kinship structures, anthropologists have long recognised, vary greatly across cultural and historical contexts. Kinship as such nonetheless recurs historically – we cannot readily point to societies, past or present, that invoke *no* familial bonds of obligation, responsibility, and obedience.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., pp. 6–7.

<sup>79</sup>For Bodin, the right form of that political order was a not society of free or equal people governed by a benevolent sovereign, but, like the family, hierarchically stratified (Bodin, *ibid.*, pp. 9–10). Hierarchies, Bodin implies, are nested: individuals within families ('households'), and families within states. Those political orders contain relationships of command and obedience. We find a similar nestedness implicit in Hobbes.

<sup>80</sup>Daniel Lee, *Popular Sovereignty in Early Modern Constitutional Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 190.

<sup>81</sup>Bodin, *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, p. 25.

<sup>82</sup>See discussion in Lee (*Popular Sovereignty*, p. 11). The word referred to the commonwealth's unitary legal personality, as distinct from its coercive capacity. In this respect, Bodin's conception of the sovereign state anticipated the fictional account of the state in Hobbes (Skinner, 'A genealogy of the modern state'). For Bodin, as for Hobbes, sovereign power was vested in the institution of the state, not the specific person of a given prince – Bodin rejected personalistic rule (Lee, "Office is a thing borrowed", pp. 412–15).

<sup>83</sup>In contrast to Hobbes, it is difficult to imagine a feminist reading of Bodin, who adamantly endorses the authority of husbands over wives and children (Bodin, *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, pp. 10–13). We emphasise him here chiefly as indicative of the family or household politics that preceded the commonwealth for many early modern theorists – we know of no research emphasising his account of the family or offering feminist critiques.

<sup>84</sup>Our thanks to Chris LaRoche for advice on constructing this review.

<sup>85</sup>See fn. 59.

The persistence of social hierarchies within the scope and at the scale of the family suggests both a metaphor and a model for international hierarchy. Hierarchies, Hobbes strongly implies, can persist at length within the state of nature, in the form of family. They can do so without the state of nature itself losing its distinctive structural properties: the absence of a single, overarching site of authority. By analogy, international systems may be similarly structured, with persistent areas of hierarchy. The presence of enduring social hierarchies in the fabric of international order – in historical Europe, East Asia, or elsewhere – should neither surprise us nor strike us as inconsistent with core theoretical precepts of the discipline.<sup>86</sup>

However, while authority in the family endures, it is generally neither absolute nor permanent. Standard realist readings of Hobbes derive a proto-realism from the independence of the state, and an analogy of that state to individuals in a state of nature – thereby rendering sovereignty an absolute and static feature. Inserting the family into this formula changes matters significantly, suggesting the possibility of commonwealth-like units that are nonetheless potentially amenable to rule from without. What matters for Hobbes is the relationship between the sovereign and the constituent subjects of the commonwealth. The family gives us a way to think of political societies that are authoritative, but less durable and independent than the state. Implicitly, the internal authority relationship is orthogonal to possible outside authorities, not exclusive of it. Hobbes's state has more or less absolute authority internally, but he is comparatively silent on its independence from other political orders. States' political institutions may have authority over their subjects, Hobbes seems to imply, without absolute sovereign independence. Indeed, the assumption that Hobbes's commonwealth possesses *external* sovereignty – the property of absolute political independence from other international actors – is likely an imposition by later IR theorists, by way of the domestic analogy.<sup>87</sup> His analytical focus was on covenant within the state, not on its absence without.

Like recent conceptions of international hierarchy, sites of authority within the family are limited, in several respects. Superordinated individuals are not, or need not be, uppermost points of authority or rule. In expansive, preindustrial kinship networks, authority within a parent-and-child family unit may be subordinate to more distant but prominent relations. Leading family members are, as a consequence, not dictatorially absolute: they may be obligated to other kin or to some larger political order, once established.<sup>88</sup> Family hierarchies are, moreover, chronologically delimited. Parents rule over children only so long as they *are* children, their authority diminishing with time. These constraints on rule may play out not just within the nuclear family units of the modern West, but also across the variety of more enduring large clans or kinship networks found elsewhere. Kinship structures may be enduring, but they are rarely immutable, being instead prone to merging, fissioning, and otherwise transforming as circumstances demand. The 'little kingdom' of the family lacks the institutional regularity of the commonwealth

<sup>86</sup>John M. Hobson and J. C. Sharman, 'The enduring place of hierarchy in world politics: Tracing the social logics of hierarchy and political change', *European Journal of International Relations*, 11:1 (2005), pp. 63–98; Ji-Young Lee, *China's Hegemony: Four Hundred Years of East Asian Domination* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2016). Lake begins his analysis of hierarchy by briefly contrasting his position with that of Hobbes. David A. Lake, *Hierarchy in International Relations* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), pp. 1–2. Our account, while largely consistent with Lake's, suggests the contrast with Hobbes is easily exaggerated.

<sup>87</sup>Hobbes's classic definition of the commonwealth insists on a unified juridical '*Person, of whose Acts a great Multitude, by mutuall Covenants one with another, have made themselves every one the Author, to the end he may use the strength and means of them all, as he shall think expedient, for their Peace and Common Defence*' (Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, pp. 260–2, emphasis in original). This definition is strikingly silent on how the commonwealth might relate to outside sources of power. See also a distinct but related argument in Murray Forsyth, 'Hobbes and the external relations of states', *British Journal of International Studies*, 5:3 (1979), pp. 196–209.

<sup>88</sup>Anthropologists have long insisted that kinship relations are constructed, that is, they are in no way necessarily hereditary. For us, it is enough that the *idea* of kinship or familial bond is persistent. Hobbes himself appears to be silent on matters of heredity. What matter for him and his feminist readers are the relations of protection and obedience that emerge from parent-child relationships.

properly formed.<sup>89</sup> It is a recurring or persistent social order, but not an indelible one. The Hobbesian commonwealth is at least aspirationally immortal.<sup>90</sup> The Hobbesian family is a more protean and changeable thing. International hierarchies, too, may combine these qualities: persistent but changing, recurring but flexible. Empires, for example, have historically been sites of constant contention over rights and rule.<sup>91</sup> Hegemons must work to maintain the stability they putatively impose or provide.

A second concern is that sociopolitical hierarchies can be *nested*. If social hierarchies are not absolute, illustrated by the example of the family within the state, smaller hierarchies can persist inside larger ones. Here, larger kinship networks are exemplary, wherein smaller family units find themselves nested within the legitimate authority of larger clans, concatenations, or networks. Once the theoretical anachronism of the closed hierarchical unit is set aside, we argue, hierarchies become less inconsistent with Hobbes's general framework. The Hobbesian account of the family both within and without the state suggests affinities with how social hierarchies interoperate, at levels including the international.<sup>92</sup>

The Hobbesian family offers scholars an alternate or additional 'domestic analogy'.<sup>93</sup> A revision and expansion of Hobbes's elusive references to world politics point to ways we can think not just about anarchy and self-help, but also hierarchy, obligation, authority, and rule. The super- and subordinate relations within the Hobbesian family may help us in so doing. Tacitly echoing the Hobbesian-type family compact, David A. Lake proposes a 'relational conception of authority' in international hierarchies, in which certain states enjoy the right to rule and others see fit to follow.<sup>94</sup> Much like the Hobbesian family, order is provided by contract. Indeed, the nested aggregation of social orders in early modern conceptions of family and political life point more generally to recent research on international hierarchies in which the domestic hierarchy of the state is located within a larger, super-ordinated hierarchical structure:<sup>95</sup> a hegemonic order, an empire, a 'tributary system', or some other hierarchical form besides.<sup>96</sup> Here though a caveat is in order. Many other accounts of hierarchy explicitly reject an assumption of consensual contract – we turn to these below.<sup>97</sup>

Nestedness makes hierarchies potential sites of political-institutional adaptivity and variability. It also makes them potential sites of layered authority, wherein structures of gender, race,

<sup>89</sup>Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, p. 102.

<sup>90</sup>Skinner, 'A genealogy of the modern state', p. 346.

<sup>91</sup>See, for example, Burton on persistent contestation within the British Empire. Elizabeth Burton, *The Trouble with Empire: Challenges to Modern British Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

<sup>92</sup>The literature on international hierarchies is not large – see review in Janice Bially Mattern and Ayşe Zarakol, 'Hierarchies in world politics', *International Organization*, 70:3 (2016), pp. 623–54.

<sup>93</sup>Our argument thus resonates with, but differs from, Owens's account of *oikonimia*, or household governance, in the nineteenth-century emergence of modern social theory. For Owens, the broad analytical category of the social papers over the extent to which modern political order remains shot through with household (ergo, domestic) modes of governance. For Owens, the consequence is a need to go back and more seriously historicise analytical categories. Because we are concerned chiefly with explanatory theory building, we emphasise theory building rather than historiographical implications. Patricia Owens, *Economy of Force: Counterinsurgency and the Historical Rise of the Social* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

<sup>94</sup>Lake, *Hierarchy in International Relations*.

<sup>95</sup>Hobson and Sharman, 'The enduring place of hierarchy in world politics'; Bially Mattern and Zarakol, 'Hierarchies in world politics'; Ayşe Zarakol (ed.), *Hierarchies in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

<sup>96</sup>See, respectively, G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001); Daniel H. Nexon and Thomas Wright, 'What's at stake in the American empire debate', *American Political Science Review*, 101:2 (2007), pp. 253–71; David C. Kang, *East Asia Before the West: Five Centuries of Trade and Tribute* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2010); Feng Zhang, 'Rethinking the "tribute system": Broadening the conceptual horizon of historical East Asian politics', *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 2:4 (2009), pp. 545–74; Yuen Foong Khong, 'The American tributary system', *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 6:1 (2013), pp. 1–47.

<sup>97</sup>See review in Bially Mattern and Zarakol, 'Hierarchies in world politics', pp. 629–31.

and other factors may interoperate to generate hierarchies at micro and macro levels alike. Feminist scholarship has long pointed to the interoperation of gender and international hierarchy.<sup>98</sup> The Hobbesian family reminds us, as feminists have long known, that nested hierarchies go ‘all the way down’: hierarchical structures, and thus actual or potential structures of oppression, occur across scales, from the family to the international system. This view is not new to scholars working in two overlapping areas in particular: gender and empire. Here, postcolonial scholars in IR have focused on the intersections of race, gender, and coloniality.<sup>99</sup> Inversely, hierarchy as a structure may serve to shape or generate the actors contained, nested, within it.<sup>100</sup>

Talk of empire and expansion points to a third class of issues, perhaps most important for feminist readings of Hobbes: international hierarchy, like family life, is a persistent site of potential or actual violence. Where women are equal to men in the Hobbesian state of nature, where no one is safe, they become subordinated to men in the family. Hobbes is said to be alone among social contract theorists in treating women and men equally in the state of nature; there is no ‘natural dominion’ of one over the other.<sup>101</sup> In the state of nature, for Hobbes, even the weakest individuals can overcome the strongest.<sup>102</sup> Nevertheless, he goes on to give marriage and society patriarchal form.<sup>103</sup> This has led some feminist scholars to conclude that the family comes about as a result of conquest rather than contract, likely after women give birth, when they are ‘at their weakest’.<sup>104</sup> For Pateman, there is something inherently illegitimate about the unequal Hobbesian family, which implies a lack of consent: an ‘environment in which women are not truly free’.<sup>105</sup> Here, violence not yet actual is always potential or implicit.

<sup>98</sup>Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), p. 198; V. Spike Peterson, ‘A “gendered global hierarchy”’, in Greg Fry and Jacinda O’Hagan (eds), *Contending Images of World Politics* (London: MacMillan, 2000); Laura Sjoberg, ‘Revealing international hierarchy through gender lenses’, in Zarakol (ed.), *Hierarchies in World Politics*. Inversely, on the historical exclusion and erasure of women from the history of international theory, see Patricia Owens, ‘Women and the history of international thought’, *International Studies Quarterly*, 62:3 (2018), pp. 1–18.

<sup>99</sup>See, for example, Geeta Chowdhry and Sheila Nair (eds), *Power, Postcolonialism and International Relations: Reading Race, Gender and Class* (London: Routledge, 2004); Anna M. Agathangelou and L. H. M. Ling, ‘Power, borders, security, wealth: Lessons of violence and desire from September 11’, *International Studies Quarterly*, 48:3 (2004), pp. 517–38. Strikingly, Hobbes may, for his own part, have been suspicious of empire. See David Polansky, ‘Drawing out the leviathan: Kenneth Waltz, Hobbes, and the neorealist theory of the state’, *International Studies Review*, 18:2 (2016), pp. 275, 278, for whom ‘the ideal Hobbesian state is largely nonimperial’ and ‘more watchful than acquisitive’. On this reading, Hobbes inveighs normatively against imperial expansion: ‘the insatiable appetite, or bulimia, of enlarging dominion’ (Hobbes quoted in Polansky, ‘Drawing out the leviathan’, p. 275) – although not against nested authority structures as such.

<sup>100</sup>See Weber on the generative or productive effects of sovereignty discourse. Cynthia Weber, *Simulating Sovereignty: Intervention, the State and Symbolic Exchange* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

<sup>101</sup>Wright, *Origin Stories in Political Thought*, p. 88. See also Hirschmann, ‘Gordon Schochet on Hobbes’, p. 128; Pateman, ‘“God hath ordained to man”’, p. 457.

<sup>102</sup>Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, pp. 188–90.

<sup>103</sup>Hirschmann, ‘Gordon Schochet on Hobbes’, p. 133; Schochet, ‘Intending (political) obligation’; Pateman, ‘“God hath ordained to man”’. Indeed, Hobbes elides the role of women completely in defining the family as ‘a man and his children; or of a man and his servants; or of a man, and his children, and his servants together’ (*The Leviathan*, p. 257). Elsewhere, where women are mentioned, they are treated as property and completely subsumed under the male head of household (Hirschman, ‘Gordon Schochet on Hobbes’, pp. 131, 135; Pateman, ‘“God hath ordained to man”’, p. 447).

<sup>104</sup>Hirschmann, ‘Gordon Schochet on Hobbes’, p. 134; Schochet, ‘Intending (political) obligation’; Pateman, ‘“God hath ordained to man”’, p. 457). Haraway is, perhaps, the most prominent critic of these and other assumptions. In her work on primatology she argues that a focus on competition in the state of nature – to the exclusion of communication, cooperation, and others – lends itself to masculine metaphors about the state of nature. Donna Haraway, *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science* (London: Routledge, 1989).

<sup>105</sup>Quoted in Hirschmann, ‘Gordon Schochet on Hobbes’, p. 123. Nevertheless, if the patriarchal family results in security for all its members it would be legitimate for Hobbes even were it coerced. Hobbes treats covenants given under duress as consensual if they result in security ‘much as the vanquished will agree to be a servant to avoid death’ (Hirschmann, ‘Gordon Schochet on Hobbes’, p. 133).

Pateman has a point: in practice, the family is often as dangerous as the Hobbesian state of nature for women and children. The most common form of violence experienced by women is physical violence inflicted by an intimate partner. Worldwide, up to 70 per cent of women experience violence at some time in their lives and women aged 15–44 face a greater risk from domestic violence and rape than from cancer, motor accidents, war, or malaria.<sup>106</sup> Although according to Hobbes every individual's security is threatened in the state of nature, men are comparatively safer at home than women and children. Attendantly, the experience of preparing soldiers for military life and for combat in war is largely one of masculinisation.<sup>107</sup> War visits violence on women distinctively and disproportionately.<sup>108</sup> By erasing the lived experiences of many women and children, the Hobbesian account of the family ignores the potentially life-threatening insecurity that reigns in many households. By refocusing on it, we see the family as a site of potential hierarchical oppression, and this as a vessel for the legitimisation of violence. Such violence is inevitably a central feature of many international hierarchies as well – formally imperial, hegemonic, or otherwise. The Hobbesian family thus becomes a valuable metaphor in analysing how hierarchical contracts become permissive spaces for violent domination. The metaphor is especially apt insofar as that violence is visited differently, distinctively, and extensively on the bodies of women. This was, to paraphrase Laura Sjoberg, 'what Hobbes couldn't see': a structure of hierarchy that replicated the violent potential of the state of nature, institutionalising danger, rather than precluding it.<sup>109</sup> International hierarchies writ large may commonly do much the same.<sup>110</sup>

It also points to the deeply normative character of Hobbes's account of the state. Hobbes did not merely describe a sovereign and exclusive political authority; he emphatically endorsed it. The state he described was aimed to bind together subjects in order to 'keep them in awe, and tie them by feare of punishment to the performance of their Covenants'.<sup>111</sup> In so doing it rendered men and women putatively equal and secure. The state of nature was a wrong, however

<sup>106</sup>United Nations, *UNiTE to End Violence Against Women: Violence Against Women*, United Nations Department of Public Information (2011), available at: [http://www.un.org/en/women/endviolence/pdf/pressmaterials/unite\\_the\\_situation\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/women/endviolence/pdf/pressmaterials/unite_the_situation_en.pdf) accessed 26 April 2018.

<sup>107</sup>See, for example, Altınay on gender and militarism in Turkey, discussion in Cockburn. Ayşe Gul Altınay, *The Myth of the Military-Nation: Militarism, Gender, and Education in Turkey* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Cynthia Cockburn, 'War and security, women and gender: an overview of the issues', *Gender & Development*, 21:3 (2013), pp. 433–52 (pp. 436–8). Zarkov shows the discursive productions of male and female bodies in the Croatian and Serbian press laid groundwork for the ethnicisation of politics, and with it the conditions for war. Dubravka Zarkov, *The Body of War: Media, Ethnicity and Gender in the Break-up of Yugoslavia* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007).

<sup>108</sup>Cockburn, 'War and security'. Women's distinctive experience of wartime violence occurs distinctively as nested or overlapping hierarchies break down, as in the experience of systematic wartime sexual violence during the Yugoslav breakup. Cathie Carmichael, *Concise History of Bosnia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 144–5. On theoretical problems surrounding wartime sexual violence, see Miranda Alison, 'Wartime sexual violence: Women's human rights and questions of masculinity', *Review of International Studies*, 33:1 (2007), pp. 75–90; on civil wars specifically, see Dara Kay Cohen, *Rape During Civil War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016); for quantification, see Dara Kay Cohen and Ragnhild Nordås, 'Sexual violence in armed conflict: Introducing the SVAC dataset, 1989–2009', *Journal of Peace Research*, 51:3 (2014), pp. 418–28. Some feminist IR security scholarship has focused on reframing accounts of armed conflict away from IR's usual analytical frames, and towards war as experienced by those who live through it. Christine Sylvester, 'War experiences/war practices/war theory', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 40:3 (2012), pp. 483–503. See also discussion of militarism and masculinity in Carol Cohn and Cynthia Enloe, 'A conversation with Cynthia Enloe: Feminists look at masculinity and the men who wage war', *Signs*, 28:4 (2003), pp. 1187–107. Inversely, the practice of international politics may shape masculinities. Charlotte Hooper, *Manly States: Masculinities, International Relations, and Gender Politics* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2001).

<sup>109</sup>Laura Sjoberg, 'Gender, structure, and war: What Waltz couldn't see', *International Theory*, 4:1 (2012), pp. 1–38. Sjoberg goes further, to consider how the construction of gender roles shapes international structure – as do other feminists in other ways.

<sup>110</sup>Thus, Owens documents empires referring to and treating their possessions as households. In consequence, premodern household governance persists within modern 'public' life (Owens, *Economy of Force*, for example, p. 278, *passim*).

<sup>111</sup>Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, vol. 2, p. 254.

hypothetical, he believed the commonwealth could put right. The potential in hierarchical inequality for oppression and violence was part, however implicit, of the ethico-political problem Hobbes meant to solve. If hierarchy, in whatever form, was the solution to the problem of the state of nature, we must ask what other problems it perpetuates.

## Conclusion

Our theoretical motives in this article have been dual. First, we aim to recover under-recognised elements of a major precursor text of IR theory – the *Leviathan* – in order to better address some core theoretical problems in IR's reading of Hobbes. Second, by drawing on a feminist perspective in particular, we hope to make sense of how inattention to gender and family in sources such as Hobbes has limited IR's understanding of how one such theorist can shed light on core disciplinary concerns. On the one hand, it indicates how hierarchies – states – are created and justified in the context of anarchy. On the other hand, it points to the persistence of pre-state social hierarchies – families – both before the rise of the state and within it. This in turn suggests the persistence of hierarchies other than states, including by extension and analogy international hierarchies.<sup>112</sup>

This account points to a larger purpose of feminist theorising in IR. Refocusing on the family reminds us that *all* of social life is actually or potentially gendered. Sjoberg has suggested that the international system itself may be gender-hierarchical, on Waltzian terms: 'a "third image" approach asserts that gender of, within, and among states reflects and reproduces the gendered nature of the international system structure, rather than being an incidental property of its units'.<sup>113</sup> We find in Hobbes elements for a distinct but sympathetic argument. The gendered hierarchies of family and kinship provide a model for the many and varied, protean yet also persistent hierarchies IR scholars increasingly find permeating international political life. IR-theoretic readers of Hobbes have often taken him to prefigure Waltz's insistence on two, and only two, mutually exclusive structural ordering principles: anarchy and hierarchy.<sup>114</sup> By reading Hobbes through the lens of his scattered comments on the family, another account emerges: one in which hierarchy persists within anarchy, in which hierarchy itself is highly changeable, and in which hierarchy, as well as anarchy, is a potential source of violence.

The account above also offers a way to rethink the field's long-contested domestic analogy. For Bull, the analogy is wrong chiefly because states are not people, and therefore do not experience the absence of authority in the same way.<sup>115</sup> While this may be so, it elides a second element of the domestic – family life. If international political orders are like families or kinship networks, then we should expect them to exhibit similar strengths, limitations, and pathologies. They may be persistent, overlapping or nestable, and potentially violent. While they may be less stable and durable than states, they do not reduce theoretically to anarchy – a position broadly consistent with the 'new hierarchy studies' in IR.<sup>116</sup> Hobbes does not state this position directly, but elaboration upon his scattered, numerous comments on the family strongly suggest as much.

<sup>112</sup>Whether or not IR feminism *should* concern itself with the theoretical concerns of IR's mainstream – anarchy, hierarchy, and so on – is another matter. Wibben, for example, finds much IR feminism interested increasingly in asking and answering its own questions, not tracking with the dictates of the wider discipline. Annick T. R. Wibben, 'Researching feminist security studies', *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 49:4 (2014), pp. 743–55.

<sup>113</sup>Sjoberg, 'Gender, structure, and war', p. 11. See discussion in Joseph MacKay and Christopher David LaRoche, 'The conduct of history in International Relations: Rethinking philosophy of history in IR theory', *International Theory*, 9:2 (2017), pp. 203–36 (pp. 227–8).

<sup>114</sup>Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1979), pp. 114–16.

<sup>115</sup>Bull, *The Anarchical Society*.

<sup>116</sup>Bially Mattern and Zarakol, 'Hierarchies in world politics'.

Chapman suggests ‘Hobbes intended to use the family as a heuristic device to teach the basic principles of Hobbesian political science.’<sup>117</sup> Similarly, the family offers a heuristic to better understand the role of authority, hierarchy, and violence at the individual, state, and interstate levels. Family life provides a direct and meaningful alternative to the competitive and atomistic life of the state of nature, and a model on which they may pattern their transition out of it. When the parent-child relationship is emulated, citizens may find the necessary motivation to defend the commonwealth. Quasi-familial hierarchies may also persist between polities in world politics. And, much like families, international hierarchies may be just or unjust, peaceful or violent.

Following J. Ann Tickner, the purpose of revisiting a canonical text is not to undermine or devalue it. Instead, ‘[a]dding a feminist perspective to the epistemology of international relations ... is a stage through which we must pass if we are to begin to think about constructing an ungendered or human science of international politics which is sensitive to, but goes beyond, both masculine and feminine perspectives.’<sup>118</sup> In line with that sensitivity, the feminist scholarship taken up above offers ways to problematise the structural assumptions central to conventional IR readings of Hobbes – and thus to IR theory that draws on him.

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<sup>117</sup>Chapman, ‘*Leviathan writ small*’, p. 89.

<sup>118</sup>J. Ann Tickner, ‘Hans Morgenthau’s principles of political realism: a feminist reformulation’, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 17:3 (1988), pp. 429–40 (p. 438). See also J. Ann Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: A Feminist Perspective on Achieving Global Security* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1992).