

# 偉大的界定者： 霍布斯絕對主權論的一個新解釋\*

錢永祥\*\*

絕對主權論是霍布斯政治思想的核心主題，不過主權者的權力在甚麼意義上是「絕對」的，文獻中尚難見到比較細緻的討論。在本文中，作者進一步發展Wolin、Tuck等人的提示，根據霍布斯三本「政治著作」的內在證據，以較為系統的方式，顯示霍布斯關於自然狀態以及主權者之絕對權力的分析，有一個一貫的、突出的認識論側面；並且這個認識論側面所處理的問題，係由一種關於認識標準的懷疑論所引發。從這個角度來看，主權者不僅須作為理知與道德方面整套秩序的頒布者，並且由於他所頒布的秩序必須獨立於一切客觀的妥當性考慮，不接受任何理知、功效、與道德標準的詰疑，故他的權力乃是絕對的。

本文無意將霍布斯的政治理論化為一套認識理論；但是非常顯然，他藉主權者的絕對性，賦予政治意志一個獨立的「界定者」角色，以求解決認識領域無力自行解決的理知與道德問題。這樣一套主權理論對於近代「政治」之地位與性質的啟示，本文最後做了簡短的討論。

- 一、前言
- 二、霍布斯關於主權者權力的敘述
- 三、自然法與自然狀態的認識性問題
- 四、懷疑論脈絡中的絕對權力
- 五、結語

## 一、前言

政治思想家中間，鮮見霍布斯(Thomas Hobbes, 1588-1679)這樣的戲劇

---

\* 本文之寫成，作者必須感謝戴華、鄭鴻生、瞿宛文、張復、以及王麗美所提供的幫助。本文初稿曾在中研院社科所歷史思想組的研討會上做過報告，對於與會者的批評和建議，以及投稿後兩位審查人的意見和鼓勵，筆者也十分感激。

\*\* 中央研究院中山人文社會科學研究所副研究員

## The Great Definer: A New Perspective on Hobbes' Doctrine of Absolute Sovereignty

Sechin Y. S. Chien

### Abstract

Hobbes' notion of an absolute sovereign ruler as the *sine qua non* of political order is the central theme of his political thinking. Yet in the literature, the senses in which the sovereign power is said to be 'absolute' have not been explored with the degree of care and subtlety that such a key issue deserves. Starting from the work of Wolin, Tuck, and others, a fresh look at the epistemic role of the Hobbesian sovereign will be taken here. Basing itself on a detailed examination of Hobbes' three major 'political writings', this article tries to show, in a systematic fashion, that there is a persistent and salient epistemic aspect to Hobbes' analysis of the state of nature and the absolute power of the sovereign. Moreover, it will become apparent that the issues involved in that epistemic aspect are consequences of a general scepticism concerning the feasibility of epistemic standards. Seen from this perspective, it will emerge that the sovereign has to prescribe the whole fabric of the social order in its moral as well as intellectual aspects. The order thus prescribed, being independent of every consideration of objective validity and hence free from challenges on any rational ground whatsoever, in turn implies that the sovereign must be characterized as absolute.

It is not the claim of this paper that Hobbes' political theory can, or

should, be reduced to an epistemic theory. But it is clear that through the absolute status of his sovereign, Hobbes does intend political will to play the role of an arbitrary 'definer' in matters pertaining to epistemic issues, be they moral or intellectual. In light of Hobbes' doctrine of absolute sovereignty, the article concludes with a brief discussion of the status and character of politics in the modern world.