

Introduction to the Dissertation

0.1 Overview of Dissertation

This is a dissertation about the political thought of Thomas Hobbes and the early-modern practice of honoring. More specifically, this is a dissertation about Hobbes's account of *sovereign authorization* and the mid-seventeenth-century-English practice of honoring. I argue that what Hobbes says about sovereign authorization invites us to portray this practice as an honoring practice.

I focus in the dissertation specifically upon sovereign authorization in Hobbes, and how we should portray it, because sovereign authorization has come to characterize Hobbes's political thought as a whole. By authorizing a sovereign, individuals leave the state of nature where life Hobbes tells us is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short. Through sovereign authorization, individuals constitute political society. Sovereign authorization is one of Hobbes's major contributions to the history of political thought. Analyses of this practice and arguments that help explain it frequently take center stage in contemporary scholarship about Hobbes. Making sense of sovereign authorization is therefore crucial to our understanding of Hobbes's political theory as a whole.

By portraying sovereign authorization as an honoring practice, I intend to challenge scholars who exclusively use a legal-judicial framework to understand Hobbes's

political theory. The legal-juridical account predominates and is authoritative today.¹

That is, contemporary scholars employ legal-juridical practices, words and assumptions to make sense of Hobbes's account of sovereign authorization. Formal procedures such as transferring or surrendering rights and voting are part of this account. Concepts such as "disenchantment," "representation," "contract," and "equality" predominate. Scholars also use assumptions about man's egoism, and his ability to negotiate exchange relations to make sense of sovereign authorization in Hobbes's texts.

The legal juridical account of Hobbes's text has a hold on us in part because its inventory of concepts, practices and assumptions are so much a part of our form of life, of our contemporary grammar.² The legal-juridical account makes the distinctions we make. It summons the concepts and the correspondences that we use to make sense of the world around us. It notices the features in Hobbes's texts that we notice in our lives. It also neglects the features that we regularly neglect. For this reason, we are inclined to use a legal-juridical framework to make sense of Hobbes's political thought, specifically his account of sovereign authorization.

But, the legal-juridical account of sovereign authorization has its problems. Scholars who use it to make sense of Hobbes's text tend to neglect or explain inadequately the passages where what Hobbes says about sovereign authorization does not fit neatly into this authoritative framework. They do not critique the framework's conventions. They do not

¹ See especially Gauthier (1990); Flathman (1993); Hampton (1988); Kraus (1993); Macpherson (1962); Mansfield (1971); Orwin (1975); Pitkin (1964); Sabine (1961); Skinner (1972); Strauss (1936); Zarka (2001).

² The structure of this section is highly influence by James Tully's (1995) account of Wittgenstein's political philosophy.

ask if perhaps these conventions themselves give rise to the tensions and the questions that they write about. And, they do not acknowledge that these conventions fail in crucial ways to make sense of what Hobbes says.

Let me offer some examples. First, the legal-judicial framework cannot accommodate the sacred arguments offered by Hobbes in favor of sovereign authorization. Scholars who employ this framework tend to reduce Hobbes's account of authorization to two variables: fear and prudence.³ Here, they go on as if the sacred justifications for authorization simply did not exist, or did not matter. They neglect these features of Hobbes's account of sovereign authorization.

Second, the legal-judicial framework cannot marshal a persuasive argument against John Locke's claim that it is not prudent to authorize a vain, possibly irrational and ungodly sovereign power. This is the sovereign power Hobbes unabashedly calls the "Leviathan," the "Mortal-God," and the "King of the Proud." Scholars who employ the legal-judicial account obscure this problem. They do so by expanding the notion of prudence beyond its reasonable limits.⁴

Third, scholars who employ the legal-judicial account cannot make sense of Hobbes's claim that individuals transfer rights to the sovereign (to-be) when they authorize him. They solve this problem inadequately in one of two ways. Either they eschew Hobbes's

³ See especially Hampton (1988), Kraus (1993), Sabine (1961), Skinner (1972), and Strauss (1936).

⁴ See especially Gauthier (1969), for an elastic reading of prudence.

account of transference altogether.⁵ Or, they make peculiar arguments about transference. These arguments are peculiar because they contradict Hobbes's claim that the sovereign possesses the right to everything prior to authorization.⁶

Fourth, scholars who employ the legal-judicial account cannot avoid problems generated by Hobbes's commitment to nominalism.⁷ Hobbes says that sovereign authorization requires to-be-subjects to declare their will through a sensible medium. Words are the only medium offered in the legal-judicial account. But, this medium is riddled with difficulties because words frequently breed collective misunderstanding. Scholars who employ the legal-judicial account neglect the problem of collective misunderstanding that Hobbes associates with words. They just go on interpreting sovereign-authorization as a purely verbal act.

Fifth, the legal juridical account cannot make sense of Hobbes's assertion that individuals transfer power to the sovereign (to-be) through authorization.⁸ Scholars who employ the legal-judicial account here conclude that Hobbes's theory is impoverished, perhaps even fatally flawed. Without superior power, Hobbes's theory unravels. The sovereign will not be able to keep subjects obedient. Scholars who expose the flaw in Hobbes's account do not ask if the flaw resides elsewhere. That is, they do not ask whether the legal-judicial account of sovereign authorization generates the flaw and is therefore impoverished.

⁵ See especially Orwin (1975), for an account of why we can eschew transference altogether.

⁶ See especially Pitkin (1964), for an account of why we need transference.

⁷ See especially Kramer (1997), for an account of the use of words in the act of authorization.

⁸ See especially, Flathman (1993) and Wolin (1960), for an account of the problem of power in Hobbes.

Instead, they go on using the legal-judicial account even though they acknowledge that power transference is crucial and show that their account cannot accommodate it.

Sixth, the legal-judicial account does not explain how sovereign authorization creates a positional relation between subjects and the sovereign. Hobbes grounds this positional relation in power. Authorization positions subjects as standing below and in awe of a powerful sovereign. The act, in turn, positions the awe-inspiring sovereign as standing powerfully above his subjects. Because equality is a central feature of the legal-judicial account, the inequality between the sovereign and his subjects is problematic. Scholars who use the legal-judicial account to make sense of what Hobbes says address this problem in one of two ways. Either they neglect it. Or, they cover it over by appealing to the concept of “representation.”

Luckily, the legal-judicial account—with all its problems---does not exhaust all possible ways of making sense of Hobbes’s account of sovereign authorization. Portraying sovereign authorization as an honoring practice explains what Hobbes says about sovereign authorization in a different way. Sovereign authorization as honoring more closely resembles the Christian relationship constituted by a humble individual *honoring* God than it does a legal contract between members of a nascent bourgeoisie. By situating sovereign authorization within a mid-seventeenth-century religious discourse, and by making sovereign authorization correspond to a sacred practice, I challenge the legal-judicial account’s dogged reliance upon a secular and word-centered framework for understanding central elements within Hobbes’s political theory.

My portrayal significantly changes the way we go on making sense of sovereign authorization in Hobbes. It explains sovereign authorization in a way that does not generate the problems that scholars using the legal-judicial account ignore or cannot adequately resolve. The framework of honoring also dissolves some the flaws generated by scholars who use the legal judicial account. Portraying sovereign authorization as an honoring practice fits better with what Hobbes says about the practice. That is, it more faithfully captures Hobbes's description of it, and the claims that he makes to explain it.

That said, portraying sovereign authorization as an honoring practice does not cut all ties with the legal-judicial portrayal. The former portrayal shares significant *similarities* with the latter. It also *differs* significantly from the latter. The fact that the legal-judicial portrayal is hegemonic renders it difficult to give the differences presented by the framework of honoring a fair hearing. And, the differences are what render making sense of sovereign authorization as an honoring practice a more persuasive interpretation of what Hobbes says about sovereign authorization. In this dissertation, I therefore highlight the differences between the accounts and I argue that the honoring account is the more persuasive one.

I use two methods to support my interpretation of Hobbes, sovereign authorization and honoring. I closely analyze how Hobbes uses honoring in his texts *and* I explore how Englishmen and women used honoring in the middle of the seventeenth-century, roughly between 1640 and 1660. Because I appeal to the historical context, my analysis of

Hobbes and honoring draws from some of the methodological precepts propounded J.G.A. Pocock and Quentin Skinner. But, let me be clear. I do not contend that Hobbes's words are altogether devoid of meaning if the historical context is not examined. One surely can understand something about Hobbes and honoring by simply picking up his books and paying attention to how he uses the verb "to honor," and synonymous verbs. Exploring the syntax in which these verbs are found, analyzing the arguments generated by the syntax and considering how Hobbes's account of honoring fits into the overarching structure(s) and argument(s) within his texts is not a fruitless enterprise.

It is not fruitless because Hobbes has a particular way of connecting "honor" with other words in the sentences, paragraphs, and chapters that make up his texts. His way of connecting "honor" and synonymous words to other words significantly constrains what his words might mean. Much therefore is learned from paying careful attention to what Hobbes does with the verb "to honor" and synonymous verbs in his texts. For this reason, I carefully analyze how Hobbes writes about honoring in his works.

My close-textual analysis of honor in Hobbes is different from other contemporary scholars who discuss Hobbes's analysis of honor. Their discussions are limited because they take honoring and honorers for granted. Commentators who investigate honor in Hobbes tend only to investigate Hobbes's account of the few who pursue honor and the dangers that Hobbes associates with their pursuit.⁹ Once we know about this pursuit we know Hobbes's account of honor. I argue that we a lot about the role honor plays in Hobbes's political thinking when we fail to analyze honor as a practice embedded within

⁹ See especially Slomp (2000) and Strauss (1936), for this analysis of honor in Hobbes.

a complex social interaction that involves honoring practices, honorers, the honored, and neutral spectators. Hobbes writes about honor as a practice embedded within such a social interaction but this way of conceptualizing honor is not adequately considered in the scholarship on Hobbes. The obligation to honor, the incentives to honor, and the many complicated effects that follow from honoring others receive scant attention, as does the relationship between the honorer, the honored, and neutral spectators. The connection Hobbes forges between secular honoring practices and sacred acts of worship is also frequently under-analyzed. Through my close textual analysis of what Hobbes says about honoring, I bring Hobbes's account of the social interaction of honoring to the forefront, and I develop the parallels Hobbes makes between sacred and secular honoring practices.

But, for the purposes of this dissertation a close-textual reading of Hobbes and honor is not sufficient. This method is not sufficient because Hobbes does not explicitly connect sovereign authorization to honoring. Sole reliance upon Hobbes's text will probably lead to the conclusion that the connection forged between sovereign authorization and honoring is tenuous, even though Hobbes's analyses of honoring and sovereign authorization easily lend themselves or invite us to make the connection between these practices.

A careful examination of the historical context shores up the link between honoring and sovereign authorization in Hobbes. The historical context shows the practice of honoring interacting with the practice of sovereign authorization. Englishmen and women in mid-

seventeenth-century England advanced their discussion of political relations through their discussions of honoring. Englishmen performed solemn honoring practices when they acknowledged---even authorized---a sovereign power. For example, they acknowledged (and authorized) God's sovereignty by honoring, or worshipping, Him. They also performed honoring practices when acknowledging or authorizing their civil sovereign. The connection between the practice of honoring and sovereign authorization was commonplace in mid-seventeenth-century England. Additionally, men and women performed honoring practices in English society in order to recognize---and even constitute---positional relations between themselves and other individuals in socially stratified England. A more compelling way to forge the connection between honoring and sovereign authorization in Hobbes comes from a careful study of honoring practices and the ways Englishmen and women wrote about them in the middle of the seventeenth century.

0.2 Six Historical Idioms of Honoring¹⁰

In the historical chapters, I explain how Englishmen and women practiced and talked about honoring in the mid-seventeenth-century through concrete examples. The examples reveal the customs, concepts and traditions used by mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen and women when recognizing, constituting or authorizing positional relations. The examples I also offer provide a kind of training. Working through them teaches *us* how to use honoring in different early-modern, English contexts. Specifically, by working through the examples we become better able to apply the terms of honoring to Hobbes's

¹⁰ The structure of this section is heavily influence by Hanna Pitkin's account of Wittgenstein's philosophy in Pitkin (1972).

account of sovereign authorization. The historical chapters therefore prepare us to use the verb “to honor,” and its synonyms as Englishmen and women did. They also prepare us to practice honoring as they did. Consequently, the historical chapters train us in how to apply honoring to Hobbes’s account of sovereign authorization in a historically informed and appropriate manner.

The concrete examples I analyze in the historical chapters do not show Englishmen and women talking about or engaging in honoring in one, uniform way. There was no one recipe that explained how to honor others, or how to use the verb, “to honor” (or similar verbs), in the appropriate manner. Honoring practices lacked the essential structure required to construct a single paradigm. The examples I offer from Hobbes’s texts are no exception to this general rule; he does not talk about honoring in clear and uniform manner throughout all his texts (although he does sometimes offer definitions). There simply was no one paradigmatic use and logic of honoring in England in the mid-seventeenth-century.

The concrete examples I analyze reveal Englishmen and women using the verb “to honor” and practicing honoring in many, different ways. Honoring is a heterogeneous practice. In different instances, it summons up different terms, assumptions, rules, situations and consequences. Honoring practices themselves and how Englishmen and women talked about them had more than one structure, and consequently more than one meaning. The historical chapters grapple with this fact and, whenever possible, they show Hobbes grappling with this fact as well.

But, the different ways Englishmen and women talked about and practiced honoring are not so unique that honoring becomes an idiosyncratic practice and the verb “to honor” becomes an idiosyncratic term. There was a limited range of customary and institutionalized uses of honoring practices and terms in mid-seventeenth-century-England. Englishmen and women continually engaged in honoring practices in regular ways. There are therefore discoverable patterns and regularities in how Englishmen talked about and practiced honoring, and I call these patterns and regularities “idioms.”

The historical chapters on honoring focus on these idioms. When possible, I show where Hobbes’s descriptions of honoring fit and depart from the idioms I analyze. By placing Hobbes’s accounts of honoring within these historical idioms, I show Hobbes engaging with his contemporaries who also discuss honoring. Because Hobbes’s engagement in these discussions has not, to my knowledge, been analyzed by scholars before, the historical chapters on honoring add to our understanding of Hobbes’s thought as a whole. Along the way and in the historical chapters, I present some arguments Hobbes makes about honoring that appear to challenge some of the standard ways we interpret Hobbes’s texts. That said, the historical chapters on honoring do not center around Hobbes, his accounts of honoring, his political theory or how his accounts of honoring challenge conventional interpretations of his works. Chapters 8 and 9 of the dissertation do that, as does the conclusion. The historical chapters center instead around mid-seventeenth-century English idioms of honoring.

I present six idioms of honoring in the historical chapters of the dissertation. These idioms are hard to systematize. They are not always internally consistent. But, the features that constitute them frame what Englishmen and women meant when they talked about or practiced honoring. These features include such things as: sets of assumptions or reference points, patterns of consequences associated with honoring, regular physical surroundings, social situations, or occasions where individuals practiced honoring, clusters of distinctions, tensions, inconsistencies regularly associated with honoring, as well as predictable relationships between honoring and other concepts, feelings, beliefs, or judgments (Pitkin 1972, 81, 119).

The six idioms of honoring I analyze are both similar to and different from one another. Each idiom of honoring overlaps somehow with at least one of the other idioms. For example, two idioms of honoring might assume the same belief in another's superiority and they might occur in the same kind of social situation, at court, for example. This overlap makes it possible to co-classify a particular example of honoring within both of these idioms. But, the differences that emerge across idioms renders co-classification a more difficult task. The features (or the combinations of features) that differentiate the idioms enable honoring practices to signal different things and to function in different ways in particular contexts.

The first idiom I analyze is a religious and moral idiom. I analyze this idiom in Chapters 1 through 3. Honoring in this idiom is a moral obligation. God commands mortals to honor. He obliges mortal inferiors to honor mortal superiors through external practices,

such as obedience. He also obliges inferiors to honor their mortal superiors through internal thoughts, feelings and beliefs. I analyze the religious and moral obligation to honor mortal superiors and what this obligation entails in Chapter 1. Specifically, I analyze how the obligation to honor mortal superiors entails the obligation to honor political authority. I discuss the political implications that follow from the moral obligation to honor political authority in the first chapter

In the second chapter, I analyze the moral obligation to honor or worship God. I focus in this chapter upon controversies in mid-seventeenth-century circling around the question of how to honor God outwardly through external acts of religious worship. I discuss what Englishmen thought honoring practices did and I offer their accounts of why God demanded this practice from them. I also offer an account of the social consequences that Englishmen associated with external practices of religious worship.

In Chapter 3, I analyze controversies arising in mid-seventeenth-century-England between the religious obligation to honor God and the religious obligation to honor mortal superiors. Englishmen and women agreed that mortals were obligated to give honor to whom honor was due. But, tensions surfaced. The obligation to honor Caesar competed against the obligation to honor God. Man's obligation to superiors in this world frequently conflicted with his obligation to the eternal superior. In Chapter 3, I present some early-modern arguments that Englishmen deployed in order to show the irreconcilability between these religious obligations. In this chapter, I also present some

arguments made by Englishmen that reconciled the tension between these competing obligations.

The religious framework for understanding the practice of honoring that I analyze in Chapters 1 thru 3 harkens back to a pre-modern moral idiom. Mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen and women summoned this idiom regularly. On occasion, Hobbes does so, too. In Chapters 1 thru 3, I highlight previously ignored passages where Hobbes situates honoring within this idiom. I also summon Hobbes's accounts of honoring as a moral and religious obligation to show how Hobbes positions himself within the historical debates about honoring so conceived. By showing Hobbes's engagement with honoring as a religious and moral obligation and by showing his engagement with contemporary debates concerning the obligation to honor, we gain a richer understanding of the relationship between this pre-modern, religious and moral idiom and Hobbes's thought as a whole.

The second historical idiom connects honoring with virtue. I develop this connection in Chapter 4. This idiom offers a humanist account of honoring. Individuals here owe honor to those who are excellent. Honoring is something virtuous people deserve. Whigs and mid-seventeenth-century English republicans frequently situate honoring within this idiom. They appealed to notions like honoring and virtue in their attempts to usher in a republican political order. I discuss this attempt and how Englishmen deployed their account of honoring against the royalists in Chapter 6. Not surprisingly, Hobbes---neither a Whig nor a republican---rarely situates honoring within the idiom of virtue. Hobbes's

silence here reflects his departure from the humanist principles that served to structure this historical idiom of honoring.

The third idiom I analyze associates honoring with strategic actors who use honoring to rise. Honoring is flattery here. It is a dissimulating, Machiavellian practice used on the powerful by the powerless. I discuss this idiom and how it relates to humanist idiom that associated honoring with virtue in Chapters 4 and 5. In his texts, Hobbes frequently associates the logic of honoring with the logic of flattery. He even calls flattery a form of honoring. Hobbes's contemporaries frequently attributed this form of honoring to sycophants and to "favorites" who swarmed in court during the mid-seventeenth-century. I discuss the connection between honoring practices and the court in Chapter 6, and I relate this discussion back to Hobbes's analysis of honoring practices in that chapter.

The fourth idiom I analyze aligns honoring with rhetoric. Honoring in this account is analogous to epideictic rhetoric, a practice widely used in mid-seventeenth-century England. Catholic and Anglican religious services, for example, used epideictic rhetoric regularly. Their use of this form of speech, gesture and behavior distinguished their religious services from the "plain" services performed by Puritans. Although I do not dedicate an chapter to this idiom, in Chapter 2, I analyze how the use of epideictic rhetoric in religious services generated controversies in England I also explore Hobbes's preference for using this kind of rhetoric in church in Chapter 2. In Chapters 1, 4 and 6, I also explore passages where Hobbes and his contemporaries discuss the role that epideictic rhetoric plays in the secular sphere. Understood as a rhetorical practice,

honoring others added luster to the honored. In Chapter 3, I discuss the parallels Hobbes and his contemporaries made between sacred and secular honoring practices understood as epideictic rhetoric. I also explain some of the social consequences that follow from engaging in this form of rhetorical practice.

The fifth idiom I analyze relates honoring to etiquette. Englishmen located this honoring practice primarily within in the political institution of court but they said that this practice permeated all of English society in the mid-seventeenth-century. I address honoring as etiquette squarely in Chapter 6. As a form of mannerly or learned and appropriate behavior, Hobbes called honoring a “point of small morals.” It was something courteous or refined Englishmen and women performed willingly and without prompting. Puritans associated with Parliament’s cause challenged this claim. They associated this kind of mannerly behavior with flattery and with corrupt courtiers living in Catholic France. I bring their criticism to bear in my discussion of honoring as etiquette in Chapter 6.

The sixth idiom I analyze connects honoring with notions of reciprocity. Honoring here is part of a sacred or secular exchange relationship. I analyze this form of reciprocal exchange carefully in Chapter 7. I also engage with this account of honoring in Chapter 2. Honorers, according to this account, give or transfer honor to God or to mortals in exchange for favor and for favors, such as protection, long-life, and comfort. Hobbes makes the case for this understanding of honoring when he discusses the child-parent relationship, the mortal-God relationship, and any relationship between the more and the less powerful. Throughout Chapter 7, I show how Englishmen, including Hobbes,

frequently explained honoring by embedding this practice within an exchange relationship.

The six idioms of honoring I discuss in the historical chapters help acquaint us with the nuanced ways the English (including Hobbes) practiced and talked about honoring in the mid-seventeenth-century. I do not presume to offer an exhaustive account of honoring in these chapters. New examples might reveal new idioms and further investigation is clearly possible. But, the idioms I offer provide a richer understanding of honoring and they are important for my analysis of sovereign authorization and honoring in Hobbes.

To claim that further analysis may reveal new and different idioms of honoring is not to claim that the idioms I analyze were picked randomly. The six idioms of honoring I analyze reflect early-modern English forms of life, or contexts. The religious idiom of honoring, for examples, reflects a context where old, pre-modern religious frameworks for understanding life remain but, like crumbling buildings, are losing ground. The virtuous idiom reflects a context where humanist frameworks for understanding politics and the world were gaining ground, especially amongst Parliamentarians. The idiom that explains honoring in terms of rhetoric and etiquette reflects a historical context in which religious reformists and proto-enlightenment thinkers were vehemently reassessing the use and value of formal ceremonies and ornamental speech. Finally, the strategic and contractual idiom reflects a historical context where these modern ways of understanding politics and perhaps life more broadly were emerging and beginning to take hold. The idioms of honoring I analyze are therefore representative and central to English life in the

early-modern period. They reflect the different interests and the different agendas that different Englishmen and women in the mid-seventeenth-century used to frame, understand, preserve and advance their particular forms of life.

0.2 A Working Definition of Honoring

It is possible to distill an abstract, working definition of “honoring” from the different idioms. This abstracted definition lacks richness. It is a step removed from the more concrete idioms of honoring I present in the historical chapters. It is a further step removed from the particular examples I offer of Englishmen and women using the verb “to honor” and synonymous verbs and engaging in honoring practices. Nevertheless, because we are quite unfamiliar with honoring today, let me offer a short list of features that would have signaled honoring. These features do not define honoring with any certainty. The list is not serial; it is not intended to create a boundary; and it is not complete. Some honoring practices may lack some of these features. But, the list of features helps us get a preliminary handle on what practices would probably signal honoring to men and women living in mid-seventeenth century England.

First, honoring practices are performed by an actor. He or she is “the honorer.”

Frequently, honorers honor another person, “the honoree,” but they do not need to honor a person. They could, for example, honor God, a relic, an idol, a rock, the law, or a concept like reason. And, quite often, there are neutral individuals who witness these acts of honoring (but not always).

Second, honoring requires a medium. An honorer honors an honoree through a medium such as speech, deed, pose, gesture, and behavior. A eulogy is a classic example of honoring through speech. Obedience can be an example of a deed where one honors whomever one obeys. Kneeling can be an example of a pose that honors the person toward whom the honorer kneels. Doffing a hat can be a gesture that honors the person to whom one doffs a hat. Not speaking until spoken to can be an example of a behavior that honors the person who gets to speak first.

Third, by honoring another, the honorer publicly declares a relation of inequality. That is, the practice acknowledges and testifies that the honored stands above the honorer because the former is said to possess some excellency that the honorer is said not to possess. (Ames 1642, 355). Honoring acknowledges this positional relationship. According to Hobbes, power constitutes this positional relationship. But, power was not the sole ground for honoring others mid-seventeenth-century England. Different bases for recognizing others as superiors through honoring practices were prevalent. Moreover, the acknowledgement of superiority could be groundless. It could even be insincere. An honorer could bow or bestow honors—and thereby symbolically acknowledge inequality--but the bow or the honors bestowed may be nothing but false flattery or empty ceremony.

Suppose someone used an honoring practice to acknowledge equality. This use would challenge the characteristic use of an honoring practice, as honoring practices were used to acknowledge inequality. Such challenges were not altogether unheard of in mid-

seventeenth-century England, however. When Puritans honored others, they said they honored them as “fellow men,” as “equals.” But, Puritans were criticized for doing this, even laughed at. Their practice was highly unusual. They were challenging the characteristic use of honoring practices. Their challenge therefore reveals the habitual use of honoring as a practice that signals a relation of inequality.

Fourth, frequently, the acknowledgement of inequality (implicitly or explicitly) suggests to neutral observers that the honorer approves of the unequal relation between the honoree and the honorer. Honoring practices frequently served to legitimize and maintain positional relations. Honoring a king shows approval for that king and the display of approval adds to the king’s legitimacy. But, again, these displays of approval might be insincere. An honoring practice might be ironic, for example. Excessive displays of honoring might even be signs of contempt. The practice might also mask the actual relation between honorer and honored. It might mask the disdain an honorer feels for the honored, for example.

Fifth, consequences follow from honoring practices. An honoring practice might, for example, please the honored person, tickling his or her vanity. Or, the honored person might be enraged, imagining that the practice is nothing but flattery. Something might happen to the honorer as well. The honorer might, for example, deepen his or her appreciation for the honored person through honoring. Or, the honored person might stand to gain something by engaging in honoring practices. Honoring might have consequences for neutral spectators. As they watch others directing honoring practices at

a particular person, they might gain respect for the person honored, or for the honorer. Or, they might wonder why the honorer is directing these empty formalities at the person honored.

Sharing some of these features will signal that the practice in question is an honoring practice. I am not insisting upon necessary and sufficient conditions here. If a practice shares some of these features, the fact that it does so is a decent reason to think that it signals honoring.

0.4 Terms Used to Signify the Honoring Practice

I have mentioned that Englishmen used the term “to honor” and synonymous terms when they talked about honoring practices. Let me briefly discuss some of these synonymous terms here. The Oxford English Dictionary equates the verb “to honor” with verbs like “to worship,” “to pay worthy respect to,” “to celebrate or praise,” “to reverence,” “to pay obeisance to,” “to perform one’s devotions to,” “to pay homage to,” “to adorn,” “to glorify,” and “to magnify with praise.” So too Randle Cutgrave’s *A Dictionaire of the French and English Tongues*, published in 1611, 1634, and 1673 defines the verb “to honor” as to “reverence,” “respect very much,” and to “praise exceedingly” (Cutgrave 1634).¹¹

Mid-seventeenth century English authors were comfortable interchanging a term like “worship” with the term “respect” because sacred and secular languages were not

¹¹ Cutgrave also defines the verb “to worship” as “to honor,” “to adore,” “to revere.” He defines the verb “to reverence” by verbs such as “to worship,” “to honour,” and to “respect with *awful* observance.” He defines the verb “to glorify” with verbs such as “to commend” and “to magnify.” Cutgrave (1673).

differentiated in the way they are today. Let me offer two examples to establish the interchangeability of these and other terms used to signify honoring. In the first example, Thomas Hall, a conforming Protestant commentator is responding to an argument made by non-conforming Quakers. The latter sect claimed that it was unlawful to “respect persons.” Hall disagreed with their position. “Salutations” and “courtesies” are permissible, according to Hall. He writes,

Salutations are lawful. The Apostle would never have enjoined them if there had been any thing of sin or folly in them; as the foolish Quakers imagine....When you come into a house (be they good or bad that dwell in it), yet Salute it....Moses **made obeisance** to Jethro and kissed him and asked him of his welfare...[Salutations] are testimonies of our...**respect** to them....[But] the Persian Princes exacted more then civil **reverence**, they had a kind of divine **honour given** them...[but] there is a common salutation and civil **respect** which is due....Piety is no enemy to curtesie...Religion...teacheth men to **give honour** to whom honour is due (Hall 1658, p. 458).

I have introduced boldface type to emphasize the terms used by Hall to describe “salutations” or “curtsies.” In this passage, Hall distinguishes divine honour from civil reverence or respect, and he claims that Persian princes unlawfully demanded divine honour from their subjects. The terms “honour,” “reverence,” and “respect” do not, however, forge the distinction that Hall makes between a divine and a civil act of honoring. Instead, Hall places the terms “divine” and “civil” in front of “honour,” “reverence,” and “respect” to distinguish the two kinds of honor. Distinguishing divine from civil worship was important because the Second Commandment implied that individuals must not honor men as gods. I will explore this claim more carefully in Chapter 3. The point I make here is only that Hall interchangeably identifies salutations as ways of “making obeisance,” “giving honour,” showing “reverence” or showing “respect.”

My second example comes from a 1660 pamphlet written by Henry More. Like Hall, More is asking whether it is morally lawful to perform acts of honoring toward other mortals. He, too, is addressing moral doubts that stem from a particular reading of the Second Commandment which I discuss in Chapter 3. Specifically, More here asks whether mortals should honor fallen heroes. He writes,

The same Apology we may make for **that Honour we do** to the deceased Heroes, whose noble persons and refined spirits the divine excellencies more illustriously shone through than ordinary. For in truth we do not so **much worship them** as God shining through them; as he that bows to the Sun or Moon through a glass-window, intends not **his obeisance** to the glass, but to those Celestial Luminaries; nor do we bow our body to those Luminaries, but to God who to us appears through all things. (More 1660, p.200)

I use boldface type here to highlight how More uses “honor,” “worship,” and “obeisance” interchangeably. More argues that it is not sinful (idolatrous) to honor a deceased hero by bowing because honoring acknowledges only the “divine excellence” in man. In Chapter 3, I will develop More’s claim that by honoring heroes individuals honor God. Here, I am only trying to establish the claim that Englishmen and women used terms like “honour,” “worship, and “obeisance” interchangeably.

My analysis of honoring goes beyond the study of the verb “to honor” and includes the study of other verbs used by Englishmen and women when talking about the practice of honoring. In my historical chapters, I examine texts that offer up interpretations of honoring, regardless of whether authors signify the practice with terms like “honor,” “worship,” “glorify,” “obeisance,” “reverence,” “respect,” or “awe-ful observance.” If a

particular author explicitly distinguishes one term from another, or if the text seems to warrant such a distinction, I will note it. Otherwise, I shall assume that contemporary authors frequently used these terms interchangeably.

0.5 Hobbes and Honoring

In Chapters 8 of the dissertation, I invite us to view Hobbes's account of sovereign authorization as an account of an honoring practice. I use arguments from my historical analysis of honoring to support this portrayal of sovereign authorization and to challenge the legal-judicial portrayal of sovereign authorization in Hobbes's texts.

I grapple first with the legal-judicial account's dogged reliance upon a verbal medium to authorize a sovereign power. When we portray sovereign authorization as an honoring practice, authorization ceases to be a purely verbal speech act. It therefore avoids the kinds of misunderstandings words generate. The legal-judicial portrayal of sovereign authorization cannot surmount this difficulty. Sovereign authorization as an honoring practice, by contrast, presents sovereign authorization as a practice containing both words and self-interpreting actions. By including these actions, the framework of honoring offers to-be-subjects a more reliable medium to declare their will to authorize a sovereign power.

I then apply arguments from my historical analysis of honoring practices to Hobbes's account of sovereign authorization as an act by which individuals transfer rights to the sovereign. The assumptions about property and property-exchange that inform the legal-

juridical portrayal of sovereign authorization cannot make sense of Hobbes's paradoxical claim that individuals "transfer" rights to a sovereign who already possesses the right to everything. I show how the religious assumptions that inform how we make sense of certain honoring practices help us make sense of this claim. The assumptions summoned construe the notion of "transference" in such a way that it becomes meaningful to "transfer" rights to someone who possesses those rights already. The historical framework of honoring is therefore better able to make sense of what Hobbes says about transferring rights when he writes about sovereign authorization.

I also use arguments that I develop in my historical analysis of honoring practices to help us make better sense of Hobbes's claim that individuals transfer power to the sovereign-to-be when they authorize him. The legal-juridical account cannot make sense of this claim. Moreover, the latter account does not explain how sovereign authorization creates a positional relationship between subjects and the sovereign that keeps subjects in awe of the sovereign. The logic that explains honoring practices, by contrast, makes sense of these claims. It shows how it is possible to think of authorization as an act that transfers power to the sovereign. It explains how sovereign authorization, as an honoring practice, can constitute a positional relationship. It also shows how honoring practices can generate a sense of awe for the sovereign.

In Chapter 8 and 9, I apply some of the arguments that I develop in my historical chapters on honoring to further our understanding of why Hobbes says individuals should authorize a sovereign power. At the end of Chapter 8, I grapple with Hobbes's claim that

it is prudent to authorize a vain, irrational, ungodly and absolute sovereign power that Hobbes calls “Leviathan,” or “Mortal-God.” The legal-juridical account of sovereign authorization does not sufficiently explain this claim. I show how honoring practices like authorization and obedience are prudent because these practices can be used by the cunning to curry the sovereign’s favor, even to suborn the sovereign’s will. Conceived as weapons of the weak, honoring practices like authorization and obedience serve to encourage a vain, irrational and ungodly sovereign to protect and provide for those who honor him. Performing these practices upon the “Leviathan” is prudent because cunning honorers stand to gain from their performance.

I conclude the dissertation with a chapter that grapples with Hobbes’s many arguments which serve to justify sovereign authorization and obedience. In Chapter 9, I show how the historical framework of honoring I offered in Chapter 7 provides a compelling narrative that embeds all of Hobbes’s justifications for authorization and obedience. In the honoring narrative, secular arguments for authorization rooted in the passion of fear and motivated by a rational concern for self-preservation are rendered compatible with sacred arguments grounded ultimately in God’s will. The legal-juridical framework does not accommodate all these arguments. The narrative of honoring, by contrast, offers a richer and more comprehensive narrative that incorporates Hobbes’s many justifications for sovereign authorization, and for obedience.

PART I

HONORING FOR THE GODLY

The accounts of honoring explained and analyzed in Part One target a particular audience: those individuals who aim to be “godly.” These mid-seventeenth-century-Englishmen and women are Christians who aspire on the one hand to be morally upright and on the other to avoid the fires of hell. The godly are—or at least they claim to be—zealous in religious matters. They try to order their actions from God, by God and for God (Baxter 1658, p.a3). They believe that the Scripture is God’s Word, and that it contains the moral law. They want to conceive of God’s commands rightly; they desire to live by Christ’s doctrine; and they attempt to fulfill their religious obligations regularly and diligently (Baxter1658, p.a3). Chapter 1 concerns itself with one of these religious obligations: the obligation to honor mortal superiors. Chapter 2 deals with another; it focuses on the religious obligation to honor God. Chapter 3 places Chapter 1 and 2 in conversation. It shows those instances where the obligation to honor mortal superiors collides with the obligation to honor God. Chapter 3 concludes by exploring some of the ways mid-seventeenth-century-English authors resolved the tension between these two religious obligations to honor superiors.

The arguments on honoring found in Part 1 will not and probably were not intended to persuade mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen and women who had “forsaken God,” (Baxter 1658, p.a3) that is, who had “turned infidels” (Baxter 1658, p. a3). Claims put

forth in Part 1 are not suitable for the ears of Englishmen and women who care not for their consciences, who think there is no afterlife, or who carnally adhere to the profane world (Baxter 1658, p. a3). Part 2 and 3 present strong arguments on honoring that serve to persuade these other mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen and women to honor their superiors. Part One serves only to bring the godly discourse of honoring into sharp focus.

Chapter 1

Honoring Mortals, a Moral Obligation: Religious Accounts of Honoring Mortals in Mid-seventeenth-century England and in the Works of Thomas Hobbes

1.0 Overview of Chapter 1

“Frogs must have storks (Luther 1523/1991, p30).” This is how Martin Luther clarified the relation between subjects and rulers in his 1523 text *On Secular Authority*. Rulers are the storks. They are God’s jailers and hangmen. They punish the wicked (and frequently the not-so wicked) and maintain outward peace. But subjects, Luther later explained, are more than frogs. It is God’s divine will and pleasure that rulers receive *honor* from their subjects -- and “in heaped measure” (Luther 1523/1991, p. 30). “We [subjects] should call His hangmen “gracious lords (Luther 1523/1991, p. 30).” We should “fall at their [rulers’] feet and be subject to them in all humility” (Luther 1523/1991, p. 30).

Here Luther accounted for the political relationship between subject and ruler in terms of honoring. Honoring is a moral obligation. Luther legitimized the obligation to honor by invoking God’s will and pleasure. He also invoked a divine command theory of moral obligation to justify this obligation to honor rulers. Now consider the depth of commitment implied by what Luther wrote. Subjects are obligated to conceive of and to call their lords “gracious” (p.30). Consider the danger that subjects must face. They must fall at the feet of their lawful executioners. Consider the way subjects obey when Luther

discussed obedience alongside honoring. Subjects do not simply obey; they must obey their rulers *in all humility* (p.30).

Many mid-seventeenth century English authors also described political obligation in terms of honoring. These accounts of political obligation do not contain notions like instrumental reason or contract. Like Luther, authors---especially royalists and Laudine divines---writing in England during this period used a divine command theory of moral obligation to justify the obligation to honor superiors, namely the monarch, Charles I.¹² Honor was something subjects were obligated *to give* Charles I. But honor also described what inferiors generally (not just subjects) were bound to give all their superiors (not just the monarch).

Honoring here was a thick moral obligation. That is, it obligated *more than* obedient action to a godly ruler. It obligated what I call “obedience plus.” It obligated individuals *externally* and *internally*. Externally, it imposed obligations upon the honorer’s action, speech and gesture. Internally, it imposed obligations upon a subject’s will, emotional state, and his or her set of estimations and beliefs. Here, it commanded inferiors to obey their Christian rulers willingly, sincerely, diligently and promptly. It obligated inferiors to love their Christian rulers and to fear them. It imposed upon them the obligation to conceive of them as *truly* superior. And, honoring had an imperialist element to it. For, not only did it command subjects to defend and vindicate their ruler’s honor. Honoring also commanded inferiors to magnify and to advance their ruler’s reputation throughout

¹² For more on the Laudine divines and their emphasis on divine order see MacKenzie (2002), especially Chapters 1 and 2.

their lands, and beyond them. The obligation to honor rulers touched nearly every part of a subject's being. In short, it was nearly a totalizing obligation.

I argue that when we conceptualize mid-seventeenth century political obligation in terms of honoring, we must envision a Christian subject who is morally obligated to be active, rather than passive; willing rather than indifferent; zealous in his or her obedient actions rather than grudging. I do not mean to suggest here that Christian subjects were obligated to fervently obey rulers who broke God's law. According to some Puritan accounts, they were not so obligated and their political obligation was significantly limited.

Nevertheless, understanding political obligation in terms of honoring challenges the commonplace notion of Christian political obligation nicely summarized two centuries later by John Stuart Mill (1859). He wrote,

Christian morality (so called) has all the characters of a reaction;...its ideal is negative rather than positive; passive rather than active;...in its precepts (as has been well said) "thou shalt not" predominates unduly over "though shalt"...It is essentially a doctrine of passive obedience. (Mill, 1997, p. 47)

Indeed, there were Christian authors in mid-seventeenth-century England who exhorted Christian subjects to passively *disobey* wicked rulers (Allestree 1658b, p. 280-1). But, when we conceptualize political obligation in terms of honoring, the conceptualization frees us from some of the constraints established by Mill's generalized account of the early modern Christian subject. In contrast to this so-called "passive" and "negative" account of Christian political obligation, the account of political obligation offered through the discourse of honoring conjures up a relationship between a *godly* subject and a *godly* ruler according to which the

former is a humble, obedient, willing and extremely *zealous* and active political subject.

1.1 Fashioning the argument

Mid-seventeenth-century-English authors relied upon existing theories to develop the connection between honoring political authority and moral obligation. Three of these theories include the theory of pre-ordained hierarchy, the divine command theory of moral obligation, and patriarchal theory. Royalist and Catholics¹³ especially deployed these theories but they were familiar to Anglicans, Puritans, Presbyterians and Englishmen and women generally in the early modern period. In this section, I explain how these theories were used to establish the connection between honoring political authority and moral obligation and I discuss some of the *sources* authors summoned to ground their claims concerning their moral obligations, specifically the moral obligation to honor political authorities. And, wherever possible, I show where and how Hobbes's engages with this pre-modern discourse.

The theory of pre-ordained hierarchy claims that God arranged the universe as a fixed hierarchical system, a chain of being.¹⁴ This chain stretches down from the Deity in the Empyrean heaven through the hierarchies of angelic beings to the ranks of men, animals and plants at the base terrestrial sphere (Mason 1953, p.31). Each individual on the chain

¹³See for example Parker (1644), especially p.2. He writes, "Royalists take a great deal of superfluous pains, and quote many texts of Scripture to prove *that all powers are from God; that Kings are anointed by God: and that they are to be obeyed as the vicegerents of God*" (p.2). Alexander Ross (1634), one of Charles I's chaplains, also defended the medieval world view in his *Commentum de Terrae Motu* (1634) and *The New Planet No Planet* (1646) (as cited in Mason, 1953, 41).

¹⁴ See Lovejoy (1936), for the history of the idea. See Tillyard (1943), for the late medieval version

has a “degree” or rank. Each is higher or lower than another is. And, God expects each to stay in his or her “place,” since God “fashioned some to honour, others to dishonour, as hee please” (Dickson 1659, p. 24).

God here commanded individuals of lower “degree” to honor those individuals situated above them. That is, inferiors were obligated to look up and yield honor to those whom God set over them, including political authorities. Honoring practices here clearly implied a relation of inequality between mortals. The unequal relation is grounded in the claim that mortals were ontologically distinct; superiors possessing a higher “being” than their respective inferiors.

To Equals the offices of love, and humanity are due, but no honour: for it is the right which inferiours must give to superiours, and of them it is principally intended. For God did so order it...[that] there should be an imparity. (Lawson 1659, p.186)

As noted in this passage, God created hierarchies between mortals. The theory of preordained hierarchy stands behind this relation, and the divine command theory of moral obligation establishes the connection between honoring and moral obligation. God here commanded inferiors to honor superiors and He gave superiors the correlative right to receive honor from inferiors. Superiors did not gain this right because of their de facto status within society. Rather, they gained the right to receive honor from inferiors because God gave this right to them as superior beings. Assuming superiors do not waive this right, they may justly challenge inferiors who fail to honor them.

The honor that inferiors owed superiors, according to the theory of preordained hierarchy, was a consequence of their divinely given position or station, not their intrinsic merit or

excellence, as humanist scholars assumed.¹⁵ It therefore did not matter whether superiors were “learned or ignorant” (White 1659, p.180).¹⁶ Inferiors owed superiors honor regardless. Nearly a century earlier, Calvin explained this point further, and his influence upon Christians in mid-seventeenth-century-England is undeniable (Doerksen 2004, p. 13).¹⁷ “It makes no difference whether those on whom the honour is conferred [by God] are deserving or not. Be they what they may, the Almighty, by conferring their station upon them, shows that he would have them honoured” (Calvin, 1947, p. 344).

Authors here coupled the theory of preordained hierarchy with the divine command theory of moral obligation to justify the connectin between honoring and moral obligation. Honoring was therefore morally obligatory simply because God commanded it. Those who refused to honor individuals holding superior stations disobeyed God’s command. They disturbed God’s pre-ordained order. They committed a moral wrong; they sinned. Some even styled them “brainsick.” (Baillie 1643, p. 39) By contrast, those who honored their superiors, including political authorities, followed God’s command. They were morally upright, even healthy, at least in terms of this matter.

¹⁵ I discuss the humanist account of honoring virtue or excellence in Chapter 4.

¹⁶ But, as I will explain below, it might matter if superiors commanded disobedience to God.

¹⁷ James Ussher (1659) wrote,

The most eminent writers, and learned Fathers of our Church, (whom I suppose you reverence) have had [Calvin] in great esteem; and usually name him with honour. I might quote divers, as Arch-Bishop Whitgift, Bishop Bilson, Bishop Davenant, Mr. Hooker, Doctor Ward, &c. but Bishop Andrewes shall suffice, who..thus writes of him. *Calvino (illustri viro nec unquam sine summi honoris praefatione nominando) &c.* i.e. *Calvin is an excellent man, never to be mentioned without a Preface of the highest honour.* (p. 376).

Divine command theory and pre-ordained hierarchy were therefore a cluster of closely connected theories or arguments that mutually reinforced the connection between inequality, honoring and moral obligation. Consider how these theories worked together to establish this relationship with respect to political authority in this example.

The Lord commands Subjects to...give honour...to them [Magistrates]; this certainly implies (by the Rule of Relatives) that there must be Magistrates to whom this Honour...is due: And if every soul must be subject to the Higher Powers, then there must be Higher Powers, to which men must be subject. This enjoining the duty of the Subject, doth establish the authority of the Magistrate. (Hall 1660, p. 15)¹⁸

In the first sentence, the author declared that subjects have a moral obligation to honor magistrates. He invoked the divine command theory of moral obligation when he wrote that “the Lord commands” subjects to honor them. This declaration established the legitimacy of political hierarchy. Since “honor” implied “subjection,” the author claimed that subjects were morally obligated to be subject to higher powers, such as magistrates. Here, the author legitimized hierarchy by invoking the obligation to honor superiors and by invoking the divine command theory of moral obligation.

The obligation to honor individuals holding superior stations was not altogether without qualification, however. One qualification typically summoned by Puritans rested upon the purpose that authors claimed underwrote the chain of being. God intended the chain to facilitate the “ascent” to Him; the practice of honoring mortals should therefore always serve as “a step” in the “ascent” to God (Calvin 1947, p. 346; and Walker 1642, p. 9). For

¹⁸ See also Gillespie (1646), especially p. 317, where he writes, “If we be obliged by the fifth commandment to honour Magistrates as Fathers, then it is the will of God that there be such Fathers. So...we are commanded to know them which are over us in the Lord, and to esteem them highly, 1 *Thess.* 5. 12.

this reason, English Puritans who paralleled this argument from Calvin claimed that inferiors were not obligated to honor political authorities who commanded disobedience to God. This would be absurd, as it would move subjects away from God, undermining the purpose for the chain of being's existence (Calvin 1947, p. 346).

Another set of arguments that worked to establish the connection between honoring political authority and moral obligation depended upon a particular belief concerning the appropriate *source* that individuals summon when they validated a moral claim.

Conforming Protestant reformers believed that the Bible was the primary, even sole, *source* of human knowledge about God and his moral commands. This “word-centered” (Doerksen 2004, pp.13-15) style of piety was theologically Calvinist, although we can attribute it to Lutheranism as well. Conforming Protestants who followed Calvin or Luther in this matter typically turned to the Bible to shore up the claim that honoring political authority was morally obligatory and I will offer some of the Biblical passages they summoned to support this claim in a moment. The Conformist Protestant belief in the ultimate moral authority of the Bible served as an alternative to the Catholic belief. The latter claimed that God transmuted His will through the Pope and his bishops. The Conformist belief also served as an alternative to a belief found in less dominant Protestant and reformist sects like the Brownists, Independents, Baptists, Millenairains, Familists, Quakers, Seekers, and Ranters. These non-conforming Protestant sects usually thought in terms of direct moral inspiration by the Holy Spirit who spoke to or through the conscience (Thomas 1958, p. 44). As King James I put it, their theology made “the

Scriptures to be ruled by...conscience, and not...conscience by Scripture” (King James I 1616, 144 as cited in George 1968, p. 81).

Word-centered Conforming Protestants who relied on the Bible to establish the obligation to honor political authority took issue with this spirit-centered moral doctrine. Hobbes also took issue with this spirit-centered doctrine and I will discuss his engagement with this controversy briefly here. Spirit-centered morality was on the rise in the mid-seventeenth-century; Hobbes claimed that it “hath spread itself so largely through the whole Christian world, that the number of [its] apostates...is almost become infinite” (Hobbes *DC*, p. 249). Hobbes battled against this increasingly popular spirit-centered moral doctrine, ultimately claiming that what nonconformists identified as the divine spirit moving within them and speaking moral truth to and thru them is “nothing else but a man’s settled [private] judgment and opinion” (Hobbes *EL*, p. 153). Hobbes argued that the foundation of moral claims that non-conformists argued derive from “spirit” working within truly derived from the senses, the passions or the creative constructions of the non-conformists wild and lawless imaginations (Hobbes *Lev*, p. 265). For, according to Hobbes’s materialist ontology, mortal flesh could never be possessed by the Holy Spirit or by an ethereal conscience, as nonconformists claimed. Man was nothing but matter. There was therefore no void through and in which the spirit could enter and dwell in man (Hobbes *Lev*, p. 262-271).¹⁹ Spirit and matter were also logical opposites,

¹⁹ The only divine thing morals *might* possess, according to Hobbes, is the laws of nature, assuming that this law is a divine command and not merely a rule of prudence. But, these moral laws dwelling within man are not to be confused with divine spirits. Moral laws do not mysteriously enter the flesh, move mortals to speak God’s will, and then leave the flesh at a moment’s notice. Instead, as I will show in Chapter 7 Hobbes argued that God *wrote* the moral laws onto the hearts of every mortal and mortals could therefore *read* these moral laws if they exercised their reason rightly.

according to Hobbes. So, to claim that one's flesh was momentarily inspired by or thoroughly invested with a divine spirit that proclaimed moral truths was to state a logical contradiction.²⁰ That is, it was to speak falsely. Hobbes further argued that individuals who claimed that their moral beliefs were divinely inspired spoke nonsense (Hobbes *DC*, p. 249). Men who appealed to the divine spirit to establish the validity of their moral claims were "pretender[s] to the spirit of God" (Hobbes, *Lev*, p. 321). They were vain, possibly insane,²¹ and most certainly idolaters (Hobbes *DC*, p. 249). For, they vainly worshipped the moral claims of their own *subjective* making as divinely sanctioned, even obligatory (Aston 1988, p. 343).²² This spirit-centered morality was also political dangerous because it ultimately led to war. It generated moral disagreement and destroyed the common moral fabric in society, as it permitted each "divinely inspired"

²⁰ Hobbes attributed the foundation of this nonsensical and therefore meaningless contradiction to "the canting of Grecian sophisters," namely to Aristotle and the Peripatetics who argued for the existence of immaterial essences within material bodies (Hobbes *EL*, p. 149).

²¹ For example, consider this passage from Hobbes.

[One] that preached in Cheapside from a cart there, instead of a pulpit, that he himself was Christ, which was spiritual pride or madness...Amongst the learned madmen may be numbered (I think) also those that determine of the time of the world's end, and other such points of prophecy. (Hobbes *EL*, p. 63)

Hobbes's description of these men as insane or vain was neither new nor out of the ordinary. Nor does it mark him as an atheist. Nearly a century earlier, Calvin also called these types "mad" men and claimed that they suffered from vain pride (Calvin [1559] 1949, pp. 46, 59, 84).

²²As Hobbes put it, they "stand in awe of their own imaginations...[they] invoke them [and] give them thanks, [they] mak[e] the creatures of their own fancy their gods" (Hobbes *Lev*, p. 62). Like Hobbes, Protestant Reformers worried about man's propensity to worship one's own mental thoughts or images (Aston 1988, p.458; Barbour 2002, pp. 101-102). As Aston (1988) explains, "As time went on mental images received increasing attention from the over-anxious exponents of the second commandment. In the end it was the pictures in the mind, more than misused images in church, that became the first burden on the consciences of believers (p.458)." In 1643, one house member warned the House of Commons "that the idols you carry in your hearts, are the greatest stumbling blocks [to reformation]" (Aston 1988, p. 459). Hobbes, too, considered the worshipping of images created by the brain idolatry and, to put a more disdainful spin on it, he associated this contemporary practice with those performed in ancient times by pagans and gentiles. He wrote,

Before our Savoie preached it was the general religion of the Gentiles to worship for gods those appearances that remain in the brain from the impression of external bodies upon the organs of their senses which are commonly called ideas, idols, phantasms, conceits..the thing which they honored or feared in the image, and held for a god, was a mere figment..and the worship of these with divine honour is that which in the Scripture called idolatry, and rebellion against God. (Hobbes, *Lev*, p. 441)

individual to judge good and evil from their own radically subjective position and to masquerade their subjective morality as objectively true (Hobbes *DC*, p. 249).²³

Mainstream and conforming Protestant reformers argued that in order to validate the claim that honoring was a moral obligation one must turn to the Word, that is, to Biblical passages. The Bible here bound the conscience, that is, it bound subjective judgments or opinions concerning good and evil and it proclaimed which practices were obligatory, which non-obligatory, and which prohibited.

Conforming Protestant reformers turned especially to the Decalogue for the moral law, as the Ten Commandments assumed great importance in reformed belief (Aston 1988, p. 346). These commandments became the essential guide to moral conduct (Aston 1988, p. 346). With respect to the moral obligation to honor superiors, reformers appealed to the Fifth Commandment (Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother). Hobbes, too, did so on one occasion. He writes, “Honour thy parents” is a “command” “because the reason for which we are to obey [it] is drawn from the will of God our king, whom we are obliged to obey”

²³ In the *Lev*, Hobbes writes,

From this false doctrine [that each man judges good and evil] men are disposed to debate with themselves, and dispute the commands of the commonwealth, and afterwards to obey or disobey them, as in their private judgments they shall think fit....Another doctrine repugnant to civil society is that whatsoever a man does against his conscience is sin, and it dependeth on the presumption of making himself judge of good and evil....It hath been also commonly taught *that faith and sanctity are not to be attained by study and reason, but by supernatural inspiration or infusion*, which granted, I see not why any man should render a reason of his faith, or why every Christian should not be also a prophet, or why any man should take the law of his country, rather than his own inspiration, for the rule of his action. (p. 212)

(Hobbes *Lev*, p. 168). Here, God's command revealed through Scripture renders honoring parents morally obligatory.²⁴ As Richard Capel (1658) also explained,

It's agreed on by almost all Divines of all sides, that if one of the Propositions be in the Scripture, and the other be but a moral certainty which leaves no dubitation behinde it, the conclusion binde the conscience. *As thus, every childe is bound in conscience to honour his Parents* (this is an act of faith grounded on the Scripture) *such or such a man is my father*, this is but a moral certainty, yet hence it follows, that *in conscience I stand bound, in conscience to honour such a man as my Father...*If these reasonings were not firme, it would destroy all Policy and Order in this life, nor could Gods law to *honour father and mother* binde the conscience. (p. 24)

Capel (1658) here established the moral obligation to honor parents by appealing to Scripture and by claiming that the propositions found therein bind the conscience. Who counts as a natural "parent," rests not in Scripture but on a "moral certainty" that depends on the credit the child places on the one hand in the mother as a faithful wife and on the other in the father who witnessed the mother's pregnancy, and the delivery of the child.

Authors then extended the scope of moral obligation to honor parents into the realm of political relations. Sir Edward Coke (1606), for example, articulated the central premise of patriarchal theory by declaring that the commandment to honor fathers "doubtless doth extend" to "pater patriae" (p. 91).²⁵ If honoring one's father was a moral obligation, so was honoring the sovereign since the sovereign was the "father" of the people. On occasion, Hobbes (*DC*) also summons patriarchal analogies. He explains, "to be a *king*, is nothing else but to have dominion over many persons; and thus a great family is a kingdom, and a little kingdom a family" (p. 205). Hobbes (*EL*) makes a similar analogy

²⁴ But, according to Hobbes, civil sovereigns, rather than individual subjects, flesh out the content of this moral obligation. Therefore "honour thy father and thy mother" is also a civil law. (Hobbes *DC*, p. 277)

²⁵ For more on patriarchal theory in mid-seventeenth century England see Schochet (1975), and Thomas (1958), especially pp. 42-62.

when discussing children and subjects. He wrote, “And forasmuch as all subjects in commonwealths are in the nature of children and servants, that which is a command to them, is a command to all subjects” (p. 143).

Patriarchal theory therefore contributes to our understanding of the moral obligation to honor political authority because it enables the moral obligation to honor parents to include the political obligation to honor political authorities. Most Englishmen and women in mid-seventeenth-century England conceptualized political authority in these patriarchal terms (Schochet 1969, pp. 415-428). As a contemporary author further explained,

Now as it is a thing required by law...that children beare that honour and reverence to their naturall parents which is commanded; so it is necessary by the same respect, that all subjects performe that duty of honour...[to] Princes and Kings...Scripture biddeth every man to be subject to the higher powers; not so much to avoid the punishment which might befall the contrary, as because it is agreeable to the will of God. (Beard 1642, p. 158)

The relation between honoring, moral obligation and political obligation could not be clearer here. Ascribing political superiors with the title of “father” or “mother” was said to help inferiors “comport” with their inferior position, since authors claimed parental superiority is “most natural” (Fergusson 1659, p. 411). The title of “father” or “mother” rendered the superior position “lesse invidious to those who are to be subject unto it” (Fergusson 1659, p.411), and it helped “accustom” inferiors to “legitimate subjection” (Calvin 1947, p. 344).

In addition to the Fifth Commandment, authors cited one of Luther's favorites, Romans 13.7 to establish the moral obligation to honor political authority (Doerksen 2004, p.15-16). "Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; *honour to whom honour.*"²⁶ As one author explained,

Tis His [God's] expresse charge and command, *Give unto Caesar the things that are Caesars, honour to whom honour belongeth*, and shall any Mandate from any inferior power, cause any of us to violate the Mandate of heaven it selfe?... Let us make our peace with God, and...not onely remember, but execute Gods command by *giving unto Caesar the things that are Caesars, Honour to whom honour belongeth.* (Jordan 1642, p. 3-5)²⁷

For the goldy, making peace with God is here more important than making peace with an inferior mortal power. Conveniently, the way to make peace with God, especially within the Anglican tradition, is by giving honour to political authorities, to Caesars, to whom honor is due.

Authors also invoked Peter's First Letter to establish the morally obligatory character of honoring political authority. "Honor the Emperor. Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect (1 Pet. 2.17-18)." Honoring here entails showing a kind of submissive respect, a kind of humility to political authority. I will flesh out the connection between honoring and humility in a moment. Protestants invoked Peter again to establish the obligatory nature of honoring when they cited 1 Peter 2. 17. "Fear God, Honor the King" (Dickson 1659, p. 292). Pointing to specific stories in the Bible as a way to establish the moral obligation to honor superiors was also commonplace.

²⁶ Emphasis mine.

²⁷ See also (Dickson 1659, p. 32).

Honor thy father and mother: it is Gods express command, and a *dictate of natu[...]*Je: this imports reverence in thy bodily gesture before them (as King Solomon rose up to meet his mother Bath-sheba, and bowed himself unto her [1 King.2.19]: as Moses went out to meet his father in law, and did obeisance [Exod.18.7]) ...So saith the *Apostle*, We have had fathers of the flesh, and *we gave them reverence* [Hebr.12.9]: none but a cursed Cham will behave himself unreverently before his father or mother [Gen 9. 22, 23]....Go with blessed Shem and Japhet with the vaile of discreet piety to conceale them [their failings] [Gen 9. 22,23]. (Reading 1651, p. 312)

Examples from the Old Testament here served to develop what flows from the moral obligation to honor parents. For example, because Solomon and Moses bowed to their parents, reverential bodily gesture toward parents is morally obligatory, a claim I will flesh out in a moment.

The Bible showed too that dishonoring parents is sin and it shows how God punishes these sinners. In the preceding passage, Noah's son, the "cursed Cham" is a sinner (Genesis 9:21-25). When Noah was drunk and lying naked, Cham's brothers Sem and Japheth honored their father by covering him up with a mantle. They concealed his shame by covering over the truth about their father. But, Cham did not hide his father's shame. He publicly ridiculed his father. By this disobedience, children "kindle the fire of Gods wrath against them" (Beard 1642, p. 157). A century earlier, Calvin argued that God orders mortals to punish children who refuse to honor their parents. "The Lord orders all who rebel against their parents to be put to death, they being, as it were, unworthy of the light in paying no deference to those to whom they are indebted for beholding it (Calvin 1947, p 345)." When Noah learned what Cham had done, he cursed Cham for dishonoring him. And, as one contemporary author explains, "The curse was

fulfilled in his [Cham's] posterity the Canaanites, who being forsaken of God, were rooted up and spued out of their land" (Beard 1642, p.151).

1.2 The Political Obligations that Follow

The connection between honoring political authority and moral obligation spelled out above affected how mid-seventeenth-century-Christian believers discussed their political obligations. Many authors fleshed out the specific beliefs and practices that honoring imposed upon inferiors. Authors also worked to construct the boundary between obligation-meeting and non-obligation-meeting honoring practices. Their abstracted set of obligation-meeting honoring practices approximate what Max Weber terms an "ideal type" against which one could evaluate actual honoring practices in real contexts. These idealized accounts show that the obligation to honor superiors commanded inferiors to be extremely obedient and zealous political subjects, bounded by the moral law to honor their godly rulers externally and internally. In this section, I explore some of the external and internal political obligations imposed upon subjects by virtue of the assumption that they were morally obligated to honor their rulers.

Authors who wrote on the issue generally agreed that obedient action to a ruler's lawful command flowed from the Fifth Commandment.²⁸ That is, obedience was one obligation-meeting action. In fact, it was "the surest note of the honour" that an inferior gave to his or her superior (Clarke 1659, p. 259). One of King Charles's I loyal subjects articulated the relation between honoring and obedient action in the following way.

²⁸See especially Calvin (1947) p. 345. See also Schochet (1975), p. 90; and Laslett (1965), p. 177.

The fifth Commandment, enjoin'd by God himself...enjoins...Obedience to Parents....Most Divines do acknowledge that here is intended Magistracy...[and] I have obeyed that Magistracy....under which I have liv'd. (Capel 1649, p.166)

Obedience to a magistrate here flows from the Fifth Commandment. Like Capel (1649) in this passage, Hobbes (DC) also associates obedience with honoring. He writes, "Honour thy father and thy mother...Nothing else was commanded, but that subjects and citizens, should *absolutely obey* their princes in *all* questions concerning meum and teum, their own and others' right (p. 342, emphases mine)." Hobbes here employs the Fifth Commandment to justify obedience to parents and he employs patriarchal assumptions in order to extend obedience to subjects who owe to their rulers to *all* questions pertaining to property, rights and liberties.

Hobbes's unqualified claim about the obedience subjects owed to civil authority on account of their obligation to honor them as parents is neither novel nor heretical. For, it is consistent with patriarchal assumptions and with the liner notes and prologues found in authorized, conformist religious texts including King Henry VIII's *Great Bible*, Queen Elizabeth's *Bishop's Bible*, and King James's *King James Bible* (C. MacKenzie 2002, p. 10). Wherever possible, the notes and prologues in these Bibles counseled obedience to civil authority instead of making excuses for disobedience (C. MacKenzie 2002, p. 74). The liner notes expressed the notion of a church and state combined under one secular head, and they authorized a Christianity operating under the guidance and control of secular authority (C. MacKenzie 2002, p.10, p.20, p. 46). According to Caroline Anglican divines, affairs of church and state were "of one piece," the civil and ecclesiastical were not separate; they were united in one body politic under the head of secular authority (C.

MacKenzie 2002, p. 86). Anglican divines abhorred individual interpretations of Scripture (I. MacKenzie, 2002, p. 3). Interpretation, they thought, was best left to divines appointed by the civil sovereign. This “had always been the generally accepted and practiced constitutional position in England” (I. MacKenzie 2002, p. 86). Within this Conformist and Anglican tradition, there was therefore no room “for using the Scriptures to stand in judgment over the monarch” (C. MacKenzie. 2002, pp.45-6), since the monarch possessed ultimate authority in scriptural interpretation. Here, therefore, the moral obligation to honor the civil sovereign through obedient action in civil and sacred matters contained no authoritative Biblical qualification.

The unqualified obedience that flowed from the obligation to honor rulers required an *active* form of obedience. Here it, demanded something more than a “mere” obedience to the civil sovereign’s command. What I mean by this is that honoring obligated subjects to obey their rulers in an *intense* way. Anglican clergyman and scholar Lawrence Andrewes (1650) explained this point:

By doing *more* then we are bound to; this is a good sign that we do truly honour them, if we do not barely our duty, but abound in every good work, by doing more or oftener then law requires. (p. 394, emphasis mine)

Here, Andrewes distinguished the obligation to honor superiors from the obligation to obey them simply. Honoring here entailed an intense kind of obedience. It required that inferiors do *more* than they are lawfully bound to do. It also required inferiors do whatever they are commanded *more often* than they are strictly bound to do it.

According to this view, therefore, an intense or active form of obedience flowed from the obligation to honor superiors.

Qualifications upon the obedience owed to political authorities arose within a certain Genevan brand of Protestantism, however. Protestants returning to England from Geneva after their exile in Marian times brought with them this brand of Protestantism. These Protestants used the notes and prologues in their Bible, the Geneva Bible, to establish an international Protestant faith independent of the personal whims of any civil sovereign (C. MacKenzie 2002, p. 7). This brand of Protestantism is one that Hobbes (*EL*) wrote, “hath not been of very great antiquity in the world” (p. 141). Its doctrine qualified the obedience owed to political authority. If the civil sovereign commanded something expressly prohibited by Scripture, subjects were not obligated to honor the sovereign by obeying him or her (C. MacKenzie 2002, p. 7).²⁹ One example of this argument is developed in the writings of Henry Perkins, a Cambridge theologian and foremost leader of the Puritan movement in the Church of England. Perkins (1654) wrote,

The fifth commandment. Honour thy Father and thy Mother....*The Affirmative part of this, is this.* Here is commanded.....obedience to the lawfull commands of parents....Here we are commanded to obey superiors, yeah, though cruel, but not in wickedness. (p. 80)

Perkins here related honoring to obedience but qualified obedience by forging a distinction between cruelty and wickedness. Inferiors must obey cruel superiors but they must not obey them when cruelty is so extreme that it spills over and becomes something else, wickedness, which God forbids.

²⁹ As Calvin [1559] (1947) earlier explained,
If [parents] instigate us to transgress the law [of God], they deserve not to be regarded as parents, but as strangers attempting to seduce us from our obedience to our true Father. The same holds in case of rulers, masters, and superiors of every description. (p.344)

Both conforming and nonconforming Protestants, however, interpreted the obedience that honoring obligated as rich in symbolic meaning. Through obedience, inferiors made their superior's relative superiority symbolically "shine forth." Obedient action therefore presented a relation of inequality. It signified the superiority of the person obeyed, namely it signified his or her superior power (Hobbes *DC*, p. 297). That is, it symbolically "demonstrated" and "confessed" a superior's relative superiority to others living in a shared semiotic field. (Hammond 1659, p. 20). Within this field, obedience was understood as an honoring practice and this practice "manifested" a superior's relative superiority (Hobbes *Lev*, 1.X).

Obedience was therefore one of many symbolically meaningful honoring practices that the multitude of the world was obligated to perform in order to fulfill their obligation to honor their superiors. Other obligation-meeting outward expressions of honoring like "putting off the hat" and "standing bare-headed" when facing superiors also flowed from the obligation to honor superiors. These outward expressions are the second type of obligation-meeting action that flow from the moral obligation to honor superiors. Inferiors here were obligated to "show" their superior's superiority externally "by all reverend behavior," including "rising up before them" and giving "them the honour to speak first" (Clarke 1659, p. 266). Like obedience, these actions contained symbolic meaning, as they served as "confessions of [another's] greater power" (Hobbes *Lev*, X, I).

Ardent royalist Richard Allestree (1659) explained,

There must be also some exterior sign or testimony, whereby we acknowledge it [superiority]....Holy men in scripture have exhibited *outward honour* by several gestures...which may be reduced to these seven heads. 1. to rise up when a person of excellency...is...in

presence...2.The uncovering or making the head bare was accounted a token of honour in use with the Saints...3. The bowing of the knee, or all or part of the body. 4...standing up...5...to be silent, in the presence of them we account our betters... 6...when of necessity we...speak, we use words of submission...7...[and we must] minister and wait. (p. 311)

Like Allestree here, Hobbes also claimed that children and subjects are obligated to perform acts of “outward honour.” But, unlike Allestree, Hobbes claimed that the civil sovereign---not Scripture---will determine which external expressions of honoring children and subjects shall perform within society. Hobbes (*DC*) wrote,

Christ hath commanded us to honour our parents, and hath not prescribed what rites, what appellations, and what manner of obedience they are to be honored; it is to be supposed that they are to be honored...outwardly, [but] not beyond the city’s permission, which shall assign to every man, as all things else, his honour. (p. 342)³⁰

Here, Hobbes does not deny superiors the outward expressions of honoring that flow from the moral obligation to honor parents. Hobbes only argued that the sovereign will determine what social script inferiors will follow in their daily social interactions with their “parents.” The sovereign power will determine and maintain the hierarchical order within society that the civil sovereign—who is akin to God since he is the fountain of honor---sets in motion.

Obligatory outward expressions of honoring were also *performative* practices. They formed the visible substance of what Belarius in Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline* called “Reverence/That angel of the world” that “doth make distinction/Of place ‘tween high and low” (as cited in Bevington 1984, p. 135). Here, Belarius asserted that reverence

³⁰ See also (Hobbes, *DC*). Hobbes writes, “Now because it comes from the civil laws, both that every man have his proper right and distinguished from another’s, and also that he is forbidden to invade another’s rights; it follows that...: Thou shalt not refuse to give the honour defined by the laws, unto thy parents..[is] civil law.” (p.277)

itself is what *makes* the distinction between high and low. The obligation to honor superiors outwardly is not simply an obligation to acknowledge an original, essentialized or foundational hierarchical order. Here, honoring is performative. It is an obligation that commands inferiors to bring an unequal relation into being, that is, to bring an unequal relation into social existence by signaling the unequal relation to other members of society. Symbolic honoring practices like hat-doffing do something here; they constitute inequality within a given semiotic field. And, constituting inequality in this semiotic field through these performative practices was another obligation-meeting action that flowed from the moral obligation to honor superiors.

We find further evidence of the claim that outward acts of honoring are performative and therefore *bring* unequal relations into social existence and into public view in the writings of Hobbes's contemporaries. In a short letter to a friend, Ezekias Woodward claimed that honoring "lifteth them-up high," that is, the practice did something: it raised the honored person's existing position in society. Other commentators claimed that honoring establishes a *new* relation of inequality between honorer, honored and neutral onlookers (Woodward 1644, p. 10). By putting "honour upon them, [one] helps to magnifie them" in society (Woodward 1644, p. 23). Honoring "stamps value" upon the person or thing honored (Cokain 1658, chpt. 3). Honorers here *alter* and *transform* existing social relations because they augment the honored person's position relative to the honorer within a semiotic field (Woodward 1644, p. 23). In the *Leviathan*, Hobbes notes that obedience (understood as an honoring practice) serves to "exalt" the power and authority of the person honored (p. 386). In answer to sundry arguments written by the Independent

theologian Goodwin, George Walker (1641) claimed that by externally honoring another, the honored person's "reputation might be rais'd" (p.1). Richard Ward (1641), in his text, *The principall duty of Parliament-men* implied that external honoring "sets forth" a relation of inequality *and* makes this unequal relation "shine" (p. 4). This "shining" constitutes the relation of inequality between honorer and honored within society, or within a community with a shared language. And, these performative deeds, gestures or utterances were obligation-meeting actions. They flowed from the moral obligation to honor superiors.

Samuel Clarke (1642) also expressed the performativity of these obligatory and outward honoring expressions. "Honour is but the *raising* the rate, and value of a man [and] it carries nothing of substance necessarily along with it." (p.195, emphasis mine). For Clarke, honoring practices neither presupposed nor implied an unequal relation "of substance." What Clarke suggested here is that honoring practices *themselves* establish unequal relations in society. Here, "the very foundation" of the unequal relation "is nothing else but the noyse of the tongue, and the report of others, or the knee, or the hat" (Plockhoy 1659, p. 26). Obligatory outward expressions of honoring here constitute unequal relations, provided that the community of spectators shares an understanding of these practices. And, in England during this time period, "the name of the tongue" was no more worthy than "name of the finger," and the "name of the eye" was no more excellent than "the name of the brest," but "the name of Lord and Gentlemen puffeth up" (Plockhoy 1659, p. 26). Hobbes (*DC*) noted that the name "king" is "a point of honour and reverence" (p. 194). Consequently, this title "puffeth up." Here, honorific titles and

locutions, along with honorific gestures and actions, create hierarchical distinctions within the linguistic community (Plockhoy 1659, p. 26). Social inequality here is produced by and through this practice of signification within the structure of this language system. Social superiority is established here not by God but through the “varnish” that the honorer provides through his or her honoring practice (Allestree 1660, p. 32). Honorers here are artists. Through their speeches, gestures and deeds, they paint others in such a way that they appear relatively superior within society. This claim is one I will address further in the next Chapter on honoring God and in my eighth chapter, where I argue that we should interpret the act of sovereign authorization in Hobbes as an act of honoring.

Let me return to some other obligations that honoring imposed upon inferiors. In addition to obedience and certain outward expressions, honoring obligated inferiors to pay superiors tributes for their maintenance. One author explained, “To bring honour...is to pay tribute or bring a present (Mede 1642, p. 214).” Hobbes similarly associated honoring with paying tribute. “To offer unto or present,” or “to give oblations” is a “sign of honour” which “the inferior giveth to the superior” (Hobbes, *EL*, p. 49, p. 70). Here, honoring obligated children and subjects to give their parents and rulers what we might think of as taxes and to construe taxes in terms of honorific tributes, or gifts.

Contemporaries argued that children owed their parents gifts or provisions as a form of honoring, especially if parents were in need. “If parents be in want it is not to be doubted, but children ought to do their mutual duties to their Parents, and to honour them by nourishing them (Dickson 1659, p. 91).” As another author had it,

Honour thy father and mother. Among other good offices, nourish and cherish them as Joseph did Jacob and his family...Be unto them as Obed was to Naomi, A restorer of her, and a nourisher of her old age. This the Apostle commends to us. (Trapp 1647, p. 420)

Joseph and Obed maintained their parents in times of need and honoring obligated this from them. Contemporary authors extended the notion of honoring as the obligation to give the gift of maintenance into the political sphere. John Milton (1641), for example, associates honoring with providing maintenance to magistrates. “The Magistrate...is to bee honour’d with a[n]...elaborate and personally Courtship, with large Salaries and Stipends, that hee himselfe may abound in those things whereof his legall justice and watchfull care gives us the quiet enjoyment (p. 73).” Here, political subjects honor magistrates by offering them a gift greater than the gift of maintenance. They honor them by offering them “large Salaries and Stipends.” Hobbes (*Lev*) concurred: “to give great gifts to a man, is to honour him” (I.X).

According to Hobbes, the obligation to give gifts which flowed from the obligation to honor superiors is saturated with symbolic meaning. This gift-offering serves to acknowledge the recipient’s relative superiority. As Hobbes wrote, “to give great gifts to a man is to honour him; because it is....acknowledging of power” (Hobbes *Lev*, p. I, X). Other contemporary authors established the symbolic meaning of honoring as gift-giving using pagan as well as Christian sources. One author explained,

Aristotle, *Rhet* 1.1.c.5 among the parts of honour, reckons gifts, honorarie donatives, for a gift is the giving a possessions, and a signe of honour. So Num.22.37 Am not I able to honour thee? That is, to give thee...a reward, saith S. Hierome: for so the Hebrew signifies both honour and reward (Hammond 1659, p. 798)

As tributes of honor, the gift symbolically denotes something quite specific. As Mede (1642) explained,

[It] is not to be esteemed of the nature of Almes, as some would have it, but is a Tribute of honour, such as is given by an inferiour to his superior....[the] maintenance is no ordinary mercenary wages, but such as is given by way of honour, as well as of reward: for such as is given to ordinary workmen is reward and wages only, and not a Testimony or Tribute of honour...[Tribute is] not a common wages [sic], which the superior often gives to his inferiour, or servant, but honorarium. (p. 214)

When provisions are honorariums, they do not connote that the recipient of them is dependent upon the provider. Nor does gift-giving connote equality. Instead, the gift symbolically acknowledges a relation of inequality, with the giver as inferior. Here, the act of giving provisions is not part of our ordinary understanding of exchange relationships in the sense that exchange relationships usually presuppose that the objects exchanged have a determined value. By contrast, the superior acknowledged through the honorarium is acknowledged as beyond value, or as someone who performed something beyond value. As one author wrote,

[Call] the stipend given them by the name of Honour, because of such moment is their work, that it cannot be valued at any rate: And because the stipend which is allowed them, is to be given not upon the account of wages, but an Honorary, or an honourable reward. (Dickson 1659, p. 167)

The honorary gift here symbolically acknowledged or testified that the superior performed work or is so extraordinary that his value cannot be determined. The “debt” of gratitude owed by the inferior here can therefore never be repaid. Honorary gifts therefore do not underscore notions of equality between giver and recipient. Individuals do not give “honoraries” to equals or “hirelings;” they give them to “Fathers” (Dickson 1659, p. 167). I plan to return to this conceptualization of honoring as gift-giving in Chapter 8 where I analyze Hobbes’s account of sovereign authorization. There, I shall

argue that we must understand the gift of sovereignty as an honorarium, as a tribute of honour, serving to symbolically declare the sovereign's superiority.

In addition to paying honorary tributes to superiors, honoring obligated inferiors to speak well of them. This was another obligation-meeting action that flowed from the moral obligation to honor superiors. Honoring here obligated inferiors to maintain their superior's "persons and authority according to their several ranks and the nature of their places" (Blunt 1647, p. 26). That is to say, inferiors were obligated to maintain their superior's reputation, their status, or their good name. As English Protestant divine and philosopher William Ames (1642) explained,

Honour as it is the externall good of a man, doth not really differ from fame....That office of honouring which we owe...is to preserve that state of dignity which they have, without being hurt...The good name of our neighbor is hurt when that estimation which ought to be had of him is diminished, 1 *Cor. 4. 13.* (p. 356)

Honoring here obliged inferiors to preserve their superior's fame, or outward honor.

Inferiors have to ensure that other members of society esteem their superiors according to their superior's station or "state of dignity." In the political sphere, subjects had to maintain and even promote their ruler's fame or outward honor within their borders and outside them as well. Here is how one writer put the point:

[Subject are] bound to promote the Honour and Dignity of *Kings*, whom Christianity would have so much honour'd, as to establish the just subordination of people to their Prince, upon better principles then ever, no lesse the their precise duty to God. (Taylor Jeremy 1647, Image 4)

Peter's command to "Honor the King" here served a double function. It bound Christian subjects *to promote* the king's honour and dignity, and it bound them *to promote* their own subordination. That is to say, honoring "establishes the just *subordination* of people

to their Prince” while it “promotes the Honour and Dignity of Kings” (Taylor, Jeremy 1647, Image 4).

In order to promote their ruler’s honour and dignity, subjects were obligated to honor rulers with words and locutions. Authors told inferiors to esteem their rulers in public. One way to do this was through praise. “*Honor est in honorante* [honor is in the honorer]... We must honour him, we must doe him honour; and of all the honour in the world, that of words is the cheapest (Taylor, Jer. 1647, p. 337). Cheap words may be, but honoring superiors in speech was nevertheless obligatory. Hobbes argued that inferiors honor their superiors in speech by associating their names with virtuous and powerful attributes such as “good, fair, strong, just, and the like” (Hobbes *DC*, p. 295). These attributes are reverential. Presbyterian Richard Baxter (1683) also discussed how honoring obligates inferiors to speak reverently to and about their superiors. He wrote,

What duty doth the Word [*Honour*] contain and Command?... They [inferiors] ought to speak reverently to them [superiors], and honourably of them, and not use any unjust dishonouring Thoughts or Words... against them. (p. 296)

Whenever inferiors spoke of their superiors in public, inferiors had to *promote* their superiors’ fame or outward honor. They had to speak well and honorably *of* them to others. And, when speaking *to* them, they had to use reverential speech, since “to speak to another with consideration, to appear before him [or her] with decency, and humility; is to honour him [or her]” (Hobbes *Lev*, I.X). These were additional obligation-meeting actions that flowed from the obligation to honor superiors.

Inferiors also had to cover up any discrepancies between facts and ideals. Frequently, individuals holding superior positions did not embody the ideals that accompanied their superior status. Nor did they perform the duties associated with their superior position. These facts diminished their outward honor or reputation. So, when these facts were revealed, honoring obligated inferiors to cover them up (Fergusson 1659, p. 401). We have already come across an example of this obligation in the case of Noah and his sons. Recall that when Noah was shamefully drunk and lying naked, honoring obligated his sons to cover their father's shame. In an analysis of the Fifth Commandment, Royalist Richard Allestree (1658b) carefully explained how children should perform this cover-up operation.

We owe them [parents] reverence, and respect...If indeed they have infirmities, it must be our business to cover, and conceal them; like Shem and Japhet, who while cursed Cham published and disclosed the nakedness of their father, covered it. Gen 9.23. and that in such a manner too, as even themselves might not behold it. (p. 280)

Paradoxically, to meet their obligation to honor their superiors, children had to blot out their awareness of their parent's infirmities. They had to engage in self-mystification, willing their own ignorance. Authors who extended this argument into the political sphere claimed that subjects who honor their rulers ought not to "behold" or become fully conscious of their superior's infirmities. They especially should not become fully conscious of infirmities that make inferiors suffer. Those "who looke with honour upon the Prince...will more hardly be brought to think, though themselves feale, and suffer for it, that he is faultie" (Thomas, 1642, p. 7).

Additionally, subjects who honor their rulers should not criticize them for wrongdoing. They especially ought not to speak disrespectfully about them in public.³¹ These were additional obligation-meeting actions that flowed from the obligation to honor mortal superiors. Honoring here obligated inferiors to obey “without enquiring, murmuring or contending” (Clarke 1659, p. 266). Inferiors who honor their superiors therefore should not “tell or discover their [superior’s] failings, to discredit, or dishonour them” (Reading 1651, p. 312). They should “never dar[e], upon any pretence whatsoever, to speak evil of the ruler of our people, *Acts 23.5*” (Reading, 1659, p. 278). Hobbes (*Lev*) explained that,

[Subjects] ought to be informed how great a fault it is to speak evil of the sovereign representative (whether one man or an assembly of men), or to argue and dispute his power, or any way to use his name irreverently, whereby he may be brought into contempt with his people, and their obedience (in which the safety of the commonwealth consisteth) slackened. (p. 223)

In addition to speaking reverently about and toward the civil sovereign in order to shore up obedience, subjects should look well upon the civil sovereign. They should not give their rulers an “ill look” (Trapp 1647, p. 421). For, “the eye that mocketh at his father...the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young Eagles shall eat it” (Trapp 1647, p. 421).

Here, the obligation to honor superiors truncated verbal and visual criticism of superiors. Anglican clergyman Lancelot Andrewes wrote, “Honor must be shown in words...the children that mocked...were destroyed by beares (Andrewes 1658, p. 394).” Echoing the First Commandment’s declaration that mortals shall not use the Lord’s name in vain, Thomas Beard (1642) explained,

³¹ See also (Blunt, 1647 p 26); (Perkins 1654, p 80); (Leigh 1650, p 822); and (Hall 1658, p. 296).

To honour the King; and To give unto Caesar that which is Caesars, as unto God that which is Gods. So also in Moses law wee are forbidden to detract from or speake evill of the Magistrate, or to curse the Ruler of the people. (p158)

Rather than speak poorly about their rulers, subjects should speak of their rulers “in love so they may be an honour to them and to their government” (Blunt 1647, p. 26). Consider this example. The author below wrote about the causes of the civil war. He claimed that libelous pamphlets and sermons were one cause. He maintained that those who wrote them and who spoke against King Charles I broke their moral obligation to honor him.

Whence come the numberlesse Pamphlets of these distracted times, seditious Sermons or rather exclamations, tending to disorder, faction and mutiny...Such black-mouth'd *Machiauells*... should know, that Princes whilst they live are Gods, and especially annoynted from above, whom they ought not to touch neither to curse or revile, no, nor so much as think an ill thought; how far...such are from being subject to the higher powers, and from submitting themselves to every ordinance for the Lords sake let the world judge. It being I believe no part of their study or profession to feare God, and *honour* the King. (Reynolds 1642, p. 38, second emphasis mine)

This Royalist supporter of Charles I reminded his audience of the chain of being. God “especially annoynted” Charles. He made Charles a “vessel of honor.” That is, God made the king a person that all God-loving or God-fearing Christian subjects *should honor* with reverential speech and thought. The pamphleteers and sermonizers who “curse or revile” Charles break Peter’s ordinance. These pamphleteers and sermonizers “despise Dominion, speak Evil of Dignities, Kings and Kingships” and they are therefore “like those unjust, carnal, brutish Beasts” mentioned in the Bible who are “made to be destroyed, and reserved to the day of Judgement to be punished...2 Pet.29 to 14. Jude 8,

9,10” (Prynne 1659, p. 69).³² They fail to “Feare God, and honour the King.” Years later, Charles I (or his ghostwriter) (1648) echoed this argument in the text *Eikon Basilike*.

Those rude and scandalous Pamphlets (which like fire in great conflagrations, flie up and downe to set all places on like flames)...are so forgetfull of their duty to God and me. By no way ever vindicating the Majesty of their King against any of those, who contrary to the precept of God, and precedent of Angels speake evil of dignities, and bring railing accusations against those, who are honoured with the name of Gods; But ‘tis no wonder if men not fearing God, should not Honour their King. (p. 135)

Here, the moral obligation to honor the King entailed two actions. First, subjects must not speak evil of kings; they must instead speak well of them. Second, subjects must “vindicate the Majesty of their King.” That is, they must work to re-establish their king’s honor by speaking and acting against those who speak evil of him. They must “stop the mouths of Snarlers” (Pierce 1659, p. 277). Vindicating their superior’s honor is another obligation-meeting action that flows from the obligation to honor superiors. Here, Charles I is not personally responsible for vindicating his own honor through, say, a duel or other form of satisfaction (although one reason he [or his ghost writer] wrote *Eikon Basilike* was to vindicate his honor). Charles instead claims that subjects are morally obligated to *vindicate* his honor (Sandys 1643; Strodes 1642, p. 3). They ought to “to defend their [the king’s] person [reputation] against all violence” offered to him (Leigh

³² William Prynne was no royalist sympathizer. He made this argument in 1659, when members of another faction kept his Parliamentary faction from entering the Parliament house. Because honoring practices apply to all superiors, Prynne is able to make the argument apply to Parliamentary “kings” as well as to monarch. Prynne writes,

The Lord of Hosts himself most peremptorily and preciselie commands you, *To fear God, honour the King*, 1 Pet. 2. 17. ..How can, how dare you then dishoour, vilifie, reproach, destroy, both your natural Kings, and Kingship too, without the least fear at all of God or the King, and change them into a New Repulican Conventicle?...He Commands you...and that not only for fear of wrath, but for Conscience sake....With what face, heart, confidence, conscience, then can or dare you, not onlie not subit, subject your self to, but exalt yon selves above, against your lawfull Sovereign Kings (p. 1)

1654, p. 713). This was the pressing argument Royalists made in their polemical writings, prayers, and preachings. Under the “colour and vizard of Religion and duty to God,” Royalists stressed the obligation to honor secular authority by defending and fighting for Charles I. They cried “*Come forth, fight for God and your King...you fear not God unless you serve and honour your King*” (Hubberthorn, 1659, p. 8).

Here is also where the obligation to honor superiors turns imperialistic. Take, for example, an argument from a letter written to the High Court of Parliament in England by William Lenthall, Speaker of the House of Commons in 1642. Lenthall wrote in order to inform Parliament about matters pertaining to the Catholic rebels in Ireland. These rebels recently slaughtered Irish Protestants. Many Parliamentarians feared that if civil war broke out, these Irish rebels would defend King Charles I and his Catholic wife, Queen Mary. Lenthall (1642) explained,

The [Irish] Rebels...fight in defence of the honour and prerogatives of their King and Queene...That they take not Armes, as did the Scots for lucre or gaine, to raise their own fortunes by the ruin of others, but only out of Conscience and duty to God, and his Majesty. (p. 7)

Because the Irish “Fear God and Honour the King,” they will invade England. Here, the obligation to honor superiors takes an outward, imperialist turn.

In addition to obliging certain outward action, honoring also obligated inferiors *internally*. That is, outward speeches, gestures and deeds were not sufficient to fulfill the obligation to honor superiors. To think that outwards actions were sufficient was to think that one could “delude” “any man of place and understanding,” making “him believe that you have done him much honour by fair words, though you think unworthily of him in

your minds, and are disaffected towards him in your hearts” (Ingelo 1659, p. 66). Let me describe some of the internal thoughts, feelings and convictions inferiors had to have in order to meet their obligation to honor their superiors.

Honoring imposed internal obligations upon inferior’s “hearts,” their will, and their inward estimations. For example, when subjects obeyed their princes, honoring obligated them to have particular internal mind-set: they should obey their rulers *humbly* and *willingly*. As Edward Leigh (1654) explained, “Honour and reverence includes with it a[n]...act....of the will, in a humble inclination...unto them [superiors]” (p. 832). Hobbes (*DC*) concurred. “Christ hath commanded us *to honour our parents*....It is to be supposed tha they are to be honoured with the will indeed, and inwardly, as kings and lords over their children” (p. 343). The obedience obligated by honoring must therefore be executed “freely, and with diligence: for it it be not free, and willing, it is no obedience” (Lawson 1659, p. 186).³³ Outward honoring acts like obedience must here correspond to an inward willingness to obey. Honoring here obligated godly inferiors to obey their superiors with “sincerity” (Hammond 1659, p. 630). This inward willingness on the part of inferiors was an obligation-meeting action that flowed from the moral obligation to honor superiors. As Hammond (1659) explained,

Not with eye-serves as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing....[all] from the heart....And this not onely to avoid the displeasure of...masters...but upon sense of obligation to the Law of Christ, who can see the secrets of the hearts, and so much be served accordingly...with good will doing service...with uprightnesse and cheerfulness, a voluntary obedience, which may approve it self to Christ, and not a forced one, which arises from fear of man, and so extends no farther then the master can see and punish (p. 630).

³³ Consider also Blunt (1647). He writes, “*Willing* obedience to their lawful commands and counsels” is obligatory (p. 26).

Christ here probes into the hearts and souls of honorers. He obligates inferiors to obey to their superiors with internal good will, uprightness and cheerfulness. Fifth Monarchist John Rogers (1657) captured the kind of internal faithfulness, care, and diligence that honoring imposes upon inferiors in this passage.

Touching the duty to be performed, and the manner thereof, I have heretofore spoken at large, in handling the fifth commandment: it proceeds from that reverent respect which they have of their Masters, and the parties set over them by God in his wise and merciful providence: If they see God in them... they will also outwardly declare the same by their faithfulness, care, *diligence*, and the like. (p. 345)

Inferiors here must be “faithful,” or loyal, “caring” and “diligent” subjects to Christian rulers who rule “in the Lord.” Inferiors ought to “cheerfully obey” their godly superiors (Jordan 1642, p. 3). That is, honoring obligated inferiors to perform their “obedience with reverence internal...internally they must have a high esteem of them, and tender respect to, and show honour, and observance of them” (Clarke 1659, p. 266). According to this account, “stubbornesse...to Parents much displeaseth God,” since stubborn or passive behavior does not show the kind of inward esteem that the godly understood the Fifth Commandment to demand (Leigh 1654, p. 825).

An inferior’s obligation to honor a superior inwardly also carried with it the presupposition of right and merit. Here, honoring obligated subjects to *internally* acknowledge the justness of human inequality. This was another obligation-meeting action that flowed from the obligation to honor superiors. Honour “implyeth, first, inward reverence, or acknowledgement of that eminency, in which God hath placed parents

above their children (Fergusson 1659, p. 409). That is, honor obligated inferiors to *believe* in human inequality. As one author explained,

Such persons as are placed in authority [by God], are to be...honoured... and holden in a most reverend estimation, because they are the Lieutenants of God, in whose seat God himselfe doth sit and judge. (Gillespie 1646, p. 7)

Inferiors even had to humbly “confess” a faith in their inferiority and another’s superiority *to themselves*. As Richard Allestree (1659) explained,

When men do acknowledge and confess that there is not an equality, but that some do excel them, and that this excellency above them is not...by chance, but by the appointment of God...Acknowledge this excellency in others, and that it comes from God, who hath imparted his gifts to them. This is the first and *inward* part of honour. (p. 311)³⁴

This inward confession, in turn, further distinguished honoring from *mere* obedience action.

For although to honor and to obey, do usually signified the same, yet because the inferior is alwayes in that kinde to honour his superior, it is still with a presupposition of the right and merit of the person commanding: else to obey the usurped power of a robber, although in a greater command, is not so much to honour him as it is to my Prince or father when I obey them. (Hall 1654, pp. 16-17)

What we have here is honor as an obligation that imposes itself upon an individual’s innermost and private estimations, not simply upon external action, as obedience does.

Here, it was not morally sufficient for a mid-seventeenth-century Englishman or woman act “as if” another was superior but estimate otherwise. Thomas Hall wrote, “Give honour to whom honour is due....salute heartily, not hollowly, knowing that a handful of love is better than an arm full of flattery” (Hall, 1658, p. 459). To perform an act of

³⁴Emphasis mine. See also, (Hyde 1659, p. 199); and (Gouge 1655, p. 75).

honoring through speech, deed or gesture, while inwardly estimating that the honored person was one's equal or one's inferior, was flattery, a form of hypocrisy. I discuss flattery in detail in Chapters 4 thru 6. Considered from the perspective of the godly here, flattery was sin and it was not an obligation-meeting action.

Honoring also obligated inferiors internally by commanding them to embody a particular emotional state: they had to obey their superiors *lovingly*, and they had to *fear* them.

These emotions flowed from the obligation to honor superiors as well. Inferiors were obligated to have "all due reverence in heart" for their superiors (Blunt, 1647, p. 26).³⁵

Hobbes explained that "to love and to fear, [another] is to value" another and it is to honor him or her (Hobbes, *Lev* I.X). Another author wrote,

Fear and respect he must have fir his landlord, or the gentleman his neighbor, because God hath placed them above him and he hath learnt that by the father he ought to honour is meant all his superiors. (Steele 1672, p. 104, emphasis mind)

The fear obligated by honoring is a particular kind of fear. It is "a fear of reverence not diffidence" (Hardy 1659, p.17). Calvin calls the type of fear that flows from "a voluntary fear" that flows from reverence and contrasts it with "a forced and servile fear which divine judgment extorts" (Calvin 1949, p. 48). The fear that follows from reverence is akin to sublime awe.

1.3 Conclusion

What the preceding analysis suggests is mid-seventeenth century English accounts of honoring understood as a moral obligation offer us a different understanding of political

³⁵ See also (Balls, 1642).

obligation. These accounts are unaccompanied by notions of instrumental reason or contract. Political obligation is conceptualized here as a moral obligation. Mid-seventeenth century English authors established this moral obligation by summoning ideas such as pre-ordained hierarchy, patriarchal theory and the divine command theory of moral obligation. These authors also relied on the Bible and elements within certain strands of reformation theology to support the connection between honoring and moral obligation. On a few occasions, we even find Hobbes---famously known for rejecting these pre-modern foundations---summoning them to ground his theory of political obligation.

The moral obligation to honor superiors invites us to expand our understanding of early modern political obligation beyond the narrow conception of acting according to a sovereign's lawful command. The moral obligation to honor superiors draws our attention to the fact that an English subject was not obligated only to perform what a ruler lawfully commanded. The moral obligation to honor rulers demanded more. It demanded obedience *plus*. It also obligated a subject internally, imposing obligations upon the will, emotional state and his or her set of estimations and beliefs.

According to this understanding of political obligation, grudging obedience to a ruler's lawful command was morally wrong. Criticism and dissent were sinful too. Unmasking a superior's foibles and failing to cover over these foibles amounted to sin. Finally, acting "as if" a ruler was superior—but believing otherwise---was not acceptable behavior for the godly. Subjects were morally obligated to believe with their hearts and their minds

that a superior was superior even if empirical evidence demonstrated otherwise. They were obligated to idealize their superiors (or to fool themselves). Subjects also had to announce the unequal relation between themselves and their superiors. They even had to establish and to magnify this unequal relation within the social and political sphere. In sum, honoring as political obligation shows us a form of Christian political obligation that is active, rather than passive; and energetic rather than indifferent. Honoring is nearly totalizing in scope and degree, in that it is all encompassing, with the important exception that Puritans claimed that subjects must not obey a sovereign's unlawful command. Honoring here places diligent, prompt, loving, willing and obedient thought, belief, speech, bodily expression and action at the center of our understanding of early modern political obligation.

Chapter 2

Honoring God

2.0 Overview of Chapter 2

For the worship which naturally men exhibit to powers invisible, it can be no other but such expressions of their reverence as they would use towards men: gifts, petitions, thanks, submission of body, considerate addresses, sober behavior, premeditated words. (Hobbes *Lev*, 65)

For if when we are to speak to a Prince, we are touched with great reverence of an earthly Maiestie, how are we to be affected when we speak unto God? And if the blessed angels...are described in the Scripture as having six wings, whereof two pair serve to cover their face & their feet, Isa.6.2,3. thereby betokening their wonderfull reverence of God; how much more should we, who inhabit these houses of clay...be stricken with an awfull reverence of God?...[We] shall behave our selves accordingly, doing speaking thinking nothing but that which may become His presence. (Downname 1656, 114)

George Downname (1656), Doctor of Divinity and Chaplain to King James VI, here asks how mortals should outwardly “betoken” or show their inner reverence of God. Like Hobbes (*Lev*) in the passage quoted above, Downname draws certain parallels between honoring mortals and honoring God. In the previous chapter, I analyzed mid-seventeenth-century English accounts of the moral and political obligation to honor *mortal* superiors internally and externally. Here, I address honoring practices within the religious sphere. Striking are the interconnections and the high degree of interdependence between religious and secular discourses of honoring, as well as religious and secular honoring practices. These interconnections and interdependencies show how closely the English associated sacred and secular discourses and practices in the early modern period.

Paralleling arguments blazed by Calvin, mid-seventeenth-century English authors claimed that honor was God's right. It was His due and, as Downname argued, it "became" His presence (Downname 1656, p.114). God was at the very top of the chain of being, and mortals were obligated to yield honor to their greatest superior. Contemporaries also maintained that honoring was how mortals repaid their debt to God, a claim that I will explain shortly.

Performing "good works" was one way to honor God, as Max Weber has noted (Weber, 1930). But, in this chapter, I show that outward proto-capitalist work was not the only practice contemporary authors discussed when they commented upon honoring God *actively*. They also claimed that honorific speech and certain bodily gestures were obligatory practices that honored God. Religion had not yet drawn itself inward, into the dark and private sphere of the conscience. And, toleration of diverse religious practice was not yet mainstream doctrine. I examine the controversies that raged in England over what Christians should say (and how they should say it) when they honored God publicly. Which bodily gestures Christians should perform when they honored God before others also divided the country and I explore some of the debates on honorific gestures in this chapter as well.

Contemporary authors who engaged in the debate on honorific words and gestures conceptualized honor as something honorers "gave" to God through their practice. Honor was something honorers "transferred" to God through honoring. To make sense of this

claim, I situate the practice of honoring God within a Reformation worldview, specifically a Calvinist worldview. By “worldview,” I do not mean some homogenous, coherent set of doctrines. I mean a mosaic of fragments, frequently changing and often contradictory. These fragments in part constitute the conceptual and social world of this period in England’s history (Doerksen 2004, 13).

According to Calvin’s theology, honoring was a practice where individuals *recognize* and *publicly declare* God as their relative superior. In this chapter, I also examine how “recognition” can be something that mortals give to God, and I explore arguments where recognition is something God demands from mortals. Individuals who give honor to God *give* Him superior recognition. They are witnesses who acknowledge and *declare* (a declarative statement) God’s relative superiority over them, and over all mortal beings.

There are a dizzying number of ways to understand this recognition of inequality, and I argue that the semantic confusing proves potent. The questions the declaration of inequality posed offered contemporaries a rich and varied means of exploring the basis of the inegalitarian relation between themselves and God. In the third section of this chapter, I examine certain authors who interpreted the testament of inequality as a descriptive statement. On this view, honoring provided neutral spectators with information concerning the honorer’s inner faith and the practice provided spectators with information about God’s superior being. I then examine authors who interpreted honoring practices as ascriptive practices. When mortals honored God here, they *appointed* God as the term to which they *ascribed* attributes that signaled God’s relative superiority in relation to mortals. These ascriptive acts need not correlate with facts or

belief. Finally, I examine authors who understood honoring practices as poetic statements. Honoring practices here used language to establish, embellish and magnify the imputed relation between honorer (and mortals generally) and God.

Regardless of how different authors interpreted the semantic construction of honoring practices, many claimed that the practices served a few social functions and I conclude this chapter with an examination of the social functions contemporaries associated with honoring. First, the practices established God's glorious reputation within the mortal community. These practices gave God fame. The practices *signaled* God's relative superiority to neutral observers. Generally speaking, neutral observers understood this signal because they shared, at least to a significant extent, a language or infrastructure of signals or signs of honoring.

Observing or hearing honoring practices served a second social function because the practices worked to *persuade* neutral spectators to make God the object of their own worship and adoration. Watching and hearing honoring practices seduced neutral spectators to follow in the footsteps of those who honored God before them. In economic terms, honoring practices were marketing strategies; they were advertisements procuring followers to God. We can also think of them as political propaganda or as tools in religious proselytizing.

Honoring practices served society in a third way because authors claimed that the practices themselves forged consciences. Honoring practices worked to establish, to

sustain and to deepen the honorer's own belief in the unequal relation between himself or herself and God. Here, honoring practices infused beliefs into honorers. These practices therefore inculcated and maintained the belief in inequality and therefore prompted the honoring practices that flowed from this belief in inequality.

2.1 Honoring God: A Moral Obligation

Reformation theologians argued that the practice of honoring God was a fundamental element of religion, and an important moral obligation. Calvin wrote, "Pure and genuine religion...includes in it willing reverence, and brings along with it such legitimate worship as is prescribed by the [God's] law (Calvin 1947, p. 42). The importance Calvin attached to honoring God is undeniable. Honor was God's right and He desired it. God "wishes us to have respect to himself, to make him the object of our...worship, and adoration" (Calvin 1947, p. 55). Calvin explained that honoring God was "a cause more valuable and precious than...salvation (as cited in Kroon 2001, 26)." If mortals left God un-honored, then they left Him in "brutish oblivion" (Calvin, 1949 p. 47, p. 55). Without honoring, God would remain unrenowned to mortals on earth. Worse, He would remain unknown to mortals on earth. And, authors claimed that "It be the design of the Devil and the slanderous world to obscure...the work of grace....[It must] be the care of Believers to...maintain and manifest the luster of that grace, to the glory of [God,] the author" (Baxter 1658, p. 224).

Mid-seventeenth-century English reformers like Baxter (1658) above shared this theological view. One English Protestant divine asserted, "Religion is the observance

whereby we *perform* those things which directly belong to the giving of honour to God” (Ames 1633, p. 57, emphasis mine). Likewise, the royalist Richard Allestree (1659) maintained, a “duty to God is Honour; that is, the paying him such a reverence and respect as belong to so great a Majesty” (p. 142). In John Milton’s *Paradise Regained* (1670), Christ told Satan that “The first of all Commandments, [is] Thou shalt worship / The Lord thy God, and only him shalt serve” (p. 236).

Thomas Hobbes (*DH*) made similar claims. “Religion,” he wrote, “is the external worship (cultus) of men who sincerely honour God” (p. 71). Later in the same text, Hobbes explained, “For it can neither be doubted that God must be thought of with honour, nor that He ought to be... worshipped. For these things are common to religions among people” (p. 72). Shockingly, Hobbes (*DC*)---known in some circles for his atheism and in others for his unqualified devotion to the civil sovereign--asserted,

Neither also had nay one, before the constitution of the city, of those who acknowledge God to rule, a right to deny him the honour which was then due unto him; nor could he therefore transfer a right on the city of commanding any such things. (p. 305)

Hobbes here claimed that Christians who acknowledge God as King cannot deny Him His due honor. They ought to honor Him. When establishing a commonwealth, Hobbes here claims that Christians “transfer their right of judging the *manner* of God’s worship on him or them who have the sovereign power” (Hobbes, *DC*, p. 305, emphasis mine). However, the sovereign power cannot demand subjects to *deny* God His honor. If a civil sovereign commands Christians to deny God honor before men, subjects retain their right to refuse this command.

Some man may demand, first, whether doth not follow that the city must be obeyed, if it command us directly to affront God, or forbid us to worship him? I say, it does not follow; neither must we obey. For to affront, or not to worship at all, cannot by any man be understood for a manner of worshipping. (Hobbes *DC*, p. 305)

The Christian duty to honor God in some fashion here overrode the obligation to obey the civil sovereign's command to dishonor or not to honor God. Clearly, Hobbes—the civil sovereign's devotee—took the obligation to honor God very seriously.

Other Englishmen pushed the importance of honoring God further. They asserted that God created humans solely to receive honor from them. In *The Religion of a Physician*, Sir Thomas Browne (1642), a scholar in diverse fields including medicine, religion and science, stated,

God made all things for himself, and it is impossible he shoul[] make them for any other end then hi[] own glory...[It] was necessary to make a creature from whom hee might receive this homage. (p. 66)

When humans neglected to honor God, some authors argued that humans “forg[o]t the very end of [their] creation” (Marshall 1641, p. 25). Humans came into this world not “to play, sport, court and complement” their soul away; they came into the world to honor God (W.B. 1659, p. 9)

And authors claimed that honoring was in the honorer's self-interest. Quoting Scripture, they claimed that God promised dignity and honor to humble mortals who honored God. “*God saith*, Hee will honour those that honour him, 1 Sam. 2.30 (Leigh 1641, p. 197).” Puritan William Ames (1641) wrote, “They [mortals] glorifie God, and therefore God

will exalt them according to his promise, *Those that honour me, I will honour*” (p. 117).³⁶ Similarly, Edward Reynolds, in “Peace of Jerusalem,” a sermon he preached in the Parliament House on January 9, 1656, proclaimed, “*The Lord saith... them that honor me, I will honour, 1 Sam. 2. 30.*” Here, God forged a unilateral *covenant* between Himself and His mortal inferiors. He promises to honor them on the condition that they humble themselves and honor Him.

Honoring God therefore pays dividends. In some instances, authors claimed that God promised to raise his humble honorers into heaven. Honoring practices here served as “a buckler against the fear of death” (Buckler 1640, p. b2), since “God promiseth deliverance to the humble [who honor Him] 2 Chron. 12.7 *Iob* 22.29” (Leigh 1641, p. 350). Honoring also served the interest of the honorer because authors argued that God promoted His honorers here *on earth*. Thomas Hall (1658) explained,

Many make it their study how they may rise and get promotion [on this earth], behold the way, humble your selves, and you shall be exalted, even to Honour here, if God see it good for you...There is no entrance into the Temple of honour, but by the gate of Humility, for as Pride goes before a fall, so before Honour is humility, Prov. 15 ult. And 18.12 and 22.4...They [the humble] give all glory unto God, and therefore God loves to exalt them to Honour (p. 55)

According to the logic Hall offered here, honoring God garnered “favour, affection and respect from men” and this respect lead to worldly promotion (Clarke 1659, p. 385). As Burrough (1659) put it, “If you honor him [God], and do that which is acceptable to him, he [or his instruments] will honour you, and set you a top of all your enemies” (p. 28-9).³⁷

³⁶ See also Reynolds (1657), especially pp. 10-11.

³⁷ By contrast, those who refused to honor God are an abomination unto the Lord. God promises to “lightly esteem” and to “abase” these individuals in this world and the next. See Burrough (1658), especially p. 16; Hobbes (*DC*) p. 158; Allestree (1658) p. 266; Henderson (1644) p. 32. Burrough (1658) wrote, “If thou

A century earlier, Calvin (1559) also argued that our capacity to worship God is what makes mortals “rise,” but Calvin placed a different interpretative construction upon “rising.” For him, honoring made humans rise above beasts (Calvin 1949, p. 45). Echoing and extending this claim, one mid-seventeenth-century English commentator wrote, “that man which doth not glorifie God, is baser than the basest worme” (Leigh 1646, p. 119). Honoring practices here are what raise humans up, placing them in a station more dignified than worms. Reason does not raise humans above animals here. The practice of honoring is what makes humans human, distinguishable from and superior to animals.

For some Protestants, honoring God was even a sign of blessedness. It was a “sign that we have the Spirit of Adoption,” that is, it indicated membership in the small group of the predestined elect (Clarke 1659, p.11). If honoring God marked one as a member of the blessed elect, “not to performe that duty and worship we owe unto the living God, is a kinde of Atheisme,” and a sign of predestined damnation (Ford 1659, p. 34). Hobbes (*DC*), for example, argued that those who deny honor to God are *fools*, or atheists (p. 284-5). These imprudent individuals “confess not before men, both in words and deeds, that there is one God most good, most great, most blessed, the Supreme King of the world and of all worldly kings; that is to say...they do not worship God” (Hobbes *DC*, p. 308). These fools are God’s enemies. And, He punishes them by dashing them “in[to] pieces with his Iron-Scepter, and [by] cast[ing them] into Hell (Lawson 1659, p. 100).”

honour him he will honour thee, otherwise he can, yea, and will cunfound thee and break thee, and make thee weak as water before him” (p.10).

2.2 How to Honor God

Because God bound individuals in conscience to honor Him, godly mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen and women concerned themselves with the question of *how* to do it. Just as authors distinguished inward and outward obligations to honor mortals, authors here drew a distinction between “inward” and “outward” ways to honor God. Inward honour concerned itself with the soul, or with beliefs, affections and acts of will. So, for example, one author wrote, we must “Honour Him with all our heart, with all our soule, and all our strength (Beard 1642, p. 68). Ainsworth (1641), a nonconformist clergyman, explained, “The proper manner of honour, or religious worship is to subject the soule it selfe, and the inward affections and acts of the will” to God (p. 25). Faith was also a way to honor God. We “give honour to God, by believing him and his word” (Walker 1641, p. 18). “God would have all to believe, as beleefe is a point of obedience, and honour to him (Ainsworth 1641, p. 25).” “You cannot honour the Lord more then in...believing in him,” wrote Hugh Peters (1646) (p.2). Inwardly trusting in God was another way to honor Him. Individuals “give honour to God...by trusting in him as our onely Rock, and the God of our strength and salvation” (Walker 1641, p. 18).

Acknowledging God’s relatively superior strength inwardly---to oneself---was also way to honor Him internally. Hobbes explained, “To honour God internally in the heart, is the same thing with that we ordinarily call honour amongst men: for it is nothing but the [internal] acknowledging of his power (Hobbes, *EL*, p. 70). Mortals also honor God inwardly by endeavoring to obey His commands. Hobbes argued that they honor Him when they use their “best endeavour to keep the laws of nature,” that is, they honor Him

by being what Hobbes called a just person (Hobbes, *DC*, p. 302). “For the undervaluing of our master’s command, exceeds all other affronts whatsoever,” and is the mark of an unjust person (Hobbes, *DC*, p. 302).

That mortals were obligated to honor God inwardly in these ways was not as divisive a claim in mid-seventeenth-century England as claims made with respect to how to honor God through outward *practice*. This age was not yet the age of toleration or the age of inwardness. It was still an age where Christians believed they ought to affirm and ought not to deny God outwardly, in practice, before men. As one Anglican noted,

In th[e] point of the inward worship of God we agree in many things with Turks and Pagans; but the outward service of God is it, which makes the difference between us, and will ever distinguish the true Church from the false, Christs church from Satans Synagogue. (Andrewes 1650, 192-3)

Lancelot Andrewes here claimed that practice—not doctrine or inward honoring—distinguishes one religion from the next. Practice, he wrote, determines truth and falsity in religion. Practice also distinguishes the righteous from the sinful church.

My analysis of how to understand the religious honoring practice in mid-seventeenth-century England does not require me to examine in great detail the nuanced differences between Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian and Puritan religious practices (let alone the practices performed by smaller, but important nonconforming sects like the Brownist, Adamites, Anabaptist, &c). My analysis requires some familiarity with key differences in the religious practices of England’s most prominent religions during this period. So, let me briefly describe some of these differences here. Protestants generally claimed that Catholics engaged in idolatrous styles of worship. King James argued that idol-worship

was “the maine doctrine of the Roman Church” (as cited in Milton 1995, p.190). Catholics honored “graven images” of God, Christ and Mary. They made obeisance to material objects, like crucifixes and the altar (Baille 1643, p.54). They even bowed to relics, including reeds. Catholics also regularly worshipped Christ’s name at Masses of the Holy Name (Duffy 1992, p.115). They honored a “Breadengod” when they kneeled with both hands raised in adoration, and set their eyes upon the bread (Milton 1995, p.198). Catholic worship was also known for its use of rhetorical flourish (Lake 1988, p. 20). At mass, priests used “papistical reasoning” (Lake 1988, p.20). That is, they used allegorical speech, they spoke in metaphors and they used other kinds of ornamentation or flourish when speaking to their flock (Lake 1988, p.20).³⁸ Protestants maintained that Catholic practices and forms of speech were “first found in the ancient Babel” (Mede 1641, p.24). Catholic worship was pagan worship. As Hobbes explained, pagans did not look to the causes of things. In ignorance, they did not worship God as the first cause, and the “one God Eternal, Infinite, and Omnipotent” God but instead worshipped all sorts of secondary causes, natural and imaginary, as gods (Hobbes *Lev*, XII). Quaker leader George Fox connected Catholic with pagan practices of honoring secondary causes when he wrote, “That honour which you [Catholics] should give to God, you give to images, in kneeling to them; as so in that you are as the heathen, and are found idolaters” (Fox, 1658, p.11). As Fox attested here, Catholic theology included the “gentile theologie of demons” (Mede 1641, p. 24).

³⁸ Contrast this with Skinner who only associates the rhetorical tradition with the humanist tradition and who maintains that Hobbes’s attack upon and later return to the rhetorical tradition is attack and a later return to humanist forms of persuasion. One might instead argue that Hobbes’s attack on rhetorical flourish and his appreciation of plain speech (simple definitions and civil science) is an attack on Catholicism and shows how Puritanism influenced his early thought. His use of rhetoric in the *Leviathan* might mark his later appreciation for Catholic forms of ornamental and rhetorical persuasion.

Generally speaking, Protestants during this period engaged in what later historians have called the second phase of the Protestant reformation (Horton 1948, p. 6).³⁹ The first phase concerned itself with doctrine. The second phase worked to overthrow superstitious “pagano-papist” practices (Shagan 2005, p. 4). Hobbes (*Lev*) participated in this overthrow when he attacked superstitious beliefs in spirits and demons and summarily concluded, “Christian sovereigns ought to break down the images which their subjects have been accustomed to worship, that there be no occasion of such idolatry” (p. 448). More importantly perhaps, the English government got involved in this phase of the Reformation. They invoked the Second Commandment (against idolatry). This commandment became “the essential blade for shearing papal corruptions” (Aston 1988, p. 387). Parliament, for example, passed legislation in the early 1640s to rid England of Catholic forms of honoring God root and branch (Shagan 2005, p.13).⁴⁰ Englishmen also brought bishops and other clergymen who refused to reform their superstitious “pagano-papist” honoring practices to trial. If guilty, these holy men frequently lost their positions, their tributes, and their land (conveniently, the land was frequently given (directly or indirectly) to the persons who accused them).

Although they may have been striving for economic and political power, godly Puritan reformers claimed that they were striving to rid England of superstitious practices and to re-establish the “natural,” “pure,” and “simple” way of honoring the true God (Horton

³⁹ See also Clifton (1971) and Wiener (1971).

⁴⁰ See Heylyn (1645).

1948, p. 7). The “primitive” way to honor Him was discoverable in the Bible.⁴¹ As Calvin (1559) explained,

In regarding the worship of God, the custom of a city, or the consent of antiquity, is too feeble and fragile bond of piety; it remains that God himself must bear witness to himself from heaven...The human mind is a perpetual forge of idols. (Calvin 1947, p. 61)

Paralleling this argument, Puritan reformers in mid-seventeenth-century England showed distrust for tradition and for conventional ways of honoring God. For mortals to decide how to honor God was akin to “a servant tak[ing] upon him[self] to make Rules in his Masters house” (Burgess 1658, p. 282). The rules the servant made would surely be an “abomination” to the master (Burgess 1658, p. 282). Human servants were not to honor God as they chose, as humans were essentially corrupt, and their judgments concerning what constituted the morally right way to honor God were judgments vitiated by subjectivity and sinfulness (Burgess 1658, p. 282; Horton 1948, p. 71). Worship determined by human design or by tradition inevitably led to idolatry (Burgess 1658, p. 282). To avoid this horrible sin, every godly practice of worship needed Divine justification. As Protestant divine William Ames wrote, “*The scripture is not a partiall, but a perfect rule of faith and manners* (Ames 170).” Manners here included religious practice. As one Puritan explained,

Whatsoever done in...worship, [that] cannot be justified by the said Word, is unlawful...It is a sin, to force any Christian to do any act of Religion...that cannot evidently be warranted by the same...Ecclesiastical actions invented and devised by man, are utterly to be excluded out of the exercises of Religion. Especially such actions as are famous and notorious Mysteries of an Idolatrous Religion [Catholicism]...Every act ought evidently to be prescribed by the Word of God, or else ought not to be done. (Bradshaw 1641, p.1)

⁴¹ Presbyterians such as Thomas Cartwright especially held this position and they applied it to the structure of church government, arguing that the church ought to be organized in the same fashion as the apostles had organized it (Lake, 1988, p.16-17).

Puritans promoted unornamented prayer, simple praise, easy-to-understand catechizing, and the direct proclamation of the Word as the proper way to worship God (Horton 1948, p. 51). They claimed that the apostles—the primitive elect--worshipped God in his manner. This was “natural,” or “primitive” worship. Puritans were therefore against conventional practices like hat doffing, kneeling, bowing, as well as highly ornamental or excessively convoluted speech. Individuals should “move no hat at Church, nor bend a knee” (Taylor 1640, p. 4). The “natural” posture for worship was to stand or sit with head covered (Horton 1948, p. 51). And, the natural speech was plain and simple, without flourish or ornament. This is how the first church of the apostles honored God and this is how the godly ought to honor God.

Anglicans (Conformists generally) disagreed with these “proud Puritans” whose “knees being too stiffe to kneel” literally “stood up” to God and “turne[d] out all good order and distinction” (as cited in Ferrell 1998, p. 48). Anglicans insisted that the Bible did not set the law for matters pertaining to outward worship (Horton 1948, p. 4; Lake 1988, p. 18). So long as the Bible did not expressly forbid a practice, members of the establishment generally argued that honoring practices were matters left up to the discretion of men, namely monarchs or those appointed by them (Horton 1948, p. 4). External practices and matters of government were matters “indifferent,” that is, not matters necessary to salvation and faith and not subject to the sort of direct scriptural control that regulates doctrine (Lake 1988, p. 18). Here, secular authority determined if a particular religious practice was rooted in superstition and idolatry (and consequently impermissible) or if it was a “true” act of worship (and consequently permissible or obligatory). Hobbes (*Lev*)

concurr with this position when he argues that the civil sovereign shall forge the distinction between religion and superstition (p. 42). Likewise, as Richard Baxter, a famous Presbyterian, proclaimed,

It is in the Power of man to determine such Modes and Circumstances as are necessary to the performance of that worship which God hath instituted in his word: And therefore lawfull Governors may in such cases bind us by their commands....[It is] left to humane prudence, to order our gestures by the General Rules of Order, Decency, Edification &c. in Preaching, Praying, Hearing, Singing, Receiving, &c. (Baxter, 1659b, p. 400-405)

Presbyterians like Baxter, along with Anglicans, cherished honoring practices like bowing and kneeling because Englishmen and women performed these practices time out of mind. Important secular authorities, including monarchs, sanctioned these practices (Taylor 1640, p.12). This was reason enough for the godly to use them.

Debates over the practice of worship were probably more important to everyday mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen and women than the unification and reformation of religious doctrine (Holmes 1982, p.125). In a 1642 speech to members of Parliament, Bishop Wren, an influential English clergyman and scholar, and supporter of Archbishop Laud, underscores how political and divisive the question of religious practice had become in England.

We serve one God, we believe in one Christ, and we all acknowledge and professe one Gospell, the different is...de natura, we vary...in the Ceremonies. (Wren, 1642, p. 1)

The “natura” of diverse religions in England here depends upon ceremonies or practice, *not* upon doctrine or belief. Opponents of this view mockingly asked, “Were the Apostles no Christians, because they had no kneeling at the Eucharist...Dare you say

they were no Christians” (Baxter 1659b, p. 344)? There is no need to push the argument this far to get a sense that questions concerning the significance of honoring practices obsessed theologians, and the godly laity during this period. As historian John Sheehan notes,

If orthodoxy, ‘right belief’, was the obsession of the Lutheran seventeenth century, Calvinists added orthopraxis, ‘right practice,’ to their list. This was certainly true...in England, where the politics of worship were ever present in scholars’ mind and marked both the subjects and the results of their work. (Sheehan 2006, p. 36)⁴²

2.3 With Tongue and Limbs

For many God-fearing and God-loving individuals during this period, honoring God *outwardly* and *actively* was as important as honoring him internally and with the heart. Metaphysical poet and preacher John Donne—ordained into the Church of England in 1615 and made Dean of St. Paul’s in 1621--- proclaimed that all men should “Glorifie God actively, Sicut Nix, Sicut Lux, their being, their doing shall be all for him” (Donne 1649, p. 122). “Doing” here did not exclusively mean performing proto-capitalist outward work. Doing also meant honoring God through speech and bodily gesture (Targoff 2001, p.8). As Hobbes wrote, “All *worship* consists either in *words* or *deeds*” (Hobbes *DC*, p. 295) Lancelot Andrewes, also turned to the Bible to shore up the importance of honoring God with words and with the body.

Solomon prayed upon his knees; Daniel fell down upon his knees; so did St. Peter, so Paul...[We] must not only *orare* but *laborare*. (as cited in Targoff 2001, p. 9)

With respect to *orare*, contemporary authors claimed that the Apostles intended individuals to honor God “with their minds, as well as with their mouths...with their

⁴² See also (Lake 1988, p. 17).

voices, as well as in their hearts (Ford 1659, p. 13). And, they advised Englishmen and women to choose their language carefully when honoring God with their mouths. In *A Discourse Concerning Prayer Ex Tempore, or By Pretence of the Spirit*, Jeremy Taylor (1646) offered advice on this matter. Relying upon Solomon, “a very wise man,” Taylor wrote,

Eccles. 5.2. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God, for God is in heaven and thou upon earth...
The consideration of the vast distance between God and us...should create such apprehensions in us, that the very best and choicest of our offertories [of speech] are not acceptable but by Gods gracious vouchsafeing and condescension....It is not safe venturing to present him with a dowbaked sacrifice...such is all the curde and imperfect utterance of our more imperfect conceptions. (J.Taylor 1646, p. 4)

Conceptualizing honorific speech as an offering as Taylor does here fits within a Reformation worldview. I shall explore this conceptualization carefully in a moment. Taylor’s preference for the use of pre-mediated, formal and ornamental speech or rhetoric places him on the side of the Conformists (Anglicans and Presbyterians). Nonconforming sects, especially radical Puritans (and members of the Independent Party), acquired the reputation for making spontaneous and irreverence speech offerings to God that presumably were inspired by the spirit. Conformists attacked non-conformist through their style of speaking, arguing that mortals must take more care when honoring God in speech. They suggested that only the educated few—bishops or the elderly elect---could formulate reverential and formal speeches honoring God. The “howling damned in hell” (nonconforming sects generally), by contrast, “belch against the Majesty of Hevan” using speech “uncivill” and “evil mannered” (Dering 1641, p. 56).

In this debate, Hobbes sides with the Conformists. He states that speeches honoring God should not be “rash, or light or vulgar,” “sudden, light,” or “plebian,” as nonconformist honoring practices were reputed to be (Hobbes, *Lev* p. 240; *DC*, p.301; *DH* p.75). Words honoring God, Hobbes maintained, should be “beautiful and well composed” (Hobbes, *DC*, p.301).

Prayer and praises giving thanks to God were two types of poetic speech or song that contemporaries associated with divine worship.⁴³ On Sundays, as well as on state sanctioned days of public humiliation and thanksgiving, Conformists went to church to sing songs and to recite poems humbling themselves and honoring God. Hobbes seemed to favor church attendance as well as the use of ornamental speech in church. “It not against reason to use poetry and music in...churches.” (Hobbes *DC*, p.300).⁴⁴ Puritans, of course, disagreed. They questioned the importance of church-going and they sought to purify religion of ornamental practices like singing songs and reciting poetry.

Conformists, by contrast, argued that the performance of these ornamental “outward actions” served to honor God (Taylor, Jeremy 1647, p.95). They were “signs of divine worship,” wrote Hobbes (Hobbes *DC*, p.300, *Lev* p10, p.29). They were not, as Puritans argued, signs of decadence and moral decay. For Hobbes, therefore, ornamental speech was unsuitable for philosophy. But it was suitable for religion where the speaker intended to honor God.

⁴³ Reciting poetry and singing songs to God was also a sign of “blessedness” (Taylor, Jeremy 1647, p.353). It raised reciters and singers out from the mass of the damned, and marked them as elite members of the Protestant elect.

⁴⁴ Perhaps this is why Hobbes takes greater poetic license in his chapters on religion.

Consider the poem below. It comes from the Psalter of David. Conforming churchmen encouraged their flock to pray and to thank God by saying (or singing) this Psalter (Jo. Taylor 1646, p.19).⁴⁵ The Psalter's contents were "very familiar" because of its "constant use" in church services where attendance was mandatory (Doerksen 2004, p.17).

Attaching it to the Book of Common Prayer, Conformists argued that the Psalter was an "excellent directory" and "pattern" to mimic when honoring God (Jo. Taylor 1646, p.19).

Verse 10 of the Psalter goes like this:

Sing to the Lord o all yee lands,
And make a joyfull sound:
Sing forth his fame,
And make his praise renown'd.
How dreadfull works come from
Thy pow'r (say), Lord, how great!...
Yea sing unto thy Name shall they,
In songs thine honour spread:
Gods works come see,
Whose actions be
To mortals full of dread.
(Barton 1644, vs10)

Shortly, I will examine carefully the *social* significance of this honoring poem or song. That is, I will examine how honorific poetry and song works to "sing forth" God's fame, how they act to make God's "praise renown'd," and how they "spread" God's honour far and wide. The point I am trying to shore up here is only that poetic speech and song were types of speech used frequently to honor God. Here is another example of poetic song used to honor God. It also references the Psalter of David.

Of sweetest musicke! Pre-three David lend
Thy well-resounding harpe, that I may send

⁴⁵ In this period of the Protestant reformation, controversies raged over whether individuals should sing or speak the psalms in church. Henry Hammond, for example, was generally against singing these psalms. (Hammond, 1659). Thomas Ford (1659), in his treatise on the duty of singing in church, by contrast, wrote that the "Singing of Psalmes is a duty of Christians under the New Testament" (Ford 1659, p. 5).

Some praises to my God: I know not how
 To pay by songs my heart-resolved vow: How shall I sing good God?
 Thou doest afford
 Then thousand mercies, trebled songs O Lord
 Cannot requite thee! O then I could pay with lifetime songs the mercies of
 one day!...
O Bring
Thy God some honour. (Jordan 1646, p.25)

Poetic song is not important here for its social significance but for its religious significance. It “sends” or “brings” honour to God. The author of this passage presents his songs to God as “payment” for His mercy. I will explore how honoring practices serve as payment in a moment. Here, the example serves only to show how authors conceptualized honorific song and poetry as practice, practice that somehow connects the secular and the sacred realm because it transfers honor to God.

In addition to honorific poetry and song, many mid-seventeenth century Englishmen and women claimed that individuals were obligated to honor God with *their bodies* (Targoff 2001, p. 9). Conforming Protestant churches (Anglicans and Presbyterians) used theological and secular arguments to persuade nonconforming sects (Puritans and others) who “stand or sit with sawcie pride” and who were “stiffe in th’hams” to honor God with bodily gestures (Taylor, Jeremy 1640 p.4, p.7).⁴⁶

⁴⁶ But, consider the following attempt to persuade a Puritan to honor God with the body. It documents some of the contours of the debate between Anglicans and Puritans on the question of whether to honor God through bodily gesture and it draws connections between secular and sacred honoring practices.

To Thee (that read'st or hear'st) these lines I send,/That art so stiffe in th'hams, thou canst not bend;/Thou ought'st (in feare and love) bow downe thy knee to him, whose Grace and Love came downe to thee;/Oh fall before him that hath rais'd thee up,/... Thy Body prostrate, that it may expresse/Thy Soules intentions humble thankfulness;/ As hee's thy Maker, duteous honour doe him;/As hee's a Judge offended, kneele unto him;/The Captive doom'd to hell for his offence,/ought kneele to Him that did redeeme him thence;/Fall down (and with thy soule) thy body bende,/And then (no doubt) thy prayers will ascend;/... An injur'd man oft-times such mercy feeles/To pardon his offender, when he kneeles... For free remission of thy sinnes unholy/Thou canst not (in thy gesture) be too lowly;/He that's asham'd to worship God, is then/Like him that doth

Hobbes participated in the controversy between conforming and nonconforming sects regarding bodily worship. He evoked the Puritan distinction between “natural” and “conventional” ways of honoring God in his argument. He wrote,

Now [some] actions do signify not by men’s appointment, but naturally; even as the effects are signs of their causes. Whereof some are always signs of scorn to them before whom they are committed...Others are always signs of honour. (Hobbes *DC*, p. 302)

Hobbes, I argue, here used the nonconformist (Puritan) distinction between “natural” and “conventional” signs of honoring to arrive at a Conformist conclusion. He claimed that falling prostrate and genuflecting (what Conformists did and what Puritans refuse to do) were *natural* practices of bodily worship. Mortals do not constitute these natural honoring practices through their wills or through mutual consent. As Hobbes wrote elsewhere, these “actions do signify not by men’s appointment, but naturally” (Hobbes *DC*, p.303). Here, meaningful honoring practices are “forced out,” or they “burst forth” by the strength of passion (here, the fear of an omnipotent God) in the same way that certain meaningful signs burst forth in the animal species (Hobbes *DH*, p. 37).⁴⁷ When seen, these bodily acts of worship can therefore eradicate the equivocation and confusion that Hobbes frequently associated with verbal forms of communication, and, by extension, with verbal honoring practices (Hobbes *EL* p. 76). And because these bodily

deny him before men./Then, if thy soule be touch’d with penitence/Expresse it, with thy bodies reverence’/For though God of our kneeling hath no need,/To blesse Humility he hath decreed./And not to kneele, when we Gods blessings seeke,/Doth shew we neither lowly are or meeke./To bow thy heart, true faith doth thee perswade; And he that made thy heart, thy knee hath made;/And since he hath made all, and every part/Hee’le have thy kees obedience, with thy Heart...Dar’st thou stand or sit with sawcie pride/To entertaine thy Savior glorified? (Jer. Taylor 1640, p. 4-7)

⁴⁷ In the *Second Discourse*, Rousseau makes a similar claim regarding natural signification (the cry of pain) as Hobbes does here.

honoring practices are natural, when they are seen they signify the same thing in all lands whatsoever (Hobbes *De Homine*, p.37). Hobbes wrote,

Nature hath given everyone, to whom it hath given the belief that God exists, to fall prostrate and to genuflect when praying or adoring, as a sign of humility and subjection in the presence of God. (Hobbes *DH*, p.75, emphasis mine)

According to Hobbes's argument here, Puritans should be willing (and they were not) to fall prostrate and to genuflect.⁴⁸ Hobbes further enters the debate over bodily worship when he argues that the sovereign may create conventional bodily gestures that will signify honoring (Hobbes *DC*, p.302; Hobbes *DH*, p. 75).⁴⁹ Hobbes wrote,

That is honourable, which by the consent of men, that is to say, by the command of the city, becomes a sign of honour. It is not therefore against the will of God...to give him such signs of honouring as the city shall command. (Hobbes *DC*, p.304)

Hobbes sided with the Conformists here because he argued that subjects can honor God according to nature, as well as according to the sovereign's command. Hobbes concluded his engagement with this debate by arguing that idiosyncratic gestures of honoring performed by nonconforming sects that rely on private judgment are not signs of honoring. Hobbes was against tolerating the religious practices performed by the

⁴⁸ For more on this controversy see (Fox, 1657). The title of this text is, *Of bowings: shewing such as are not to bow, nor worship, nor so to do, are commanded of God. As bow, and worship without, and contrary to the command of God.*

⁴⁹ Hobbes applied the "natural-conventional" distinction when addressing honorific speech (epideictic rhetoric) as well.

There be some signs of honour (both in attributes and actions) that be naturally so (as, amongst attributes good, just, liberal, and the like...Others, are so by institution or custom of men, and in some times and places are honourable, in others, dishonourable, in others indifferent...The former is natural, the latter arbitrary worship. (Hobbes *Lev*, p. 238)

Once a commonwealth is established, the sovereign has the right to determine which terms shall denote honor within the commonwealth. Hobbes explained, "They who have the power of the whole city, shall judge what names or appellations are more, what less honourable"-note to self--check quote-- for God (Hobbes *DC*, p. 303).

separatists. He was against religious splintering and diversity of religious practice. He favored instead a unified and national practice of worship. For,

If each man should follow his own reason in the worshipping of God, in so great a diversity of worshippers one would be apt to judge another's worship uncomely, or impious; neither would the one seem to the other to honour God. (Hobbes *DC*, p. 304)

Hobbes emphasized the social significance of honoring in this passage. Only *uniformity* in public honoring practices will *bring* God's Majesty into social existence. Only a uniform religious practice properly honors God. Diversity of practice breeds confusion, and possibly dishonor to God. If Christians honor God with their unique or subjective "sudden raptures, 'tis impossible others should joyn" in honoring God (Ford 1659, p.14). Diversity of religious practice brings disunity. Diverse honoring practices "will be nothing but a sacrifice of fools, and [they will bring] the confusion at *Babel*" (Ford 1659, p. 14). Only *unified* honoring practices can extend God's glory within society, a point I shall develop shortly. The significant point here is Hobbes's position favored consistent and unified forms of bodily worship. He favored this uniformity not for political reasons but because uniform practices brought honor to God.

Authors who emphasized the importance of honoring God using bodily gestures typically claimed that honoring practices served as "signs." But, the language of sign and signifier here does not reflect the traditional epistemological dictonomy of subject as signifier and object as signified. Rather, honoring *practices* serve as signifiers and the subject is signified through them. "Effects are signs of their causes" here (Hobbes *DC*, p.303). As signifiers, honoring practices refer to (signify) the honorer's reverential intentions,

feelings and beliefs (Targoff 2001, p.7).⁵⁰ As Hobbes put it, “The inward thoughts of men which appear outwardly...are the signs of our honouring and these go by the name of worship” (Hobbes, *Lev* 4.45.12). Elsewhere, Hobbes claimed that inward *emotions* are signified through outward honoring practices. Gestures of thanksgiving and supplication “contain the love and fear wherewith we are commanded to love and fear God” (Hobbes *DH*, p. 71) For Hobbes, therefore, bodily gestures were a kind of language. Just as speech can “stand for the series of conceptions [not words] of the things about which we think,” bodily gestures can signify internal thoughts, intentions and emotions (Hobbes *DH*, p. 37; Hobbes *EL*, p.39). As George Downame deftly asserts,

Now our bodies...they are...the indices and manifesters of our souls...The signes of those graces which we contain in our souls...must be expressed in the body. (Downame 1656, p.117)

Honoring practices here refer to the condition of the honorer’s soul, its “graces,” and “thoughts.”

These practices provide information to others and to God concerning the honorer’s innermost intentions. As descriptive statements, they offer others a description of the honorer’s inner beliefs and feelings (and blessedness). Ardent royalist Richard Allestree (1658b) applies this general logic. “Humble and reverence gestures in our approaches to God...express the inward reverence of our Souls (p.126).” Likewise, Anglican clergyman Lancelot Andrewes (1650) wrote, “Reverntia exhibetur per gestus...the gesture discovereth our reverence” (p. 192-3). Edward Leigh (1654) explains that bodily gestures serve to “set forth and declare our humble heart and holy affection unto God” (p. 635). Finally, James Fergusson (1659) wrote, “Seeing an outward reverend gesture of the

⁵⁰ Certain Protestants argued that only the “elect” would share these beliefs, feelings and intentions.

body in prayer doth...expresse and natively flow from a reverend frame of spirit within, from which the body is acted” (p199).

In these godly accounts of honoring, where honoring is a practice that expresses the internal state of the honorer’s soul, hypocrisy is sin. And, hypocrisy here has dire consequences. Downname (1647) explained,

If...we draw neer to God with our mouthes [and bodies], and honour him with our lippes [and limbs], but remove our hearts farre from him *Es* 29 13. we must expect the reward of hypocrites....The Lord...abhorreth the prayer of the hypocrites, *Prov.* 28.9. *Es.* 29. 13...If we pray with fained lippes [and bodies]...we shall offer a great abuse to the Majesty of God,...[and] we can have no assurance that we are the redeemed of the Lord....For such is the immediate opposition between uprightnesse and hypocrisie; that if we be not hypocrites, then we are upright. (p.191-210)

Downname here exhorts his audience to communicate *faithfully* their internal reverence for God.

Certainly, individuals might honor God outwardly for worldly reasons. They might, for example, honor Him “to purchase an opinion of Holinesse,” as the reputation of piety procured a good reputation and followers (Steward 1659, p. 17). They might also honor God outwardly for self-serving reasons such as: “to avoid the threat of the law,” or “for fear of Superiors, or to keep correspondency with those of [ones] own Rank” (Steward 1659, p.17).

But, these are not godly reasons and they “are as farre from the nature of a good work, as truth is from hypocrisie” (Steward 1659, p.17). Hobbes (DH) claimed that those who honor God without faith and who perform honoring practices “only for glory or for

acquiring riches or for the avoidance of punishment are unjust, even though their works are frequently just” (p. 74). Their outward practices fail to correspond to an inward endeavour to honor God and therefore their just practices do not conform with a just intention, or endeavour. In order for honoring practices to be instances of “good work,” the godly honorer must “be indeed what [he or she] would seem to be” (Steward 1659, p. 17). That is, the honorer must internally honor God. “For ‘tis a shame that your bodies should be more Christian, than your soules; that your tongues should be more ready to praise, then your hearts to conceive the lord; Your knees more officious to bow to him, than your souls to adore him (Steward 1659, p.17).”

Hypocritical honoring practices directed at the Lord were not only “shameful” practices. They were also a sign of damnation. “Just works without faith,” wrote Hobbes (*DH*), “are an abomination to God, so also are all sacrifices and worship without justice and charity” (p.74). Here, the individual that humbly honors God for “selfe-credit, or selfease, or selfe-contentment, or self-safety” engages in honoring practices like praying, obeying, professing, and kneeling for himself or herself alone (Shephard 1641, p.60). Because they act for themselves, these individuals “commiteth the higheste degree of idolatry;” they “pluck[] God out of his throne, and make themselves a God because [they] make[[themselves the] last end in every Action; for a man puts himselfe in the roome of God as well by making himselfe his finis ultimis [final end] as if he should make himself primum prinipium [first cause]” (Shepard 1641, p.60).

Hypocritical honoring practices directed at God were also sinful because they were “flatteries” or “complements.” Individuals who offered these kinds of honoring practices to God were “sordid extremely” because they thought “that God is of such a Make, that he is pleased with flatteries, or that he doth not see and contemn the wickedness of such as feignedly court him” (Ingelo 1659, p.47; Steward 1659, p.17)). There is much to say about flattery and complement as types of honoring practices used for courting others, including God. In Chapters 4 thru 6, I address flattery and complement with considerable rigor.

Mid-seventeenth-century writers did not concern themselves with verbal and bodily honoring practices exclusively because these practices provided information concerning the honorer’s humble soul, its intentions, “graces,” emotions, or internal thoughts. Commentators also conceptualized honoring practices as *independently* significant and meaningful.

For where the Lord commandeth any duty or forbiddeth any sinner, there also he commandeth and forbiddeth the signes and appearances thereof; and therefore where he requireth the inward worship of the soul in prayer, as honorme facti, the honour of the deed, there also he requireth the outward of the body...as honor[um] signi, the honour of the signe.
(Downname 1656, p.117)

God here commands both inward worship (here called “the honour of the deed” or fact) and outward worship (the honor of the signe).⁵¹ Inward worship is a deed here because it is an *act* of the will, an act Hobbes (EL) identified as the last appetite, the beginning of external “voluntary” motion (p. 71-2). Englishmen, including Hobbes, summoned scriptural passages to confirm that that God takes the will as a deed, that is, He reads an

⁵¹ Note to self: consider when thinking through author/actor distinction in hobbes.

internal act of the will as external work (Hobbes *DC* p. 162, p. 341; Hobbes *EL*, p.152).

But what is most significant about the passage above is that truly outward honoring practices are independently important and meaningful simply because God commands their outward performance. “God craveth service both from the soul and body, as having created and redeemed both, 1 Cor. 6. 20 (Fergusson 1659, p.199).”

Royalist churchman Richard Allestree (1658b) also emphasized the importance of honoring God with the body, irrespective of internal intentions, beliefs and feelings.

We may also pay him [God] some tribute for our very bodies, with which the Apostle commands us to glorify God, as well as with our Souls; and good reason, since he hath created, and redeemed the one, as well as the other, whensoever therefore thou offerest thy prayers unto God, let it be with all lowliness as well of body , as of mind, according to that of the Psalmist, Psal 95.6. *O come let us worship, let us fall down and kneel before the Lord our maker.* (p.126)

Honoring practices are important and obligatory here not because they reveal some internal state but simply because God commands their performance. Mortals owe bodily honor to God because God redeemed the body. Mortals owe God bodily honor as payment for this kindness, as a form of gratitude. As Presbyterian Richard Baxter (1658a) explained,

Though his Grace is free, yet he will not expose it to contempt, but will have the fullness and freeness of it glorified. Though he came not to Redeem himself but us, yet he came to be glorified in the world of our Redemption. He hath no Grace so free, as to save them that will not esteem it, and give him thanks for it...That faith which is the Condition of our Justification, is fitted as well to the honour of the Giver, as the commodity of the receiver. (p.143)

Exchanging honoring practices as gratitude for the kindness of redemption is a theological relationship I will explore briefly in a moment, and I will develop this relation more carefully in Chapter 7 as it relates to the secular exchange relationships.

Divines also invoked the first two commandments to justify the independent obligation to honor God with the body.

In the two first commandments where the Lord forbiddeth this outward worship which we call *honorem signi* to be given to any other, there he requireth that it should be performed to himself, and he is jealous thereof....[3.] The holy ghost...so much he seemeth to esteem the outward worship, that as the signe many times is put for the thing signified, so the voice of the mouth and gesture of the bodie are oftentimes put for invocation it self. (Downname 1656, p.177-8)

In this passage, the signifier---the honoring practice---becomes all-important. The Holy Ghost *takes the practice for the intention*, not the intention for the practice. The Holy Ghost does not examine hidden, dark intentions here. The Holy Ghost does not see “behind” hypocrisy, either. What the Holy Ghost does is He examines honoring practices and He judges individuals on the basis of these practices alone.

According to this logic, Catholics who outwardly worship images, objects and saints can no longer appeal to the inner logic of intentions, as they had, to defend themselves against the charge of idolatry.⁵² Because they worship images, they commit “treason against God,” irrespective of their intentions (Hobbes *DC*, p.384). Following along these lines, if the civil sovereign commands subjects to practice idolatry, then the civil

⁵² Catholics distinguished *dulia* (veneration) and *latria* (worship). The good Christian venerated images in their mind but did not worship them (Sheehan 2006, p. 43). As historian John Sheehan also explains, “Calvin dismissed the *dulia-latria* distinction as a ‘subterfuge’, a mere wordplay in the face of the very real ‘profanation of the Divine Honour’” (Sheehan 2006, p. 43).

sovereign commands them to perform treason against God. As one author explains, even if “the Idol we know to be nothing” --even if the practice is plain hypocrisy---the “act and shew tends to the honour and worship of the Devill” (Featley 1642, p.66). For, whatsoever is done as “usuall ceremonie” is “taken (whatsoever the intention be) as done to His honour” (Featley 1642, p.66). The significance of the honoring practice in and for itself is unmistakable here.

What, in this context, is a subject to do if the sovereign commands him or her to perform idolatrous honoring practices? Resist, some Protestants argued (Featley 1642, p.66). Hobbes reasoned that “if they [civil sovereigns] command us to do those things which are punished with eternal death, it were madness not rather to choose to die a natural death, than by obeying to die eternally,” does not provide a consistent view on the question of practicing idolatry (Hobbes *DC*, p.370). On one occasion, Hobbes implied that God will most probably take the intention for the deed. He wrote, “For they who worship [idols] unwillingly, do worship in very deed: but they either stand or fall there, where they are commanded to stand or fall by a lawful sovereign” (Hobbes, *DC*, p.306). Elsewhere, Hobbes deftly claimed that the sovereign cannot command idolatry since the sovereign will define what idolatry means and his definition will identify idolatry with those practices that the sovereign forbids or does not command (Hobbes, *DC*, p. 328). Perhaps not persuaded by this cunning linguistic solution to the problem of idolatry, in another place, Hobbes advocated resistance to the civil sovereign. He stated that Jews and Christians who have entered the kingdom of God either by the old or the new covenant, “where idolatry is expressly forbid, though the city commands us to worship thus, yet we

must not do it.” (Hobbes *DC*, p.306). Hobbes also advocates the option of “going” to Christ. That is, he advocated martyrdom, in lieu of resisting the sovereign power or committing idolatry (Hobbes, *DC*, p. 384). Like Hobbes here, Roger Williams (1644) advocated resistance through martyrdom. He wrote,

So thousands of *Christs witnesses* (and of late in those bloody Marian dayes) have rather chose to yeeld their *bodies* to all sorts of *torments*, then to...practise *worships*, unto which the States and Times...have compelled and urged them. A chaste wife will not onley abhorre...to be restrained from her husbands bed...but will also abhor (if not much more) to bee constrained to the *bed* of a *stranger*. (p.20)

Fidelity to the right form of worship, presented here as sexual fidelity, is of incredible importance. Faithless practice is akin to adultery and faithful practice is worth the suffering of “all sorts of torments,” including death. This argument---supported on one occasion by Hobbes---is difficult for Hobbesian mortals to swallow, given that Hobbes claimed that mortals fear (or should fear) violent death above all.

Mortal observers of honoring practices also tend to take the sign—the practice---for the intention. Bodily gestures that “appear as signs of honouring are ordinarily also called honour,” writes Hobbes (Hobbes *Lev* 4.45.12). Mortals cannot view innermost intentions. All they observe is the honoring practice. What concerns society and its members is therefore practice. “Whether those words and actions be sincere or feigned...because they appear as signs of honouring [they] are ordinarily also called honor” (Hobbes, *Lev* 4.45.12). Clearly, the *practice* of honoring God through speech and bodily gesture takes on an order of extreme importance in English discussions of honoring God in the mid-seventeenth-century.

2.4 Honoring Practices: Their Meaning and Function

Kings and Princes are...bound to re-acknowledge Him againe, to the end to doe Him all honour and homage which is required at their hands.....Serve the Lord...with reverence. *Yee Princes and high Lords* (saith the Prophet) *give you unto the Lord eternall glory and strength: give unto him glory due unto his name, and cast your selves before him to do him reverence* [Psal. 29 .1]. (Beard 1642, p.9)

Thomas Beard told kings and princes not to deny God before men. They should affirm Him before them. In their gesture they ought to “adore” Him; in their speeches they ought to “profess” Him; and in their deeds they ought to perform a “publick and solemn Homage” to Him (Hyde 1659, p. 202). Like many of the passage quoted throughout this chapter, the passage by Beard describes the practice of honoring as a way of “acknowledging,” or “re-acknowledging” God. The passage also echoes a familiar tune when it frames honoring in terms of a transaction, a transaction where individuals “give honor” to God. The recurring phrase tells us that honor is something transferable. It is “given,” “tendered up,” and “paid” to God through the practice of honoring. This odd conceptualization of honor and honoring fits within the framework of Reformation theology. Calvin claimed that God is owed “a gross transference of glory, almost as if he were speaking of an accounting ledger” (Eire 1986, p.214).

English reformers used this economic language in their accounts of honoring. They claimed that mortals had to repay God (with honor) for their creation. Honor was the “rent” owed; it was what mortals returned to God for their creation (L’Estrange 1659, p. 59). “The very condition and nature of a man created by God requireth, that he should honour...and reverence Him that made him (Abbott 1641, p. 56).” Here, God’s role in

man's creation is an objective fact, not a belief some people hold. An objective transaction follows from this fact: in exchange for creation, mortals repay God with honor. It was their way of showing *gratitude* to Him.

Mortals also repay God (with honor) because God sacrificed His son to redeem humankind. "Thou did'st give thy precious blood, that all people may worship thee, and give thee thanks for ever (Vaughan 1644, p.111)." Honoring or glorifying God is "the price" mortals pay for their redemption through Christ (Durham 1658, p.290). Here again, Christ's death is a fact. In exchange for it, God expects humankind to thank Him by honoring Him. Hobbes also described an objective transaction between man and God when he explained why mortals honor God. Honoring was how mortals "acknowledge God for author of all benefits, as well past as future" (Hobbes *Lev*, p.240).

Acknowledging God as author here is a way of thanking God for *actual* benefits received. Honoring is a form of gratitude here, it is doing God a *courtesie*, a notion I will explain as it relates to the secular sphere in Chapter 7. Here, the practice of honoring is an act of acknowledgement and thanks and it is part of an objective transaction between man and God.

Hobbes also claims that honoring is a way to pay God *in advance* of benefits received (Hobbes, *Lev*, p.240). Mortals here pay God honor "up front." That is, they pay Him for actions they *hope* He will perform for them in the future. As one contemporary author further elaborates,

Prayse, thanksgiving, strength, honour and glory, be to thee O great
God...for that thou hast redeemed me from the driver of anguish....O

great God in Christ Jesus, I praise and magnifie thee now in thy truth, in thy great power and glory, for that thou hast forgiven me my sinnes. (Bohme 1648, p.59-60)

This reverential act pays Christ for actions that the author cannot be certain Christ has performed or will perform for him. The honorer believes that God can forgive and save humankind. The honorer honors God here *before* the day of his forgiveness and deliverance. The honorer here *hopes* that God will exchange salvation for honor, a hope firmly grounded in a covenant existing between humble honorers and God (those that honor me I will honor). This covenant possibly obliges God to save those who honor Him or to offer honorers tangible benefits in this world. But, if this covenant does not oblige God, it is because deliverance and benefits derive exclusively from God's power of grace, as God "shewes himself freely to his Creatures;" and "doth not sell his truth" for honoring (Ingelo 1659, p.28).

But, honoring certainly pleases God and the pleasure that He feels *entices* Him to draw close to the honorer, and this closeness, perhaps, prompts Him to forgive and to save the honorer. As one author explains, God is "well pleased with just adorations, not that he receives any advantage thereby, or is tickled with praise, but he rejoyceth that his creatures do as they should" (Ingelo 1659, p.28). Honoring here does not dupe God, as it frequently does within the secular sphere where honoring and flattery frequently dupes superiors, an argument I explore in Chapter 5 and 7. The all-knowing God takes pleasure in honoring and the practice provides Him with the "opportunity to reward sincere expressions of duty" (Ingelo 1659, p.28). I will further explore how honoring provides God with the opportunity to reward honorers and how honoring entices the recipients of

honor to shower favor upon honorers in Chapter 7, where I discuss honoring within *exchange* relationships.

According to the conceptualizations of the practice of honoring articulate above, honor is something external to God and it is something mortals have the capacity to give to Him.

As one mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen put it, honor is “al[] that is without himselfe [God]...honour being an externall adjunct, and in the hono[]er, rather than in the person honoured” (Brown 1642, p.66). What, then, is this external and transferable thing called “honor” that individuals give through honoring practices? What can mortals possibly give God? What would He in His splendor want from them in their weakness and sinfulness? Isn’t God perfect, self-sufficient and independent? Doesn’t He possess “all in all?”

Apparently, not. Mortals give God *recognition* or *acknowledgement* when they honor Him. They give Him recognition not of identity and equality *pace* Hegel but of difference and superiority. As Hobbes puts it, “We are said to *honour* him, of whose power we testify ourselves, either in word or deed, to have a very great respect; insomuch as *honour* is the same with *worship*” (Hobbes, *DC*, p.295). Stated in Reformation terms, when they honor God, the “*justify*” their faith in His superiority to Him and to neutral spectators. Englishmen argued that God wanted to receive unequal recognition from his *inferiors*. He wanted them to testify publicly that He was different and superior to them. God craves what Hobbes called “definite acknowledgment” of Himself as their God (Hobbes *DC*, p.311-312). In a sense, God was a vain God, and honor--the “puffe of stinking breath”

that acknowledges relative inequality---is what God wanted from mortals (Trapp 1647, p. 85).

God extorted this type of recognition from mortals. God “extorts from men the confession of his great and holy Godhead” (Mede 1642, p.30). And, if mortals fail to honor God willingly, they “shall at last bee compelled to acknowledge his name or his power....(which is expressed by a Metonymy of bending the knee)” (Dickson 1659, p.128). As another author proclaimed, “It must needs be, there is a God, to whom the Service and honour is due, of being confessed, and adored as God” (Leigh 1646, p.13).

Mortals here *declare* God’s superiority to others using gesture, song, speech and deed. This declaration is not silent. Nor is it said in a private corner. Instead, honorers tell “the people what great and wonderfull things he hath done, and how by his owne arme and power he hath brought great and strange things to passe” (Walker 1641, p. 77). As another Christian commentator explained,

I’le of it speak...I will declare thy greatnesse. Men...shall utter speeches; and I will thy greatnesse so declare...They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdome: and talk of thy power.... Praise ye the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul. While I live I will praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God, while I have any being. (Boyd 1648, p. 274-7)

God expects humankind to make these *declarative* statements of of relative inequality and praise in public. He commands mortals to sing declarative songs about His superiority, his “greatness,” “glory,” and “power.” And, when mortals declare God’s relatively superior power, they simultaneously declare their own relative weakness, since “true humbling tends to Gods honour and glory” (Stokes 1659, p.512). Similarly,

Hobbes wrote, the honorer “confess[es] his own admiration [of God] and obedience [to Him], which is the property of humility and a mind yielding all the honour it possibly can do” to God (Hobbes *DC*, p.300).

Now, how are we to interpret these declarations about relative inequality? Are they descriptive statements anchored in empirical or historical fact? in faith? in fancy? Or, are these statements groundless declarations or performances in which the honorer establishes God’s relative superiority through speech, gesture, or deed? There is no easy answer here.

Some contemporary authors used the term “ascription” and terms synonymous with ascription when they explained what honorers do through their honoring practice.

Voluntarism underlies these ascriptive statements. They entail no correspondence theory of truth, and no essentialized foundation or origin of meaning. The unequal relation between man and God here rests on nothing factual or faithful about the honorer or the honored person. It rests on the honorer’s act of honoring. The unequal relation is proclaimed through words, deeds or gestures, and the performance constitutes the unequal relation between honorers and God.

Mid-seventeenth-century authors captured the ascriptive quality of the practice of honoring through the language of giving. Here, mortals ascribed certain words to the name, or term, God. For example, “*Give you unto the Lord eternall glory and strength* (Beard 1642 p. 9; emphasis mine).” “*Give unto him glory due unto his name* (Beard 1642, p.9; emphasis mine).” Beard (1642) exhorted individuals to ascribe glory and

strength to God's name. He exhorted individuals to perform an ascriptive practice, to associate superior terms with the term "God." As Lancelot Andrewes (1647b) also wrote,

Give unto the Lord (all ye Kindreds of the earth) give unto the Lord honour and glory. Give unto the Lord the glory due to his Name. Being [sic] your offerings, and come into his Courts....lift up your hands towards his Sanctuary, o lift them up and praise the Lord....To my God will I sing whilst I have any being...I will praise thee....I will exalt thee. Be thou O god exalted above the Heavens, and thy glory above the Earth. (p.97)

Andrewes here exhorted Christians to worship God by ascribing honor and glory to His name. Granted, Andrewes also asserted that these terms are "due," which might imply that they are owed to God because of His properties, but Andrewes wrote that these terms are due to His *name*, which suggests that Andrewes exhorted mortals to engage in an ascriptive practice. This point is buttressed by how Andrewes encouraged mortals to use praising speech, songs of exaltation, and gestures such as lifting up the hands. These acts ascribed honour unto God's name. Here is another explanation of the honoring practice as an ascriptive practice.

Give unto the Lord (o ye kindreds of the people) give unto the Lord glory and strength...Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his Name: bring an offering, and come into his court...Say among the heathen, that the Lord reigneth (Boyd 1648, p.185)

This author also exhorted his audience to honor God in speech and song. In addition to encouraging them to ascribe "glory" and "strength" to the name "God", this author also encouraged them to ascribe "reign" (sovereignty) onto His name. Here, honoring practices are ways of *appointing* or naming God king. The similarity between this practice of appointment and a key practice within feudalism is unmistakable here, and worth briefly noting. By "giving divine worship" the honorer, like the vassal, appoints God as his liege-Lord, swearing exclusive allegiance to this sovereign (Lawson 1659,

p.153). Through the act of homage, the honorer or vassal offers the sovereign his or her “fealty,” or obedience, loyalty and faith (Lawson 1659, p.153).

Some writers made the connection between honoring and ascription more explicitly.

They literally claimed that mortals honor God when they *ascribe* strength and honor unto His name (Vaughan 1644, p.63). “To thy Name let honour be for ever ascribed of all the Hosts of Heaven and Earth (Taylor, Jeremy 1647, p.83).” The Christian “ascribes *honour* to God, or a testification to his eminency, Glory, a celebrious fame with praise, which is eternally due unto God” (Dickson 1659, p.160). Honorific speech is here what associates the term “honour” and “glory” with the name “God.” And, this ascriptive practice works to establish God’s reputation or fame in speech. It makes God’s *name* an honorable, glorious name, it gives His name “celebrious fame.” Honoring here works to “sanctify” God’s *name* within the linguistic community (Mede 1642, p.30). Here, God’s relative superiority and His outward being (or glory) comes into being within the structures of language, or signification.

Christian authors also maintained that the ascriptive practice of honoring God was a type of rhetorical practice. It was rhetorical speech, what Aristotle centuries earlier called epideictic rhetoric. It contained exaggeration and flourish. Through ornamental and poetic phrasings, the practice *magnified* God’s reputation within the profane world. In his *A treatise of divinity consisting in three bookes*, Edward Leigh (1646) articulated the relation between honoring and magnifying: “Oh that I could honor thee, and magnifie thy

power and the greatnesse of thy hand” (p. 44). As William Marshall (1641), an English Nonconformist churchman, explained,

In our praises we are said to blesse, honour, exalt, magnifie, and glorifie God; can any creature be thought worthy or able to do this? Lift up God, to make him a great God; to put glory upon God, yet God so interprets it, *he that praiseth me honoureth me.* (p.43)⁵³

Paradoxically, creatures “so base as our selves...become the instruments of the glory of so great a majesty” (Hales 1659, p.55). For, “reason informs us” that honorific titles, even “those relating to God himself” “could not be Present now, were there no Creatures, endued with so much understanding, as to be able to pronounce them” (Osborne 1659, p.124). If mortals did not honor God in speech and gesture, God’s glory would be “offuscated and blinded in the shades of solitude” (Osborne 1659, p.124).

The honor that mortals “put upon” or ascribe to God’s name when they honor Him did not necessarily correspond to truth. The practice did not acknowledge God for Himself. Honoring practices instead *embellished* God. They *magnified* and *glorified* Him (Hardison 1962, p.31). Discussions surrounding the Cheapside cross offer an example of the disconnect between facts on the ground and honoring practices. In 1641, a cross stood in a square in Cheapside. Reformers argued that the Cheapside-Cross was “an Eye-sore to their uprightnesse, and ought to be abolished” (Taylor 1641 p.3). The cross was an “eye-sore” because it was an idol. “The Cross in Cheapside hath many in the twilight and

⁵³ I will discuss those who do not adopt this view in a moment. But, here is Nathaniel Ingelo’s direct assault upon the claim. He wrote,

Since he [God] can receive no glory by addition of any thing to what he is, let us not foolishly endeavour to take away from him, by obscuring that which he hath revealed himself to glory in by attributing to him any Temper, Disposition, or Design, that is unworthy of him. Let us raise our thought of God as high as we can, for by that which hath been said already, it appears how far all unworthinesse is removed of God. (Ingelo 1659, 26)

morning early which doe reverence before it” (Abbott 1641, p.7). What made the Cheapside-Cross an idol, rather than a mere object, was the fact that people honored it. “The guilded Crosse in Cheapside, is an Idolatrous Crosse, for many adore and worship it (Taylor 1641, p.3).” Honoring here *makes* the cross an idol. The practice “lifts it up” and deifies or idealizes it. “Whatsoever is thus worshipped...is thereby changed into a Daemon (Mede 1641, p.21).” By worshipping the cross at Cheapside, worshippers made the cross into “a thing separated or divided from other things, by way of preeminence or excellency” (Mede, 1641, p.12). The worshipper “lower[ed] himself, in order to set other creatures above him” (Calvin 1949, p. 43). Even Hobbes in his account of idolatry asserted that by worshipping an image, a place or an object one “implieth” “a new relation by appropriation to God” (Hobbes *Lev*, 4.45.23). Honorers here idealized---even deified---the piece of wood through their honoring practice. They made the cross seem relatively superior to the honorer and, by extension, relatively superior to mortals generally. As Calvin put it, “an earth-born creature, who breathes out his life almost every moment, is able by his own device to confer the name and honour of deity on a lifeless trunk” (Calvin 1947, 93).

As in the case of the Cheapside cross, honoring practices directed at God do not declare who God is, what He does, or what he did. Rather, they offer a fanciful or imaginative representation of God that serves to *idealize* Him, rather than to falsify Him (Hardison 1962, p.15). Through amplification, honoring practices here increase God’s honor, making Him into an ideal God. Hobbes explained, “Worship... *increaseth* God’s honour...If we refuse to do it, we refuse the enlarging of God’s honour. (Hobbes *DC*,

p.305) Here, mortals do the enlarging and they do it without any positive notion of God's true being.

Like many of his contemporaries, Hobbes invoked the logic of ascription and magnification when he commented upon honoring practices in relation to God. Thus, Hobbes claimed that when we honor God we tend to do so *dogmatically* or *categorically* (Hobbes *DC*, p.296). He argued that individuals honor God by dogmatically ascribing superhuman (or almost superhuman) titles or attributes to His name. Although the civil sovereign will generally decide what words subjects shall ascribe to God, Hobbes claims that individuals "honour him [God] with attributes of significations as remote as they can from the grossness of bodies visible" (Hobbes *Lev*, p.65). Thus, mortals, who Hobbes argued are weak, should ascribe omnipotence to God's name; they should ascribe irresistible and *infinite* power to Him. (Hobbes *EL*, p.70). The concept of "infinity" here is rhetorical flourish and serves to idealize God because humans have no conception of infinity (Hobbes *DC*, p.299). Humans, who Hobbes claimed are nothing but matter, should honor God by ascribing immateriality to His name (Hobbes *DC*, p.299). This is another embellishment and idealization since mortals cannot conceptualize immateriality (Hobbes *Lev*, p. 239, p. 459; Hobbes *EL*, p. 66). Individuals, who Hobbes argued are determined beings, should honor God by associating His name with the phrase "the cause of the world" (Hobbes *Lev*, p.239). This, too, is rhetorical flourish and idealization because humans have no positive notion of an uncaused or first cause.

Hobbes insisted that individuals who honored God by ascribing these embellishments to His name were not witnesses declaring empirical or historical facts about God (Hobbes *Lev*, p. 462). Hobbes argued that humans have no conception of God because God is not subject to sense and all human conceptions derive from the senses (Hobbes *Lev* p.15; Hobbes *DC*, pp. 299-300; Hobbes *EL*, p.64-5). Hobbes strongly opposed those who inquired into the truth about God. Individuals “ought not to examine by reason any point, or draw any consequence of Scripture by reason, concerning the nature of God Almighty, which reason is not capable (Hobbes *EL*, p.149). Those who seek “scientific knowledge of those things which do not belong to science” end up “destroying faith in God” (Hobbes, *DH*, p.72). And, it seems that Hobbes did not want this. Scientific inquiries into the nature of God discourage honoring practices and Hobbes seemed to want to keep these practices around, albeit under the control of the secular authority (Hobbes *DH*, p. 72; Hobbes *DC*, p.301).

Properly speaking, when individuals honor God, they only confess their *inability* to conceptualize Him (Hobbes *DC*, p.300). That is, they acknowledge their limited range of conceptualization and understanding vis a vis God (Hobbes *Lev*, p.462; Hobbes *EL*, p.

64-6). Echoing Hobbes, John Sergeant (1659) wrote,

The true ground of our ignorance being this: That our understandings in our present state of *mortality*, being onely *naturally* moveable from our *Phansies*; which depend wholly on the weak reports drawn from our Senses: we have not, without *Revelation*, any other notions but such as are abstracted from *sensible Objects*; so that the peculiar properties of abstract *Substances*... can not now by us, naturally, be known. (p.107)

Mortals cannot know God. They can only have faith in Him. When they speak positively of Him, they simply use fanciful phrases to honor and *idealize* Him. They use “those

names, which amongst us are the names of those things we most magnify and commend” (Hobbes *EL*, p. 70; Hobbes *Lev*, p.15). As a contemporary had it, it is “custome to honor God with the most precious of....things, so also in names of praise” (Ingelo 1659, p.34).

The use of precious, honorific words or names served to establish the inequality between man and God within the linguistic community. And, the more men distinguished God from man and the more they idealized God and debased man, the greater the likelihood that man would obey God. As Allestree (1659) explained,

If you ever mean to obey intirely (as you must if you ever mean to be saved) get your hearts possest with the sense of that great unspeakable distance that is between God and you. Consider him as he is a God of *infinite Majesty* [sic], and glory, as we poor worms of the earth, he *infinite* in power, able to do things; and we able to do nothing...He eternal and immortal and we frail mortals...Consider all this, I say, and you cannot but acknowledge a wide *difference* betwixt God and man...and [this] humility...[brings] us to obedience. (p.35-6)

Honoring’s ability to amplify and idealize the recipient of honor here humiliates the honorer into obedience. Conceptualizing honoring as an ascriptive and rhetorical practice that deifies the recipient of honor, here constitutes unequal relations and encourages honoring practices like obedience.

A century earlier, Calvin argued that the fitting response to God’s self-revealing greatness is honour (Calvin, 1947). Calvin anchored honoring practices here in historical *facts* about God’s revealed greatness. Here, honoring is no ascriptive or rhetorical practice. Instead, honoring re-acknowledges historical facts, or at least the honorer’s faith in them. Quoting Revelation 4.1, one mid-seventeenth-century English author wrote,

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour...for thou hast created all things, and for thy wills sake they have beene and are created” (Twissee 1646, p.18-19).

Honorers here study the Bible as history. In this text, they observe or read about God’s real Power and Wisdom. When they honor God, they “admire his glorious Excellence, and with all Humility, adore his Eternal Majesyt, who alone is worthy of all honour, glory and power, for evermore” (Lawson 1659, p.45). Honorers here “lay” honour and majesty “upon” God because the Bible, as a historical record, reveals Him as “so glorious in all his attributes, that all, even heathen men, ought to give all glory and honour to him” (Hammond 1659, p.76). Honoring practice here are rooted in the honorer’s faith in the historical fact of God’s revealed greatness, as recorded in the Bible. This was the text where God revealed Himself through His actions.

The Lord hath shewed himselfe and his divine power in the creation, and by the creatures, that we might know and acknowledge, love and honour, serve and worship him. (Walker 1641, p.77)

“Acknowledging” God here rests in the honorer’s faith that God really “shewed himselfe and his divine power in the creation and by the creatures.”⁵⁴ Honoring God here is a way to declare the honorer’s belief in God’s past and present superiority. Honoring God by giving Him a title or by associating certain honorific words with His name here does not make God “more excellent then [He] is in [Himself]” (Lawson 1659, p.259). Instead, it shows that one “knows” or has the faith that God is such as He is (Lawson 1659, p.259). And one’s knowledge or faith in God’s greatness must be expressed.

[God’s greatness is] manifested in his glorious works, and especially in his blessed word. To know it thus manifested, and to acknowledge him the onely supreme Lord with all humility and reverence..is to hallow, glorify,

⁵⁴ Acknowledging here is synonymous with honoring. As James Fergusson (1659) explained, “we are not [in] strict phrase of speech said to acknowledge any, but these...whom we prosecute with that respect and honour which is due unto them, as the servant is said to acknowledge his master” (p. 57).

and magnify the same. For all these words signify the same thing. For to sanctify is to acknowledge Him to be excellent; to glorify is to acknowledge him as glorious; to magnify, is to acknowledge him as great. Yet it's not sufficient to acknowledge him as excellent, glorious, great but he must be acknowledged as most excellent, most glorious, and the greatest (Lawson 1659, p.259)

Lawson here described honoring as a descriptive practice in which the honorer testifies to a fact (revealed through His present works and through the Word) about God's relative and absolute superiority.

Hobbes also discusses honoring as a descriptive practice that offers a testament rooted in empirical fact, and a philosophical position. He argues that it is fitting to acknowledge God as relatively superior (to honor Him) either because God *has* irresistible power, or because He *is* the first cause (Hobbes *Lev*, p. 443). Properly speaking, honoring here relies on the honorer's faith in the fact of God's superior power, or His philosophically grounded status as first cause. The practice declares God's relative superior power and His primacy here. And, it provides others with information regarding the honorer's faithful soul, or philosophical belief in a first cause.

Honoring practices therefore perform a dizzying number of linguistic functions that are not strictly speaking consistent. They *declare* an unequal relation. They *appoint* a superior and an inferior. They *ascribe* superior qualities and characteristics to God. They *ascribe* inferior qualities and characteristics to mortals. And, they *embellish* and *magnify* the unequal relation that they recognize, constitute and declare. Honoring practices here blur distinction between fanciful rhetorical speech, testaments of transcendent truths, testaments of faith, and testaments of empirical and historical fact.

2.5 Social Consequences of Honoring God

Mid-seventeenth-century authors argued that honoring God in front of others promoted God within society. When individuals performed honoring practices publicly, their practices worked to “beget [God’s] honour and esteem” in the minds of others. Hobbes explained the way this process works in the following way,

God must be worshipped not privately only but openly and publicly in the sight of all men; because that worship is so much more acceptable, by how much it begets honour and esteem in others...Unless others therefore see it, that which is most pleasing [to God] in our worship vaniseth. (Hobbes, *DC*, p. 300)

Honoring here *summons* others to honor God. Honorific speech performs a rhetorical function because it works to persuade others to honor God. By publicly honoring God’s Name and by laboring “by all we can do to lift it up....others may be moved by us more to love, serve, and honour him” (Ussher 1645, p.247). The same is the case with respect to bodily honoring.

By frequent elevation of their hands and hearts in thy Sanctuary...thy honour may be exalted among all thy servants, Religion may be advanced, and the love of thy Name increased. (Vaughan 1644, p.359)

Lifting up one’s hands here procures others to honor God. And, Hobbes shows how this practice functions to procure followers when he analyzes the honoring practice in the secular sphere. “Where a man seeth another [man] worshipped, he supposeth him powerful, and is the readier to obey him, which makes his power greater (Hobbes *Lev*, p.238).” In the previous chapter, I already discussed how honoring mortals “lifted them up.” In *De Cive*, Hobbes explained how this “lifting” function procures followers,

Now because men believe him to be powerful, whom they see honoured, that is to say, esteemed powerful by others; it falls out that honour is

increased by worship; and by the opinion of power true power is acquired.. His end therefore, who either commands or suffers himself to be worshipped, is, that by this means he may acquire as many as he can...to be obedient [obedience being a form of honoring] unto him. (p.297)

Honoring here triggers further honoring. It has a kind of promotional value; it is akin to advertising in the economic sphere; proselytizing in the religious sphere, and propaganda in the political sphere. Hobbes filled Chapter X of his *Leviathan* with examples of how honorers help “draw adherence” to superiors, and how their practices help honored persons acquire “assistants,” what he calls a “faction” in *Elements of Law* (Hobbes *Lev* 1.X; Hobbes *EL*, p.176). Hobbes pressed the point further and deeper when he claimed that St. Peter’s honoring practice served as “the whole foundation of Christ’s church,” or His kingdom. Hobbes wrote, “Upon the confession of Peter, Matth. 16,16: *Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God, our Saviour, verse 18, saith, Upon this rock* [the declarative act of honoring] *will I build my Church.* [Rom 15.20]. (Hobbes, *EL*, p.147). Shockingly, Hobbes argues that Peter’s honoring practice served as the *foundation of a kingdom*. The honoring practice can serve as this foundation because the practice augments the honored person’s reputation and it publicizes this reputation, thereby making the honored person appear great or powerful in the eyes of neutral spectators. This, in turn, encouraged these spectators to make the person honored the object of their own honoring practice. Consequently, the practice worked to procure followers, and ultimately to establish a kingdom on earth.

Consider this example. In his conduct manual for rural clergy, George Herbert urges a Protestant parson to compose himself reverently “lifting up his heart and hands, and eyes and using all other gestures which may express a hearty and unfeigned devotion” (as cited

in Schoenfeldt 1991, p.1).” Showing this outward reverence, Herbert maintained, may “effect also his people knowing that no Sermon moves them so much to a reverence...as a devout behavior in the very act of praying” (as cited in Schoenfeldt 1991, 1). Hobbes also argued that many parsons or preachers will “adopt a role graver and holier than [they] otherwise might” (Hobbes *DH*, p.75). Hobbes claimed that this is “a kind of play-acting” (Hobbes, *De Homine*, p.76). Here, the parson or preacher assumes a fictitious role or becomes what Hobbes elsewhere called an “artificial person.” The parson or preacher acts graver and holier than how he would if he were not play-acting. Hobbes here argued that the parson’s or the preacher’s play-acting (what we might identify as hypocrisy) is without fault, since the observing and listening flock demand the parson or preacher to play this kind of role when addressing religious matters (Hobbes *Homine*, p.76). Here, Hobbes suggested that the flock authorizes the fictitious role that the parson or preacher plays. I assume what Hobbes means is that the authors (not the actors) take responsibility for the role. But, acting the part of a grave and humble preacher or parson might be “without fault” for another reason. The purpose of play-acting is to procure followers to God, and Hobbes here identified no fault in this end. The end might therefore justify the use of artifice.

Some argued that individuals of inferior rank were particularly susceptible to mimic the honoring practices performed by their superiors. Francis Rous (1641), a prominent Puritan and member of Parliament wrote that, if a “weake brother” sees a “stronger brother” worshipping Idols in “the Temple of Idols,” that is, in the Catholic Church, then the “weake brother” is “strengthened” in his “giving honour and worship to the Idoll

(p.190). The stronger brother here advertises and promotes the idol through his worship. We therefore find concerned Protestants worrying that Catholic practice would promote and spread the Catholic faith in England. If notables continued to perform Catholic forms of honoring practices, then Catholicism would spread like wildfire throughout England. Hobbes, too, appears to worry about this. He explained that he who “counterfeit such worship [idolatry] for fear of punishment, if he be a man whose example hath power among his brethren, commiteth a sin” (Hobbes *Lev*, p. 448). Catholic honoring practices performed by notables are powerful advertisements here. They become “a stumbling block” for “weaker” brethren. And, as Romans 14.13 declares, “Let no man put a Stumbling-block in his brothers way.”

Aware of how honoring practices could promote reverence in others, Hobbes also warned the civil sovereign to keep a careful watch on individuals honored by subjects within the commonwealth. Neutral observers, Hobbes feared, might defer the “obedience of honour,” to individuals who are honored by others (Hobbes, *Lev* p.223). Observing this practice might “seduce” onlookers “from their loyalty” to the sovereign (Hobbes, *Lev* p.223). As promotional advertisements, honoring practices “draw” subjects toward the person honored, thereby potentially drawing them away from the sovereign and his laws (*Lev*, p.219).

Some contemporary authors also reasoned that the practice of honoring could promote God beyond the Christian community. Honoring practices here became part of a missionary’s repertoire. It was a form of proselytizing. That is, to acknowledge God by

honoring him “is in effect to become his proseyltes and servants” (Hammond 1659, p.89). Reformation theology emphasized the importance of bringing non-Christians into the fold, as it was “uncharitable” to let non-Christians “shift as they may” (Lewis 1659, p.8). For “their souls behoof and benefit,” therefore, Christians ought to encourage non-Christians to “testifie their duty and Homage to their Creator” (Lewis, 1659, p.8). And, those Christians who did not care much for the souls of non-Christians, ought, “for the honour and glory of God” to encourage non-Christians to “testify their duty and Homage” to Him (Lewis 1659, p.8).

To advance the honour of God across the globe was therefore a task charged to the elect (Kroon 2001, p.23).⁵⁵ The godly believed that God wanted to “receive glory...in the voluntary confession and profession of the converted Gentiles” (Dickson 1659, p.128). God “requests” “that his very enemies” “acknowledge that he alone is God, and that his name is most excellent, and that he rules in Heaven and earth (Lawson 1659, p.259) And, since honoring practices were akin to promotional advertisements, they furthered this goal. They became part of a missionary’s toolkit.

Let all the Princes and lands of the earth, stretch their hands out unto thee,
O God, and confesse thy mightinesse and thy honour; that the Gospell
going forth into all lands, peace and all thy blessings may follow it.
(Vaughan 1644, p.165)

⁵⁵ As Royalist Henry Hammond (1645), chaplain to King Charles I during his captivity in the hands of parliament, explained,

A Christian must not content himself in doing what Christ commands, but must also dipose his actions so as may most tend to Gods honour, which consists in bringing in many disciples unto him, and which ought to be as pretious to a Christian as the salvation of his soule. That he ought to labour the conversion of others (in charity to them) the extending not inclosing of God’s kingdome. (p.155)

This author advises missionaries to promote God first by honoring Him through speech and gesture. Missionaries should “confess” God’s “mightinesse” and His “honour.” They should also stretch out their hands to God. As another author explains, “Among the heathen folk declare/his honour round about: To show his wonders do not spare,/ ev’n all the world throughout. (Barton 1645, Psal XCVI.1). Hobbes describes St. Paul as a missionary who brought heathens into the fold by honoring God. “Paul preaching amongst the Jews, Acts 185, did but testify unto the Jews, *that Jesus was the Christ*. And the heathens took notice of Christians no otherwise, but by this name that they believed *Jesus to be a king* [Acts 17, 60] (Hobbes *EL*, p.147).” Missionaries like St. Paul converted heathens by honoring God through speech and gesture. They spoke “of the glory of thy kingdome: and talk of thy power.... To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts: and the glorious majestie of his kingdome. (Boyd 1648, image 274-7).” That is, they promoted God amongst heathens by honoring him.

Ascribe unto the Lord (o ye kindreds of the people): ascribe unto the Lord worship and power...Call it out among the heathen, that the Lord is king: and that it is he which hath made the round world so fast that it cannot be moved (Vaughan 1644, p.246)

The assumption these authors make repeatedly is that by observing and hearing honoring practices, heathens will come into the Christian fold, and honor God as well. They anchor this assumption in a conceptualization of the honoring practice as a rhetorical practice, one that advertises and promotes God to neutral spectators.

Contemporaries also claimed that honoring practices affected those who engaged in them (Targoff 2001, p.6). Honoring here had a devotional impact. John Donne claimed that honoring practices are “conduc[ive] to the exaltation of Devotion (Donne 1649, p.204).

Honoring here served to *intensify* the practitioners religious thoughts and feelings. As Quaker leader George Fox argued, these practices were ways that Catholics used to “stir up” their love of Christ (Fox 1658, 12). In his exposition of the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians, James Fergusson (1659) explained this point more fully. He writes,

An outward reverend gesture of the body in prayer...serveth to stir up the affections in prayer, as being a man's remembrancer what his heart ought to do....it is a thing needful and convenient...to use some reverend gesture of the body while we are about the duty of prayer. (p.199)

Faith does not singly determine practice here. Practice informs and significantly determines faith. The logic behind this relation between practice and faith is fundamentally Aristotelian (Targoff 2001, p.6). As one commentator wrote,

For it is a rule of the Schoole, and there is much reason in it. *Habitus infuse infunduntur per modum acquisitorum*. Whatsoever is infused into us, is in the same manner infused as other things are acquired, that is, step by step, by humane means and cooperation (Taylor 1646, p.7)

Honoring practices are here the slow and steady “humane means” to inculcate and sharpen belief. As Downname (1656) explained, “The gesture and voice do greatly serve to help both the atte[.]tion of the mind and intention of the affections,” (p. 118). They “conduce much to the encrease and advancement of our devotion” (Donne 1649, p.204).

As Nathaniel Ingelo (1659) said in sermon he preached at St. Pauls Church in London,

Whilst we worship God as we ought...we grow bigger, and are filled with God. The more we submit our selves to God in due posture of obedience, the more we are exalted in wisdom and goodnesse. Though the...exercise of Religion, scem [sic] to be made for the glory of God, yet they were indeed designed and appointed by God for mans bodily and spiritual good. (pp. 30-32)

Ingelo's account here focuses less on how honoring practices glorify God and focuses more on how these practices affect mortals. Ingelo claims that honoring practices educate

mortals, they lift them out of ignorance and sin, making them “grow bigger,” wiser, and more good. Honoring practices also help to *maintain* inward faith (Slayter 1645, p. 655).

George Abbot (1651), for example, wrote,

Oh ye people of the lord be much busied in praising him...nothing we can do more profitable and available to our selves, for *it keeps the heart in a holy frame and tunableness in the exercise of faith, and love to God-ward.* (p.739, emphasis mine)

Honoring here keeps honorers looking “God-ward” and living a life with faith. Some even argued that honoring practices could work *to transform* an honorer’s innermost intentions (Targoff, 2001). In Thomas Tenison’s terms “mere outward shews of Adoration not only *testified*...inward states, but actually produced them” (as quoted in Sheehan 2006, p. 60). As James Fergusson explains,

It is the duty..of people...to set forth...Gods excellency and greatnesse; this being a singular mean[s] to engage the heart unto the high esteem of Him, and from esteem to serve and honour Him, Mal. 1.6. (Fergusson 1659, p. 241-2)

For zealous Protestant reformers, the idea that honoring practice could generate esteem for God and could thereby lead honorers “to serve and honour Him” had far-reaching and troubling implications. If reformers failed to eradicate Catholic forms of worship, then members of the flock—and the English nation as a whole---could return to the Catholic faith and service (Walsham 1993, p.18; Milton 1995, p.61). Smectymnuus, a Presbyterian group active in the early 1640s, argued that worshipping images, relics and Altars was a “stumbling block before the feet of many” (Smectymnuus 1641, p.9). Idolatrous practices encouraged or insinuated idolatrous beliefs into practioners. Idolatrous honoring practices led practioners *to esteem and serve* idols.

Christians must “utterly refuse” to perform these honoring practices, as these practices would inevitably lead mortals to serve an idol (Walker 1642, p.12).

2.6 Conclusion

Let me recap the points in this chapter that I will return to in my later chapters on Hobbes and honoring practices. First, honoring practices perform a dizzying number of linguistic functions and these functions are not, strictly speaking, compatible. All honoring practices acknowledge and outwardly *declare* an unequal relation between honorers and recipients of honor. Honoring practices might also announce the qualities and the characteristics that make the recipient “superior,” and the honorers “inferior.”

However, it is not clear how to interpret these declarations of inequality. There are a variety of ways, and the semantic confusion is potent. It offers a rich and varied means of exploring how mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen and women conceived of the inegalitarian relation between themselves and God. The practice might, for example, be a purely descriptive statement, describing an empirically or historically verifiable relation of inequality between honorer and God. Or, the honoring practice might offer a description of the honorer’s inner faith in a relation of inequality between honorer and God. Or, honoring practices might be purely ascriptive practices whereby the honorer imputes inequality through speech, appointing God as superior and the honorer as inferior. Or, the honoring practice might be a poetic practice whereby the honorer embellishes or creates a relation of inequality between honorer and God through ornamental speech and gesture. Finally, honoring practices might be poetic practices that

exaggerate the inwardly *believed* relation between the honorer and God. These are all possible ways of understanding the honoring practice and the relation of inequality that it declares.

Second point: honoring practices have social consequences. They are rhetorical practices that advertise and promote the honored person within society. They function in such a way that they augment the honored person's reputation and his or her social power. This encourages others to perform honoring practices to those honored by others. It encourages neutral observers to serve the person honored by others.

Honoring practices also shore up the honorer's belief in an unequal relation between honorer and recipient of honor. Through their performance, honorers may procure an inner faith in inequality. Through continual practice, honoring also sharpens and deepens this faith in equality. These practices serve as continual reminders of the unequal relation between honorers and the recipient of honor. Honoring practice therefore help to sustain the honorer's belief in their relative inferiority and the recipient of honor's relative superiority.

Chapter 3

Honoring God *and* Mortals: Paradox or Dilemma?

3.0 Overview of Chapter 3

Religion and Gods Word teach men to honour...such as are...Messengers of God unto them: But yet all these are to be...honoured, and respected in and under God...Let all Gods people take heed and beware...that they give not too much way to...regarding and respecting secondary means and inferior causes more then God the first and chief cause...Whosoever [gives]...more then due respect to any persons whatsoever, he may here learne...that God will admit no excuse for breaking any of his Commandments out of any respect, or...reverence...to any person (Walker 1642, p. 11).

In 1642, faithful minister of Christ George Walker preached a sermon to the people of London. Walker cautioned his audience, warning them not to reverse the metaphysical order of the universe. He acknowledged that Christians ought to honor their mortal superiors, since God entitled them to receive it. But, Christians should “take heed and beware.” All mortals are *under* God in the hierarchy of being. Honorers therefore should not honor mortals beyond what is their right. They must not honor the creature *over* the creator. Creatures were but “secondary means” and “inferior causes.” God was “the first and chief cause.” When Christians honored mortals over God, they turned the hierarchical order upside-down and the causal order around. And, God would not accept this. “God will admit no excuse for breaking any of his Commandments out of any respect, or...reverence...to any person (Walker 1642, p. 11).”

In his sermon, George Walker enters into and finds an answer for a raging mid-seventeenth-century Christian controversy. The controversy swirled in England and it swirled around the question of how to keep both the Second⁵⁶ and the Fifth Commandments. The controversy surfaced because authors could easily impose a particular interpretative construction upon these two Commandments, a construction that generated a contradiction. With respect to honoring practices, their interpretative constructions claimed that the Second Commandment forbade what the Fifth Commandment demanded from mortals. Consequently, a moral dilemma resided at the very center of what many godly men and women in reformation England viewed as the essential guide for their moral lives (Aston 1988, p.346).

The clause “Thou shalt not bow down” is a clause in the Second Commandment. Some Protestants interpreted this clause literally, and they extended it (Hyde 1659, p.199). According to this view, the Second Commandment forbade mortals from showing other mortals *any* signs of honoring. The Second Commandment therefore came into direct conflict with the Fifth Commandment. One Protestant articulated the existence of this moral conflict in the following way:

You tell us, the Second Commandment says, thou shalt not bow down thy self. Pray you, do those words forbid civil respects among men?...Will you so establish the second commandment that you abolish the fifth? (Dodd 1658, p. 5).⁵⁷

⁵⁶ There were many theological debates concerning which clauses in the Decalogue were part of the First Commandment, and which part of the Second. See Aston, 1988, Chapter 1. For my purposes here, The Second Commandment includes, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them. For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visitng the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me” (King James Bible, Exodus 20.5-6). See also Deut. 5.8-10.

⁵⁷ See also (Hyde 1659, 199). And (Gilbert 1657, 26)

The controversy between the Second and the Fifth Commandment also surfaced because of how authors interpreted other phrases within the Second Commandment. “Thou shall have no other gods before me[God]” is a clause found in this Commandment. Some interpretative constructions of this clause included mortals in the category of “other gods.” Thus, the Second Commandment meant that no honorer was to give a “mortal god” honor “before” the Christian God. To do so was tantamount to idolatry. What “before” meant in this clause was a question to be determined, as it was not transparent. This opacity enabled certain authors to place an interpretative construction upon the Second Commandment that made it and the Fifth Commandment come into moral conflict.

The Second Commandment also stated that God was a “jealous God.” Some mid-seventeenth-century English authors interpreted this to mean that God was jealous when mortals honored other mortals. Honoring mortals denied God the honoring that he jealously coveted for Himself (Kroon 2001, p.35). These authors argued that denying God what He coveted was sin. They also claimed that this sin especially enraged the vain God who craved all honor. And, authors claimed that God avenged Himself upon those who enraged Him. Here, again, a tension emerged between God’s Second and Fifth Commandment, since those who faithfully honored their “parents” discovered that they made God jealous, and this was something the godly now learned the Second Commandment prohibited them from doing.

Assuming this perceived contradiction between the Second and the Fifth Commandment, I organize this chapter around mid-seventeenth-century English accounts that answer the question, “What were godly Christians supposed to do?” This chapter places, albeit in an abstract way, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 in conversation, since the former addresses the political obligations that stem from the 5th Commandment, and the latter addresses the religious obligations that stem from the Second. This chapter also concludes Part 1 of the dissertation, which analyzes the godly discourse of honoring in mid-seventeenth-century England.

Not surprisingly, there is no single, definitive account of what the godly should do given the apparent contradiction between the Second and the Fifth commandments. There are many accounts, and I have chosen to organize a number of them into two distinct camps. The first attempts to *reconcile* the moral paradox. The second acknowledges the paradox as a *true dilemma*, and it exhorts Christians to make the right choice between Commandments. Both accounts, however, continue to support a hierarchical metaphysical order. Both accounts situate God above and causally prior to all mortals, including civil sovereigns. Both accounts assume God was due honor because of His superior place, and both conceptualized mortals as obligated to humbly honor God.

Commentators who reconciled the moral paradox did so in a number of ways. There were those who rank-ordered the Commandments, placing the Second above the Fifth, and using the Second to limit the Fifth. Inferiors here were to honor their mortal superiors up to a certain degree or extent—but never as much as they there were to honor God. Other

reconcilers introduced theories of representation and delegation. Individuals who honored mortal superiors here honored them as God's representatives, as His lieutenants.

Honorers kept the Fifth and satisfied the Second Commandment here because they did not honor mortals as "other" gods "before" God. Rather, they honored the representative element of the true God that theoretically (even actually) dwelled within God's mortal representatives.

Finally, there were authors who reconciled the paradox by forging substantive distinctions between secular and sacred honoring practices, and the intentions behind these practices. These substantive distinctions enabled godly honorers to honor God and mortal superiors differently. Conscientious honorers conformed to both Commandments by making these substantive distinctions in intention and practice.

There were writers, however, who viewed the moral paradox in terms of a true moral dilemma. The godly must therefore choose between the Second and the Fifth Commandment, and the appropriate choice was to honor God exclusively. On the one hand, arguments in support of this choice levelled hierarchical distinctions *between* mortals, establishing thereby a binary metaphysical order between humans and God and shortening the chain of being considerably. On the other hand, these arguments supported a tri-levelled hierarchical metaphysical order. At the top, was God, the only being to receive honor from mortals. In the middle, were honorers of God who humbly acknowledged human equality as frailty and weakness in relation to God. And, on the lowest rung stood the proud. They refused to worship God and they refused to humble

themselves before Him. They also refused to acknowledge human equality as the human condition of weakness and frailty before God.

According to this tri-levelled metaphysical order, inferiors who honored their mortal superiors (who obeyed the Fifth Commandment) were sinners, since they failed to acknowledge human equality as frailty before an awesome God. God punished honorers for this transgression. Additionally, individuals who demanded honor from other mortals as their right (given the Fifth Commandment) were now demanding others to sin against God. Their demand for honor was no longer viewed as deriving from the Fifth Commandment. It now derived from vanity, not from God's law, and God abhorred the vain. Finally, because honoring practices contributed to another's vanity, authors argued that the godly should stop engaging in honoring practices. Obeying the Fifth Commandment only promoted sin because it promoted the honored person to deny God and to honor themselves before Him. This is the final argument I discuss in this chapter on the tensions the godly faced between their religious obligation to honor mortals on the one hand and their religious obligation to honor God on the other.

3.1 In Search of Reconciliation

The passage quoted at the beginning of this chapter from George Walker's sermon reconciles the tension between the Second and the Fifth Commandment by evoking a rank ordering, and by discussing honoring in terms of *degrees*. Edward Hyde (1659) explained this rank ordering in the following manner:

Cesar must have his own, but he may not have Gods Tribute... The Honour...due from the fifth Commandment, though in the highest degree

of proportion, being infinitely below the Creator; and the honour of Religion or of the first Table...though in the lowest degree being infinitely above the creature...You must place your degrees of proportion...unless you will serve them [mortals] instead of God to the dishonour of the Lord, and to the despight of his Commandments. (pp.198-199, 202)

Here, the Second Commandment takes precedence over and limits the Fifth. The degree of honor owed to mortals is “infinitely below” the degree of honor owed to God. One’s obligation to God trumps the obligation to mortal superiors. Alexander Henderson similarly relies on the notions of rank ordering and degree when discussing honoring practices with members of the House of Lords and Commons. Henderson says, “Whom the Lord honoureth, it becomes us to honour...[But] no man ought to offer the fat of the Sacrifice, or the principall praise of the day” to a mortal superior (Henderson 1644, p.14). “The fat” and the “principal praise of the day” belong to God. Mortals may honor men here but there is a limit to secular honoring: they must honor God “before” or more than mortals. God deserves the most and the best praise, tribute, and obedience. As author Thomas Beard (1642) explained,

If they [subjects] owe so much honour unto God as to their Sovereigne, then surely it must follow, that they ought to obey his voice...and *so much the rather*, because hee is a great *deale more strong and terrible than they*, able to cause his horrible thunderbolts to tumble upon their heads. (p.9; emphases mine)

Like Walker, Beard here claimed that inferiors owe God more honor (including obedience) than they owe mortal superiors, as he is superior in strength. If a conflict between a divine and a mortal command arises, honorers must obey the divine command “before” the mortal one. And, if there is conflict between Commandments, the obligation to honor God overrides the obligation to honor any mortal “parent,” including the civil sovereign. According to this account, superiors may “by all lawfull means...labour to

maintain what honour God hath put upon [them] according to the fifth Command[ment;” but they ought not to demand “inordinate” or “excessive” honor from their inferiors, as this “postponeth” Gods honor and glory (Fergusson 1659, pp.237-8). Here, it seems, authors imposed stricter limits upon the *active* and *zealous* notion of political obligation that I analyzed discussed in Chapter 1.

A second way English commentators reconciled the tension between the Second and the Fifth Commandment was by conjuring up abstract theories of delegation and representation. The connection between honoring practices and these theories is wonderfully articulated by George Lawson (1659) in this passage.

Honour, Service, Subjection is due onely unto God in proper and strict sense...To them [Mortals and Angels] as such, no Subjection, Honour, Service can be due. Yet seeing by Commission from God, some of them may receive power and dignity above others, so as in that respect to represent God; honour, service and subjection may be due unto them from the fellow Servants. In this sense, higher powers are called Gods, and as such as not fellow-servants, and subjects, but Superiors; and in honouring them, we honour God, whose persons they beare. And as there may be an inequality, and also a difference of this communicated power and dignity, so there must be in the honour and service to be performed unto them.
(p.156)

Strictly speaking, Lawson argues God is due all honor. However, mortal superiors may receive “excessive” honor so long as they do not receive this honor strictly on account of themselves, that is, on account of some superiority they possess *independently* of God. Superiors who represent God on earth, that is, those that “bear” God’s “person,” may receive honor as God’s representatives. Here, as Hobbes puts it, “God, the mover of all things, produceth natural effects by the means of secondary causes” (Hobbes *DC*, p.258). Mortal superiors are these secondary causes and God works through them to produce

certain effects in this world. According to this account, rulers may receive “inordinate” honor from their subjects and subjects may be zealous when obeying their ruler’s commands because the honor rulers receive from subjects relates to and does not undermine God (Baxter 1658, pp. 33-4). As Hobbes put it, God “speaketh by his vice-gods, or lietenants here on earth, that is to say, by his sovereign kings, or such as have sovereign authority as well as they” (Hobbes *EL*, p.162). The honor cast upon political authorities who bear God’s person serves to honor God (Baxter 1658, pp.33-4).

Honoring mortals here does not overshadow God. There is no tension between sacred and secular honoring here. And, according to this line of argumentation, a tension cannot arise between the commands of mortal superiors and the commands of God, since the former command represents the latter’s command. Honoring or obeying a mortal superior here amounts to honoring and obeying God. Citing Aristotle as his authority on the distinction between a person and his or her representative, James Durham (1659) explained this point in greater detail. He wrote,

That honour done to the type, honoureth him that is typified...As suppose a great Courtier to be made Commissioner and Ambassadour for his Prince, he is received and honoured with all Kingly reverence due to him, whose Person he sustains; in this, say they, that honour is principally given to the King, who is honoured in his Ambassadour, as if he himself were present. (p. 457)

According to this account, the godly must “distinguish betwixt a Glory that is terminated ultimately in [mortals], or is accompanied with any undue ascribing to [mortals]” and “a glorying which tendeth to God and is terminated in him, and giveth no honour to any creature but what God giveth them, and what is in a due appointed order to Gods honour” (Baxter 1658, p. 227). Here, when the godly honor their rulers, they must honor the *representative role*, the *superior station*, the *instrumental role* or the *divine element* that

God gives to them, or infuses into them (Allestree 1659, p.311). They must not honor rulers as individuals, or as mere mortals. They must honor that part of their ruler that “participates” mysteriously in the Divine (Baxter 1659, pp.102-3; Allestree 1659, p.311).⁵⁸ Of course, in practice, it’s hard to see how one does this. That is, how does a subject avoid honoring the individual ruler when he or she honors the ruler’s representative role (Durham 1659, p.457)? Roles are embodied, and it is not clear how a subject can honor the divine role without also honoring the ruler who embodies the divine role. Theoretically, however, these notions of participation and representation help to reconcile the tension between the Fifth and the Second Commandment. As Baxter (1659b) explained,

Some of the ancient Doctors thought that the fifth commandment was the last of the first Table of the Decalogue; and that Honouring of Governors is part of our Honour to God, they being mentioned there as his officers, with Whom he himself is honoured or dishonored, obeyed or disobeyed: For it is God’s Authority that the Magistrate, Parent, and Pastor is endued with, and empowered by to rule those that are put under them. (p. 485)

If we follow Baxter’s account of how the “ancient doctors” (scholastics, I presume) interpreted the relation between the Second and the Fifth Commandment, then the latter becomes part of the First Table of the Decalogue and it is contained within the obligation to honor God. Honorers who honor magistrates do not break the Second Commandment

⁵⁸ Baxter (1658) wrote,

We look on [mortal authority] as a beam from God, as participating of somewhat that is Divine; I look on a Magistrate as Gods officer, and one that deriveth his Authority from him; and I no more acknowledge any Power which is not efficienctly from God as the supream Rector of the universe, then I acknowledge any naturall Being which is not efficienctly from God as the author of nature and the first Being. I look at a Magistrate as ultimately for God, as a man authorized to do his work, and none but what is ultimately his. So that as his office is so humane as to be also participatively Divine, and he is so an humane creature, as to be by participation Divine, so the Reverence and Obedience which I owe to a Magistrate is by participation Divine...We honour them as Gods officers, speaking and acting for him and from him by his Commission, and we oby obey their Power, as participatively Divine...This honour and obedience we owe them....for ..their Authority. (pp. 102-3)

when they obey the Fifth here. They cannot break God's law when they honor their mortal superior's commands. When subjects obey their ruler's commands, they do not honor mortal rulers "before" God, or as "other" gods. They only honor rulers as "officers," or "instruments" or the "secondary causes" of *the* one, true God. When they honor or obey rulers who participate in God, they honor God Himself, or the authority that He invests into His representatives. Thus the "honour he [the ruler] getteth, redoundeth to the honour of him that commissionateth him [God]" (Durham 1658, p. 551). As another author wrote,

To God alone the whole and solid glory is duly to be rendred: yet withal, who can but acknowledge, honour...and set forth his worth, whom that Great God thought good *to depute the instrument* of so glorious achievements? (Wishart 1647, Image 5; emphasis mine)

The glorious achievements this author refers to are those of James Marquis of Montrose, a Royalist. Wishart argues that subjects do not honor Montrose because he accomplished glorious achievements by himself. God accomplished these glorious achievements, not Montrose. Honorers honor Montrose because he is God's "deputy," or His "instrument" on earth. Montrose is God's secondary cause. Individuals here honor Montrose because he "represents" God, or bears his person.

On the Parliament side, we find Oliver Cromwell also resolving the tension between the Second and the Fifth Commandment by directing his secular honoring practice to God's "instruments." In a letter written from Putney to Colonel Jones, who won a decisive battle against Royalists at Dungan Hill, Cromwell wrote, "We desire to ascribe the glories of all to Him [God]....and as you are an instrument herein, so we shall, as becometh us, upon all occasions, give you your due honour" (Cromwell, 1899, v.1, p. 285). Cromwell

here describes Jones as an *extension* of God, as His instrument, or secondary cause. The victory that Colonel Jones won for Parliament at Dungan Hill belongs principally to God, not to Jones. Cromwell here honors God *in* Jones. When honoring Jones, Cromwell is put “in mind” of the one, true, Christian God; he is not “put in mind” of God’s deputy (Walker 1641, p.14).

Forging substantive distinctions deep within the honorer’s innermost intentions was another way authors reconciled the Second and the Fifth Commandment. Honorers here performed the same outward honoring practices to God and to mortal superiors. But, when they honored God in speech, gesture and deed, they had to *intend* to honor Him as God. When they honored mortals through these same practices, they had to *intend* to honor them as humans (and not as gods). A breach of the Second Commandment occurred when honorers *intended* to honor mortals as “other” gods or “before” God. Hobbes offered an example of this argument.

The worship we exhibit to those we esteem, to be but men (as to kings and men in authority) is civil worship; but the worship we exhibit to that which we think to be God, whatsoever the words, ceremonies, gestures, or other actions be, is divine worship. To fall prostrate before a king, in him that *thinks him but a man*, is but civil worship; and he that putteth off his hat in church, for this cause, that he *thinketh it* the house of god, worshippeth with divine worship. (Hobbes *Lev*, 4.45.13; emphasis mine)

Hobbes here suggested that honorers can satisfy the Fifth Commandment *and* keep the Second as long as they think or intend to honor mortal superiors as *mere* mortals, and God as God. “Divine worship is distinguished from civil...by the declaration of our opinion of him whom we do worship. As if we cast down ourselves before any man, with the intention of declaring by that sign that we esteem his as God, it is divine worship; if we do the same thing as a sign of our acknowledgment of the civil power, it is civil

worship (Hobbes *DC*, p.307).” Hobbes resolves the tension by turning inward and making distinction in the private sphere of intention and conscience.

But, as was shown in Chapter 2, Hobbes’s emphases on private thoughts and intentions frequently shift and becomes a skillfully intricate account of outward signification.

Once Hobbes made this shift, outward honoring practices---not private thoughts and intentions----played a role in determining whether the honorer adheres to both Commandments or breaks one of them. Here, *what* honorers *say* and *do* in public significantly determines whether the honorer keeps or breaks the Commandments.

Consider what Hobbes wrote in this passage.

There are many things, which may be commonly attributed both to God and men; for men may be praised and magnified. And there are many actions, whereby God and men may be worshipped. But the *significations* of these attributes and actions are only to be regarded. Those attributes therefore, whereby we *signify* ourselves to be of an opinion, that there is any man endued with a sovereignty independent from God, or that he is immortal, or of infinite power, and the like; though commanded by princes, yet must they be abstained from. As also from those actions signifying the same; as prayer to the absent. (Hobbes *DC*, p.306-7)

Assuming this logic, suppose an honorer signifies his or her intention to honor a mortal superior through a declaration. In the declaration, the honorer honors the mortal superior by assigning to him or to her attributes such as “immortality,” “infinite power,” or “sovereignty independent from God.” Spectators who share an understanding of this practice and these terms recognize that the honorer here engages in an honoring practice. They understand that the honorer is trying to communicate that the honored person is relatively, even absolutely, superior to other mortals, including the honorer. They might

even think the honorer is using poetry to highlight or magnify the difference between this superior and other mortals.

According to Hobbes, however, this honorer says something that a mortal must not say about another mortal, even if the civil sovereign commands it. Hobbes's prohibition here relies on the Second Commandment. This honorer wrongfully attributes god-like qualities and characteristics to a mortal, making him or her an "other" god in speech. This honoring practice (regardless of the intention behind the practice) is idolatry, even blasphemy, since blasphemy "is committed in two waies; either by speaking contumeliously of the true God, or giving divine honour to any else; which is also the taking that honour which is due to him alone, and bestowing it upon others (Hammond 1659, p.912). For something "temporal to be called eternal, is the name of blasphemy" (Hammond 1659, p.912). And when "Kings though mortal are called gods, and the suppliants address to them in this style, *To your Deity*," suppliants commit the sin of blasphemy or idolatry (Hammond 1659, p.912). According to this argument, in order keep the Second and the Fifth Commandment, mortals must abstain from engaging in idolatrous or blasphemous honoring practices. Hobbes further explained,

Christian kings...are not to be worshipped by their subjects by *an act* that signifieth a greater esteem of his power than the nature of mortal man is capable of. (Hobbes *Lev*, 4.45.32; emphasis mine)

If, for example, an honorer honors a Christian king by praying to him when he is absent or by praying to him for fair weather (even supposing the honorer intentionally exaggerates here) then the honorer, in effect, signifies that the honored person possesses superhuman power (Hobbes *DC*, p. 306, p. 7; Hobbes *Lev*, 4.45.22). These practices

declare that the mortal king is a god. According to Hobbes, this is idolatry and it is forbidden.

Distinguishing the sacred from the secular sphere, was another way contemporary authors resolved the perceived tension between the Second and the Fifth Commandment. Here, subjects honored mortal rulers by “confessing” that their commands were supreme over civil affairs (Carwell 1658, X). In these matters, mortal superiors were absolute; God did not subsume their authority. Godly honorers “honour and very willingly acknowledge” that the civil sovereign administers all civil affairs, and confess that “all persons within his Dominion ought to be subject to him (Carwell 1658, p. 226). The godly honor God by “confessing” that His rules were supreme over the affairs of the Church, as well as all questions pertaining to faith (Carwell 1658, p.226). By keeping honoring practices within their appropriate “orbes,” godly honorers were able to reconcile the tension between the Fifth and the Second Commandment (Carwell 1658, p.226).

3.2 Beyond Reconciliation

Let me now turn to arguments where the underlying assumption is that there is no way to resolve the tension between the obligation to honor God and the obligation to honor mortal superiors. Arguments that incorporated passages from Scripture to justify a *total ban* on honoring earthborn creatures surfaced, especially in polemical texts written by political radicals and nonconforming Christians (Barbour 2002). Essentially, these arguments offered an explanation as to why all Christians should keep the Second but “make void” the Fifth Commandment (Howgill 1659, p.12). One such argument runs as follows,

As saith the Scripture...if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and...whosoever shall offend in one point, he is guilty of all; and he that respects mens persons, hath not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ...Jesus leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps (John 5.44)...respected no mans person: And God saith...*thou shalt not...honour the person of the mighty; he that respecteth mens persons comitteth sin by transgressing the law.* (Clark 1656, p. 9)⁵⁹

The prohibition of honoring is at the heart of this passage. Clark used Christ's life as an example of a life lived according to God's will. Rather than honoring "the person of the mighty," or "respecting mens persons," Clark claimed that Christ honored God and followed only His law (Matt 22.16).⁶⁰ Hobbes also quoted Scripture and used God as an example to shore up his tenth law of nature, which forbids the respecting of persons.⁶¹ Hobbes wrote, "Acts x.34: of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons. Ecclesiasticus xxxv.12: The Lord is Judge, and with him is no respect of persons. Rom. ii. 11 For there is no respect of persons with God" (Hobbes, *DC*, p.159). Curiously, neither Clark nor Hobbes mentioned of the Fifth Commandment, Romans 13.7 or Peter's First Letter in their discussion of respecting persons.

Englishmen of Clark's persuasion referred to explicit examples from Scripture to further ground their arguments. For example, Penington (1659) argued that Christ "shewed not respect to Herod the King (but spoke contemptuously of him as men would account it) *Go saith he and tell that Fox*" (p. 9). Christ "did not shew respect to the reverend and grave Doctors of the law, nary nor to the High Priest himself" (Penington 1659, p.9). Worse, Penington argues that Christ "did not speak respectively to his own Mother"

⁵⁹ The Biblical passages cited by Clark include James 3.9, Joh 5.44, 1 Pet.2.21, Mat.22.16, Mark 12,14, Luke 20,21. 1 Joh.3.4,6,8,9,10.

⁶⁰ For more on Christ's dictum against respecting persons see Barbour (2002).

⁶¹ There is an important caveat here. Subjects are obligated to respect the sovereign.

(Penington 1659, p.9) To her, Christ said, “Woman, what have I to do with thee? John 2.4 and in a manner denied all his relations, Matt 12.48” (Pennington 1659, p.10). The examples from Scripture offered by Penington demonstrate that the Son of God did not honor any so-called mortal superiors, including the civil sovereign. Penington radically argues that Christ let the dead bury the dead, and exhorted the living to honor God exclusively. According to this radical claim, godly followers of Christ ought to “crucify” this world, that is, they ought to “strip” it “of its vain shew, and give it the honour of a reed for levity” (Baxter 1658, p.29).

Some Englishmen and women also argued that Christ gutted the Fifth Commandment because he did not demand the honor owed to him as a superior. Instead of demanding honor or respect from mortals, Baxter (1658) wrote,

[Christ] gave his cheeks to be smitten, his face to be spit upon, his head to be Crowned with thorn[], and his body to [be] arrayed contemptuously like a fool, and at last to be hanged as a contemned thing among malefacotrs on a Cross; to be reviled by those that passed by and by him that suffered with him. (p.55)

Christians like Baxter here clearly placed a different interpretive construction upon a superior’s right to receive honor from inferiors. They interpreted any claim to this right as the frustrated cry of vanity, or pride. And, Christ, they noted, did “no vicious extravagant thing,” like “seek honour to himself” (Hammond 1659, p.295). Christ did not have what Hobbes identified as a “fiery spirit,” or vain glory, from which arises “man’s will to hurt” (Hobbes *DC*, p.114). Instead, Christ was a humble honorer of God. That is, He denied Himself, and referred all honor to the Lord (Hammond 1659, p.295). Mortal humiliation before God, like Christ’s humiliation before His Father, was here “the designed way to

the glory of [the] Redeemer.... [Mortals] must be Nothing, that he may be All” (Baxter 1658, p.237).

Radicals, like Quaker Francis Howgill (1659), also turned to the phrases within the Second Commandment in order to undermine what contemporaries claimed followed from the Fifth.

Bowing, the second Commandment prohibits it, *Thou shalt not bow down to them...* That which thou calls civill respects is idolatrous worship...respecting of persons...is commission of sin...respecting the creatures, and worshipping the array which is upon a mans back...is idolatry and not civility which is to be condemned....That which the world calls civility and courtesie is hypocrise and idolatry. (Howgill 1659, p.14-15)

Howgill here interprets the Second Commandment as imposing a prohibition upon honoring practices like bowing. He identifies this practice, along with other forms of civil respect, as a form of “idolatrous worship.” He also identifies this practice as “courtesie” and “civility.” In Chapter 6, I will explain accounts of honoring that situate honoring practices within the discourse of civility and courtesie. What is important here is that Howgill identifies honoring practices as idolatry and prohibits their performance on account of the Second Commandment. Civil respects are practices that honor men as gods before the true God and the Second Commandment explicitly prohibits this form of honoring.

What stands behind this Quaker prohibition against honoring is the claim that mortals must assume and even proclaim that humans are equal. And, as Hobbes (no Quaker but a frequent subscriber to this view) put it, “since we are all equal by nature, one should not

arrogate more right [including the right to be honored] to himself than he grants to another.” Granted, when mortals authorize the civil sovereign, Hobbes’s position on this matter changed, as sovereign authorization permits the sovereign to arrogate relatively more right and more honor to himself (Hobbes, *DC*, p.140). Nevertheless, the “levelling principle” put forth by Quakers, and by Hobbes in his account of the state of nature, commanded the godly to “defalk much of that respect which former ages paid to Superiors of all sorts” (Allestree 1660, p.130). Individuals who shared this moral persuasion argued that mortals have an equality and unity in Christ, alike being “partakers of Christ” (Hales 1642, p.32-33). Consequently, honoring or respecting persons “blasphemed” the egalitarian doctrine that these Englishmen found within the Gospels.

Christ’s teaching, according to the radicals, commanded mortals to assume and profess human equality. Accordingly, they had to forgo the performance of honoring practices. The profession of human equality, however, did not signify some a priori inner *dignity* inherent within all members of the human community. Rather, the profession gave testament to the fact of human’s relative *frailty* and weakness when compared against God’s infinite strength and power (Hobbes *EL*, p.100). A *humble* or *meek*---not dignified---disposition is one that acknowledges equality of nature; it acknowledges that all are equally weak, dependent and afraid, as they are, by nature, unable to preserve themselves without help from another (Hobbes *DC*, p. 143, p.157; Hobbes *EL*, p. 101, p.105, p.107). Like Hobbes, Quaker William Caton (1658) denied natural inequality and the honoring

that followed from it. He acknowledged natural equality among men, associating it with weakness. Caton (1658) wrote,

For what is man but dust? And vvhwherefore should he be adored by his Fellowv-ceature? As if honor pertained to him, vvich indeed is onely due to his Creator, vvho formed him of the dust, to vvich he must return.
(p.52)

By nature, mortals are all but dust. There is no reason to honor a mortal—as the Fifth Commandment declares---because honor does not pertain to dust and ashes. God, however, is glorious. He can make man from ashes and therefore only He deserves honoring.

Radical authors who wrote against honoring mortal superiors, including civil sovereigns, also challenged those who anchored their favorable arguments in theories of participation, delegation and representation. Recall that these theories justified honoring superiors because they were somehow extensions of God. Authors who challenged this argument asserted that *only* the principal cause of superiority (God) is fit to receive honor from mortals. Secondary causes, including God’s instruments or representatives, do not merit honor.

[Secondary causes] may be Pipes, they are no Fountaines of Good things: Through whatsoever God conveighs his Favours, they are still his Favours... ‘Tis no huge Christianity to allow God...a Bounty [of all honour]. (Howe 1644, p.38)

Howe here uses the presupposition that God is the source of all good things, including stations of superiority, to gut the obligation to honor mortal superiors. Inferiors are only obligated to honor God, the principal cause of everything, including a mortal’s superior station. They are not obligated to honor consequents, here, mortal superiors, including

rulers. In a biography about her husband, author Lucy Hutchinson made a similar claim. Hutchinson wrote, “Remember to give all his and all our glorie to God alone, who is the only father and fountain of all light and excellence” (Hutchinson, 1973, p.2). Since God is the principal “father” or cause of the excellencies that make some mortals superior to others, He—and not secondary “fathers” or causes---deserves *all* the honor. As another author put it, “Ascribe the honour and glory to God alone...lest the most noble Pearls should be cast before Swine” (Paracelsus, 1659, p.81). And, as another contemporary put it,

Let God have the glory of all...let us say with *David*, *Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name wee give the praise; Not unto us, because not by us; let us give the praise, and the whole praise to God.* (Calamy 1642a, p.12)

Calamy argues that God’s instruments are not worthy of honor, here described as praise.

Only God is, as He is the first cause. Cromwell further articulated this argument.

It may be thought that some praises are due to those gallant men, of whose valour so much mention is made;--Their humble suit to you and all...is, That in the remembrance of God’s praises they be forgotten....Our desires are that God may be glorified...It is meet that HE have all the praise.(Cromwell 1899, vo. 1, p. 228)

Cromwell here marked himself as a member of the humble and blessed elect because he encourages his audience to leave valorous men---himself included---in brutish oblivion.

The Fifth Commandment might oblige inferiors to honor Cromwell, an officer in the army and later Lord Protector, but Cromwell rejected the honor inferiors might lay upon him. Like Christ, Cromwell practiced self-denial here, and perhaps took secret pride in doing so. More likely than not, Cromwell also engaged in this act of self-denial because he knew that perceived humility helped his reputation and procured godly followers to him (Steward 1659, p.17). Edward Burrough (1658a), for example, argued that Cromwell

did seek the “greatness and honor of the World, and loved the praise of men, and took...titles...and....respects” (p.4).

But, upon other consideration, Burrough also conceived of Cromwell’s humiliating acts as wholly sincere. He asserted that Cromwell would have been furious if he had lived to see the “idolatry” that surrounded his funeral (Burrough 1658a, p.4). Burrough supposed that the Lord Protector would have forbidden his officers, children and kindred from parading his coffin from place to place and following it, causing “multitudes” “to wonder after it” (Burrough 1658a, p.4). According to Burrough’s second account, Cromwell was a man who sincerely exhorted the godly to deny honor to all mortal superiors, including himself. Like other members of the Independent party, he urged mortals to honor God exclusively.

Cromwell advanced this claim against honoring mortals by arguing that secular honoring practices enrage God. He explained,

God hath said, “My glory I will not give unto another,”...He hath said He will not give unto another, nor suffer to be taken from Him! We know what God did to Herod, when he was applauded and did not acknowledge God. And we knoweth what He will do with men, when they...detract from his glory. (Cromwell 1899, vol. 1, p.189)

This persuasive force of this passage depends heavily upon the Second Commandment.

Radicals interpreted this Commandment as reminding the godly of the fact that “God is jealous of his honour” (Burgess1647, p.168). “God is very tender, and jealous of his owne honour, it being to him as the apple of his eye, the richest jewell in his cabinet (Clarke 1659, p.11).” And, jealousy here means “the indigna~tion and wrath of some

person against those who with-hold and with-draw from him that love and respect which is due to him, and bestow it on others who do not deserve it, and to whom it is not due” (Walker 1642, p.2).

Authors argued that honoring mortals *stole* honor from God, causing Him *injury* (Hammond 1659, p.912). Some Englishmen wondered whether and how it was possible for God to suffer an injury from mortals. This claim implied that justice existed between mortals and God (White 1659, p.90). Moreover, if God unwillingly suffered an injury from mortals, then His suffering suggested that He was not omnipotent (White 1659, p.90). And, if He willingly suffered this injury to his honor, then what He suffered was no injury at all (White 1659, p.90). Injury or not, Englishmen claimed that honoring mortals was sin, as it was “contrary to His being acknowledged the one God” (Hammond 1659, p.912). Honoring mortals was even a “direct *blasphemy* against the Creator” (Hammond 1659, p.912).

The Biblical story of Herod provided certain authors with an example of what happened to honorers who honored mortal superiors. In this story, God punished Herod’s *subjects* for honoring Herod (Malvezzi 1642, p.81). In their honoring practices, honorers magnified Herod’s reputation, an act that the Fifth Commandment required of them.

Their performance of this and other obligatory honoring practices made God jealous. God interpreted their practices as rejecting His sovereignty. Honorers here pulled God out of his throne and set up “a scullion,” giving Herod “the honour and obedience of a King,” and this amounted to “high treason against the god of heaven” (Baxter 1658, p.61).

When Herod's honorers "doted" upon him, their honoring made God "not looked upon" (Reynolds 1659, p.26; Hutchinson 1973, p.167). When honorers left God in brutish oblivion, God was known to give honorers up "to become their own and others' Idols, and so to fail" (Hutchinson 1973, p.167). Dickson (1659) explained,

God gave them up judicially to their own affections, and most justly left them to themselves for a punishment of their abominable Idolatry: That they which robbed God of his glory, might suffer in, and by themselves, the foulest ignominy...They are said to worship and serve things created, passing by the Creator...God altogether rejects that worship...hee will not by any means share his worship. (p.4)

Honorers of Herod who essentially obeyed the Fifth Commandment were here given up by a covetous God who was not willing to share His worship with a mortal ruler. The implication here is startling. Subjects who adhere to the 5th Commandment and who honor their rulers shall suffer the "foulest ignominy" at the hands of God. To avoid this divine punishment, authors exhorted the godly to honor God exclusively.

In addition to punishing honorers for their transgression, God punished superiors who accepted honor from honorers. Cromwell wrote,

Wherever anything in this world is exalted...God will pull it down; for this is the day wherein He alone will be exalted....acknowledge God, That they would exalt him. (Cromwell 1899, vol. 1, p.351)

Millenarianism haunts this statement by Cromwell. The Kingdom of God is at hand and individuals must prepare for the day of God's coming through acts of self-denial and through acts that exclusively give honor to God. They must take "heed of being lifted up" by honorers (Burrough 1659, p.45). In the Biblical example, God gave Herod to "the wormes" to punish Herod's vain-glory and to encourage Herod's honorers to honor God exclusively (Younge 1641, p.196; Maveszzi 1642, p.81). God showed Herod's honorers

“what a God they had magnified, that cannot keep the lice or worms from eating him alive” (Baxter 1658, p.13). He showed them the frailty of man, “forcing” Herod’s honorers to “*leane upon his Name again.*” (Reynolds 1659, p.25)

What followed from the Fifth Commandment presented further arguments against adhering to it. The godly argued that honoring rulers indirectly *encouraged* their rulers to *deny God His honor*. Authors claimed that receiving honor from honorers “hinders the receiving of Christ into the heart....[and] it is sure [to] bring dangers, since all our safety, all our hope of escaping the wrath to come, stands in receiving him” (Reynolds 1659, p.145-6). Godly rulers should forbid honoring practices because these practices are a type of betrayal (Burrough 1659, p.34). They encourage vanity, and vanity encourages rulers to turn away from God (Burgess 1647, p.168). As Edward Burrough (1659) explained,

O, be awakened, be awakened, and now seek the Lords glory....if men would give thee honour...take it not for that which would exalt and honour thee in the world, would betray thee to the world and cast thee down...This is Gods word to thee...deny thy self...be not exatlted by man least man betray thee...the glory of the Lord is revealing, and thine shall be vailed before it, and the glory of all flesh shall fall. (p.10)

Honoring caused rulers to “betray” their higher concerns. Honoring practices are therefore “sin-offerings” (Stokes 1659, p.25). Obeying the Fifth Commandment therefore indirectly encourages rulers to break the Second and the godly did not want their rulers to break the Second Commandment. This argument offered the godly another reason to turn their honoring practices exclusively toward God.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter explores the mid-seventeenth-century tension that surfaced between the moral obligation to honor God and the moral obligation to honor mortal superiors.

Conforming Protestants (Anglicans and Prebyterians) and Royalists generally attempted to reconcile this moral tension. They did so in three ways. First, they tried to rank-order obligations, placing the obligation to honor God above the obligation to honor mortals. Second, they summoned up the notions of representation and instrumentality; honorers honored their mortal superiors as God's instruments or representatives. Third, the differentiating what these obligations entailed in practice, or they forged a distinction between intentions and practices.

Non-conforming radicals (Puritans and Independents), by contrast, frequently exacerbated the tension between the moral obligation to honor God and the moral obligation to honor mortal superiors. They pressed Englishmen and women to deny mortals honor and to honor God exclusively. According to these radicals, honor was not a mortal's right. To demand honor was a mark of vanity. It was sin. The demand for honor even marked God as a vain and jealous deity. And, by honoring Him exclusively, mortals satisfied His vanity.

By rejecting the Fifth Commandment, non-conforming radicals conceptualized mortals as equals in relation to God. The equality I discussed in this chapter is an equality that humble honorers acknowledge. They associate human equality with weakness, not with dignity. They deny-themselves and all mortal beings. Mortals, they claim, do not possess any right to respect or honor. God alone possess this right.

Coda to Part I

All the arguments in Part One which *support* the practice of honoring mortal superiors presuppose that the honor showed by godly inferiors issues from the assumption that superiors “participated” more significantly with or in the divine. Either God positioned them closer to Him on the chain of being and therefore in a higher *station* relative to their mortal honorers; or God infused some divine element into them; or He used them as His instruments, or secondary causes. The godly who intended to honor these superiors “after a right manner” considered them not so much as “what they [*were*], as from whom they c[a]me” (Steward 1659, p.72). And, the honor that they afforded to their superiors was an honor they gave “not so much for their [superior’s] sakes, as for His that sent them” (Steward 1659, p.72). That is, the godly did not honor their superiors as independent “persons” who manifested some superior merit or excellence independent from God (Steward 1659, p.72). According to these Englishmen and women, honoring practices that did proceed from a superiority that was somehow “independent” from God proceeded from a “bastard fountain” (Steward 1659, p.72).

The godly associated these “bastard” honoring practices with the ancient Rome and Greece, especially in their haydays of paganism and idolatry (Steward 1659, p.72). In ancient Rome, honorers “honored the Severer strictness of Cato’s Integrity” (Steward 1659, p.72). In ancient Greece, honorers honored “the Stern carriage of the Stoicks” (Steward 1659, p.72). And, it is to mid-seventeenth-century-English-humanist accounts

of the practice of *honoring virtue* along with its opposite, the practice of *flattery*, that I turn to next, in Part 2 of the dissertation.

PART II HONORING VIRTUE AND FLATTERY

I would have thee, Sancho, learne by the way, that if the naked truth should come to the eares of Princes, without the apparel of flattery, we should have another manner of world, and other ages would be called iron, and not ours, and this would be the golden age (Cervantes 1652, p. 156).

In this translated passage from a mid-seventeenth-century English edition of *Don Quixote*, the translator, and perhaps Cervantes himself, imposed a different interpretative construction upon honoring practices. As Chapter 1 explained, within regimes that presupposed hierarchy, many contemporaries argued that subjects were morally obligated to treat their rulers with reverence and respect. They were obligated to honor their rulers in speech, behavior, deed and gesture. If superiors had faults, inferiors humbly masked these faults in reverential and praising speech, and so on. When inferiors failed (or refused) to honor their superiors, they sinned.

But here, English readers of this popular text discover the translator calling what many would probably identify as honoring by another name. The translator has Quixote call honoring *flattery*. The translator links *flattery* to political speech and he connects *flattery* to corrupted monarchical institutions. He has Quixote lamenting that certain princes do not hear the “naked truth” from their subjects, specifically their councilors.

Unfortunately, honorific speech—here called flattery—is all princes hear.

English readers then discovered Quixote going out of his way to condemn the practice of flattery. Earlier he told his loyal servant Sancho Panza that it is “the part of loyall

servants, to tell the naked truth to their Masters, in its native colour, without increasing it by flattery, or diminishing it for any other vain respect” (Cervantes 1652, p. 156).

Curiously, even though the relationship between master and servant is a hierarchical one, Quixote remarked that masters expect unadorned speech---not “vain respect”---from their loyal servants. The demand for frank speech, gesture and behavior does not undermine inequality here. This lesson in turn applies to subjects in relation to their princes. It is not the proper role of subjects to honor or flatter their rulers. It is their proper role to speak and behave frankly with them, even though rulers are superiors.

English readers also find Quixote condemning flattery because of its worldly implications. Quixote claims that flattery makes for an iron age---a lesser “manner of world.” Here, the practice that I previously claimed helped support and maintain unequal (and what some authors called better) institutions, turns out to harm these very institutions and the world. Flattering disempowers subjects and such disempowerment does not promote their prince’s good. Flattery does not promote institutional stability or the common good, either. If only inferiors spoke and behaved frankly to and with their superiors, then “other ages would be called iron.” If only princes heard empowered and frank speeches from their subjects, then Quixote, Sancho and everyone else—including princes---would live in “the golden age.”

Analyses of honoring as flattery are not unique to the sixteenth century. Nor are they unique to Spanish works of fiction. An overwhelming number of mid-seventeenth century English authors also discussed flattery and associated it with honoring. Their

discussions share certain parallels with the remarks they found in the English translation of *Don Quixote*. Contemporary English authors “repented” and tried to “reform” their claim that inferiors should honor individuals holding superior stations even when these individuals were cruel (Cotton 1642, p.166). Honoring practices here amounted to flattery because honoring did not acknowledge real excellence and superiority. Honoring was flattery because it was undeserved. Englishmen also linked flattery to political speech and to monarchical institutions. Surprisingly often, contemporary authors echoed the quixotic claim that the eradication of flattery and the introduction of another mode of speech, gesture and behavior toward individuals holding superior stations will lead to a “golden age,” that is, a better manner of world.

Why did mid-seventeenth century authors condemn a practice that shares striking similarities with honoring, a moral obligation that I analyzed in Chapter 1? Why did contemporary authors link the practice of flattery to monarchical institutions? In what way does flattery contribute to the creation of a lesser manner of world? What’s the difference between honoring on the one hand and flattery on the other? Is there a difference? Do *all* honoring practices create inferior worlds? Or, is flattery the only culprit here? If the latter, then what alternative modes of honorific speech, gesture and deed did contemporary authors offer as an alternative to or as an antidote for flattery? In the pages that follow, I intend to answer these questions by carefully examining how Christian-humanist arguments in mid-seventeenth century England accounted for the practice of flattery, and its conceptual opposite, the practice of honoring virtue.

In Chapter 4, I explore mid-seventeenth century English accounts of flattery from a Christian-humanist perspective. Authors writing in this vein theorized and criticized the practice of flattery by opposing it to another honoring practice: the practice of *honoring virtue*. By pitting the practice of honoring virtue against flattery and their respective underlying elements these authors developed a scathing, although abstract, critique of flattery. As I will show, it became far more difficult to distinguish honoring virtue from flattery and to commend the former and criticize the latter when Englishmen analyzed instances of these practices within their social world.

I also examine in Chapter 4 the reason why Englishmen claimed that honoring virtue was preferable to flattery. Arguments infused with Christian and humanist overtones associated values such as altruism, goodness, truth, friendship, loyalty, and even justice with the practice of honoring virtue. Against this taken-for-granted standard, the practice of flattery clung frequently to devilish and vile motifs. Authors endorsed a conception of flattery in which evil, falsehood, the enemy, treason, vice and injustice constituted the meaning of flattery. Authors condemned flattery here because flatterers acknowledged others as superior when they did not merit this acknowledgment. That is, they acknowledge others as superiors who were not virtuous and therefore did not deserve honoring. But, this was not the only reason authors condemned flattery and flatterers. Self-interest led flatterers to engage in flattery and this motive led to its condemnation. The fact that flatterers ignored truth and spoke or behaved falsely made flattery worthy of reproach, as well. The treason that underlay flattery also distinguished it from honoring, and led to its condemnation. Finally, authors identified certain unhappy consequences

that followed from flattery. The practice encouraged vanity and it swelled the flattered person's appetites. These consequences led flattered monarchs to behave tyrannically, and led political subjects to dissent and discord.

Chapter 5 surveys some more charitable analyses of flattery offered by mid-seventeenth-century worldly realists who offer an interpretative construction of flattery according to which the practice is an efficacious means for attaining personal security and advancement. I provide several reasons why these practically minded writers tempered some of the scathing criticisms of flattery offered in Chapter 4. Ultimately, however, even these interpretative constructions of flattery condemn the practice because of the hypocrisy it entails. Flattery gives false testament to the unequal relation between flatterer and flattered. And, there remained something deeply noxious about bearing false witness against oneself and one's neighbor, the flattered person. These worldly accounts of flattery strongly inclined readers to associate weakness with hiding one's motives. Finally, even in these more charitable accounts of flattery, authors remain somewhat suspicious of a practice whose aim is social climbing and/or economic profit.

In Chapter 6, I use much of what I discuss in Chapter 4 and 5 to examine two ways that mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen and women viewed honoring practices performed by courtiers and councilors in the court of Charles I. One view conceptualizes honoring practices as *norms* embedded within the institution of the court. Their performance served to magnify the king's majesty, to constitute the "courtier" social group, and to distinguish refined manners from brash and base forms of behavior. The other view

describes the symbolic honoring practices performed by courtiers in court as strategic flattery. This interpretation is critical of the court, the king, and especially courtiers.

Chapter 6 then examines assertions made by courtiers that hostile Parliamentarians argued smacked of flattery. Parliamentarians used their critique of flattery to justify their participation in the English civil war, a war some claimed was waged against the king's flatterers. The chapter concludes by examining arguments favoring the construction of political orders that would eradicate devilish or Machiavellian flattery and would encourage different norms, including honoring practices that acknowledged virtue. The conclusion of Chapter 6 therefore gestures back to my analysis of the practice of honoring virtue in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.

In addition to contributing to our understanding of mid-seventeenth century English accounts of honoring, I here analyze the practice of honoring virtue and the practice of flattery for two reasons. First, because both practices share resemblances with the practice of honoring discussed in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. Second, because aspects of what Hobbes offers as an account of honoring is what mid-seventeenth century Englishmen and women would more readily identify as strategic practice, and flattery is this kind of practice. And, since I will argue that flattery mimics the practice of honoring virtue it is important for my analysis of Hobbes and flattery to understand this practice as well. My account of these practices therefore sets the stage for my analysis of Hobbes and honoring.

Chapter 4

Vicious flattery and Honoring Virtue

4.0 Overview of Chapter 4

Mid-seventeenth-century writers theorized the practice of flattery by contrasting it with the practice of *honoring virtue*, and its underlying elements. Arguments infused with Christian-humanist or Neo-platonic overtones associated values such as altruism, goodness, truth, friendship, loyalty, and even justice with the ideal of honoring virtue. As an ideal type, the practice of honoring virtue acknowledged others as superior because of their virtue. Here, virtue implied hierarchy and it justified the rule of the honorable, or virtuous. In these ideal accounts of honoring, there were three reasons offered for why individuals engaged in this practice. First, contemporaries argued that honoring practices occurred out of mechanical necessity; the appearance of virtue here triggering honoring as a response. Second, contemporaries argued that honorers honored the virtuous out of an altruistic concern for them, or because they claimed it was their duty to reward or to encourage the virtuous by honoring them. Third, Englishmen claimed that honorers revealed the honored person's virtue out of a love of or concern for virtue itself. In these ideal accounts, contemporaries valued honoring practices because they associated them with notions including truth, goodness, altruism, friendship, justice and loyalty.

Of course, when Englishmen examined real social practices, they noticed tensions between idealized accounts of honoring practices and the way honorers engaged in these practices in England. I explore some of these tensions in this chapter. First, social-practice revealed that honoring frequently served the honorer's self-interest. It consequently became difficult to shelter honoring practices from less than purely

altruistic motivations. Second, the social-practice of honoring frequently contained rhetorical flourish. It did not speak truth, as certain ideal accounts of honoring suggested. Third, honorers needed to be motivated to honor others; their practices did not follow virtue necessarily and appeals to duty and love seemed excessively naive. Finally, in the world, virtuous persons did not simply appear like mushrooms appear in nature. That is, virtue was not an objective fact that honorers unequivocally witnessed in the world, and which they responded to with honoring. Rather, virtue depended significantly upon the honorer's private judgment. Here, the hierarchies acknowledged through honoring were matters of private opinion, not nature, and private judgments could err, or change in a way that nature could not. Some contemporaries pressed deeper in this direction. They claimed that virtue and the hierarchy it presupposed depended upon public, rather than private, judgment. Honoring here was a practice rooted in popular opinion. Notions of honoring and the hierarchy the practice presupposed therefore became associated with instability, as public judgment was subject to change with the whims of fortune.

Against the standard or ideal account of honoring presented in the first part of this chapter, I offer mid-seventeenth-century-English-authors who proceeded to develop a scathing critique of flattery. Although flattery shares many characteristics with the social-practice of honoring virtue, authors conceptualized honoring virtue and flattery as opposites, and associated flattery with devilish and vile motifs. Flatterers acknowledged individuals as superior who did not possess the virtues that humanists claimed made some individuals superior to others. Acknowledging the undeserving as superior was wrong. Flattery was also an evil practice because it masked the self-interest that

motivated those who engaged in it. Moreover, flattery was vicious because it was a kind of false speech and behavior; it contained rhetorical flourish. Finally, while masquerading as friends of the virtuous and of virtue, flatterers were enemies who committed treason against those they flattered and encouraged vice. Flatterers here led their prey down dangerous paths, and toward dangerous ends. As I show in Chapter 6, they led monarchs down the road to tyranny. For all these reasons, in ideal accounts of the practice of flattery, flattery stood condemned.

4.1 Flattering or Honoring?

Let me quickly gloss why it is easy to confuse the practice of honoring virtue with flattery. Below, one mid-seventeenth century author offered his reasons for the confusion between the two practices. He wrote,

[With] the more ordinary sort of people, flattery is apprehended to be the same with honor; And for want of observation and intelligence wherein true honor doth consist, they take all kind of praises and commendations to be the same with it (Hall 1654, p. 441).

Both honoring and flattery are similar because they declare a relation of inequality. But, Hall here insists that flattery differs significantly from “honor” and “true honor.” As I will show below, Hall’s account of “honor” and “true honor” is akin to what I call the practice of honoring virtue. What Hall suggests here is that most of his contemporaries failed to see how the underlying elements of flattery differ substantially from (and even exclude) the underlying elements that constitute the practice of honoring virtue.

A lack of intelligence and observation are not the only reasons why it is difficult to distinguishing flattery from the practice of honoring virtue. The confusion between

honoring virtue and flattery also arises to a certain extent because flatterers purposefully *mimic* the practice of honoring virtue. Flatterers aim to blur the distinction between what they do and what honorers do, and they frequently succeed in their aim. So, for example, honorers of virtue frequently praise and commend the individuals they honor. Flatterers mimic this practice, although those they flatter frequently do not merit praise and commendation and the motives for flattery are not disinterested, as they are when someone honors the virtuous. Similarly, honorers tend to humble themselves before those they honor. Flatterers are also frequently very obsequious, although their sycophantic behavior is typically not sincere. Finally, honorers frequently take orders from their virtuous superiors, since virtue, according to humanists, justifies rule. Honorers offer their service to the virtuous, as do flatterers, but flatterers frequently do not believe their ruler's rule is justified and the promises of service flatterers make frequently are not fulfilled (Plutarch 1870, p. 130).

Mimicking the practice of honoring virtue proved advantageous to flatterers. In Chapter 5, I will explain this point fully. Briefly, this is because by successfully disguising flattery as the practice of honoring virtue, flatterers made a blameworthy practice (flattery) appear like a commendable one (honoring virtue). It was in the flatterer's interest to appear to be acting commendably. Mimicking the practice of honoring virtue increased the likelihood that the flatterer would gain because the flattered tend to favor those who behaved commendably, who honored [flattered] their virtues. So, flatterers aimed to make it hard for people to distinguish their practice from the practice of honoring virtue.

The apparent similarity between these practices was unfortunate for those Englishmen and women who truly honored virtue. They did not desire to acquire the reputation of being a flatterer. This reputation proved disadvantageous, since flattery was wicked. Therefore, individuals who honored virtue attempted to distinguish what they did from flattery. Consider this example. A writer penned the following to a fellow writer.

Friend, let me honour thee....I tell thee Friend, from me Thou must expect no straines of flattery in too much praising; thus must I dare say....I ne're knew a line, but what was good, proceed from you[.] [P]roud am I to be a sparkle 'mongst stares in such a skie. (Tatham 1640, Dedication)

The author of this dedication honored his writer-friend by first praising his friend's excellence in writing. The author then honored his writer-friend by acknowledging his relative superiority: he equated his writer-friend to a star and he humbly equates himself to a tiny sparkle among stars. But before doling out these praises, the author claimed that his acts of honoring are not acts of flattery. That is, the author attempted to distinguish himself from the flatterer.

Now, should *we* believe this author? Is he truly an honorer of his friend's virtue? Or should we think of him here as a flatterer? This example does not provide us, as observers of this act, with indubitable information about the underlying elements or motives informing this act. We just cannot be sure whether this is flattery or an act that truly honors virtue.

An additional problem that "real" honorers of virtue faced was that flatterers also condemned flattery and they mimicked gestures of sincerity. "Beware, lest in condemning flattery you become a flatterer," wrote one author (Comberville 1647, p.88).

Flatterers explicitly claimed or at least they implied that they were faithful truth-tellers. For these additional reasons, therefore, it was hard to distinguish flattery from the practice of honoring virtue.

What, then, distinguishes one practice from the other, or is there a distinction at all? In practice, of course, an individual might be partially an honorer, partially a flatterer, they might be self-delusional, or they might be clueless, not knowing what they are doing when they are performing their act. But, how did mid-seventeenth-century authors conceptually forge the distinction between flattery and honoring virtue? As ideal-types, what is “honoring virtue?” What is “flattery?”

4.2 Honoring Virtue

As an ideal type, honoring virtue is a practice performed by a *friend*, or a *client*, or a *political adviser*, or subject.⁶² When performing an honoring practice, the honorer *selflessly* bears witness and *truthfully* acknowledges his or her friend, patron, advisee or ruler. Relative, if not absolute, *superiority* is signified through the honoring practice, and

⁶² Although the Tudors and Stuarts tried to discredit the system of clientage, this social structure significantly retained its hold upon social relations in mid-seventeenth-century-England. G.E. Aylmer wrote,

The structure of central and local government in early 17th century England is to be seen against the background of personal and social relationships which had grown up in the sixteenth but persisted into the early seventeenth century.....‘Clientage’...this system went right through society; lesser men attached themselves to greater men, becoming their clients. Looked at from the point of view of the greater men, the system can be called ‘patronage’. The king at the very top of the pyramid is the greatest patron of all. People who are near to the king—councillors, favourites, ministers, courtiers, bishops and so on—enjoy power and wealth and prestige by being near to him; they in turn dispense favours and patronage to other people, that is to say to their friends, relatives, and clients. The Privy Councillors, the judges and the top officials in the government patronize their clients, just as they themselves in one sense can be thought of as the king’s clients as well as his servants (Aylmer 1963, p.31).

See also, Stone (1967), especially pp. 7, 42, 207.

the honored person is signified as a superior because he or she possesses *virtue*. Let me flesh this out.

First, as an ideal type, honoring virtue is a practice embedded with a friendship or a patron-client relationship that some Englishmen believed ought to exist between rulers and particular subjects, such as counselors. Parties in this relationship did not share equal status. Consider the friendship between Mercutio and Romeo in the beginning scenes of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* as an example. Mercutio is Romeo's "true man." He is his loyal retainer, his kinsman, his friend, perhaps even his client, but he is not his equal. Romeo is Mercutio's social superior and he can tell Mercutio what to do. In his essay on friendship, Francis Bacon describes friendship between unequals, namely princes and their advisers, claiming that this concept and phenomena has Roman roots.

Bacon wrote,

For Princes...raise some Persons, to be as it were Companions...the Roman Name attaineth the true, use, and Cause thereof; Naming them *Participes Curarum* [partners in cares]...This hath been done, not by Weake and Passionate Princes onely, but by the Wisest, and most Politique that ever reigned; Who have oftentimes joined to themselves, some of their Servants; Whom both Themselves have called Friends; And have allowed Others likewise to call them in the same manner. (Bacon 1985, p.60)

Bacon here offers a glowing account of friendships existing between princes and their favorite subjects, who clearly do not share equal status or political power.

In a letter addressed to his friend and patron, Jean-Louis Balzac (1638) explained a set of roles that each plays in this ideal friendship or in an ideal patron-client relationship.⁶³

⁶³ Sr. Richard Baker translated this letter into English and published it in London in 1638.

Balzac claimed that his friend or patron, Monsieur de Uoyture, held the “higher part” in the relationship. Balzac, in turn, held “the lower and less noble part.” (Balzac 1638, Letter XXXIII). Uoyture’s role was to “do good.” Balzac’s role was to “give honour” to Uoyture, or to “acknowledge” him when he does good (Balzac 1638, Letter XXXIII). Here, the “higher” friend or patron is the performer of honorable actions. The “lower” friend or client honors these actions: he or she performs the role of the honorer.⁶⁴

In idealized accounts of this relationship between honorer and honored, here specifically between Balzac and Uoyture, the parties possess an element of *like-mindedness*. If we reference Roman terminology (as described by Bacon), the parties are “partners in cares.” But, this partnership “in cares” is embedded within a relationship where the parties have different and unequal roles to play with respect to these “cares.” Ideally, both share a concern (a care) for virtue. But, they manifest this concern through roles that are both different and unequal. “Higher” friends act virtuously. As Balzac had it, they “do good.” “Lower” friends, by contrast, stand at the sidelines and acknowledge their “higher” friends when they “do good.” That is, they honor their “higher” friends. In this relationship, the honorer shares a concern for virtue but the honorer plays what Thomas Hall identifies as a “subservient and instrumental” role (Hall 1654, p. 22). As Balzac put the point, honorers are “lower” friends.

Here, the “higher” friend’s possession of virtue, not his or her given social status, is the true foundation of the inequality between the higher and the lower friend. Virtue even

⁶⁴ Koenraad Verboven argues that the very essence of a client’s role with an ancient patron-client system is “precisely the enhancement and confirmation of their patrons’ social position” (Verboven 2002, p. 101). That is, the essence of the client’s role is to honor the patron.

justifies the “higher” friend’s rule here. In ideal accounts, performing honoring practices, including practices like obedience and praise, signify the honorer’s subjection to a virtuous and superior friend who deserves to rule. According to humanists, the meaning honoring practices carried here was superior to the meaning these practices carried when honoring flowed from God’s pre-ordained hierarchy and His omnipotent command (Symmonds 1642, p.13). The hierarchy and the kind of rule signified through honoring practices that acknowledged virtue had a “better tenour” because the foundation was a person’s virtue, not his or her station in a preordained hierarchy (Symmons 1642, p.13).

In ideal accounts of honoring virtue, an honorer is also a truth-teller who accurately signifies his or her “higher” friend’s virtues through honoring practices (D’Ouvilly 1657, p.38). Curiously, in these accounts, the honorer does not embellish the truth about the honored person. This is curious because honoring was frequently associated with rhetoric, namely epideictic rhetoric. But, it is not so associated here. Instead, “truth ought to be in [a friend’s] love. If the one be without the other, if either love be without truth, or truth without love” then the law of friendship is broken (Andrewes 1650, p.510).

Honorers, in this ideal account of the practice, act like “reporters and publishers” who “return and report” upon their higher friend’s honor, or virtue (Hall 1654, p.22). Their practices merely “carry the force of an Echo,” or a reflection (Hall 1654, p.22). That is, honoring practices offer an echo----a representation, a mirror---of their “higher” friend’s virtue (Hall 1654, p.22). Honored persons embody ideal and abstract virtue and honorers here bear witness to and signify the physical embodiment of ideal virtue through their honoring practices. Honorers do not embellish here. Nor do they speak falsely, as they

frequently would if they were applying their rhetorical skills. Instead, their practices faithfully represent the “higher” friend to herself or himself and to neutral spectators. Honorers reflect reality and ideality, a combination that appears in the person honored. Honorers therefore signify what their “higher” friends are through honoring. They do not use honoring practices to impute superior value to their “higher” friends.

In England, however, honorers frequently exaggerated the truth when performing honoring practices. The appearance of rhetorical flourish within existing honoring practices therefore complicates this ideal account of honoring. I briefly focus on this complication and then return to other important features within the ideal account.

Consider how Thomas Herbert honors Philip, Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery.

Herbert wrote the panegyric to Philip on behalf of the House of Commons in 1641.

Your [Philip’s] virtues do deserve a Virgils straine,
...The splendor of your virtues dim the skies,
Which I can’t looke on with a Buzzards eyes:
...Excuse my gazing up, standing below.
The Commons voice runs thus of you, I see
The abstract of virtue, and Epitomee
Of all Morality.

(Herbert 1651, 3rd stanza)

Herbert honors Philip and glorifies his distinctiveness, namely his superiority, here.

Clearly, Herbert is not speaking in all truth and seriousness. His account does not offer Philip a mirror reflection of who he is. Herbert embellishes when he claims that the splendor of Philip’s virtue “dims the skies.” And, I assume he also exaggerates when he claims that Philip is the “epitome of all morality.” However, the panegyric might reflect some accurate claims about Philip. And, it does contain some of the ideal characteristics associated with honoring practices, which I address in a moment. For example, I assume

the panegyric accurately signifies that Philip possesses some important virtues and therefore is worthy of honoring. Second, I assume the panegyric accurately signifies that virtue has an ennobling effect and Philip is superior on account of his virtue. For these reasons, contemporaries might have overlooked Herbert's use of rhetorical flourish, calling his panegyric an example of a "true" honoring practice, not an example of flattery.

Englishmen might have identified Herbert's flowery speech as an honoring practice (not flattery) upon consideration of Herbert's intentions as well. In *Timber of Discoveries* (1641) poet and masque writer Ben Johnson acknowledges that he, too, has honored individuals above their true worth. That is, he "oft prefer'd men past their termes and prais'd some names too much" (Johnson 1641, 566 as cited in Sharpe X, 196). But, Johnson suggests that his honorific speech is not flattery because the purpose behind his praise was to make those he praised virtuous (Johnson 1641, p.566, as cited in Sharpe X 196). Properly speaking, ideal honoring practices contain no rhetorical flourish. But, honoring practices that do contain flourish can be subsumed under the ideal so long as the honorer's intentions are virtuous. Thus, so long as Herbert had honorable intentions when he honored Philip, Englishmen might have overlooked his less than strict adherence to the truth about Philip's virtue.

Let me return to other characteristics found within the ideal account of honoring practices. In this account, honorers never honor men like Philip for self-interested reasons (Malvezzi 1643, p. 85). Honorers are not for-themselves. If Herbert is truly honoring Philip, then he is not honoring him to establish his reputation as a poet. As David

Dickson explains in his account of honoring, “In the testifying our opinion by outward signs, concerning the virtue or worth of any one, wee do not expect what is due to ourselves.....[instead] we go before others, giving them the honour which belongs to them” (Dickson 1659, p.31). Here, the honorer asks for nothing for himself or herself when honoring. As an ideal type, honoring practices carry with them the notions of selflessness and an altruistic concern for virtue and for those who manifest it.

But, experiences with honorers and honoring practices in England complicate this ideal account. Contemporaries noticed that honorers stood to benefit from their honoring practices because honoring subtly carried with it the notion of reciprocity (Verboven 2002, p.35). This reciprocal relation was not defined legally and it created no legally enforceable obligations on either party. But, because honoring practices enhanced a “higher” friend’s or patron’s social status within society, the norm of reciprocity entitled honorers to a return for this kindness (Verboven 2002, p.96). Honorers therefore hoped to receive some kind of return for their practices. But, they would not publicly appeal to the norm of reciprocity to spur their “higher” friends to reciprocate. For, such an appeal would call into question the honorer’s selflessness, and this, in turn, would call into question the sincerity of his or her honoring practice, thereby reducing its “enhancing” effect. Honorers therefore simply waited and hoped for honored persons to reciprocate with “free-gifts” that flowed not from the norm of reciprocity but from the fact that the honored person was virtuous, here liberal or beneficent (Verboven 2002, p.62). Ideally, however, waiting and hoping for “free-gifts” was not what honorers did. Ideally, they

honored their “higher” friends for selfless reasons, out of duty, or a love and concern for virtue and for the person honored.

The selflessness and altruism contemporaries associated with honoring practices that were conceived in the abstract were complicated further by careful observations upon the social practices of honoring. In England, honoring tended to serve the interests of honorers because the practice pleased honored persons and it attached them to their honorers. Fortunately, forging this attachment was an element within the ideal account of honoring, as attachment was part of any friendship or patron-client relationship. But, the feeling of attachment proved gainful. It led honored persons to prefer their honorers, especially over strangers. Preference, in turn, led honored persons to shower favors (gifts) upon their honorers. Honoring here served the honorer’s self-interest. In practice, it was difficult to disassociate gain from honoring, either as a motive for or a consequence of honoring practices. Properly speaking, however, self-interest ought not to motivate an honorer and it ought not to color the social interaction between honorer and honored in any way. In its ideal form, honorers simply honored the virtuous irrespective of gain “with worthy purposes and for just ca[uses], and in friendly measures” (Taylor 1657, p.96).

In the ideal account, honorers performed honoring practices as a mechanical response to the appearance of virtue, or out of a sense of obligation or love of virtue. I have already discussed honoring that stems from love or care. Let me here discuss honoring as a mechanical response and how existing social practices complicated this account and then

turn to ideal accounts about honoring as an obligation. According to Thomas Hall, in order for honoring to be faithful or “true,” that is, in order for it to embody the ideal type, “the honorable person....must....be the cause of the honor that follows thereupon (Hall 1654, p.22).” That is, the honorable person must be “the efficient cause of this honor [of honoring]” (Hall 1654, p.22). Consequently, “the honourable must precede the honoring in time: so must they in dignity too, as the cause doth the effect” (Hall 1654, p.22). Here, Hall presents honoring as the consequence of a particular cause, the honorableness, or virtue of the person honored. The cause of honoring is not God, as was the case in previous chapters. Nor is it principally self-interest. Hall here gives his readers the impression that honoring is a *mechanical* response to virtue, or honorableness. That is, Hall posits an almost necessary causal link between honoring and virtue. As another author explains, “Honour followes merit as the shadow doth the body” (Symmons 1642, p.13). Nature’s necessary laws cause bodies to cast shadows. By analogy, these same laws cause honoring to follow merit, or virtue.

But, surely, in the social world, honoring does not necessarily follow the appearance of virtue like a shadow does the body. Honoring practices are embedded in far more complicated and far less secure social interactions. If we remove the causal necessity from Hall’s argument, what we discover is an account of honoring that ideally describes honoring as a descriptive practice. Through honoring, honorers signify to others that the person honored possesses or manifests virtues, such as prudence, temperance, wisdom, honesty, and courage. In their practices, honorers associate honorific words like “eminency” and “dignity” with a certain person because these words objectively describe

that person (Mede 1642, p.249). The honored person here “incarnates” virtue and honorers simply give testament to this objective fact by honoring them.

This account of honoring as a purely descriptive practice does not easily mesh with what many Englishmen observed in their world, however. For them, the practice of honoring only testified to the honorer’s *opinion* or *faith* concerning another person’s virtue. As Hobbes explains, “To honour a man, is the same with highly esteeming him: and so honour is not in the party honoured, but in the honourer” (Hobbes, *DC*, p.295).⁶⁵

Englishmen like Hobbes here performed a kind of Cartesian turn. They separated honor from its idyllic link to nature or objective reality, and they founded it, along with the hierarchical order it presupposed, upon the honorer’s inner convictions. Of course, empirical evidence might substantiate an honorer’s convictions, but the honorer’s judgment nevertheless mediated the previously unmediated association between virtue and the honored person (Walker 1641, p.1). In practice, therefore, another’s virtue and the hierarchy virtue justified was subject to doubt.

Englishmen who associated honoring practices with opinion and judgment further complicated the straightforward, naturalized link between virtue and honoring offered in the ideal account. As one author explains, “Pray what is honour? but the estimation and repute of people, so that every man is more or lesse [], according to the greater or lesser valuation...that he is had in with the people”

⁶⁵ In *DC*, Hobbes highlights the relation between honor and the honorer’s private opinion for a second time. “Honour to speak properly, is nothing else but an opinion [held by the honorer] of another’s power joined with goodness” (Hobbes, *DC*, 295). And, in his later text, *De Homine*, Hobbes associates honor with the honorer’s opinion and his or her testament for a third time. He writes, “To be praised, loved and magnified is pulchrum [good]; for they are testimonies to virtue and power.” (Hobbes, *De Homine* 52).

(Milton [J.M.] 1642, p.10). Virtue here depends upon “the mouth of the people;” it does not depend upon the objective nature of the honored person, or private judgment (Symmonds 1642, p.85). Virtue and honoring practices now depend upon public moral perception, which some authors argued is “no sure ground” and for that reason is “folly” (Walker 1641, p.1).⁶⁶ Clearly, this new foundation for honoring challenged the ideal account of honoring practices. Ideal accounts rested on the sure foundation of nature, or objective reality. In the alternative accounts of honoring, the practices at best served as “an externall addition and confirmation of the inward testimony in the mind of the virtuous” (Hume 1648, Preface). Honoring did not describe a fact concerning another’s virtuous nature. Honoring practices could only *justify* or confirm the honored person’s inner sense of his own excellence and superiority. Honored persons now had to “borrow other Mens Opinions” to reassure themselves of their relative or absolute superiority over others (Bacon 1985, p.47). Superiors could no longer secure their superior identity or position through an appeal to their objective and certain nature. And, since human judgment was fickle and could err, the superior and virtuous identity or position associated with the honored person, and the justification for rule rooted in this association, was subject to doubt and was consequently less secure.

⁶⁶ As Francis Osborne explains,

Honour is one of the grand Impostures of the Earth....reverberated by the Meager, empty, and hollow Eccho, of the insignicant Rabble; no lesse ready, upon the Change of Fortune, to Murther, then Father, all Markes of Desert...Opinion being for the most part printed in such blind Ink, as it hardly remains legible, to the Second Generation.
(Osborne 1659, 119-20)

Accounts of the social-practice of honoring as witnessed in the world frequently appealed to the motive of self-interest to explain why honorers acknowledged others as superiors. But, in ideal accounts of honoring, we have seen some Englishmen appealing to love and care as well as mechanical necessity. We also find some Englishmen claiming that honoring virtue is a moral obligation. Before concluding this section on ideal accounts of practices that honor virtue, let me explain how authors conceived of honoring virtue as an obligation. Consider the following letter as an example of how the practice of honoring virtue evokes the notion of obligation. In this letter, the Earl of Essex, Robert Devereux, writes to his friend, the Earl of Southampton, Thomas Wriothesley. The Earl of Essex sided with parliament throughout the first civil war. He led parliament's army until the new model was instituted in 1645, placing Lord Fairfax and his chief officer, Oliver Cromwell, in control of Parliament's armed forces. In the lead up to the war, the Earl of Southampton also sided with parliament. But by 1642, he became a loyal supporter of Charles I. He represented Charles I at peace conferences between the king and parliament.

The following is what Essex writes to Southampton, hoping, no doubt, to encourage him to join the Parliament's cause.

My Lord, As neither Nature nor Custome never made mee a man of Compliments. So now I shall have lesse will, than heretofore, to use such ceremonies....But it is no complement or ceremony, but a reall and necessary duty, that one friend oweth to another ..[to say] what I think of your naturall gifts, or of your abilities in this age. (Essex, Robert Deverux 1642, pp1-2)

Essex claims that he is not engaging in social posturing. Nor is he flattering Southampton. As a friend, Essex performs his “necessary duty” here. This duty is to acknowledge Southampton’s virtues. As another author had it, “Wee ought constantly on all occasions to praise and acknowledge virtue (Slatyer1643).” The question I address here is: why ought men like Essex constantly and on all occasions to honor virtue?

Some Englishmen evoked a principle of justice in their ideal explanations of the obligation to honor virtue. These men argued that honoring virtue was virtue’s just reward (Taylor 1653, p.312). Granted, in some circles, virtue was known as its own reward—in one passage above, Hall called virtue a great dignity in itself and, by implication, in need of no further reward—but in many circles the acknowledgment of virtue (honoring) was a way to repay honorable persons for their virtue (Sabl 2006, p.550). As one author put it succinctly, “Honour is the reward of worth (Malvezzi 1647, Image 12). Here, what Milton calls the “rule of common equitie,” or justice, makes it a duty to honor the virtuous (Milton 1659, p.48). Milton is not claiming that virtuous persons have a *positive legal right* to receive honor. But, men like Milton associated this exchange with a commonly held rule, a norm of justice. Lancelot Andrewes makes an a-historical normative claim, calling the exchange of honoring for virtue a “naturally just” exchange because the exchange aligns itself with virtue, truth and goodness (Andrewes 1650, p.511). The laws of nature, or the natural order of things, here obligated honorers to honor the virtuous.

Complicating this ideal and obligatory exchange between virtue and honoring by examining how the exchange worked itself out in practice was not uncommon.

Englishmen here wondered what kinds of honoring practices were sufficient to fulfill their obligation to reward virtue. Thomas Bancroft, for example, argued that if honoring only amounted to airy praise, then the exchange was not just. In Bancroft's mind, men who acted virtuously on the battlefield and who only received airy praise for their actions were not treated fairly. Praise needed to be supplemented with other forms of honoring, including material "tributes," a type of honoring practice I discussed in Chapter 1.

Bancroft wrote,

O age inglorious! When those men that be/Endow'd with Natures rare
benignity,/Born up hovering extasies above/The world, and all compos'd
of sweetness, love,/And harmony, are ofte with harshest scorn/Paid home,
left succourless, and quite forlorn./If they be fed with an applausive air/
And the gay ornaments of praises wear,/Be honour'd for an highly soaring
strain,/'Tis for the most part all the crop of gain/ They reap; and therefore
needsly must they sing/ Sad Notes, whom wants are still importuning.
(Bancroft 1658, p.20)

Bancroft exhorts honorers to offer virtuous persons more than "applausive air," or "ornaments of praise." The virtuous deserve tangible goods in exchange for their actions. Specifically, they deserved food, and they deserved to be paid their arrears. Offering the virtuous praise along with material tributes for their maintenance, what Bancroft later calls, "real fruit" is the just reward for virtue (Bancroft 1658, p.128). If "shadowy honour" (verbal praise) is the only reward virtuous persons receive, then Bancroft argues honoring is "his cold comfort," since the virtuous, nourished by these ornaments of praise, will starve to death (Bancroft 1658, p.128).

Other contemporary authors offered forward-looking and familiar humanist arguments to justify their normative claim that individuals *ought* to honor the virtuous (Sabl 2006, p.542). In ideal accounts, the practice of honoring virtue supported nascent virtue. This was the reason why honorers ought to engage in the practice (Taylor 1653, p.322).

Taylor, for example, writes,

That we doe not think all praise given to our friend to be flattery...For sometimes praise...may nourish up an infant virtue, and make it grow up towards perfection, and its proper measure and rewards. (Taylor 1653, p.322)

What is relevant for my purposes here is Taylor's claim that honoring sustains and nourishes existing and fragile virtue; it splendidly helps virtue grow to perfection.

Speeches and texts that honor kings here fall into the genre of mirror-of-princes literature (Gilbert 1977, pp.91-114). By presenting princes with idealized depictions of themselves, honorers engaged in a commendable practice, perhaps even an obligatory one, because of the good their honoring practice brought in the future. Honoring practices here "provoked" the honored person to become virtuous. Honoring could also provoke neutral onlookers, especially the youth, to become virtuous. For these reasons, honoring was what an individual ought to do when he or she witnesses virtue, or wanted to encourage it, even bring it into being (King Philip 1656, pp.71-2).

But, when authors considered this normative argument in light of existing social practices, the facts complicated matters significantly. Ideally, "honor should be a spurt to Vertue" (Howell 1659, p.5). Honoring practices here are "incouragement[s] to good," and honorers perform them "for vertues sake" (Ainsworth 1641, p.74). In practice, however, honoring frequently "stirred" men "op [sic] to pride" (Howell 1659, p.5).

Honoring practices are here encouragements to evil. Hobbes deftly captures the ambivalence between honoring as an encouragement to good and as an encouragement to evil. On the one hand, Hobbes is famous for associating the passion of vanity with “honour or acknowledgement,” or the “testament” of superiority (Hobbes *EL*, p.105). Hobbes shows how these practices breed evil, including contention between members of society, even war, which leads ultimately to the evil of violent death. And yet, Hobbes confesses that, “very few do things laudably who are not affected with commendation” (Hobbes *EL*, p.105; Hobbes *EL*, p.163; Hobbes *DC*, p.103). Here, Hobbes presents a normative reason for engaging in honoring practices. To encourage laudable action, individuals ought to engage in honoring practices. Like his contemporaries, Hobbes lauds honoring practices for their ability to encourage virtue. But, he notes how politically dangerous honoring can become as well. For this reason, Hobbes advises the civil sovereign to hold a tight reign over honoring practices. The sovereign ought to use them as a means to encourage ambitious individuals to perform actions that serve the civil sovereign, or the state (Hobbes *DC*, p. 265, Hobbes *Lev*, 2.28.19).

Let me conclude this section by summarizing the characteristics mid-seventeenth-century-Englishmen associated with the ideal notion of practices that honored virtue. First, honorers performed honoring practices either from mechanical necessity, or out of a sense of duty, or from a loving concern for virtue or for their “higher” friends. When honoring, honorers *selflessly* and *faithfully* signified that the person honored was a relative or absolute superior. They spoke truth here. The honored person was a superior because he or she possessed *virtue*. Possession of virtue was not a matter of subjective or

public judgment. It was an objective fact that the honorer signified through his or her honoring practice. Virtue here justified rule and hierarchy. That is, it justified honoring practices, including obedience, praise as well as other forms of honorific action, speech and gesture.

Observations upon the social-practice of honoring, however, complicated this ideal account. First, it was difficult to disassociate honoring from self-interest. Second, honorers frequently used rhetoric or false speech to honor others. Third, signifying that others possessed virtue was not as straightforward as identifying a rock in nature. Identification required honorers to use their private judgment, or to rely on popular opinion. In practice, therefore, the hierarchy and the justification for rule grounded upon the possession of virtue was a far less certain and consequently less stable than ideal accounts suggested. Honoring practices like obedience no longer depended upon nature. In practice, private or public judgment was the ground for obedience understood as a form of honoring.

4.3 Flattery as the Opposite of Honoring Virtue

Mid-seventeenth-century-English authors contrasted flattery with the ideal account of honoring virtue. This contrast organized mid-seventeenth century accounts of flattery. In this section, I develop how contemporary authors contrasted flattery with honoring virtue and I also explain how contemporary practices muddled the clear and abstract opposition between honoring virtue and flattery. Consider the following passage from Milton's

Aeropagitica (1644). Here, Milton contrasts genuine praise—what I have been more generally calling the practice of honoring virtue---with flattery. Milton writes,

There being three principall things, without which all praising is but Courtship and flattery. First, when that only is prais'd which is solidly worth praise: next when greatest likelihoods are brought that such things are truly and really in those persons to whom they are ascrib'd, the other, when he who praises, by shewing that such his actuall perswasion is of whom he writes, can demonstrate that he flatters not. (Milton 1644, p.2)

Milton claims that praise entails three principal conditions. First, that honorers praise only what is “solidly worth praise.” Second, that honorers sincerely believe that the persons they honor “truly and really” possess the virtues that honorers associated with them through their honoring practice. Third, that honorers demonstrate that they do not flatter by showing that it is their sincere belief that the honored person is virtuous and consequently truly deserves praise. We have already discussed these elements in detail above. This passage is important here because of the way Milton contrasts honoring with flattery. The contrast is important because it tells readers something about what honoring is not and, by contrast, what flattery is. Unlike honoring, flattery involves honoring someone who is not worth honoring, who does not deserve to be honored. Flatterers honor others on account of their social status or position (their social power), not on account of their “solid worth,” or virtue. Flattery also involves a lack of correspondence between what a flatterer signifies through flattery and what the flattered person is. Flatterers here speak falsely. And, unlike honoring, flattery is an insincere practice. By that, I mean that flatterers, unlike honorers, do not mean what signify in their practice. In these ways, Milton tries to teach his readers that there is a significant difference and a tension between honoring virtue and flattery. And, his account implicitly acknowledges

that individuals can easily confuse flattery with the practice of honoring virtue and vice versa.

The author below also forges a distinction between flattery and honoring virtue. Instead of contrasting one with the other, the author claims that flattery is the *opposite* of honoring virtue.

Extolling or praising vices, and bad things with undue and untrue testimony, contrary to honesty and charity...is flattery....Opposite to which wee ought constantly on all occasions to praise and acknowledge virtue. (Slatyer 1643)

In this description of honoring and flattery, a stark opposition between these two practices presents itself. Slatyer implicitly associates flattery with vice, injustice, false speech, dishonesty and a lack of altruism. Let us consider the characteristics that Slatyer's contemporaries associated with flattery and then compare them against how authors abstractly construed the practice of honoring virtue. Consider first how authors positioned flattery against the notion of friendship.

Thou canst not have me both for thy friend and flatterer. Indeed, a flattering friend is a bitter enemy...no enemy can be so mortal...flattery soothes a ma[n] up in wickedness! For they are traytors to the soul, and by a pleasing violence kill the best part eternally. (Younge 1655, p.18)⁶⁷

Younge is not troubled here over the fact that flatterers typically honor individuals who do not merit honoring, as Milton was. Rather, Younge criticizes flattery here by juxtaposing it to the notion of friendship, and what friendship entails. Flatterers and flattered are not friends because they are not "partners in cares," as honorers and honored persons are. Flatterers do not care for virtue and they do not care about their "higher"

⁶⁷ See also Reading 1651, 155 "There can be no true friendship, where there is deceitfull flattery". (Reading, 1651)

“friends.” As Taylor puts it, a flatterer does not “justly commend[] [or honor] his friend to promote and incourage his virtue, [thereby] reconcil[ing] virtue with his friends affection, [and] mak[ing] it pleasant to be good,” as honorers do (Taylor 1653, p.311).

Rather, flatterers demonstrate their lack of concern for virtue and for the souls of their “higher” friends by encouraging vice, or wickedness, in their “higher” “friends.” Like honorers who honor, flatterers who flatter signify a relation of inequality. That is, they signify hierarchy by acknowledging their relative, even absolute inferiority and the flattered person’s relative, even absolute superiority. In the political sphere, flatterers signified their legitimate subjection to the flattered person through flattering practices, including obedience. But, unlike the practice of honoring virtue, the flatterer’s practice of signification is not grounded in a concern for virtue. Nor is the practice of signification grounded in an interest in being subject to a virtuous ruler, or “higher” friend. Rather, the flatterer’s acknowledgment of his or her subjection to the flattered person is grounded in “the interests of vice,” a claim I will explain in a moment (Taylor 1643, p.312). Here, the flatterer’s “interests in vice” render the flatterer a “traitor” of virtue; flatterers are also “traitors” of their “higher” friends (Ussher 1645, p.318). Recall that Younger described them as “enemies” of their “higher” friends. In Thomas Culpeper’s *Morall discourses and essayes*, the author described flatterers as soulless; they possess “no more soul than a bare vegetable” (Culpeper 1655, p.105).

One vice Englishmen claimed flatterers rely upon and intentionally encourage is the vice of vanity. Recall the ideal account of honoring. There, contemporaries construed honorers

as individuals who intended to encourage virtue but we also saw how, in the social world, honoring unintentionally encouraged vanity. Intentions importantly distinguished honorers from flatterers here. Even though the consequences of their practices might be the same, flatterers *intended* to encourage vanity, the desire for superior distinction. Flatterers consciously relied upon vanity, a vice which Englishmen claimed is an affection that poisons the soul. They intended to provoke and excite vanity in their prey and to sooth the error of vanity through flattery (Fergusson 1659, p.269; Ussher 1645, p.318). Honorers, by contrast, intended to provoke and to encourage virtue and they intended to repay the virtuous through honoring (Fergusson 1659, p.269; Ussher 1645, p.318). Contemporaries commended honorers for their intention to create conditions that nourished virtue. By contrast, they asserted that flatterers were “guilty...of being the occasion of sin unto others,” as flattery created the conditions or the occasions that supported the sin of vanity (Fergusson 1659, p.269).

On some level, contemporaries argued that flatterers embraced the evil political outcomes that Englishmen, including Hobbes, claimed follow from vanity, since they intentionally created the conditions that nourished this passion. Granted, honoring virtue might also nourish vanity and it might lead to evil outcomes. But, flatterers differed from honorers in that the former intentionally “fe[]d the flames of sinful affections” while the latter did not have these intentions (Lupton 1640, p.421). For this reason, some Englishmen construed flatterers as the “authors and favorers of evil” and contrasted them with honorers who favored, and perhaps even were, the authors of virtue (Harflete 1632, p.11).

Flatterers were also unlike honorers because the former worked in the “interests of vice” by using flattery as a means to what authors construed as a vicious end. Here, flatterers engaged in flattery to “purchase” their own ends (Jordan 1643, Intro). The pursuit of one’s own end is a vicious pursuit here because authors compared it against the end pursued by honorers. The latter selflessly and altruistically honored virtue. Flatterers, by contrast, got their motivation primarily, if not exclusively, from self-interest, and the comparison rendered flatterers and flattery vicious.

But, recall how difficult it was to disassociate honoring from self-interested pursuits within the social-world. In that world, honorers and flatterers looked very similar. Like flatterers, honorers hoped their “higher” friends would reciprocate or act benevolently toward them on account of their practice. But, properly speaking, the hope for gain did not principally motivate the honorer to engage in honoring practices. Honorers were therefore distinguishable from flatterers who primarily pursued their own “little interest” (Taylor 1653, p.318). Nefarious descriptions of flatterers depicted them as individuals who worked against their “higher” friend’s ends, or who worked to “hurt and ruine” of their higher friends (Ussher 1645, p.318). Unlike honorers who concerned themselves with their “higher” friends, flatterers, who “praiseth,” “creepeth,” and “complieth,” here did so in order that they “may after more securely make prey” of the flattered person (Reynolds 1640, p.305).

Englishmen also distinguished flattery from honoring by claiming that the former offers the flattered person a false testimony and represents the flattered person beyond what

their merit deserved. In these instances, flattery and honoring differ on account of their relationship to truth, merit and desert. Consider their relationship to truth first. Recall that ideal honoring practices present a “higher” friend with a true representation of himself or herself. That is, honorers offered (or at least intended to offer) faithful testimony, or signification. Through their practices, honorers communicated the truth concerning the honored person’s virtue and superiority.

Flatterers, by contrast, told lies, and they intended to lie. They filled their speeches, gestures and deeds with deceitful falsehoods. Offering their prey “false praise,” flatterers “abused” the truth (Slayter 1643, pp. 438, 444). For example, they verbally or symbolically ascribed virtues to individuals who do not possess these virtues at all (Leigh 1654, Fourth Book)⁶⁸ Here, they declared another relatively or absolutely superior who did not possess the virtues that rendered him or her superior. Thus, a flatterer’s verbal or symbolic declaration of another’s superiority was a false declaration. It was false because virtue did not ground it. Harflete (1632) wrote,

Flattery] is a vice...it is a sin against the ninth commandment; A flatterer bears false witness against his neighbors....a flatterer beares witness to a man against himself. (p.4)⁶⁹

Flattery is also aligned with falsehood because it frequently speaks by “shap[ing] itself with the vanity of hyperbolizing,” (Tatham 1658, *Preface*). Here, Tatham links flattery with falsehood by associating it with rhetorical flourish. But, this association enables us

⁶⁸ See also Andrewes (1650), especially p. 509) and Ussher (1645), especially p. 318.

⁶⁹ These bearers of false witness were even likened to “Satan, that old Serpent, and arch-politican” (Young 1648, 95). In the Garden of Eden, the serpent used flattery. He presented Eve with an image of herself as a god (Young 1648, 95). That is, the serpent offered Eve a false representation of her own superiority. This was evil. Like the serpent in the garden, mortal flatterers speak “as the Dragon spake to Eve in Paradise, every word against his conscience, not one true word” (Hall 1653, 83-83).

to draw certain parallels between flattery and the social-practice of honoring virtue. That is, flattery's association with rhetoric muddles the conceptual distinction Englishmen forged between flattery and honoring virtue. Recall, Herbert's panegyric to Philip. Herbert clearly "hyperbolizes" there; and yet we found good reasons to call Herbert's panegyric a form of honoring, not flattery. But, given the way Tatham connects flattery with hyperbolic speech, we might now view Herbert's panegyric as nothing but flattery. Viewed in this manner, Herbert speaks falsely because he exaggerates Philip's virtue as well as his relative, if not absolute, superiority.

The distinction between flattery and honoring virtue that rests upon the notion of merit may have helped Englishmen better distinguish the two practices. Flattery here is what Slayter calls "undue" testimony (Slayter 1643, p.44). Honoring, by contrast, is testimony that is due, or owed because the honored person merits it. The distinction between honoring and flattery rooted in the question of merit and desert is the one Milton forged at the beginning of this section on flattery. If a person is not naturally virtuous, then he or she does not merit honoring and consequently honoring is not deserved or owed. Here, it is unjust to honor persons who do merit honoring. If the person is nevertheless honored, then the honoring received is flattery. But honoring is also flattery if the honorer does not sincerely believe that a truly virtuous person merits honoring but honors him or her anyway. Let me flesh out the two ways that notions of merit and desert work to distinguish honoring from flattery through two hypothetical examples.

First, suppose a person, call him King Charles I, is not virtuous but another person, call him George, the Duke of Buckingham, nevertheless thinks Charles is virtuous. Suppose also that George honors Charles because he thinks honor is owed to him on account of his virtue. Here, it is not just to honor Charles even though George thinks it is and honors him anyway. Through his honoring practice, George “raises up” Charles, although he does not merit such raising. George here “amplifies” Charles’s virtues above their true merit by honoring him (Leigh 1654, fourth book). George’s honoring practice amounts to flattery because Charles does not merit honoring, even though George believes he is acting justly by giving Charles the honor that he thinks is Charles’s due. Flattery here is unmerited honoring.

Now suppose King Charles I is virtuous but George does not think Charles is. Here, it is just to honor Charles but George does not think so because he does not think Charles is virtuous. If George nevertheless honors Charles, then his honorific speech, gesture or deed amounts to flattery, since George honors Charles for reasons other than his merit. He honors him to satiate his vanity or for gain, for example. Thus, even though justice calls for George to honor Charles, because George does not honor Charles on account of his desert, George’s act of honoring amounts to flattery here. Flattery here is honoring performed for the wrong reasons.

A final way Englishmen distinguish flattery from honoring depended upon what Englishmen construed as deserving of honoring. Here again, flattery differs from honoring on account of its different relationship to merit and desert. Whereas the practice

of honoring virtue presupposes a hierarchy grounded in virtue, and assumed that virtue deserved honoring, flattery presupposes a hierarchy that contemporaries claimed was rooted in an “erroneous” principle (Abbot 1640, p.108). Here, flatterers differed from honorers in that they grounded their practice upon inequalities of power, not virtue. Flattery was rooted in the “erroneous principle” that superior power deserved honoring. Hobbes, for example, forged this argument when he claimed that an omnipotent God deserved worship on account of His irresistible power. Hobbes also claimed that the association between honoring and power better corresponded to the facts on the ground. In the social world, and especially in mid-seventeenth-century-England, mortals honored individuals who possessed relatively superior power. According to humanists, however, this practice was faulty since superior power did not deserve honoring, only virtue did. François Peleau, a Frenchman who corresponded with Hobbes, affirmed this humanist position in a letter to Hobbes. He told Hobbes that his definition of honour “as the estimation of another’s power” is “not valid” (Hobbes Correspondence, p.309-310). Peleau wrote that he does not only honour individuals whom he thinks are powerful and whose power he esteems (Hobbes Correspondence, 309-310). Peleau honors virtuous individuals, and, unlike the powerful, the latter deserved to be honored through obedient action, praise, and deferential speech and behavior. Peleau, for example, claims that he showed respect for people of “great intellect,” and “distinguished people” whom he has never met (Hobbes Correspondence, p.309-310.) Contemporary English humanists who remained faithful to the distinction Peleau mentions between hierarchies of power and hierarchies of virtue deemed practices that acknowledged the first “flattery,” and practices that acknowledged the second “honoring.” Hobbes, however, collapses the

humanist distinction between honoring and flattery by strictly associating honoring practices with the acknowledgment of relatively superior power.

4.4 Conclusion

Let me conclude this chapter by summarizing and drawing some conclusions from the cluster of important notions that Englishmen associated with the practice of honoring on the one hand and the practice of flattery on the other. First, mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen associated honoring with notions including: “solid worth,” or virtue, truthful and sincere speech or symbolic action, positive social and political outcomes, friendship, selflessness, and obligation. Second, mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen associated flattery with notions including: a lack of merit or virtue, power, false and insincere speech or symbolic action, negative social and political outcomes, treachery, self-interest, and prohibition.

In abstract accounts of these practices, honoring and flattery stood in stark opposition because the notions associated with honoring stood in stark opposition to the notions associated with flattery. However, in the social world, honoring practices sometimes shared deep similarities with flattery. Because it was difficult to disassociate honoring from self-interest, it was difficult to distinguish honoring from flattery, since authors associated self-interest with flattery. Because an honorer’s speech or symbolic action frequently contained rhetorical flourish, it was hard to distinguish honoring from flattery, since Englishmen associated rhetoric with flattery. Because identifying the virtuous was a matter of opinion, not nature, and therefore subject to doubt, it was hard to firmly

distinguish honoring from flattery, as the distinction hinged upon an opinion, not upon an objective fact about the honored person's inherent virtue.

Chapter 5 Charitable Accounts of Flattery

5.0 Overview of Chapter 5

Mid-seventeenth-century English treatments of flattery generally divide into two sorts. According to one, flattery is the opposite of honoring virtue and it is evil. In the preceding chapter, I provided a schematic reconstruction of this view. The other view presents flattery in a slightly more charitable light, as strategic practice. This is the view that I pursue in this chapter.

Authors holding this view tended to be pragmatic. They relied heavily upon experience, rather than abstract constructions, in their accounts of flattery. Some argued that inferiors had no choice but to flatter their superiors. This sounds strange, because when speaking of action we usually imagine actors as agents with choices. We can rephrase the argument a bit so that it better conforms to our understanding of agency without losing the argument's general historical meaning. The rephrased argument runs like this: given the hierarchical structure within English society and the expectations and norms generated by this structure, inferiors had *little* choice but to flatter their superiors.

Flattery here was a response to the structural inequality embedded within the social fabric, especially within the structure of clientage. Worldly realists challenged utopian arguments that ignored these social realities and favored honoring virtue in exclusivity.

Other Englishmen conceded that flattery was a self-interested means to gain and suggested that it was *choice-worthy* for that reason. Implicit here is the claim that there is

nothing essentially sinful about pursuing gain. Individuals who flattered their superiors climbed the social hierarchy. Flattery was the instrumentally rational means to rise, and working to better one's position within society was not inherently evil.

Flattery was simply a powerful instrument used by the less powerful in order to raise themselves. Honoring practices here signified inferiority, submission and disempowerment, but these acts of signification were *weapons of the weak*. Authors claimed that flattery worked especially well on "great men" who tended to be vain. Vanity promoted flattery, and procured flatterers. Vanity even *caused* inferiors to flatter their vain superiors. If there was something wrong with flattery, inferiors were not primarily to blame for it. The blame rested more squarely upon vain noblemen, especially patrons, since their vanity encouraged---even caused---inferiors or their clients to flatter them.

These slightly more charitable treatments of flattery and flatterers, however, stopped far short of approval. Flattery ultimately retained its nefarious reputation because it was undeserved, because it masked hidden motives and because it misrepresented the flatterer's estimations. Flatterers deceived their superiors in two conceptually distinct ways. Either they misrepresented their estimation of their own virtues when acknowledging their inferiority, or they misrepresented their estimation of the flattered person's virtues when acknowledging his or her superiority. In both instances, flattery offered the flattered person unmerited and false testament. Flatterers presented the flattered person with a distorted and false representation of the unequal relation that the

flatterer estimated to exist between himself or herself and the flattered person. This false and unmerited testament and the flatterer's hidden agenda are what ultimately condemned flattery and flatterers. I shall conclude this chapter by analyzing these arguments condemning flattery. I begin this chapter by presenting contemporary arguments that offer a slightly more charitable view of flattery as a strategic honoring practice.

5.1 Charitable Accounts of Flattery

Compared against honoring virtue, flattery was an easier, more effective and more reliable means to gain. Flattery was “smooth and pleasing” speech and symbolic action that “always f[ound] favour” and required small endeavor (Cotton 1642, p.9). Few denied that honoring virtue indirectly served an honorer's self-interest. But, honoring virtue served self-interest in rare, fairytale-like contexts where men like Don Quixote cared for virtue and where superiors favored those who faithfully honored their virtues. Given the constraints of their social reality (where virtue did not hold the kind of sway that it held in fairytales), flattery was the more effective way to gain a superior's favor. To flatter for promotion in this world was to live according to the principles of this world. As Lilburne put it, it was to “creaturize” (Lilburne 1649, p.228). Dudley North (1645) explained this point more fully. He wrote,

Sad experience hath taught me...
Courting is an Art.
Masters and Mistresses too oft are won,
By flattery more then duty, and true love.
(North 1645, p.71)

North clearly favored faithful friends, servants, or subjects who honor virtue and chastise vice. But, North does not altogether condemn flattery here. Experience (not Satan or some inherent wickedness) teaches individuals to flatter their superiors. Here, to constrain honoring practices so that they exclusively acknowledge virtue “speaks rather Utopian, then good English” (Culpeper 1655, p.125-6). Ordinary men and women who pursue their own gain stand to ingratiate themselves more frequently when they honor superiors, even those who do not merit honoring. That is, they stand to ingratiate themselves more frequently when they flatter their superiors. And, to be in a superior’s graces, especially the king’s graces, was “the most desirable thing in the world” (Argyll 1661, p.10). More desirable, perhaps, than to be in God’s graces, a condition I showed in Chapter 2 was more available to individuals who honored Him. In these contexts, there was nothing shameful about the desire to ingratiate oneself with immortal and *mortal* superiors. Given the system of clientage relations predominant in England, this desire was ordinary and generally acceptable within the social world.

One might at this point concede that flattery is effective but object to its use because it serves self-interest, a morally inferior end in comparison to virtue. This objection, however, loses some of its sting when we consider contemporaries who claimed that forbearing flattery incurred “the danger of a great man’s disfavour” (Biondi 1641, p.181). Kings, wrote Hobbes, were especially severe against those who “oppose them with reproachful words” (Hobbes *DC*, p. 227). This argument presents flattery as a necessary means to avoid personal harm. Authors argued that superiors grew angry when their inferiors did not flatter them. Given the structure of society, superiors expected their

inferiors to, at best, honor them sincerely and, at the very least, to flatter them. Princes, for example, especially Charles I, “frowned” upon subjects who failed to do so (Strada 1650, p.3; Taylor 1657, p.96). These frowned-upon subjects “suffered” for the pain they caused their princes (North 1645, p.231). Here, gain does not motivate flattery. A far more legitimate end motivates it: the concern for safety, even self-preservation. According to this logic, inferiors had little choice but to flatter their superiors.

But let’s return to gain, since most authors associated flattery with this pursuit. In these accounts, flatterers used flattery in order to “grow great,” that is, to climb the social, economic, religious and/or political ladder (Denham 1642, p.11). Here, the notion of staying in one’s God-given “place,” as medieval theories on the chain of being prescribed, increasingly lacked moral force. The notion of a divinely sanctioned, static and preordained hierarchy had been under strain for over a century. Although Chapter 1 shows that the doctrine persisted, it was undeniably losing its hegemony (Stone 1966, pp. 48,16; Whigham 1984, pp5-6). Cut loose from ostensibly natural hierarchies, Englishmen and women began to move. Movement up and down the social hierarchy was becoming increasingly common. Historian Lawrence Stone claims that between 1500 and 1700, England saw an ever-growing “horde of aspirants” (Stone 1996, p.35). A different perception of the social structure was rising in prominence. Individuals saw themselves as socially mobile and they understood the social hierarchy as a product of human design. Given this understanding, the desire to leave one’s place was not as evil, as medieval theories had made this motive out to be.

And, aspirants used flattery to “raise” themselves. As one contemporary author explains,

Neither is there any method or trade so proper and certain, whereby to raise...a mans self, as the bestowing and casting honour and reputation upon others....John Baptist by giving testimony to one, Jesus Christ, outgrew the common stature of those that are born of women, in true greatnesse....And yet there was little or nothing (in effect) added to Jesus Christ himself by his testimony...It is a...way to serve ourselves...by advancing them...Men that want other personal abilities and excellencies of their own, subsist...only by vindicating, adorning and sett[ing] forth...other men. (Fenner 1647, image 4)

Fenner puts this argument forward to show that honoring practices clearly and reliably serve self-interest. He describes what I have identified as flattery “the bestowing and casting honour and reputation upon others,” or the “vindicating, adorning and setting forth” of other men. Fenner does not vilify the motivations associated with honoring practices here. John the Baptist was no devil incarnate. He was an apostle, a beloved friend of Christ and he honored Christ in order to rise. Clearly, Fenner’s suggestion that John the Baptist was performing acts of honoring for self-interested reasons is devilishly irreverent, and (but?) the suggestion stands upon at least one noteworthy premise.

The stated premise of Fenner’s argument is that honoring practices are tools used by inferiors, by the weak. That is, those “that want other personal abilities and excellencies of their own” bestow and cast honour and reputation upon others for gain (Fenner 1647, image 4). As Hobbes similarly writes, “We cultivate or worship (*colimus*) powerful men for the sake of the power or protection that may accrue to us; so also we worshp (*colimus*) God, that we may have His favour for ourselves” (Hobbes *DH*, p.75). Here, gestures that acknowledge distance and inequality of power like the bending of the knee and the abasing of the eye are not the marks of a dutiful subject who obeys the Fifth

Commandment. Nor are they marks of the friend who honors his “higher” friend’s virtue. They are instead “points of cunning” (Bacon 1985, p.47). Honoring practices are symbolic actions that identify the Machiavellian climber. They are cunning practices that inferiors perform in order to scale the economic, social, religious, or political ladder. In Fenner’s example, John performed the practice to rise above the “common nature” of man.

The oddity that surrounds the claim that flattery is a weapon of the weak emerges from consideration of how acts that signify distance and inequality serve the person signified in the act as the *inferior*. It is reasonable to assume that individuals signified as superiors gain something when others declare their superiority. They gain the reputation of superiority, and they acquire a superior status within the semiotic field. But, it is odd to assume that the honored gain little (or nothing) and honorers who signify themselves as inferiors gain much through honoring.

Nevertheless, this deeply Christian assumption (them that deny-themselves will be promoted or raised up) is the assumption contemporary authors made. Fenner argued that Christ gained “little or nothing” through John the Baptist’s act of honoring. John, however, procured incredible gains for himself when he humbly cast honor and reputation upon Christ. His honoring practice lifted him (not Christ) up.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Note to self: in hobbes chapter discuss how honoring practice qua act of sovereign authorization lifts you out of human nature.

Fenner's contemporaries pressed further, and in other directions. They identified flattery as an incredibly *powerful* tool in the profane world. It was one of the more rational means to gain, since honoring practices, including flattery, tended, to make superiors what Hobbes calls "propitious," or "favourable" to honorers, or flatterers (Hobbes *DC*, p.295). The performance of these practices carried the favor of the powerful. Flattery, wrote one of Hobbes's contemporaries, can do "more mischief than a Persecutors sword;" it soaks up "many a good family," (Spencer 1658, p.2). Inferiors who engaged in flattery were likened to caterpillars who "eat" those in superior stations "out of their whole estates" (Spencer 1658, p.2). And, the flatterer's power to do such mischief is not easily eradicable. Hobbes argued that political rulers tended to enrich and reward those who flattered them, that is, who honored them irrespective of their virtue or desert (Hobbes, *DC*, p. 226). Hobbes asserts that this tendency in rulers is an "inconvenience" (we might call it an injustice) that all subjects must learn to accept (Hobbes, *DC*, p.226). Clearly, these depictions of flattery and flatterers are not endearing. But, they are not excessively critical, either. Hobbes does not liken flatterers to Satan, for example.

The link made between flattery and power is also rather enticing. Here, flattery is the means to overthrow power or to acquire it. "More kings and kingdoms are overthrown by this close flattery than by public enemies (Cavendish 16XX, p.30)," writes Margaret Cavendish. Inferiors who uses flattery "doth hold the World in captivity and subjection," writes Donald Lupton (Lupton 1640, p.X). On the whole, accounts of flattery that highlight the practice's effectiveness (power) as a political tool are more charitable than those which strictly compare flattery with the practice of honoring virtue.

When English authors associated flattery with vanity and connected the latter with the nobility, they accentuated and cast aspersions upon the vain nobility and played down or minimized the evils associated with flattering inferiors. Here, the shift in attention from flattering inferiors to vain superiors led to a more charitable assessment of flattery. In these accounts, vanity or pride was identified as a “pestiferous fault” associated with the nobility, or with all “great men.” (Hume 1643, p.176). The nobility here wanted desperately to “believe they be better than they be” and they wanted others, including social inferiors, to signify their superiority (Harflete 1632, p.78). Great men took delight in honoring and flattery here. Granted, flattery stemmed from “false” delight because it was undeserved, false, or insincere. But, from a certain perspective “to flatter is to honour,” since both practices signify an unequal relation between flatterer and flattered (Hobbes *Lev*, I.X). Flattery might misrepresent the basis of inequality but it nevertheless *confirms* the existence of *an* unequal relation between the parties concerned (Hobbes, *EL*, p.48). And, since delight derives from the signification of relative superiority, flattery pleases great men just as honoring does.

English authors who drew attention the connection between vanity and the nobility encouraged the latter to temper their vanity as well as the accompanying desire for and delight in superior recognition (Cavendish 1653, p.101). William Cavendish, for example, criticizes vain noblemen for their inordinate love of honoring practices directed their way. Speaking to his noble peers, Cavendish writes,

[We are] so enamored with ourselves that we are easily taken with those things which tend to our own praise and so much addicted to this good

concept and opinion of ourselves as nothing so much delights us as to hear ourselves praised and commended (Cavendish X, p.140).

Cavendish here implicitly criticizes the “weak nature” of his fellow noblemen (Cavendish X, p.50). Nobles would be “greater” if they were less enamored with themselves and if they were less taken by flatterers (Cavendish p.79). But, Cavendish is not optimistic that the nobility will “sail” besides the flatterers Siren song with “a deaf ear” (Cavendish p.79). What we discover in Cavendish’s *Discourse against Flatterie*, is an account where vanity and the nobility take center stage. Criticism of flattery and flattering inferiors pales in comparison to Cavendish’s criticism of vain nobles. The attack on flattery here falls into the background.

Cavendish and others also diverted their frontal assault on flattery and flatterers by noting that flattery was an unfortunate but almost inevitable consequence that followed from vanity. Instead of criticizing the consequent, authors here were attacking the cause. Vain nobles were responsible for flattery and they were to blame for it. Their vanity “tend[ed] to make others prostrate themselves before the idol of those apprehended or real excellencies in us which we our selves do so much adore” (Fergusson 1659, p.268-9). Vanity made a “mischief necessarily follow[], that all that live about him [a noble] if they desire to be in grace and favour, must necessarily be flatterers” (Cavendish 16XX, p.31). Here, Cavendish sympathizes with flattering inferiors. They can’t but flatter. If there was a pestiferous fault in need of a cure, then authors like Cavendish underscore that vanity, not flattery, was it.

Authors also directed their criticisms toward vain superiors and away from their flattering inferiors because the former favored flatterers and ignored “true” honorers (Taylor 1657, p.96). Superiors here were encouraging flattery over honoring. Superiors did not offer incentives to honorers. They offered incentives to flatterers. As one had it, “Tis flattery that gets men friends:/Tell but the truth, all friendship ends (Culpeper 1652, p.72).” Implicit in this account is the assumption that superiors cared too little for virtue and cared too much for superior acknowledgment, even empty or undeserved acknowledgment. Superiors therefore turned against honorers who tried to promote virtue in them through honoring. Their turn away from virtue was blameworthy. Flatterers were only marginally at fault for making flattery their trade. Vain superiors who did not care for virtue were exceedingly responsible. Flatterers were consequently off the hook.

Well, not quite. Even these slightly more charitable accounts of flattery ultimately condemned the practice because of how it ignored the question of desert and because of its duplicity. I have addressed the question of desert in Chapter 4. Here, let me discuss how the duplicitous nature of flattery led to its condemnation. Flatterers were Machiavellians who concealed their ill-intended motives. Worse than this, they bore false witness and offered false testimony. That is, they misrepresented their estimation of the unequal relation between themselves and the flattered person. They distorted the flattered person’s perspective upon or imagination of himself or herself by duping the flattered person (no tremendous feat if the flattered person is vain) into taking their distorted presentation or testament of inequality for truth.

Mid-seventeenth-century accounts of flattery as duplicitous misrepresentation proceeded in two conceptually distinct directions. The sense of the first is clearly that flattery misconstrues the flatterer's estimation of his or her relative inferiority, frequently also exaggerating the flatterer's acceptance of his or her inferior position. The sense of the second is that flattery contains rhetorical flourish and thereby exaggerates the flatterer's estimation of the flattered person's relative superiority. These two views of flattery are typically conflated. Although they frequently appear together, they are conceptually distinct. In the following section, therefore, I intend enrich the existing framework through which we conceptualize flattery as a duplicitous practice of misrepresentation by briefly explaining these distinct conceptualizations of flattery.

5.2 Duplicitous Flattery 1

Thus was Caesar deceived by his friends Brutus and Cassius who murdered him in the Senate house. So Alexander was deceived by his kinsman and dear friend (as he thought) Antipater, who poisoned him in the midst of his triumphs at Babylon...The flatterer feigns himself harmless, honest and religious, that he may the more easily deceive the hearts of the simple. (Harflete 1632, p.74)

Harflete here offers ancient examples of duplicity. Brutus and Cassius jointly and Antipater individually are in the business of deception. They are Machiavellian mounters who envy their superiors and who use stealth to raise themselves above them (Cavendish 1655, Second Part of the First Book). In both histories, the inferiors are cunning knaves who conceal themselves and dupe their "simple" or foolish superiors.

Now, we might well wonder why Harflete identifies these inferiors as engaging in flattery. Is feigning oneself a kinsman or a dear friend (as Antipater did) or feigning

oneself harmless, honest, and religious (as Brutus and Cassius did) a strategic honoring practice meriting the name “*flattery*?” Yes. Remember, flattery, like all honoring practices, is a practice that signifies an unequal relation between the flatterer (as inferior) and the flattered (as superior). Flatterers might signify this unequal relation outright through gesture, deed, speech, or pose. Or, they might only signify their relative inferiority outright, implicitly declaring the flattered persons relative superiority (or vice versa). Or, flatterers might implicitly declare an unequal relation by signifying that the flattered person is in some way absolutely superior to others (including, therefore, the flatterer).

In the example offered by Brutus, Cassius and Antipater, the men perform certain practices that give testament to the distance and the inequality between themselves and their superiors. Here, they deceptively impersonate an honorer when they acknowledge inequality through speech, deed, and gesture. Their honoring actions reflect what superiors want, since they want their inferiors to acknowledge, accept and promote the hierarchical arrangement within society where superiors rule and inferiors honor their rulers. Caesar and Alexander are not excessively suspicious when they interpret these symbolic actions. They trust appearances and interpret their “friends” honoring practices in a straightforward manner. Consequently, they believe these honoring practices offer true testament. They think these practices signify the honorer’s inner reverence and respect for their superior’s virtue. On the basis of these practices, these superiors summarily conclude that their honorers are loyal to the inegalitarian arrangement existing

between honorer and honored (Raleigh 1642, p.43).⁷¹ Flattering speeches, gestures and deeds therefore serve to “assure” superiors that their inferiors acknowledge and accept their relatively inferior position, and, by extension, their superior’s relatively superior position (Raleigh 1642, p.43). Brutus, Cassius and Antipater purchase Caesar’s and Alexander’s good will and favor by impersonating honorers here.

Of course, flattery intentionally misrepresents or distorts the flatterer’s motives and estimations. Brutus, Cassius and Antipater are not honorers. They are flatterers who bear false witness. Their honoring practices do not testify loyalty and faithfulness to their virtuous superior. Their practices do not signify that they accept their inferior position, and the unequal relation between themselves and their superiors. These flatterers are “arrant thieves;” they “rob” friendship of its “coat and [they] wear it” (Harflete 1632, p.21). Caesar and Alexander are too trusting of appearances. They take their flatterer’s false and duplicitous testament for truth.

Flatterers sometimes also bore false witness to the unequal relation between flatterer and flattered by feigning excessive humility in their superior’s presence. When sincere, humble honoring practices signify that the humiliated person identifies a positional relationship and places himself or herself below the specified other. Flatterers enact these humble practices. They deceive their prey into thinking that they esteem them more than they esteem themselves. Frequently, they perform self-deprecating actions that *exaggerate* their estimation of the flattered person (Fergusson 1659, p.199). These

⁷¹ On how a few known practices can lead others to assume that the practitioner possesses a particular character with a vast number of other attributes see Erving Goffman, “On Face-Work,” in *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Anchor Books, 1967). P7

exaggerated depictions of humility tickled the flattered person's vanity. Flatterers used this tactic to ingratiate themselves and to gain favor from their superiors. Acts of self-depreciation here are predatory acts (Whigham 1984, p.109).

You shall find them [the flatterer's words] spoken with a humble complimentary tongue. He hath a tongue of humility and full of complements, a humble tongue; a formal hypocritical humility; you shall have him show himself affable, courteous, and officious...lay his hands even under your feet...He will tell you, that he will be your servants servant to command, and be at your service to wait upon you...you now know the flatterers language. (Harflete 1632, p.40)

Insincere and excessively self-effacing claims like "I will be your servant's servant to command" testify to a relation of inequality between flatterer and flattered (Harflete 1632, p.40). Flatterers offer the flattered person this false representation (testament) of inequality. This exaggerated form of submissiveness is not due. The flatterer might also offer this false and undue testament by saying that he or she is "half unworthy of the happiness and glory which he [their superior] hath already obtained" (Anon 1641, p.6). A straightforward read of this claim signals that the flatterer esteems himself or herself inferior to the superior and unworthy of even half the superior's happiness, or glory. Flatterers might also bear false witness by declaring that "they hold it their honour to kisse his [their superior's] hands and feet" (Anon 1641, p.6). The flatterer might use the gestures mentioned here to further devalue and undervalue himself or herself. . "In effects and deedes [flatterers] make it appear, that in all things [they] are inferior to him [the flattered]" (Fairfax 1691, p.128))." And, the devaluation of self is beyond what is due. It is unmerited. Flatterers might bow excessively, for example, to the point of "laying hands" under the superior's feet (Harflete 1632, p.40). Flatterers also might offer false testimony to the unequal relation by describing their position as a place of radical

dependency. They might claim, for example, that they will make their superiors “their mouth, and themselves even in their own affairs ruled by them” (Fairfax 1691, p.128).

In all these instances, flatterers offer their prey a false mirror. In this mirror, flatterers misrepresent their estimation of the flattered person and the positional relationship between flatterer and flattered person. Through humiliating actions, flatterers offer an exaggerated depiction of their estimation of their own inferior position. This position is not their due. Flatterers here trick their prey into thinking that their humble actions signify that they hold the flattered person in awe-ful esteem, since awe triggers humility and worship. This, of course, does not accurately reflect the flatterer’s estimation of the flattered person or the positional relationship between flatterer and flattered. The flattered person does not inspire the kind of awe that triggers this level of humility, and corresponding worship. The flattered person is tricked into imagining himself or herself as someone who inspires internal awe and its corresponding action, honoring.

5.3 Duplicitous Flattery 2

[The flatterer] plays with his friend as the fox in the fable played with the raven, who seeing a piece of cheese in the mouth of the raven sitting in a tree, devised this way to cozen her of her fare; he praised her for the most fairest bird living and that she surpassed all other birds in her most pleasant voice which he most desired to hear, which praise the raven hearing, opened her mouth to sing, by which means the cheese fell to the ground, the fox caught it and ran away. The fox is the emblem of a flatterer, he gets into a mans favor, intending nothing but deceit. (Harflete 1632, p.45)

Harflete tells the Aesopian tale of the fox and the raven in order to criticize deceit, a morally dubious means. Harflete does not criticize the fox here because of his end: he

merely wants food. There is nothing inherently wrong with preserving oneself, or consuming delicious fare. Nor does Harflete criticize flatterers generally because they intend to “get into” another man’s favor. There appears to be nothing inherently wrong with attempting to ingratiate oneself, presumably because this end was part of the accepted system of clientage. Harflete criticizes the fox here because he uses flattery to attain these legitimate or somewhat legitimate ends.

The fox’s flattering speech here *implicitly* testifies to a relation of inequality between fox and raven. The flattering fox tells the raven that her (horrible) crow surpasses “all other birds;” her voice being the “most pleasant voice.” The flattering fox offers the raven “splendid epithets where there resides no real Ability in the Party to deserve them” (Osborne 1659, pp.121-2) Since birds are species best known for beautiful song, the fox here implies that the raven’s jarring crow is superior to *all* songs produced in the animal kingdom. We can therefore infer that the fox acknowledges his inferiority to the raven with respect to song.⁷²

In this tale, the fox does not flatter the raven by explicitly humiliating himself. He does not efface himself by testifying that his voice is exceedingly painful to hear, for example. Instead, the fox flatters the raven by offering false testament with respect to the raven’s song. He honors her beyond what is her due and he bears false witness against the raven because he embellishes the loveliness and the superiority of her song. Here, the raven

⁷² I am not suggesting that the fox is altogether inferior to the raven. I suspect in medieval accounts of the chain of being that the fox is superior to the raven. Here, then, we would confront an example of an honoring practice performed by a superior and directed toward an inferior. Analyses of this type of honoring practice among humans is not unknown to mid-seventeenth-century-Englishmen. In this dissertation, I have simply chosen to narrow my focus and to analyze honoring practices directed at superiors from below.

does not deserve to be acknowledged as a superior singer. The fox's compliments are unwarranted. But, the raven takes this lovely but unmerited and false testament about herself as merited and truth. That is, she identifies with the fox's false representation of her and thinks the representation aptly applies. Thus, the fox *distorts the raven's perspective of herself*. As one author put it, the fox "suborns" the raven's "imagination," placing an image of excellence into the raven's image of herself (Osborne 1659, pp.121-2). The raven adopts this false and undeserved representation of herself. She see herself through the fox's image, as a virtuous singer, and she begins to sing.

This second variant of flattery is probably the one most familiar to us. Flattery offers the recipient a self-portrait or mirror that protects the recipient from any unpalatable truth, and that undeservingly idealizes the recipient (Sharpe XX, p.195). Stated more poetically, flatterers "stealed" (overlaid) their superior's faces "with the varnish of grosse Flattery" (Osborne 1659, p.212). The mirror presented by the flatterer is not reflective; it is not a mirror. It has coating or overlay. The flatterer however offers the flattered person this coating as a mirror, mimicking therefore the mirror offered by a true honorer.

Flatterers therefore present their prey with a mirror that is really a mask. They show people to themselves "in the glass of flatterie" where their "glory, fame, or greatness, 'Tis multiplied to an immense quantitie, and strecht'" (Denham 1642, p.2). Flatterers here inordinately praise superiors to their face, or they praise them "immoderately before those who will be sure to inform [them] of it" (Fairfax 1691, p.128). Here, the flatterer's testament magnifies the flattered person's relative or absolute superiority beyond merit.

Flattery creates greater distance between the flatterer and the flattered person than is meet.

The first sign [of a flatterer is] to praise a man...beyond his deserts...The second sign is to praise a man to his face; for this is but to puff a man up with pride and self-conceit: for (saith one) it is an easy thing to make men believe they be better than they be (Harflete 1632, p.78)

Many mid-seventeenth century English flatterers were so excessive in this second form of flattery that they represented their superiors as gods. “Flatterers will perswade great ones, that they are more then men (Young 1653, p.8).” Because flattery here shares a resemblance with idolatry, authors doubly criticized this form of flattery. In *Advice to a young lord*, for example, Thomas Fairfax advises his son to “shun the flatterer” (Fairfax 1691, p.128). Flatterers, explains Fairfax, “have no other way to ingratiate themselves, but...they pretend to idolize him, to observe his counsels and commands as oracles” (Fairfax 1691, p.128). Fairfax’s associates duplicity with weakness by telling his son to avoid weak individuals who have no other means to ingratiate themselves but through pretense⁷³. Fairfax also tells his son to avoid men who use flattery because flatterers, in effect, practice idolatry. Here, they offer a false *and* sinful testament of inequality by representing their prey as gods and representing themselves as worshippers of these mortal gods.

5.4 Conclusion

When investigating mid-seventeenth-century English accounts of flattery, scathing arguments denouncing the practice and its practitioners usually rise to the surface.

⁷³ Hobbes also associates duplicity with weakness. To openly act according to one’s internal dispositions is a sign of power. To act deceptively “is the sign of a servile mind and of having something to hide” (Hobbes *De Homine*, 52). Hobbes elsewhere writes, “Art and fallacy are signs of pusillanimity, because they depend not upon our own power, but the ignorance of others (Hobbes, *EL*, 59).”

Especially is this so when authors compare flattery against the practice of honoring virtue. This chapter, however, briefly surveyed some of the more charitable analyses of flattery offered by mid-seventeenth-century English authors.

There are at least three reasons contemporary authors somewhat tempered their criticism of flattery. First, in a hierarchically ordered society when superiors expect to receive honor from their inferiors, inferiors flatter undeserving superiors to avoid their superior's wrath, to avoid harm. Second, given the limited avenues for gain and for social mobility in this period, flattery was one of a relatively small number of ways for an inferior or a client to acquire even *marginal* benefits from his or her superior or patron. Third, to criticize flattery and flatterers was to criticize the consequent, and not the cause. The root cause of flattery was vanity, especially the vanity of great men or patrons. Therefore, if anyone or anything deserved criticism, it was great men and their vanity. They encouraged flatterers over friends, flattery over the practice of honoring virtue. They were therefore to blame for flattery.

Although these accounts of flattery come nearer to offering a charitable account of the practice, ultimately, these accounts also condemn it. Flatterers bore undue and false witness. They offered the target person either a distorted and unmerited image of the flatterer's estimation or his or her relative inferiority, or a distorted and unmerited image of the flatterer's estimation of the flattered person's relative superiority. In both cases, the flatterer acknowledges an unequal relation. In the first, the flatterer misrepresents himself or herself and thereby exaggerates the distance between self and target person. In the

second case, the flatterer misrepresents the target person, and thereby exaggerates the distance as well. For mid-seventeenth-century authors, there remained something inherently wicked about bearing false witness against oneself and another. Finally, even in the more charitable accounts of flattery, authors continued to hold some reservations about using flattery to climb. It was a weapon they scornfully associated with the weak who pursued gain through duplicitous means.

Chapter 6

Against Flattery, Against the court

6.0 Overview of Chapter 6

The first part of this chapter aims to examine two ways that mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen and women viewed honoring practices performed by courtiers and councilors in the court of Charles I. One view conceptualizes honoring practices as *norms* embedded within the institution of the court. Honoring practices here were rules of the court game. The king expected all in attendance to acknowledge his relative superiority, and he expected all to humble themselves before him. Honoring practices here symbolically represented the unequal relation between the king and his subjects. Their performance served to support and to magnify the king's majesty. These honoring practices also served to mark a social group—the courtier---and to distinguish individuals with refined taste from proud, aspiring imposters on the one hand, and country rustics on the other.

The other view offers a different interpretative construction of the honoring practices embedded within the court. It interprets the symbolic honoring practices performed there as strategic flattery. This interpretation is critical of the court, the king, and is especially critical of courtiers. A court that institutionalizes flattery is a court that institutionalizes evil, or at least a morally dubious form of speech, gesture and action. A king that rewards flattery, is a misguided king, since he rewards a practice that intends to undermine (not amplify) the king's majesty, and the monarchical institution itself. Finally, courtiers who

are flatterers are the king's enemies. They use honoring practices to *their* advantage, and at the king's expense.

The second part of this chapter examines some of the assertions made by courtiers that hostile Parliamentarians argued smacked of flattery. It demonstrates that Parliamentarians criticized courtiers and the monarchical institution of the court through the critique of flattery. They also used this critique to justify their participation in the English civil war. The chapter concludes by examining Christian-humanist polemics favoring the construction of either a republican political order or a political order where the king sat in parliament (and not in court). Authors claimed that these newly erected political orders would eradicate devilish or Machiavellian flattery. Their arguments encouraged institutions that they claimed would introduce alternative institutional norms, including honoring practices that acknowledged virtue.

6.1 Norms of Honoring in King Charles I's Court

One of the most striking features of the English nation in the seventeenth-century is the enormous expansion of the court. (Stone p.183). Prior to the civil war, executive authority rested firmly within the person of Charles and his court (Adamson 1999, p.96). As an institution, the court was the central continuing point of contact for the political nation. (Cuddy 2000, p.61). Parliaments came and went, often with years or even decades between them (Adamson 1999, p.96; Cuddy 2000, p.61). But, the court was perennial (Adamson 1999, p.96). Its influence on the nation's political, religious, economic, and cultural life was arguably uppermost (Adamson 1999, p.95) National

policy was determined there; it was the hub of international diplomacy as well (Adamson 1999, p.95).

The court became the institution where ambitious individuals satisfied their desires for reward and influence (Cuddy 2000, p.61). Royal bounty flowed from the king to his favorite courtiers. This bounty came in the forms of grants of offices, land pensions, and titles of honour (Adamson 1999, p.95). Courtiers also acquired wealth by gaining “monopolistic control of the strategic points of the system of distribution and exchange” (Mercer 1954, p.16). With the expansion of royal power, the king determined which of his courtiers controlled these strategic points. He decided who distributed royal land and money; who gave amnesties on debt and rent payments to the crown; who gave out licenses to use the royal authority to levy money; and who regulated other economic, social and political activities (Stone 1967, p.101). In short, the court was an institution where power, prestige and self-esteem was to be won, *but only for those individuals who knew and followed the court’s norms* (Curtin 1985, p.399).

In contrast with his father’s court, Charles I’s was marked by an emphasis upon honoring practices, what contemporaries interchangeably called “ceremony,” “courtesy,” “compliment,” “civility,” “etiquette,” or “ritual” (Sharpe X pp.239-241; Barbour 2002, pp.159).⁷⁴ Historians and literary critics argue that reverential and deferential decorum assumed disproportionate importance in Charles I’s court (Sharpe 189, pp.239-241; Noyes 3; Fairfax [1691], p.73). As a Protestant king with Catholic (or Laudian) leanings,

⁷⁴ Pocock notices a historical shift (occurring in the 18th century) in the discussion of manners from aristocratic “courtesy” to republican “civility.” Between 1640-1660 in England these words are generally used interchangeably.

Charles I did not adopt the Protestant preference for inwardness over outward comportment. Nor did he institutionalize reformed, puritanical norms such as plain dealing, straightforward behavior or frank speech. Instead, Charles I continued to value the ornamental and excessive displays of honoring perfected by gallants in the courts of Catholic France, Italy and Spain (Sharpe XXX, p. 226). Charles I consciously sought to resurrect these staged practices of honoring, which the modern reader might identify as empty formality, a matter of indifference, or mere ironic banter (Curtin 1985, p.400; Sharpe 1989, pp.106-8). He permitted obsequious “over-acting” (Clarendon 1702, vol 2, 539). He insisted on the “punctilios” of behavior. He instituted new orders to enforce honoring practices in his court (Sharpe XXXX, p. 239, p. 242). Charles I also “chiefly accepted” and favored those who honored him outwardly (Cavendish X, p. 67). That is, men who gained favor were those who bore his affronts to their status and who returned these affronts with obsequious honoring (Fairfax 1691, p.73). Failure to perform honoring practices rendered one politically useless in Charles I’s court (Fairfax 1691, p.111) Those who actively pursued Charles I’s favor, therefore, “lived and breathed in the odor of courtesy” (Noyes p.3). They “spoke in ‘complements’ ...[and] they humbled themselves” whenever they were in his presence (Noyes p.3).

Honoring practices were therefore a crucial part of the repertoire of rules, or the set of discourses and actions for the governing of behavior in court (Geertz, 1973, p.51; Whigham 1984, p.5). As such, they were not a set of laws or a system of ethics.⁷⁵ They

⁷⁵ Charles I had some legal entitlement to receive outward honor from his subjects (Whigham 1984, 72). Through their prerogative powers, English kings had given themselves (and other nobles) the privilege of receiving outward expressions of honoring from their inferiors (Whigham 1984, 72). Although these privileges were not strictly enforced and although the common law did not endorse these privileges,

were more akin to norms, or the informal manners of court. As with all norms of social interaction, the “system” of honoring was not as cut and dry as authors like Courtin initially suggests when he calls the study of the “rules of civility” a “science” (Courtin 1671, pp. 6-7). Honorers operating with the “system” of honoring practices had to attend to the complicated particularities within their given social context. To perform the honoring practice correctly, honorers had to pay attention to four crucial variables (Courtin 1671, pp.6-7). First, honorers had to understand correctly their relative position and place within the honoring social interaction. Second, they had to understand the relative position and place of the recipient of honor (Courtin 1671, pp.6-7). Third, they had to understand the time, as different honoring practices were more or less acceptable depending on the time of day and year (Courtin 1671, pp.6-7). Finally, they had to understand the place, as the king would expect honoring practices to differ depending upon whether he was in his chamber, or whether the honorer met him on the road while he was on progress (Courtin 1671, pp.6-7).

Of course, individuals could learn the general contours of the honoring “system” within each particular context, as the honoring practices shared certain resemblances. While on progress, the king would “pageant himself upon and down...among the perpetual bowing and cringing of...[the] People, on either side deifying and adoring him” (Milton 1660, p.429). Observers of this spectacle could learn how to deify and adore the king through bowing and cringing. The court was another context where individuals could learn some

inferiors were nevertheless quasi-legally obligated to “yield [a] diligent & attentue eare” when the King spoke in their presence (Whigham 1984, 72). And, when Charles entered a room, he was quasi-entitled to have his subjects “arise from their seats” (Whigham 1984, 72).

of the general rules of honoring. It was the “school” where individuals absorbed the art of compliment and the art of ingratiating manners (Curtin 1985, p.399). Charles I’s presence chamber, for example, was a good place to learn some of these honoring norms. The king expected to be honored in this chamber, the place where he received ambassadors, gave audiences and dined in state (Adamson 1999, p.99). The chamber “revolved around ritual,” much of which was quasi-religious in form (Adamson 1999, p.100). Royal dining, for example, began and ended with the humble washing of the king’s hands (Adamson 1999, p.104). All present at the meal kept “their reverence and distance” (Sharpe p.232). And, men of high and low estate paused and genuflected before the king’s table, as if before the altar (Adamson 1999, p.104).

Individuals could also learn the general contours of honoring norms through court entertainment. Literary critics describe court masques, plays, as well as cavalier modes of poetry⁷⁶ as expressions of the culture of honoring advocated by Charles I (Sharpe p.35-59; Barbour 2002, p.158). These art forms reflected the conventional modes by which Charles expected individuals to honor him. These entertainments therefore provided audiences with useful information regarding how to and how not to honor the king.

Englishmen and women could also self-consciously learn the general rules of honoring by reading courtesy books, such as Della Casa’s *Galateo* (translated into English and published in 1640, 1663, 1665, 1670); Francis Hawkin’s *Youth’s Behavior* (1646, 1661, 1668); Philomusus’s *Academie of Compliments* (1640, 1650, 1658, 1670); and the

⁷⁶ For more on cavalier poetry and its relationship to honoring see Parry, X X *Golden Age Restor’d*, introduction and chapter 9.

anonymous *Mirroure of Compliments* (1650). Their intended audience included those “not having opportunity or convenience of repairing to Court, and Learning these Rudiments of Civility in their proper Schools” (Courtin 1671, p.A4). Courtesy books mentioned above offered a general guide to “ceremonies” and “complemental high expressions” (Philomusus 1640, Preface). Some of them also provided precise accounts of honoring rituals (Hawkins 1646).⁷⁷

The premise behind these texts is simply that the general rules of honoring are learnable, somewhat generalize-able and therefore somewhat systematize-able. Theoretically, literate individuals from any socio-economic background could read these books and consciously impose the shapes found therein upon their speeches, gestures and deeds. If they also paid attention to the particularities of the social context, their appearance or observable identity would conform to the honoring norms and to the honorers found within the court.⁷⁸

Let me offer a few examples of what the *Academie of Compliments* advises individuals to memorize and to say (with the appropriate reverential gesture) at court when offering service to the king and when hoping to acquire his favor. Offering service to the king was a practice that harkened back to the feudal period. A to-be-vassal would offer his or her

⁷⁷ Courtly civility here amounted to what Antoine de Courtin in his famous text, *Rules of Civility*, called a “science” (Courtin 1671, 6-7). This Frenchman explains,

Civility is science in instructing how to dispose all our words and actions in their proper and true places. And nothing can be said or done exactly, and with civility, without four circumstances be observed: First, That everyone behave himself according to his age and condition. Second, That respect be preserv’d to the quality of the person with whom we converse. Third, that we consider the time; And fourthly, the place where we are. (Courtin 1671, 6-7, in Wilkinson 1964, 49).

⁷⁸ For more on self-fashioning see Greenblatt, Stephen. 1980. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*. University of Chicago Press: Chicago.

service to a to-be-lord through an act of honoring, or homage. If the lord accepted the offering of service, then the honorer became the lord's vassal. In mid-seventeenth-century England, the feudal practice of offering service through an act of homage extended beyond the political sphere. To-be-servants offered their services to masters of a household through honoring practices. Additionally, apprentices offered their services through honoring practices as well. The examples that I offer here revolve around the relationship between a subject and the civil sovereign. The subject hopes to enter into a closer relationship with the sovereign, either as a member of his or her court, or in some other capacity. The acts of honoring drip with pronouncements of self-humiliation on the one hand and with acknowledgements of the sovereign's relative, if not absolute, superiority on the other.

Sir, it may appear great boldness in me altogether unknown unto your majesty, to hope that any beam of favor should reflect on my unworthiness...I beseech you to permit me, out of the valley of humility, to look up unto the sacred hill of your Highnesses Majesty, and at the foot thereof kneeling, to offer up my devotions, and my most humble service.
(Philomusus 1640, p.53)

And,

Sir, that which hath been imaged of a golden age as an Idea of all perfect happiness, was but a prophecy of your gracious reign...all your subjects are thereby invited to offer up unto you sacrifices of thanks and obedience.
(Philomusus 1640, p.54)

There are reams and reams of other examples. Let me provide just one more here.

Most noble lord, as I hold it for a principal favor, of admitting me to kiss your honours hand, so shall I esteem myself most happy for ever, in that your honor will be pleased to accept me henceforth, as ranked in the number and catalogue of your most humble and obsequious servants.
(Philomusus 1640, p.56)

Each of these examples contains some unique flourish. The central premise, however, is the same. Honorers renounce all vanity and pride when honoring the king. Honorers offer the king a meek and humble depiction of themselves. They also acknowledge the king's relative or absolute superiority over them (Wilkinson 1965, p.49).⁷⁹ They perform this act of homage in order to enter into a closer and formally recognized relationship with the sovereign. Specifically, they perform the act of honoring in order to become a recognized servant or subject of the king.

Honoring practices like the ones provided above also served to reassure the king that those in his presence acknowledged and possibly even accepted the unequal relationship between themselves and him. In the civil war context, honoring practices also offered neutral onlookers with evidence of the honorer's allegiance to the recipient of honor and to the hierarchical order that the practice presupposed between honorer and recipient. For example, in *The Second Part of England's New Chains*, author and radical Leveller John Lilburne remarked upon a time when the general officers of Parliament's army honored the King "by kissing his hand, and the like" (Lilburne 1649, p174). In his polemical text, Lilburne used these observed honoring practices as evidence to substantiate his claim that the officers remained loyal to the king and to the hierarchical order symbolized through their honoring practices.

Likewise, when Thomas Fairfax was seen on February 11, 1647 to alight from his horse and to kiss the king's hand on the road between Mansfield and Nottingham, men

⁷⁹ For more on this essential feature of all civility see 1685 Antoine de Courtin. 1685. *Rules of Civility, or Certain ways of Deportment observed amongst all Persons of quality upon several Occasions*. London Printed for R. Chipwell, T. Sawbridge, G. Wells and R. Bently

interpreted these honoring practices (dismounting and hand kissing) as signifying Fairfax's continued loyalty to the king and to the hierarchical order symbolized through his honoring practice (Carlyle, Vol 1, 258).⁸⁰ Contrariwise, when Cromwell and his chief officers ceased to engage in honoring practices, some Englishmen (including soldiers in the new model army) interpreted their cessation as signifying that the officers envisaged a different relation between themselves and the soon-to-be beheaded king (Carlyle Vol. 1, 290). Honoring practices were clearly not meaningless norms here. They signified something. They offered neutral observers information regarding the honorer's relationship to the king as well as the honorer's acceptance of the hierarchical order between honorer and king.

Ceremonial honoring norms performed at court also served to sustain and magnify the king's superior reputation at home and abroad (assuming foreign ambassadors were in attendance). Here, honoring norms served a propagandist purpose. They worked to enhance the king's prestige and authority because they signified and exaggerated the king's superiority. When foreign ambassadors viewed their performance, the king's superior reputation could spread to their country of origin. (Stone p.217, Sharpe p.242).

Additionally, engaging in honoring norms at court served to mark the honorer as a courtier. Honoring practices here helped to forge a distinct social group within the court. "Courtiers" were those individuals who engaged in "courtly" behavior; they were the social group that principally engaged in honoring practices. When members of this group

⁸⁰ Fairfax frequently claimed that he fought against the king's evil councilors and for the king in parliament.

failed to honor the king they were said either to have “forgotten themselves” or to have temporarily fallen “ill” (Denham 1642 ?’ Bristol 1642, p.12). That is, they spoke, gestured, and acted outside of their role, since the courtier’s role was to honor the king. If that meant offering him “false reports,” and keeping him and the people from understanding each other, then so be it (Suckling 1641, p.6). It was not the courtier’s role to “bee in speech against the abuses and wrong & offences that may be occasioned by persons in authority” (Suckling 1641, p.4). It was not the courtier’s role to speak, gesture or behave plainly, either. It was the courtier’s role to honor the king whenever in his presence.

Englishmen and women also forged a cultural ordering around the court’s honoring norms.

According to this ordering, honoring identified the honorer as an individual of refined taste (Whigham 1984, p.131).⁸¹ Acknowledging one’s own inferiority and another’s superiority was an “indispensable part of good breeding,” according to this view (Allestree 1660, p.35 in Wilkinson 1964, p.63). Those who took “extraordinary care” that their carriage and speech was sufficiently deferential and reverential were identified as individuals with exquisite manners (Fairfax 1691, p.111). Cultural elites mocked the straight or downright discourses, actions and gestures that they associated with individuals who did not frequent the court. (Philomusus 1640, Preface; Curtin 1985, p.399). Honoring norms, they argued, added beautiful “adornment” to speech, giving “grace and life” to actions as well (Philomusus 1640, Preface). Individuals who did not

⁸¹ The distinction between aristocratic “courtesy” and republican “civility” does not have the kind of parsing power that Pocock claims it has, at least not in this period in English history.

practice these norms lost cultural status in their eyes. Lacking in refined taste, they “resembled walking rocks;” their practices “being dull and heavy” (Philomusus 1640, Preface). Their manners were “distasteful” (Fairfax 1691, p.111). Their lack of refined comportment, “inevitably betray[ed] [them] to the title of a silly Rustick” (Allestree 1660, p.35 as cited in Wilkinson 1964, 63). That is, it revealed that they were cultural inferiors.

6.2 The Court as the Den of Flattery

Not surprisingly, there were authors who offered a very different interpretative construction of the goings-on within Charles I’s court. These authors situated the honoring practices located within this institution in a different idiom, or system of significations. They equated the court’s honoring practices with flattery. According to their interpretative construction, “flattery” buzzed in Charles I’s court; “etiquette” did not. Flatterers, not courtiers with refined taste, annoyingly swarmed around the prosperous king in the same way that flies swarmed around fruit in the summer (Charles *Eikon Basilike*, p.158). Authors who offered this interpretative construction of courtly honoring practices identified flattery as “the sawce of the court” (Culpeper 1655, p.99). Flattery was the court’s flavor, or taste. It (not reverential and deferential honoring norms) coated all the deeds, the gestures and the speeches performed in the king’s presence. Speech therefore “tasted” of court, when it had “a relish of knowne flattery” (Rawlins 1640, p.4.1).

Authors who offered this alternative interpretative construction of court honoring also equated the courtier with the flatterer. Courtiers brought flattery into fashion (Strada 1650, p.3). Instead of having “courteous” behavior mark the courtier group, from this interpretative vantage point, flattering behavior “betray’d” that one was a member of this group (Rawlins 1640, p.4.1). Flattery here was not an example of “civil” behavior performed by a “civilized” and elite social group (Howgill 1659, pp.12-13). Rather, it was “most practiced” by those “who are full of deceit” (Howgill 1659, pp.12-13). This interpretive framework also re-evaluated the cultural ordering that was determined significantly by honoring practices. Those who engaged in honoring practices were not elites with refined taste, according to this view. Instead, they were abhorrent. They were “puff-paste Gallants” who mimic the “newest French fashions, and cry, Your most faithfull servant [and] My Lord” (Waker 1663, p.149-50, as cited in Wilkinson 1944, p.51). These flattering gallants did not comport themselves tastefully. They performed “pitifull pieces of pageantry” and their performances were awful to the taste (Waker 1663, pp.149-150, as cited in Wilkinson 1944, p.51).

More significantly, perhaps, these authors described flattering courtiers as individuals who “abused” the mediums of speech, gesture and deed (Waker 1663, pp.149-150, as cited in Wilkinson 1964, p.51). Flattering behavior was “puff-pastry.” It had “no solidity within” (Waker 1663, 149-150, as cited in Wilkinson 1964, p.51). Honoring practices licensed by custom had a beautiful and “plausible outside” (Waker 1663, 149-50, as cited in Wilkinson 1964, p.51). But, these practices did not correspond to any sentiment, faith or belief inside the flatterer. Like puff-pastry, therefore, they were eye-catching but

internally hollow. Here, honoring practices signified *nothing*. They were empty gestures of reverence and deference.

But, according to this interpretative construction honoring practices did in fact signify something. They signified that the court's norms were shot through with dissembling. Honoring practices were a "traitorous discourse" (Walker 1673, p.200) Flatterers used honoring practices to hide their true intentions (Walker 1673, p.200). That is, they used the honoring norms licensed by Charles I as tools against him. (Schoenfeld 1991, p.3; Whigham 1984, p.20) Honoring practices here became "a repertoire of techniques" for bending Charles I to the flatterer's will (Schoenfeld 1991, p.4). Authors here likened honoring practices to "silken haltars." Flattery was soft and pleasing like silk. But, it was used to subjugate the king and therefore was akin to a halter (Leigh 1654, p.200). Milton, for example, writes that flatterers and their "strumpet flatteries" were "the greatest underminers and betrayers of the Monarch, to whom they seem to be most favourable" (Milton 1641, p.64).

Contemporaries who equated the court's honoring practices with flattery also claimed that "the chimneys" at court were conveying the flatterer's "smoke" across the country (Lodge 1659, Act 5, Scene 4). That is, flattering had spilled out of court into the streets of London, corrupting even the simplicity and purity associated within the country. As mentioned previously, the court exerted considerable influence upon English society. And, behavior outside of court began to mimic behavior found within its walls. Thus, "the tongue-disease of Court spreads her infections through the whole Kingdome," writes

one author, “flattery, that was wont to be confin’d within the verge, is now Grown Empidemicall” (Randolph 1643, p.72). “Flatterers,” remarked another, have “spawn[ed] and multiplied among us: Nay they are become so busy and familiar, that the traveler can scarce keep them out of his eyes” (Culpeper 1655, p.99). Englishmen and women in town and country began to pray to God, saying “Keep us oh God from flattery (Taylor 1657b, p.77).” These Englishmen and women feared that the whole of England had become a “cruell,” “deceitfull,” and “vicious” place; a place where individuals could not “trust;” a place where flattery “gets credit” and “plaine troth is overthrowne” (Anon, 1640, p.1). “Truth a stranger is become...Flattery and falsehoods holds its room (North 1645, p.231). Englishmen and women feared that they were never again to see “truly, but through the casement of flattery....[since] all conversations, in fine, are now corrupted (Marmet 1658, p.10).” Flattery was even said to plague economic relations. As Harflete (1632) wrote,

Their [shop-men’s] sale commonly is not without flattery...to the end to deceive the buyer...there are the ‘what like you sirs’ at the shop...[the buyer] is entertained with hat in hand, a bended knee, a supple tongue, with speches steeped in oil; with candied flattery and honeyed words...[the buyer] is entertained with reverence, respect and flattery in his face, [but] he goes away with an ill bargain, bar ware, excessive price, an empty purse, and scoff at his back...oh the wickedness of such flattering shop-men. (p.68).

Court flatterers and their “strumpet flatteries” had created “a calamity” within English society (Milton 1641, p.64). And, something needed to be done to rid England of flattery and the dissemblers who used this honoring practice for their own advantage.

6.3 The Attack on Flattery

In the lead-up to and during the English civil wars, Parliamentarians deployed the discourse against flattery to attack Charles I's court, his courtiers, their arguments and behaviors, and sometimes even the king himself. Parliamentarians claimed that Charles I's flatterers successfully mystified the king. Implicit in their argument was the suggestion that Charles I was accustomed and susceptible to flattery. The honoring norms that he sanctioned facilitated his own self-delusion. Seduced by these honoring norms, by his vanity and by his flatterer's cunning knavery, Charles I was brought into semantic confusion and error. He mistakenly interpreted the courtier's flattering remarks as true testaments.

Milton, for example, argued that a group of prelates presented the king with a flattering account of his superior powers that Charles I mistakenly took for truth. The prelates offered Charles I a glorious but exaggerated (and therefore distorted) representation of the king as a person whose office resides above parliament's law, and therefore above the institution of parliament (Milton 1641, p.64). These prelates also flattered Charles I when they represented him as a king who could use his prerogative powers without limit (Milton 1641, p.64). According to Milton, these arguments were flattery because they offered Charles I a glorified but distorted representation of his office as one that was relatively superior to parliament and law.

Milton then argued that these distorted representations of the king's superior power lead Charles I down a vicious path (Milton 1641, p.64). Charles I did not see, as Milton had, that the prelates were flatterers, and therefore, the king's true enemies. Seduced by

honoring norms, by his vanity and by the flatterers, the king did not realize that the prelates bore false witness against him. Charles I did not see that the flatterers, according to Milton, inaccurately represented his position as a position relatively superior to parliament and the law (Parker 1640, p.26). Charles I did not see that his flatterers represented him as monarch with tyrannical right and power.

Other authors critical of Charles I's courtiers argued that courtiers flattered the king when they offered him a representation of himself as someone invested with the power to rule according to will and pleasure. These authors present the doctrine of absolute rule as flattery. It offered Charles I a distorted image of himself as well as the unequal relation existing between himself and his subjects, including the Parliament. For example, the distorted image justified Charles's executive order imposed upon maritime towns and counties to furnish ships in times of war (Ship money tax). Many Parliamentarians deemed the Ship Money Tax unlawful. Those who argued that the king could rule according to his will and pleasure rendered the king "first in order before the people, his naturall vassals...[and this] is an Assertion invented to flatter Princes," wrote one author (Bilson 1643, p.3). As one of his contemporaries further explains,

Among many intemperances that minister disturbance to the Church and State, we have those, whose supine affectation of flattery has grown to that impudence, as they have..delivered, that the persons, and fortunes of all Subjects, are absolutely at the will and command of the Prince, to dispose according to his will and pleasure. (Spelman 1642, p.1)

Spelman probably has the Ship Money Tax in mind here. It made "the fortunes of all Subjects" subject to the will and command of Charles I. Denzil Holles follows in this polemical vein. He calls the courtier's "general definition of a king" flattery because the

definition makes kingship a “divine institution,” and it subdues all law to the king’s will and pleasure (Holles 1641c, p.2). According to Holles’s understanding of English law, this definition of kingship is false, even “incomprehensible” (Holles 1641c, p.2). English monarchs do not possess absolute power. Only tyrants do and England is not ruled by a tyrant. Charles I’s courtiers merely flatter him when they “placed him in the rank of God” (Holles 1641c, p.2). Holles warns that these flatterers are “mindfull of their owne interest, and how much it concerned them to make the king absolute, whom they had hoped absolutely to rule” (Holles 1641c, p.2).

In *Lex, Rex*, Samuel Rutherford also associates flattery with arguments made by courtiers that represent the king as a faithful public servant who is always just and always good. This representation of the king depicts Charles I as someone who is superior to sin. The argument is flattery because it represents the king as a divine being, since all mortal beings are sinners. Rutherford writes,

He is a base flatterer who saith, The King cannot chose but earnestly and carefully endeavour his own, and the peoples happinesse; that is, the King is an Angel, and cannot sin, and decline for the duties of a King (Rutherford 1644, p.221).

Radical Puritan and later Parliamentarian William Prynne echoes this argument when he asserts that it is mere flattery to argue that “all things were honest and just to Kings” (Prynne 1643, p.73). This argument misrepresents the king’s superiority. It facilitates tyranny since it likens the king to a semi-divine or divine being who always acts unjustly and never behaves dishonestly.

Finally, an anonymous author critical of papal influences at court equated the Jesuit's praise of Charles I with flattery and idolatry. Unfortunately for English Protestants, this author argues that the Jesuits in court had successfully duped Charles I. They subdued Charles I's imagination and he saw himself through their picture of him, through the mirror of flattery. Thus, he saw himself as a god and viewed all other humans as mere mortals. This depiction also justified Charles's I tyrannical rule over his subjects.

[Jesuits] with diabolicall impudency and lying flattery, say unto him: that they seeme to perceive that there is some Deity infused into him, and that they are so astonished with the radiant light shining and glistening in him....[They] make him madly believe that they account him not a meare man any longer....Having intoxicated and bewitched this miserable wretch, [Jesuits] thus leave him to [their] intended bloody design. (Anon. 1641, p.6)

Flattery here works to distort the unequal relation between Charles I and his subjects by exaggerating Charles I's superiority over his subjects. It justifies tyrannical rule. The Jesuits flattered Charles I here by offering him an inflated image of his relative superiority over other mortals (including flatterers). Intoxicated by this image of himself, Charles I saw himself through the flatterer's perspective of him. That is, flatterer's duped Charles I's imagination of himself by offering him a mirror that presented him as superior to all mortal beings. It rendered his orders and his actions, even the most tyrannical ones, just.

In the early 1640s, Parliamentarians argued that the king had become inseparable from courtiers and their flattering images and arguments (Rogers 1659, p.1). They therefore urged Charles I to purge his flatterers from his court and from his council chamber. Here,

Parliamentarians attempted to rid England of those who justified the king's tyrannical rule. In 1642, Edmund Waller wrote,

Such as advise either to sooth their Princes humor, or for their own particular advantage, may well be heard but ought not to be followed... There are many sorts of people that are enemies to your Majesty and your kingdoms. Papists, Bishops, **Flatterers**... My humble suit is that Your Majesty should deal with them all... with the rod. (Waller 1642, p.1-2, emphasis mine)

If the king was not willing to rid himself of flatterer who encouraged tyranny, as Waller urges here, William Prynne was ready to appeal to precedent in order to support his argument that Parliament had the right to purge the king of his flatterers. Prynne maintained that past Parliaments habitually rid their kings of flatterers---by force, when necessary (Prynne 1641, p.304). For example, Prynne explained that Parliament banished John Fordham Bishop of Durham from Court as “pernicious instrument and corrupter of King Richard the Second, a Traytor, a flatterer” (Prynne 1641, p.304). Parliament also imprisoned Richard Mildford “as a pernicious whisperer, flatterer, evill counsellor and Traytor to King Richard the second, and the State” (Prynne 1641, p.314).

Through these and other precedents, Prynne supported the general claim that Parliament must somehow eliminate all the king's flatterers and their flattering speeches to restore legitimate rule. If a civil war waged against the king but allegedly on his behalf was the only way to do it, then let the war begin.⁸² A captain fighting on Parliament's side

⁸² Clearly, Parliamentarians had additional motives for waging war against Charles. When asked “If the King be in the hands of Evil Counsellors, may we not take up Arms to remove them from him?,” Heylyn, then a royalist, explained that this justification for the war was mere pretence. Parliamentarians who made it had “other aims than that” (Heylyn 1643, 14). Royalists maintained that Parliamentarians like Prynne wanted to usurp the king's lawful right to name the members of his court and counsel. In a later text, Milton “confessed” that the evil counselor argument was “a ceremony” used by parliamentarians in order to win support from inhabitants who remained loyal to Charles (Milton 1650, Preface).

proclaimed that he waged war against the king in order to rid him of his flatterers. He wrote,

I was not armed to violate the Crowne,
or please the fancies of a fickle braine,
To set one up, and pull another downe,
Or schisme, or Superstition to maintaine:
But fought....
To bring their base abusers to that end,
which **traitorous-flatterers** deserve to have:
And, he that arms himselfe, to this intent,
shall ne're be shamed, though he may be shent.⁸³
(Wither 1643, p.41 emphasis mine)

By rescuing the king from flattery and by overturning the court where flattery thrived, Parliamentarians claimed that they would establish (or re-establish) a legitimate and better regime. Here, these men projected wholesale corruption upon the court and purity upon the institution of King-in-Parliament. Prynne wrote that he “lamented” that king and parliament were no longer together bonded by friendship, the Parliament serving here as the supreme counsel for the King (Rogers 1659, p.1).

Parliament, according to Prynne, was neither the den of flattery nor the institution in which Hobbes claimed men wielded their rhetorical skills and *competed* for honor or flattery from others (Hobbes *DC*, p.231, p. 233).⁸⁴ In his polemical texts, Prynne argued that Parliament’s institutional norms were purer than the flattering norms within the

⁸³ For another example see, *Master Hollis speech in Parliament concerning the articles of high treason against himselfe, the Lord Kymbolton, Sir Arthur Haslerigg, Mast. Pym, Master Hampden, Master Strewd, exhibited by His Majesty on Wednesday the fift of Ianuary 1641.*

⁸⁴Hobbes writes, “There is no doubt, when things are debated in great assemblies, but every man delivering his opinion at large, without interruption, endeavoureth to make whatsoever he is to set forth for good, better; and what he would have apprehended as evil, worse, as much as is possible; to the end his counsel may take place; which counsel also never without aim at his own benefit, or honour....now this cannot be done without working upon the passions of the rest. (Hobbes *EL*, 139)

court, although these purer norms were ones that the “papist” Charles I was not accustomed to, seeing that he was accustomed to flamboyant and obsequious flattery that Prynne associated with the Catholic courts on the continent. “Long flattered” in his court, Charles “grew at last afraid to look” at himself in “so true a glasse as a Parliament” (May 1642, p.6) And, in part because of this “[he] became hardly reconcilable to a Parliamentarie way. (May 1642, p.6)

Parliamentarians argued that the institution of Parliament differed from the court in that the former provided the king with a faithful representation of himself, whereas the latter offered false testament. (Suckling 1641, p.3). Parliamentarians insisted that “This privilege of [faithful] speech is antiently granted...[to] Parliaments” (Suckling 1641, p.3), not to courts.⁸⁵ Unlike courtiers, Parliamentarians were dignified men who honored virtue, on the one hand, and who chastised vice, on the other. They were men who “account[ed] for Actions both Good and Evil (Wroth 1642, p.1).⁸⁶ Members of the Commons and the House of Lords would chastise the king’s vices and they would honor him by offering him “expressions of loyalty and duty,” and by making grants to him (Worth 1641, p.1).⁸⁷ In addition, unlike courtiers, parliamentarians would honor the virtuous within their walls. Baron Denzil Holles argued that Parliamentarians had a *duty* to honor virtuous public servants, especially individuals who defended the people’s rights and liberties. Speaking to the House of Lords, Holles explains,

⁸⁵ For more on this see C. Russel. “The Theory of Treason in the Trial of Strafford” *English Historical Review* 80 (1965) pp30-50.

⁸⁶ Parliamentarian’s chastise the king’s vices when they make “repetition[s] of the grievances & enormities of the Kingdome” (Suckling 1641, 3).

⁸⁷ For more on the role of Parliament during this period see R.W.K Hinton’s “Was Charles I a Tyrant?” *Review of Politics* 18 (1956) 69-87.

It is as great a point of Justice to give a blessing, a reward, where it is due...My Lords, we honour them and reckon them Martyrs for the common-wealth who suffer any thing by defending the common right of the subject...these men we magnifie and judge worthy of praise and reward. (Holles 1641a, Image 3)

Men like Holles clearly preferred a political order where politicians would honor virtue over a political order where courtiers flattered the king's vices and gained his favor for so doing. Thus, Holles used the discourse against flattery in order to support a political order with king-in-parliament over an order where the king sat surrounded by his favorite courtiers. If Englishmen and women learned to distinguish between flattery and honoring virtue, Holles's argument could serve as a powerful rhetorical weapon, in favor of parliament over the court. As Milton explains,

For he who freely magnifies what hath been nobly done, and fears not to declare as freely what might be done better, gives ye the best cov'nant of his fidelity... His highest praising is not flattery...I should affirme and hold by argument, that...when...private persons are...animated to thinke ye [triennial parliament] better pleas'd with public advice, then other statistis...with publicke flattery...men will then see what difference there is between...a triennial Parliament, and...[the] Prelates and Counsellours that usurpt of late (Milton, *Areopagitica*, p.2)

According to Milton, when "private persons" learn to distinguish true honoring from flattery and to associate the former with parliament and the latter with the court, these private persons will inevitably prefer the institution of parliament over the court.

Contemporary radicals also considered a republican political order as a means of ridding the realm of flattery. Historians and political theorists of late have given great emphasis to the prevalence of certain strands of civic or classical republicanism in Stuart England (Lake 128, 2005). According to contemporary authors who adopted this republican

tradition, flattery was a *constitutive* element of monarchy. Therefore, the only way to eradicate flattery was to eradicate the monarchy *tout court*.

Republican author James Harrington, for example, associates flattery with one-man rule, and uses this association as an argument against monarchical rule. In the *Commonwealth of Oceana*, Harrington claims that in republican Rome individuals spoke freely and honored virtue. But, with the rise of Caesar, political speech inevitable turned to flattery (Harrington 1656, p.195). Clearly, Harrington intended his readers to associate the rise of Ceasar with the rise of Charles I's personal monarchy (or the rise of Cromwell, the Lord Protector). Flattery, for Harrington, is a mark of decay. Implicitly, he advocates a retreat "back" to republicanism, which once flourished in ancient Rome, as well as in England (momentary) before Cromwell took the position of Lord Protector.

Other contemporary authors linked the practice of flattery with tyranny and did not distinguish between monarchy and tyranny. Edward Leigh, for example, suggested that tyranny and flattery went hand in hand. Like Harrington, Leigh used a historical example from Rome to establish this claim. Tiberius the tyrant always had flatterers about them. These flatterers "like dogs would lick up his spittle and commend it to him to be as sweet as nectar" (Leigh 1654, Fourth Book). Leigh is here nostalgic for republican Rome and for republican England.

Republican authors also associated the practice of honoring virtue with republican institutions. (LaMothe Le Vayer 1649, p.89). Republican institutions were "noble"

(LaMothe Le Vayer 1649, p.89). Individuals living within a republic honored the virtuous; and they strove to be virtuous themselves. Republican orders institutionalized and valued frank speech. They valued the freedom associated with nakedly speaking their mind concerning another's virtue and vice. Flatterers in monarchies, by contrast, always exhibited a "servill baseness of spirit" (La Mothe Le Vayer 1649, p.89). They hid their true sentiments and spoke humbly, honoring those who did not merit honoring. As Milton wrote,

A free commonwealth; wherein they who are greatest...may be spoken to freely, familiarly, friendly, without adoration. Whereas a king must be adored like a DemiGod, with a dissolute and haughty Court about him...[Courts tend to] the multiplying of servile crew...not of Publick, but of court-offices, to be stewards, chamberlains, ushers, grooms, even of the closet-stool (Milton 1660, p.428)

Milton explains that virtuous individuals who live in republics allow their inferiors to speak to them in freedom, with familiarly, like friends. Inferiors in a republic will honor their superior's virtue and chastise their vices. In contrast, inferiors in monarchies must always speak to their superiors with adoration, or flattery. Republicans like Milton therefore used the distinction between honoring virtue and flattery in arguments directed at those who engaged with the question of whether ruled in England should be by a republic or a mixed monarchical government (Abbott 1939ii, p.506-7).

6.4 Conclusion

This concludes Part 2 of the dissertation. In this chapter, I showed how Royalists and Parliamentarians in mid-seventeenth-century-England summoned the notions of flattery and honoring that I discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 to justify or to undermine specific

political institutions. Whereas Royalists appealed to honoring practices to shore up the institutions of monarchy and the court, Parliaments called these practices “flattery” and worked to undermine the court, even monarchy itself. Radical Parliamentarians also used their critique of flattery to justify their participation in the English civil war. By associating the legitimate practice of honoring virtue with the institution of Parliament, they highlighted the importance of Parliament and they advocated a return to rule either by the King-in-Parliament or by the Parliament without the king. Parliamentarians claimed that these different political orders would eradicate devilish or Machiavellian flattery and would (re)-introduce the institutional norm of honoring virtue.

PART III HONORING IN EXCHANGE RELATIONS

When Englishmen and women conceived of honoring as flattery, they conceived of the practice as an instrument. Flatterers used flattery as a means, as a strategic practice.

Flattery was a cunning way for the weak to ingratiate themselves with the powerful and to gain favors from them. For this reason, it would be inappropriate to say that flatterers “exchanged” flattery for personal gain. Exchange relations imply that both parties to the exchange know that they are exchanging something for something else. When Englishmen and women conceptualized honoring as flattery, they assumed that the flatterer knew that he or she was performing flattery in exchange for favors, or for the hope of favors. But, Englishmen assumed that the flattered person was not a conscious agent involved in anything like an exchange relation. The flattered person did not consciously trade honoring or flattery for favors. Instead, the English conceptualized the flattered person as duped. Tricked by flattery, the flattered person granted his or her flatterers favors.

Part Three of the dissertation explores how English authors placed honoring practices within the framework of an exchange relation. Chapter 7 examines this exchange relation. In this chapter, I uncover Englishmen and women depicting the honorer and the recipient of honor as conscious agents exchanging honoring for favors such as protection and comforts.

Curiously, this seemingly bourgeois idiom of honoring had sacred undertones in mid-seventeenth-century England. I explore the sacred foundations of the honoring exchange in Chapter 7. I also explore Hobbes's account of honoring conceived as part of a conscious exchange relation between honorer and honored.

Chapter 7

Honoring Superiors: A Most Advantageous Gainful Duty

7.0 Overview of Chapter

Doctor William Overton...being then of good yeeres; so as one may probably conjecture, that he honoured his parents well, because he had the blessing promised to such, viz. that his daies have been long in the land. (Harington 1653, p. 83-4)

Doctor William Overton (1524-1609), bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, managed to live well and to escape death for 85 years. Sir John Harington, one of Queen Elizabeth's 102 god-children, wrote about Overton briefly in his annotated translation of Francis Godwin's *De Praesulibus Angliae Commentarius*, published by Harington's grandson, John Chetwind, in 1653. In his text, Harington attributes Overton's comfortable longevity and his continued existence in a particular land to an *honoring practice*. Harington conjectures that Overton lived long and well as a bishop in Britain because "he honoured his parents well." His long and comfortable existence "in the land" is clearly advantageous; Harington calls it a "blessing." And, Harington summons the notion of promise to ground the association between receiving this blessing and the practice of honoring parents. Through this summons, an exchange relationship---secured by a promise---surfaces. Children here are motivated to honor their parents, since in exchange for honoring them, they are promised long life in the land.

Harington does not present the underlying logic or grammar that renders the motive clause or the promised relation between honoring and longevity in a particular land

intelligible. No mention is made of what Harington means by “promise;” nor does Harington indicate who makes this promise, assuming someone declares it unilaterally and thereby forges what looks to be a covenant between promisor and promisee. Harington does not state who guarantees the exchange relation between promisor and promisee, either. Nor does he adequately explain to whom the promise applies, that is, Harington does not indicate who falls under the categories of “children” and “parents.” Did Overton, for example, receive worldly benefits because he honored his natural parents well? Or, did he receive them because he honored Queen Elizabeth, his civil “parent,” well (or both or neither)? Overton’s natural parents provided for him when he was young. But, the Queen gave Overton the bishoprics of Lichfield and Coventry; she provided him with land and arguably the means of subsistence and comfort in his later years.

Moreover, Harington does not offer an account of when, if ever, and on what grounds, if any, the covenant that exchanges honoring parents for a long and comfortable life can be qualified, altered, or nullified. In turn, Harington offers nothing to help us understand those instances where children or subjects who honor their parents or the civil sovereign well nevertheless die young, live miserably, or live a wandering life in the metaphorical wilderness or desert after suffering the fate of exile from the land. And, Harington does not indicate what he means by “land,” either. If Overton lost his bishoprics would this lead one of Harington’s contemporaries to conjecture that Overton failed to honor his parents or the civil sovereign well? Or, would Overton have to be exiled from the land of Britain? Or, from the earth itself—through an untimely death---to merit this conjecture? Harington

must have assumed that his mid-seventeenth-century-English readership were sufficiently familiar with the categories and the logic that render intelligible the claim (and the contours of the claim) that a long and comfortable life in the land is the benefit promised to children who honor their parents, or to subjects who honor the civil sovereign.

This chapter unearths the underlying categories and logic that ground Harington's conjecture about honoring practices. I argue that the logic and the categories Harington summons are thoroughly Judeo-Christian. They do not derive from bourgeois, proto-capitalist or instrumentally rational justifications for political obligation where one exchanges obedience (honoring) for security and the opportunity to acquire comforts. Rather, they derive from religious interpretations of the Fifth Commandment as presented in Exodus 20.12 and Deutonomy 5.16, and as referenced by St. Paul who said in his letter to the Ephesians that the Fifth Commandment was *the first commandment containing a promise* (Eph 6.3).⁸⁸ St. Paul asserted that God promised "children" who honored their "parents" "*that it may be well with thee*" (Eph 6.2) (Burgess 1647, 171). That is, God offered mortals a motive clause, promising mortals a comfortable existence in exchange for their honoring practices. St. Paul also wrote that God promised "children" who honored their "parents" "*long life upon the earth*" (Eph 6.2) (Burgess 1647, p.171-2; Roberts 1657, p.695).⁸⁹ Here, God presented mortals with another motive clause. He promised mortals longevity on earth in exchange for honoring practices directed at so-called "parents." The benefits of comfort and long life gave mortals

⁸⁸ Mid-seventeenth-century English authors claimed that Paul relied on Exod 20.13 and Deut 5.16 to substantiate his claim.

⁸⁹ The assertion that honoring parents so that "thy dayes may be long upon the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" comes from Exodus 20.12, not explicitly from Paul, Ephes. 6.2. But, its absence from Paul's epistle did not stop mid-seventeenth-century-English authors from either attributing this claim directly to Paul or implying that this is what Paul meant in his epistles. See, for example, (Leigh 1641, p.455), (Hoole 1649, p.427)

reasons to assent to honoring practices and these reasons motivated them to engage in these practices.

Many mid-seventeenth-century-authors used these passages from St. Paul as well as the passages from Exodus and Deuteronomy to establish and support the exchange relation between honoring “parents” (including civil sovereigns) on the one hand and a comfortable, long life on the earth or in a particular land on the other. That is, they situated honoring within an ancient and biblically sanctioned exchange relation and used this religious exchange relation to formulate arguments in favor of political obedience and political obligation more generally. For example, English churchman Henry Hammond, canon of Christ Church, Oxford, and public orator of the university during the turbulent mid-1640s writes,

Honour thy father and mother, not onely thy natural, but civil Parents, and all other placed over thee by God...And this is the first commandment...with a promise annex'd 3. that it may be well with thee, and thou mayst live long on the earth. (Hammond 1659, p.630)⁹⁰

Hammond here clearly appeals to the promise that St. Paul mentions and explains in his letter to the Ephesians (6.3). Through this appeal, Hammond offers subjects a motive for honoring the sovereign, and honoring here entails obedience, among other things.

Hammond mentions a conditional promise and articulates an exchange relationship: subjects exchange honoring their sovereign for a long and comfortable life. The civil sovereign is not party to this exchange here. Instead, God secures this exchange through

⁹⁰ I will be relying on dozens and dozens of sources to unearth and substantiate the relationship between the practice of honoring on the one hand and a long and comfortable life in the land on the other. But, here is a short list of authors who make the same bold and clear claim as Hammond does in quote above. (Hyde 1659, p.161-2), (Lawson 1659, p.186), (Leigh 1641, p.455), (Ames 1642, p.353), (Hoole 1649, p.161-2). (Dickson 1659, p.122-3), and (Ussher 1645, p.256).

His conditional promise, or His unilateral covenant, which He annexes to the Fifth Commandment.

This chapter first examines mid-seventeenth-century-English accounts of *what* God promises honorers and then explores *why* God chose to annex a conditional promise or motive clause to the commandment to honor, the commandment regularly identified as the *first commandment with a promise*.⁹¹ In Chapter 1, I presented religious arguments claiming that honoring superiors was a command from God, and I showed that God's commands oblige the mortal conscience. There, I explained that the moral obligation to honor parents included the political obligation to honor the civil sovereign, and honoring entailed obedience. But, my analysis of political obligation in that chapter was disengaged from the language of promise, covenant, consent and from motivations such as self-interest and pleasure. The assumption there was that godly individuals who possessed a "truly obedient heart" did not need inducements to obey God's command (Roberts 1657, p.453). The godly "observe[d] Gods naked Command, for the authority of the Commander, though the Command be backed neither with Promise nor threatening" (Fergusson 1659, p.412).

What I explore in this chapter are mid-seventeenth-century-English accounts of honoring that express an awareness of the fact that the Fifth Commandment, conceived strictly as a

⁹¹ David Dickson, for example, writes, "Honour thy father and thy mother (which is the first Commandment with Promise)...This is the first command which hath a particular promise particularly applied (Dickson 1659, p.122-3)." William Ames explains that the Fifth Commandment "is the first commandment in all the Law that hath a singular and proper promise joined to it" (Ames 1642, p.353). And, Lawson writes, "It is the first Commandment [in the second table] and it hath a promise. The second Table is called the Law, Rom 13,8.10 And all the Law, Gal. 5. 14" (Lawson 1659, p.186)

dictate from God, will not sufficiently motivate most mortals to assent to honoring, and, by extension, will not motivate them to honor or obey the civil sovereign. Lacking motivation, mortals will not fulfill their moral obligation. I articulate how contemporary authors solved this motivational dilemma and thereby effectively mobilized the airy Fifth Commandment by invoking the motive clause annexed to the obligation to honor parents. The clause provided a justification for honoring, which generated assent to the Fifth Commandment and it put mortals in a position to comply with it. The clause offered worldly benefits to honorers. It provided them with worldly incentives to honor their superiors, including the civil sovereign (Sosino 1980, p.66).

Englishmen asserted that the motive clause or conditional promise was freely *offered by God* (he was under no obligation to offer it) because He believed it would move inferiors to obey His decrees. Here, the content of the promise, which is “drawn from [the] love of ourselves,” was an “argument God useth to winne men to love and fear God and walk with him” (Leigh 1654, p.54). Some mid-seventeenth-century-English authors conceptualized God as a merciful, gracious and predictable deity, rather than an inscrutable, if not, arbitrary Being (Perry 1956, p.56). He took mortals as they “ought to be” (godly) and as they “are” (hedonistic and self-interested beings). He annexed the motive clause to the honoring commandment to reconcile ought with is, that is, to reconcile the moral obligation to honor superiors, with the mortal concern for comfort and self-preservation. Here, the motive clause or conditional promise was God’s gracious and merciful way of summoning mortals to perform their moral and political

obligations. It was His way of advising, counseling, even exhorting inferiors to engage in obligatory honoring practices, including the practice of honoring the civil sovereign.

Considered from this vantage point, I argue that arguments about honoring or political obligation substantiated by authors through appeals to hedonistic calculations or to self-interest are not simply bourgeois, proto-capitalist justifications. Nor are they strictly speaking *secular* arguments. Authors showed where *God* promises children and subjects a long and comfortable life in the land in exchange for honoring superiors. Clearly, this promise attends to worldly or secular concerns but these concerns are not exclusively secular because they are concerns sanctioned by God. And, the promise does not undermine God or religion, since God makes the promise and He acts as its guarantor. God's attentiveness to man's concern for self-preservation and comfort only served to demonstrate (and not to undermine) God's incredible mercy and man's "backwardness," or fallen nature (Slayter 1643, p.342).

I also argue that the framework offered in mid-seventeenth-century-English accounts of this conditional promise or motive clause provides us with over-arching *religious* structure in which we can coherently place three early modern arguments justifying political obligation that have frequently been understood either as competing or incompatible. Within this framework, deontological and patriarchal arguments that justify political obligation without appealing to consent or reciprocity are supplemented with arguments justifying political obligation that are rooted in covenant as well as prudence, the latter and the former implying consent and reciprocity. Here, the existence of

prudential and contractual reasons in support of honoring or political obligation does not imply that individuals who make these arguments consider God to be “out of the picture,” and the moral obligations that stem from His will to be meaningless or irrelevant. In this context, contractual and prudential arguments are supplemental arguments, demonstrating instead just how attentive and merciful God is to fallen man. Prudential and contractual considerations do not derail deontological arguments or “utopian” concerns for action from conscience. God offers worldly considerations to supplement these “utopian” arguments and concerns.

Finally, I argue that the logic offered in mid-seventeenth-century accounts of the Fifth Commandment with a conditional promise or motive clause permit us to locate honoring, and by implication political obligation, in four distinct but overarching and sometimes overlapping frameworks. First, we can interpret honoring or political obligation as I have in Chapter 1: as a moral obligation. Second, we can situate honoring within a covenant relation, according to which God guarantees a long and prosperous life provided that inferiors honor their superiors. Third, we can situate honoring within a prudential calculation, according to which honoring is most conducive to a peaceful and comfortable existence. Fourth, we can situate honoring within a hedonistic or behavioralist account of human psychology. I will explain these accounts and how they fit within arguments about honoring and the Fifth Commandment’s annexed promise in the last section of this chapter.

7.1 To Whom the Conditional Promise Applies

The framework employed in accounts of the motive clause or conditional promise annexed to the Fifth Commandment typically distinguished what God conditionally promised the Jews (Exodus 20.12, Deuteronomy 5.16) from what St. Paul claimed God conditionally promised Christians (Ephesians 6.2). In relation to Jewish people, Englishmen emphasized that the honoring was part of the covenant God announced on Mount Sinai (Marshall 1643, Image 12). In their accounts, there was always discussion of the land God conditionally promised to the Jewish people. The promised land here “undoubtedly... literally notes the land of *Canaan*, or *Judea*” (Hammond 1645, p.134).⁹² As George Abbott explains,

Lord encline our hearts to honour our parents, that according to thy promise, the dayes may be long in the land which thou givest us: Now we all knew that by Land there and then is implicitly meant the promised Land, or the Land of Canaan. (Abbot 1641a, p.139)

Here, the obligation to honor parents “had special reference to the *Israelites*” (Lawson 1659, p.186-8). And, as Abbott notes, in exchange for their honoring practices, the Jewish people were to receive the Promised Land, which was Canaan. The promise land here encouraged the Jewish people to engage in honoring practices.

Canaan was not all that God promised to Jewish people who honored their mortal superiors, or so-called “parents.” He also promised them *long life* in the Promised Land. “The reward promised is, That they may *live long* in the land, which the Lord their God

⁹² See also (Marshall 1643, p.12).

had given them” (Lawson 1659, p.186-8, emphasis mine).⁹³ What this means is that Jews who honor their superiors have a right to longevity in Canaan. They possess this right because, under the conditions of the covenant, longevity in Canaan is the reward or blessing God promises inferiors who honor their mortal superiors.

Englishmen also appealed to Deuteronomy 5.16 when explaining the motive clause or conditional promise as it applied to the Jewish people. There, God promised children who honored their parents “that it might go well with them” (Lawson 1659, p.186-8). Here, provided that inferiors honored their mortal superiors, God promised inferiors “prosperity and comfort” (Leigh 1654, p.823-4). That is, He conditionally promised them well-being, or enjoyment. As George Lawson states, “An enjoyment of that good land God should give” to children who honor their parents (Lawson 1659, p.186-8).

Contemporary Englishmen construed this promise of worldly prosperity and comfort in Canaan as an incredible blessing, especially since the Jewish people had for many years suffered all horrors associated first with Egyptian bondage and then with wandering in the wilderness, the proverbial state of nature (Hammond 1659, p.630; Leigh 1654, p.823-4). The desire for self-preservation and comfort in a land was not, as some scholars think today, a lowly or base reason (or the lowest common denominator we can agree on) for establishing a political society within a particular land. Peace, safety and comfort in a given land was a great *blessing*. It was a blessed reason for establishing political society. God sanctioned it. Arguably, the prospect of possessing a land of their own where they could live without the perpetual fear of violent death and in some comfort would

⁹³ See also (Leigh 1654, p.823-4)

motivate the Jewish people to honor their mortal superiors. Honoring practices here were the promised means by which the Jewish people could remove themselves from the horrible condition of slavery under Pharaoh in Egypt. Honoring practices were also the promised means of bringing the Jewish people out from a state of wandering and into a state of prosperity and longevity in the Promised Land of Canaan.

As pertaining to Christians, accounts of the motive clause or conditional promise annexed to the obligation to honor superiors proceeded somewhat differently. First, some Christians sects, namely the Anabaptists, brought forth arguments supporting the opinion that the Fifth Commandment (and the Commandments generally) neither obliged Christians nor offered them promised benefits (Burgess 1647, p.171-2).⁹⁴ The Anabaptists argued that the Ten Commandments “properly belong to those people to whom they were immediately given,” that is to the Jewish people on Mt. Sinai (Abbott 1641a, p.139). Anabaptists supported this claim by appealing to the preface to the Decalogue. It begins, “I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of Egypt.” Since God did not lead Christians out of Egypt, the commandments that immediately follow this preface “doth not belong” to Christians. Canaan was not the Christian Promised Land, either. Consequently, Anabaptists and presumably other nonconforming sects maintained that “the temporall promise” annexed to the Fifth Commandment as articulated in Exodus or Deuteronomy “doth not belong to us” (Burgess 1647, p.171-2).

Additionally, according to certain strands of reformed theology the laws associated with Christianity were laws “written in the heart,” or in the conscience, rather than on a stone

⁹⁴ For more on the Anabaptist position see (Letham 1983, p.460).

tablet, as the Ten Commandments were. (Lettinga 1993, p.662). With the coming of Christ, God had taken away “hearts of stone,” and had given mortals “hearts of flesh” (Lettinga 1993, p.662; Letham 1983, p.460). God wrote His law directly upon softened hearts. Here, the divine law is the law of nature, or right reason, and it is located in the heart (Hobbes *DC*, p.153; *EL*, p. 99). “The law of God is in his heart,” writes Hobbes, quoting Scripture (Psalms xxxvii 30,31) (Hobbes, *DC*, p.153).⁹⁵ Moses, by contrast, wrote God’s Fifth Commandment on an external stone tablet. He and his people did not read their hearts; they read the inscription on the tablet. More radical strands of reformed Puritanism invoked this theological claim to argue that Moses’s written and external laws did not apply to them (Shephard 1649, p.88). They did not need external aids to remind them of their moral obligations (Shephard 1649, p.88). Their internalized relationship with God (constituted through the laws of reason) made the Fifth Commandment (and the Bible) irrelevant (Shephard 1649, p.88).

Anglicans and less self-righteous puritans, however, did not rely as heavily upon these internal laws of the heart. Following Calvin and his predecessor, the covenant theologian Zwingli, author of *De Testamento seu Foedere Dei Unico et Eterno* (1534), these other English reformers maintained that the fall and its effects obscured the legibility of these laws (Letham 1983, p.461-2). The Old and the New Testament served to clarify the

⁹⁵ Hobbes also quotes Jeremiah and passages from Deuteronomy. He writes, “Jeremiah xxxi. 33: I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts....Deuteron. Vers. 14: but the word is very nigh unto thee in they mouth, and in thine heart, that thou mayest do it” (Hobbes, *DC*, p.153). See also Hobbes (*EL*), “The laws of nature are supposed to be written in men’s hearts” (p.182).

murkiness associated with the laws of nature. The Bible was therefore of constant relevance in all ages (Shepherd 1649, p.88; Miller 1956, p.53; Letham 1983, p.461-2).

For these reformers, “The promise of Canaan in Commandment 5.....belong[s] to Christians now, as well as heretofore to the Jews” (Shepherd 1649, p.88). Presbyterian churchman Stephen Marshall, who Clarendon claimed influenced parliamentarians during the civil war more than Laud influenced royalists, stated that the promise annexed to the Fifth Commandment’s applies to Christians because “all the parts of the Morall Law [the Decalogue] we may finde required in the Gospell” (Marshall 1643, p.12).

Hobbes shares the view that the Fifth Commandment applies to Christians. He writes,

Those *laws*, delivered in general by the hand of Moses, some there are which oblige *naturally*, being made by God, as the God of *nature*, and had their force even before Abraham’s time....Of [this] first sort are all the precepts of the Decalogue which pertain unto mankind; such as, *honour thy parents*...for [it is a] law[] of nature. (Hobbes *DC*, p.316)

According to this Pauline view, the Gospel containing the new covenant did not undermine the laws of the Old Testament. Christianity did not dissolve anything that was moral in Jewish law. Both old and new testament had a common ground: God’s most fundamental and original law of nature.

Parliamentarians like Marshall as well as Royalists like Henry Hammond pressed further. They claimed that Christianity “elevates and raises” the Laws of the Decalogue to a higher level of generality, allowing for greater latitude of interpretation (Hammond 1644, p.22-3; Abbott 1641a, p.139). As George Abbott writes,

Wee pray, *Lord encline our hearts to honour our parents, that according to thy promise, the dayes may bee long in the land which thou givest*

us: ... (Ephes. 6.2.3) Not appropriating the promise to the Land of Canaan onely.... That though in some temporary implicite circumstantiall sense, his Lawes might more properly belong to those people to whom they were immediatly given then to us and our times; yet hee hath so ordered it that the Law is still usefull and binding for the substance of it, even in the letter. (Abbott 1641a, p.139)

In a temporary “implicite circumstantiall sense,” it is clear from Abbott’s passage here that the conditional promise properly belongs to the Jews. But, Abbott, along with Marshall and Hammond, insist that the “substance” and the “letter” of the Fifth Commandment is equally binding upon Christians living in the mid-seventeenth-century. For these English Christians, the Decalogue contained the law of nature and was “current and Christian, rather than merely antiquarian and Jewish” (McGiffert 1988, p.138).

These reformed Christians relied on St. Paul to shore up the claim that the promise in the Fifth Commandment applied to Christians as well as to the Jewish people. For example, churchman James Fergusson appeals to St. Paul to support his claim that the Fifth Commandment and all that this commandment implies binds Christians. Fergusson writes,

The moral Law, or the Law of the ten Commandments, as being never yet repealed by God, doth stand in force, and is binding unto Christians: for Paul doth urge this duty of obedience unto parents upon children, because the morall Law enjoyneth it.... So far is God from abolishing different ranks, degrees and states among men, that He taketh speciall care to have those, and public order in those inviolably preserved... for he giveth them the first and chief place among all those other duties which man doth owe to man: for saith he, honour thy father and mother, by whom, as we shew, are meaned all lawfull superiors, and he addeth, which is the first commandment, to wit, in the second table. (Fergusson 1659, p.411)

In his letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul slightly modified the language of the Fifth Commandment’s promise as previously articulated in Exodus and Deuteronomy (Roberts

1657, p.694-5; Burgess 1647, pp.171-2). St. Paul did not re-state Exodus's articulation of the promise, "*that thy life may be long in the land of the Lord thy God shall give thee.*" Nor did he re-state the promise as found in Deuteronomy, "*That thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee in the Land which the Lord thy God g[iveth] thee*" (Roberts 1657, pp.694-5). Instead, St. Paul spoke generally about the promise in his epistle. Specifically, he deemphasized the Old Testament language about the land "the Lord giveth" (Burgess 1647, pp.171-2; Roberts 1657, pp. 694-5). He wrote that children should honor their parents "*that it maybe be well with thee...* and then secondly, [St. Paul] detract[ed], saying only, *that thou mayest live long upon the earth in generall*" (Burgess 1647, pp.171-2). Englishmen like Burgess here maintained that the slight modifications made by St. Paul intimated "that this Promise, in the former particularity, belonged only to the Jews; but in this generality, to us Christians also" (Roberts 1657, pp.694-5).

7.2 What God Promises Honorers

Englishmen then developed the substance and the contours of the motive clause or the conditional promise annexed to the obligation to honor superiors. At the most rudimentary level, authors claimed that God promised "life" to inferiors who honored their mortal superiors (Leigh 1654, pp.823-4). This promise served to motivate inferiors to perform their God-given duty, as life was desirable. Side by side with the promise of life in exchange for honoring was the threat of death for failure to honor (Letham 1983, p.457). The threat served as a disincentive, thereby further motivating inferiors to honor their mortal superiors. Here, God threatened either to let those who failed to honor superiors "go" to the damned, or to let them live a life that Christians claimed is "no life,"

or “nothing but vanity,” since disobedient inferiors are “dead” to God, their life amounting to nothing “but sorrow here and hereafter” (Bogan 1653, p.476; Slayter 1643, p.372).

Given this account of the conditional promise or motive clause, no Englishperson could argue that God broke His promise when inferiors who failed to honor their superiors did not suffer sudden death. For, one could always counter that God’s promise “is always verified in respect of their good life” (Slayter 1643, p.371). The “good life” here being a life “in grace” (Slayter 1643, p.371). For, one day lived in grace “is better than a thousand, and a sinners life is nothing, nor nothing worth, if he live a hundred yeares, Eccl. 8. 12” (Slayter 1643, p.371). Those who lived but who honored not their mortal superiors did not “truly” live, since their life “is nothing, nor nothing worth.”

Consequently, God managed to keep His promise. And, the threat of living a worthless or meaningless life beyond the pale of God’s grace was something believers had reason to fear. God therefore managed to motivate inferiors to honor superiors through His threat.

Slightly richer contemporary accounts of the motive clause or conditional promise claimed that God promised honorers “long life,” or a prolonged life (Bogan 1653, p.476).

“5 Command: These being King *James* his own words, honour your parents for the lengthening of your own dayes, as God in his law promiseth” (King James 1642, p.5).

Like King James here, Edward Leigh associates honoring with the promise of prolonged life. He writes,

The fift Commandment, which the Apostle saith is the first
Commandment with Promise, Ephes. 6.2. every child is there commanded

to Honour his Father and Mother, upon this promise, that his daies may be long in the land. So Deut. 5.33. Deut. 25.15. & 30.20. (Leigh 1641, p.199)⁹⁶

Less than two decades later, John Hall writes that God promises “preservation,” perhaps even “mutual peace” to inferiors who honor their superiors (Hall 1654, p.26-7). In his *Exposition of all St. Pauls epistles*, churchman David Dickson echoes Hall’s statement. He comments that honoring “hath a special blessing, the lengthening of temporal life” (Dickson 1659, p.122-3). And, in his *Brief exposition of the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians*, also published in 1659, churchman James Fergusson writes, “For the Lord doth here [in the Fifth Commandment] expressly promise...long life to all such as make conscience of this duty [honoring superiors]” (Fergusson 1659, p.412). Here, the promise of longevity served to motivate inferiors to do their duty: to honor their mortal superiors.

A feature of these accounts is confusion over who distributes the promised reward of longevity to honorers. The Bible seemed to attribute the distribution of longevity to mortal superiors on the one hand and to God on the other (Slayter 1643, p.371). James Ussher offered a nuanced reading when he implicated both mortal superiors and God. In his account, God persuaded mortal superiors to preserve and to provide for inferiors who honored them. Ussher writes,

God moveth the hearts of Superiours, to promote the good estate of Inferiours; for so also doe the words sound, Exodus, 20.12 that they may prolong thy dayes; besides the providence of God to the obedient, which is farre above all experience of mens provisions. What is the summe of this promise [annexed to the Fifth Commandment]? The blessing of long life and prosperity. (Ussher 1645, p.256)

⁹⁶ King James I explains in [X] “5 Command: These being King *Iames* his own words, honour your parents for the lengthening of your own dayes, as God in his law promiseth” (James 1642, p.96).

Here, Ussher implies that what God conditionally promises to perform is not exclusively performed by Him. God persuades superiors to exert themselves to prolong the lives of inferiors who honor them. Mortal superiors here are God's instruments, or secondary cause. In addition, Ussher writes that God uses His own, independent exertions to secure longevity to inferiors who honor their mortal superiors.

Unlike Ussher who gives mortal superiors a quasi-independent role in securing the longevity of inferiors, Anglican divine Jeremy Taylor, known as the "Shakespeare of Divines" for his poetic style, views mortal superiors as "God's ministers and instruments" in this matter (Taylor 1660, p.360). In his account, God did not sustain the lives of honorers independently from mortal superiors. God gave mortal superiors this role. They are the "chanel and conveyances" of God's "divine blessing of longevity" (Taylor 1660, p.360; Leigh 1654, p.823-4). Mortal superiors do the job of preserving inferiors provided that they honor their mortal superiors. God may allot inferiors their number of days on this earth (Slayter 1643, p.371). But, mortal superiors do the work of preservation. They are God's agents or representatives on earth.

Quite different is the account offered by Edward Leigh. He gave parents an even larger role in giving and sustaining the life of children. Parents, argued Leigh, gave the initial gift of life to their children (Leigh 1650, p.289). Grateful children, in turn, honor their parents as a way of thanking them for the free-gift of life (Leigh 1650, p.289). Here, the promise relies on the premise of gratitude, a "reason" that even "Heathen Children"

acknowledge as one that binds them to honor their Parents (Lawson 1659, pp.187-8). In exchange for complying with God's law and with what Lawson calls "Reason" (the law of gratitude) God promises to secure the "life" parents have given to their children.

Leigh writes,

God promised life in this Commandment [the Fifth] rather than any other kinde of blessing, because we received life from our Parents, therefore life is promised to him which honours those from whom he hath received it.
(Leigh 1654, p.823)

Leigh's logic is not easy to follow. Why does God promise life to children because they receive life from their parents? Leigh is clear in his insistence that God enters into the equation after a child's birth. He is also clear that God offers children longevity on the condition that they show gratitude to their mortal creators by honoring them.

Lancelot Andrewes gives parents or mortal superiors an even large role in the exchange relationship between honoring and longevity. In his account, parents fulfill the promise not of generating but of prolonging life on the condition that children honor them. Here, we find a contractual relation between parents and children according to which God unilaterally constitutes the contract and acts as its guarantor. Parents are free to preserve or not preserve their children. If they do decide to give their children the gift of preservation and maintenance, then God guarantees that children will honor them. And, through their honoring practice, children constitute their parent's legitimate dominion over them. Here, as Hobbes puts it, "the title to dominion over a child, proceedeth not from the generation, but from the preservation of it [the child]" (Hobbes, *EL*, p.130) Parents "receive a promise of obedience" from their children in exchange for their maintenance here (Hobbes, *EL*, p.130). And, children will be motivated (and will give

their consent) to honor their parents thereby establishing their dominion on the condition that their parents fulfill the part of the bargain that God strikes between them. Andrewes writes, “God then will have our life preserved by them from whom [we] have had it, and that is, by their benediction if we shall continue in our honour to them” (Andrewes 1659, p.397).

Edward Leigh eventually comes around to this position as well. He interprets the Hebrew “word for word, *That they may prolong thy dayes, viz. They Parents*” (Leigh 1654, p.824). The prolonging of days is here offered as the reason for honoring parents, that is, for acknowledging their superior power and authority. Leigh further claims, “With our Parents after a sort is prolonging of our life” (Leigh 1654, p.823) Leigh concludes arguing that God’s promise is a motive clause, annexed so that “we may be the more incited to love and honour them [parents]” (Leigh 1654, p.823). These claims echo those made Hobbes. He frequently explained that parental authority derives from the exchange relation between parents and children, according to which children agree to honor their parents and thereby to establish their legitimate authority over them on the condition that parents maintain them (and vice versa) (Hobbes *DC*, p.212).

The promised annexed to the Fifth Commandment also engendered the threat of a short life to inferiors who failed to honor their superiors. The threat served as a disincentive and therefore encouraged inferiors engage in honoring practices. Authors here began to associate honoring with the curse of death (McGiffert 1988, p.139). If subjects chose to slight the honour and respect due to superiors, including political authorities and their

commands, if they decided to trust instead their “private Rules and Wills for public guidance,” contemporaries claimed that “long life” will surely not follow; nothing but “civil discention, blood and slaughter” will (Hall 1654, p.26-7). Presbyterian schoolman Richard Baxter substantiated this promised exchange relation between honoring and longevity on the one hand and failing to honor and sudden death on the other by appealing to the Gospel of Matthew. There, Matthew warned children and inferiors, “If you honour not your Parents or superiours, you have not the promise that your daies shall be long in the land [Mat. 5.5]” (Baxter 1660, p.245).

There were therefore two faces to the motive clause annexed to the obligation to honor superiors. Developing the clause’s uglier side, Zachary Bogan claimed that children who did not honor their parents were threatened with “shortnesse of life simply” (Bogan 1653, p.475-6). Richard Allestree, author of the popular *Whole Duty of Man*, also grimly associates untimely death with failure to honor parents.

The Fifth Commandment promiseth long life as the reward of honouring the Parent, to which ‘tis very agreeably that untimely death be the punishment of the contrary. (Allestree 1658, p.289)

Allestree here sets “long life,” the incentive for honoring, in opposition to what Lawson calls the threat of “an unnatural, or a violent death which takes away life, even then when natural vigour continues, and there be no internal causes of immediate dissolution” (Lawson 1659, p.166-8). This threat of unnatural or “violent” (untimely) death is one all should “have cause to feare” (Bogan 1653, pp.475-6). Zachary Bogan explains,

Have cause to feare Shortnesse of life. Because it is said, *Honour thy father and thy mother that thy daies may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, Ex: 20.12.* (Bogan 1653, pp.475-6)

Bogan here appeals to Exodus and implies that God conceives of longevity as a blessing because He offers it to mortals in His Fifth Commandment. Mortals should think of longevity as God does, as a blessing. For, “Far being it from us to despise that which God doth honour [long life]; and to turn his blessing [to live long] into a curse” (Hall Joseph 1646, pp.293-4). As a corollary, mortals should fear shortness of life.

That “it may be well with thee” is an additional benefit contemporaries associated with the motive clause or conditional promise annexed to the obligation to honor superiors. Lancelot Andrewes maintained that well-being is a necessary component of God’s Fifth Commandment promise. “Now long life, without that blessing of going well with a man, is a displeasure. It is the comfort and delight which we enjoy in our life, which is here promised as a blessing (Andrewes 1650, p.397).” This association between well-being and the Fifth Commandment’s derives from St. Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. And, well-being served to encourage children and subjects to perform their moral obligation, which included the political obligation of obeying the civil sovereign.

Contemporaries as diverse in religious belief as Edward Leigh, Henry Hammond, William Ames, and Lancelot Andrewes weighed in on what “well-being” meant here. Their root ideas share considerable overlap. Edward Leigh interpreted the “speciall promise made to them that keep this particular Commandment: that it may be well with thee” to mean that “whatsoever belongeth to a mans well-fare and wel-being in this life is here promised” (Leigh 1641, pp.455-6). Leigh qualifies and adds substance to this vague

statement, claiming, “temporall prosperity is here principally intended” (Leigh 1641, pp.455-6).

Royalist churchman Henry Hammond claimed that the Fifth Commandment promised honorers “long and *prosperous life*...i.e. of so much of the prosperity of this world as shall be matter of contentment to them” (Hammond 1645, p.322).⁹⁷ Like Leigh, Hammond limits the accruing benefits to this world and he associates “prosperity” with “well-being.” Hammond furthers Leigh’s account when he claims that God promises honorers “secular sufficient wealth” (Hammond 1645, p.322). Leigh does not, however, describe with great precision what “sufficient” wealth means. He is not necessarily justifying the unlimited quest for wealth here. Sufficient wealth is whatever amount of wealth brings honorers contentment.

Calvinist divine William Ames associated the well-being promised to honorers in the Fifth Commandment’s motive clause with pleasure. He explained that honoring parents “makes much for...making our lives the more pleasant in this world” (Ames 1659, p.242). Like his contemporaries, Ames offers a this-worldly interpretation of well-being. But, unlike Hammond, Ames does not explicitly say whether wealth is a source of pleasure. Given that Ames is a puritan, we might hesitate before assuming that he means wealth or hedonistic forms of pleasure. Finally, Anglican divine Lancelot Andrewes interprets God’s promise in the Fifth Commandment “that it may be well with us” to mean “that life be not onely long, but happy” (Andrewes 1650, p.397). Like his

⁹⁷ Fergusson also associates well-being with prosperity. He writes, “the Lord doth here expressly promise prosperity... to all such as make conscience of this duty” (Fergusson 1659, p.412).

contemporaries, Andrewes offers an imprecise account of well-being. What is happiness, according to Andrewes?

Authors like Andrewes, Ames, Hammond and Leigh typically contrasted well-being with words like “curses” and “miseryes” (Lawson 1659, pp.166-8). According to this view, “turbulent seditious persons” who do not honor their superiors are likely to suffer these unfortunate occurrences and events (Hammond 1645, p.134). Here, again, the unfortunate consequences these authors associate with the failure to honor superiors act as a disincentive and thereby encourage honoring practices. Puritan William Ames makes the point most succinctly. He writes, “The sins that are committed against parents...are most suitably punished by the loss of this life, and of the comforts thereof” (Ames 1659, p.242).

In some accounts, a long and prosperous life within a *promised land* takes the stage as a benefit accruing to inferiors who honor their superiors (Lawson 1659, pp.166-8). William Slayter, in *The compleat Christian*, asserted that annexed promise put children in mind that “not only the life, or long life” but “even the land, and all things [they] possesse in this life are the gifts of the Lord” (Slayter 1643, p.373). Anglican clergyman Jeremy Taylor—a friend of Archbishop Laud---also associates honoring with the benefit of a “land.” He writes,

And S. Paul exhorting children to obey their parents, saies it is the first commandment with promise, that is, the first to which any special promise is annexed, the promise of longevity in *the land of promise*. (Taylor 1660, p.360, emphasis mine)

The benefit of “a land of promise” mentioned here became the subject of two sorts of considerations. First, Englishmen wondered about the location of the promised land. Some contemporaries called it “a *Canaan*.” But, they never elaborated upon Canaan’s precise location (Hammond 1659a, p.481) Others identified the promised land with “their native country,” that is, with England (Lawson 1659, pp.166-8). Still others broadly stated that the promised land was a “good good Land,” and said nothing further (Bogan 1653, pp.475-6).

The second consideration was over what happened to “the land” of inferiors who failed to honor their superiors. Here, Englishmen offered a more consistent story. They maintained that there was no space in the promised land for these inferiors. Unruly “children” were consequently “every where threatened to be cast out, and carried away by captivity” (Bogan 1653, pp.475-6). “Dying in a polluted land” was also a possible consequence (Bogan 1653, p.476). Exile, slavery, or a life lived in a corrupted or polluted moral environment (a Babylon) were therefore cast as possibilities for inferiors who did not honor their superiors. Here, the motive clause annexed to the obligation to honor superiors offered incentives and disincentives. It pit “the enjoyment of our own native Country” against a short life of “captivity, banishment, dispossession, disinheritance, and a Vagabond life” (Lawson 1659, pp.166-8). That is, the motive clause offered the option of life lived comfortably and securely within a morally upright land and opposed it against life lived in what looks like a Hobbesian state of nature where individuals are foolish if they are just and obey the laws of nature, and where captivity and violent death lurks around every corner.

“Eternall blisse in heaven” is the final benefit said to accrue to those who honor their superiors (Hammond 1659, p.630). Certainly not all Englishmen associated this benefit with honoring and the Fifth Commandment. High Calvinists who believed in the doctrine of justification by faith or salvation through grace alone did not envision God promising heaven to children in exchange for honoring practices.⁹⁸ But, a number of Caroline Anglican theologians turned their backs significantly on High Calvinism for two important reasons. First, because they feared this form of Puritanism led to antinomianism (Lettinga 1993, p.662). And second, because they associated the predestinarian theology of Calvin and his successors with excessive harshness (Bierma 1990, pp.453-4). By the mid-seventeenth-century, the covenant of works had regained “a settled place in Reformed dogmatics” (McGiffert 1988, p.131)

In these dogmatics, authors reinforced a contractual understanding of salvation, placing great emphasis upon practice, works and obedience to God’s law (Lettinga 1993, p.653). They saw covenant theology as a mitigating force against abrasive predestinarianism. Reformers of this ilk found room for “works,” including honoring, in their theological system (Bierma 1990, p.454; Miller 1956, p.54).

⁹⁸For example, consider Lawson’s view here: “These blessings promised are but temporall, not spirituall and Eternal. For those are acquired by Faith, and derived from Christ, and the promises in Christ, in whom Christian Children receive not onely this temporal, but a spiritual reward upon this obedience performed in faith (Lawson 1659, pp.166-8).

These covenant theologians sometimes claimed that God annexed the conditional “higher promise” of eternal salvation to the Fifth Commandment (Marshall 1643, p.12). As

Fergusson explains,

Now under the New testament, though this promise, even in the letter be doubtlesse fulfilled unto many, Yet it is chiefly to be understood in a spirituall sense, in so far as the godly obedient childe, whether he live long or short, doth alwayes live well, because he liveth in Gods favour...having reached the prize and mark [for which]...life is given...the salvation of the soul. (Fergusson 1659, p.413)

In the New Testament (with the coming of Christ), God enters into a new covenant with children. According to this new covenant, “God [may] give to those that honour their parents....everlasting life (Andrewes 1650, p.398).” In these accounts, the conditional promise loses some of its worldly significance. “Living well” here means living in God’s favor, as churchman Fergusson explained above. The hope of living in God’s favor motivated Christians. Although it did not rule out the possibility of living a long and prosperous life on earth, God’s favor did not ensure worldly contentment and longevity (Slayter 1643, p.371). Children might live in God’s favor but suffer horribly on earth. They might live a short, unhappy life in exile from their land, for example. God fulfills His promise here by saving their souls.

In these otherworldly accounts, God was not bound by what He expressly promised (Atiyah, 1981, p.3). Christians considered the purpose behind the conditional promise and they claimed that the purpose, not the letter, bound God (Atiyah 1981, p.3). The promise here refers more to what Hobbes identifies as the intention, than to the word (Hobbes *DC*, p.127) In this instance, the promise aims at a human good. As Ussher writes, “The Lord performeth all temporall promises, so far forth as it is good for us”

(Ussher, 1659, p.200). God here remained faithful to His promise so long as He furthered our good. Thus, God did not break His promise when He gave children (who died young) life in the world to come (Blake 1658, p.101). He fulfilled His promise because He gave them what Christians identified with the ultimate good: everlasting life. The ultimate good here is not rest in philosophic contemplation *pace* Aristotle. The ultimate good is continuous motion or everlasting life, *pace* Hobbes.

In *The abridgment of Christian Divinitie*, Wolleb explains precisely this point within a political context. He writes,

The Command [5th] consisteth of a Precept, & a Promise. The precept is, *Honour thy father & thy mother*. By the name of Parents, synecdochically are meant all Superiors.....The Promise is, *That thou mayest live long in the land which the Lord thy God hath given thee*. In this promise is understood both the condition of Gods will, and of our salvation: for oftentimes to the godly, God recompenceth the shortnesse of this life with the happinesse of [t]he other. The persons considerable in this precept, are Magistrates and Subjects, in the civil state. (Wolleb 1660, p.381)

As Wolleb mentions here, God may chose to fulfill His Promise by fulfilling different kinds of goods. He can fulfill the promise by giving political subjects long life on earth, or He can fulfill it by giving the elect a glorious and happy life in the world to come (Slayter 1643, p.371). The choice is His to make.

What emerges from accounts of honoring that include the benefit of eternal life within the exchange relation is the assumption that God, although bound to fulfill the intention behind His promise, does not limit himself regarding where or how or when He fulfills His promise (Blake 1658, p.101). God is like those persons Hobbes describes as “those who are easily inclined to do well to others” (Hobbes *DC*, p.125). That is, He is like a

benevolent or charitable person. As such, God is not obliged by the terms of every promise He makes. As, “a promiser in this kind must be understood to have time to deliberate, and power to change that affection, as well as he to whom he made that promise, may alter his desert” (Hobbes *DC*, p.125; Hobbes *EL*, p.84).

The explicit wording of the promise in the Fifth Commandment operates here as a minimum threshold. At a minimum, God secures a basic good (mere life) on the condition that inferiors honor their superiors. His promise here grounds a fundamental mortal expectation (Dickson 1659, pp.122-3). That it, it serves to “bound” our “certain expectation,” since God never does less than what He explicitly promises (Taylor 1653, p.299). Yet, the explicit promise is not the “limit of his loving kindnesses; and if he does more then he hath promised, no man can complain that he did otherwise, and did greater things then he said” (Taylor 1653, p.299). God therefore “reserve[s] to himself the liberty of taking them [honorers] quickly from that land and carrying them to a better [one]” (Taylor 1653, pp. 298-9). That is, God is free to decide what benefit to give honorers. Eternal life in the world to come is a benefit far surpassing in value the benefit of a long and prosperous life lived on earth, since “life is but *via ad vitam*, the way to the other and better life” (Andrewes 1650, p.398).

Thus, when God cuts the life of an honorer short, “no man can complain” that God failed to fulfill the promise that He annexed to the Fifth Commandment (Dickson 1659, pp.122-3). For,

He that promises to lend me a staffe to walk withal, and instead of that gives me a horse to carry men, hath not broken his promise, nor dealt

deceitfully. And this is Gods dealing with mankinde; he promises more then we could hope for; and when he hath done that, he gives us more then he hath promised (Taylor 1653, pp.298-99)

As Taylor suggests here, God does no injury to honorers that are “taken out of this life,” only to be recompensed with a better life (Ussher 1645, p.268). There is no breach of promise when a person “promiseth silver, and payeth with gold, and that in greater weight and quantity,” or when a person “promiseth a hogshed of beer, and giveth as much wine” (Ussher 1645, p.268; Andrewes 1650, p.398). Consequently, there is no breach of promise when God promises long life on this earth (or in a particular land) and gives instead sudden death and eternal life in the world to come (Ussher 1645, p.268). “[When] God give to those that honour their parents...everlasting life, instead of a long life, He performes His promise to the full (Andrewes 1650, p.398).”

7.3 How the Conditional Promise Motivates Honoring

Irrespective of whether God conditionally promises mere life, a life in grace, longevity, comfort, or eternal life in exchange for honoring, the promise serves to motivate inferiors to honor their superiors, and subjects to honor their sovereign. The promise therefore makes “the yoke easie, and the burden light” (Marshall 1643, p.12). It also helps “uphold” inferiors or subjects in times of temptation (Leigh 1641, p.7).

But, accounts of the motive clause annexed to the obligation to honor superiors vary as to whether the clause appeals to the passions or to reason. Writers sometimes call the benefits conditionally promised “sweet” and claim that these tempting sweets “allure” inferiors to fulfill their obligation to honor superiors (Fergusson 1659, p.412).

Instrumental rationality plays a small role in these accounts. Authors invoke language associated with rhetoric and the swaying of the passions; the conditional promise here serving to “encourage,” “move” and “stir” inferiors, “quicken” them to honor their superiors. (Lawson 1659, pp.187-8; Leigh 1641, p.7). That is, the conditional promise “inclines” mortals; it drives them to engage in honoring practices (Leigh 1654, pp.823-4).

Here, the image of the conditional promise puts inferiors who imagine it in a state of pleasure or delight, since it serves as a ground for hope and hope is a kind of pleasure (Leigh 1641, p.5). Possessing this ground for hope mechanically triggers a response: the hopeful respond by performing honoring practices. This process occurs without any recourse to reason. Contrarily, the image of the conditional promise thrusts inferiors who fail to honor their superiors into a state of alarm or fear. In their imagination, they confront the dreaded possibility that they will not live long in the land, and this generates fear in them. The visual image proves potent. The fear it evokes triggers the fearful to respond. Without recourse to reason, they respond by engaging in honoring practices.

Hobbes describes how this mechanical and unreflective process works. When an individual imagines (or is told by a rhetorician⁹⁹ to imagine) an evil like death and then imagines (or told by a rhetorician to imagine) some means, however implausible, whereby that evil may be avoided, “the motion that ariseth we call hope” (Hobbes *De Homine*, pp.56-7).¹⁰⁰ This pleasant feeling of hope is a “passion of the mind” that “pours” animal spirits “into the nerves” (Hobbes *De Homine*, pp.56-7; *DC*, pp. 253). The nerves

⁹⁹ Rhetoricians, according to Hobbes, “endeavoureth to make whatsoever he is to set forth for good, better; and what he would have apprehended as evil, worse, as much as is possible” (Hobbes, *EL*, p. 139)

¹⁰⁰ For more on the potency of visual images in Hobbes see (Johnston 1986, p19-25).

then mechanically determine the will or the last appetite and the determined will activates motion, here, it activates honoring practices (Hobbes *DH*, pp. 56-7; *EL*, pp.43-4). Stated in terms less reminiscent of Descartes' *Passions of the Soul*, Hobbes writes, "Actions of men proceed from the will, and the will from hope and fear" (Hobbes, *DC*, p.165). Or, "voluntary actions of men, by a natural necessity, do follow those opinions which they have concerning good and evil reward and punishment" (Hobbes *DC*, p.365). Reason need not inform these opinions (Hobbes *EL*, p.76). A crafty rhetorician may formulate these opinions and generate passions, since persuasion "raises passion from opinion" (Hobbes *EL*, p.76). Deliberation may not step in and evaluate the probability of the means-end nexus. Here, "any premises are good enough to infer the desired conclusion" (Hobbes, *EL*, p.76). Nor need reason evaluate whether the end is as dreadful or as pleasant as it first appears in the imagination. Here, "it is no matter whether the opinion be true or false...for not truth, but image, maketh passion" (Hobbes, *EL* p.76). The pleasures and fears generated by the image or the conception of the conditional promise of longevity in exchange for honoring may *mechanically* or unreflectively determine the will (the last appetite), and thereby drive inferiors to engage in honoring practices.

In alternative accounts, the conditional promise played a prominent role within instrumental calculation. As William Slayter explains in 1643,

Why is long life proposed the promise or blessing? Because it is most sweet, and desired, and so a most forcible reason to all, and especially to flesh and blood, who desire by all means to live long, to procure the observation of this Commandment. (Slayter 1643, p. 271)

Slayter here locates the sweet benefit of long life within an instrumental calculation. He calls long life a desire and he identifies this desire as "a most forcible reason" to all.

Complicating this claim, Hobbes argues that self-preservation is an end that is good *not* because “every man in passion calleth [it] so, but all men by reason” call it good (Hobbes *EL*, p.98).

Because mortals are beings of “flesh and blood,” living long is at the top of their list of rational preferences or pleasure and death is at the top of their list of rational costs or pains. That is, when mortals deliberate over whether preservation is a good, the conclusion they reach, when reflecting upon their long-term interests, is that it is good (Hobbes *DC*, p.269). Reason then scouts and finds the best means to obtain this good. In this account, the will (the last appetite, according to Hobbes) “is directed and governed” by the understanding, since deliberation determines the appetite (Hobbes *EL*, p.82).

Here, reason leads individuals to honor their superiors, since reason discovers that honoring is the best means to obtain the good that a deliberating individual decides is good. The rational relationship between honoring and self-preservation is therefore likely to “procure” observation to the Fifth Commandment.

Additionally, when the benefit of long life is “opposed to all those judgements, as inflicted by God, and suffered by wicked, and undutiful Children for their neglect, disobedience, contempt and rebellion and rebellion against their Parents,” children will calculate that it is in their best interest to honor their “parents,” including their civil parent (Lawson 1659, pp.166-8). As Lancelot Andrewes explains,

Long life being a thing desirable, and death a thing most repugnant to the nature of man. To live long and to prosper, is all that men desire upon the earth....The Apostle [Paul] urges this Commandment [the Fifth] from the

promise especially annexed to it above the rest. That it may be well with thee, and thou mayst live long on the earth (Andrewes 1650, pp.329-330)

Lancelot Andrewes here implicitly poses the question of whether or not instrumentally rational beings should honor their superiors. In his formulation, Andrewes shows how the motive clause annexed to the Fifth Commandment offers these beings a reason to engage in honoring practices. The clause promises long life and well-being on the condition that inferiors honor their superiors. The motive clause here offers mortals what they most desire. It also promises to keep them away from what they most fear—death—on the condition that they honor their mortal superiors.

Before moving on, let me quickly recap what I have said in the last two sections. In mid-seventeenth-century-English-accounts of the motive clause or conditional promise annexed to the Fifth Commandment, we discover a number of benefits promised to individuals provided that they honor their superiors. These benefits include: eternal life in heaven, a prosperous life on earth, a long life on earth, a homeland, and mere life. Although these goods look like typical bourgeois, proto-capitalist goods, we find authors claiming that these goods have been deemed good by God, by his Apostles and by the Jewish people thousands of years ago and should not be scornfully looked upon. Presumably, therefore, these benefits will motivate Englishmen to do their duty, that is, to honor their superiors. Individuals who fail to obey the Fifth Commandment, by contrast, confront a number of threatened inconveniences. These include: hell, misery on earth, a short life, a vagabond life, the absence of a homeland, and an untimely death. These possible inconveniences serve as disincentives. They also encourage inferiors to honor their mortal superiors.

7.4 Why Did God Annex the Conditional Promise?

In this section, I investigate the question: “Why did God annex the conditional promise to the obligation to honor superiors, or Why did He add a motive clause to this moral obligation?” First, I explain some reasons why the annexation of the conditional promise proves puzzling. Then, I explore four reasons why authors claimed that God annexed the conditional promise or motive clause to the Fifth Commandment. These reasons include: 1) to underscore the importance that He attributed to human society and self-preservation; 2) to underscore the fact of our fallen nature and His mercy; 3) to enhance His glory; and 4) to reconcile ought with is, moral obligation with self-interest and passion.

Contemporaries acknowledged that God was under no prior obligation to make conditional promises to mortals. God was a natural sovereign. As such, He had the right to dictate commands to mortals and mortals were under the obligation to obey His commands. Accordingly, God did not annex the conditional promise to generate the moral obligation to honor superiors. Inferiors were already obligated to obey God’s command. As the Presbyterian theologian Samuel Rutherford, author of *Lex, Rex*, writes,

Whether was God under an obligation, to make a Covenant with man? Hardly can any maintain the dominion and Soveraigntie of God, and also assert an obligation, on the Lords part, of working upon the creature. The Lord is debtor to neither person nor things. He as Lord commands.... The *Leviathan* [God] in strength is far above Job, he [Job] cannot command him [God]. Job. 14.4.” (Rutherford 1655, p.16)

From Rutherford’s passage here, we infer that God’s command to honor “parents” (including civil sovereigns) obligates mortals, to “yield reverence and obedience to them

in all things” (Dickson 1659, pp.122-3). The Fifth Commandment is formulated here in the apodictic style (Jacob 1923, pp.141-4).¹⁰¹ In its character as a law, it is an unconditional imperative, or a directive coming from God who is superior to man and whose commands are authoritative (Socino 1980, p.15). As such, the Fifth Commandment generates an obligation, it speaks peremptorily, and it is accompanied by no conditional promise or motivating clause whatsoever (Jacob 1923, p.144). These characteristics of the Fifth Commandment lead to the following question: if mortals are obligated to honor their parents by virtue of God’s command, then why did God annex the conditional promise to His Fifth Commandment?

This question becomes more perplexing when Rutherford suggests that mortals are obligated to obey God out of necessity. Here, God can force mortals to honor their mortal superiors, if He wants to. Weak mortals lack the strength to resist God when He applies His force to them.

Additionally, God’s irresistible strength—not His command---generates an obligation to obey Him. Rutherford’s account of irresistible might making right echoes Hobbes, who maintains that “a sure an irresistible power confers the right of dominion and ruling over those who cannot resist” (Hobbes, *DC*, p.119). Just as mortals are obligated to honor the commands of an irresistibly powerful and therefore legitimate ruler (whose irresistibility and thus legitimacy may be the result of their making him or her *irresistible* by resigning their strength and means to him or her), so should mortals honor the commands of God

¹⁰¹ Luther, *Smaller Catechism* (529), translation in Philip Schaff, *A History of the Creeds of Christendom*, 3 vols. (London, 1878) III, 75.

“who without question hath more power over every man, than can be conferred upon any monarch” (Hobbes *EL*, p.107, p.112, p.139). And, just as children are “endeared to” honor their parents by natural necessity because of their disability to help themselves so are mortals moved to honor the irresistibly powerful God Taylor (1660). For, “they whose power cannot be resisted, and by consequence God *Almighty* derives his right of sovereignty from the *power* itself (Hobbes *DC*, p.292).

Here, God’s irresistible strength and the dominion He derives from it makes the conditional promise annexed to the Fifth Commandment all the more puzzling. If God can force mortals to obey His Commandments and if the use of force is legitimate and generates an obligation on the part of inferiors, then why would God annex the conditional promise to the Fifth Commandment?

In addition to the divine command theory of moral obligation and the theory that might makes right, authors claimed that children were obligated to honor their parents from gratitude (Hardy, 1658, p.3). This added obligation increases the perplexity surrounding the question of why God annexed the promise to the honoring commandment. Here, inferiors owed superiors honor as a way of thanking them for the gifts they received from their superiors. Gratitude here was what Englishmen called a “natural” obligation. As Henry Spelman explains,

It is a rule in Philosophy, that *Beneficium requirit officium*. And we are taught by the law of nature, that he which receiveth a benefit oweth to his benefactor, Honour, Faith, and Service, according to the promotion of the benefit received. Upon this rule was the ancient law not onely of England, but of other Nations also, grounded... though no such matter were once

mentioned between them [the recipient of the benefit and the donor].
(Spelman 1647, p.19)

As Spelman suggests here, offering honor, faith and service to superiors as gratitude for benefits received was an obligation, and Englishmen identified this obligation as “naturally engraven in the hearts of men” (Hall 1658, pp.69-70). Gratitude was not something negotiated explicitly, but the English (and all nationalities) assumed it. Gratitude was compatible with God’s will, too. Commentators claimed that God made “us so much depend upon our Parents, that we might see what great reason we have to honour them (Lawson 1659, p.186).” By making children weak, God taught children that they are bound by “the law of thankfulnesse” unto honoring, and they should be very unworthy if they should neglect to honor their parents (Lawson, 1659, pp.187-8). Here, honoring practices offered superiors a submissive kind of thankfulness, what William Ames calls “piety” (Ames 1642, p.361). And, inferiors were bound to offer submissive and pious honoring practices to superiors as gratitude for benefits received.

Now, given that honoring was obligatory for the three aforementioned reasons, the annexation of a conditional promise to the Fifth Commandment is truly puzzling. For, if mortals are obligated to honor superiors and if God can force them to do it, why did God also annex a promise? Some mid-seventeenth-century-English authors who explained the puzzle maintained that the conditional promise was God’s way of signifying that honoring mortal superiors, including the civil sovereign, was more important than the other practices commanded in Second Table (Baxter 1659b, p.485). Here, authors did not construe the promise as a legal covenant. Instead, the promise was how God signaled the importance He placed upon honoring practices. Churchman Fergusson explains,

Now this command [the Fifth] is described from its precedency, as being the first and most weighty command in all the second table; and from the manner of propounding it, not nakedly, but with a special promise of a particular mercy subjoined to this command in particular, and expressed, ver. 3. [Ephesians 6.3] which cannot be said of any other command. (Fergusson 1659, p.411)

Authors like Fergusson here argued that the promise or covenant signaled that honoring mortal superiors was a very weighty obligation. No other obligation in the Second Table contained a promise, at least “not expressly” (Ussher 1645, p.256). Clearly, God wanted mortals to obey all His Commandments. But, according to this account, He wanted inferiors to honor their mortal superiors more than He wanted them to obey Commandments Six thru Ten, which dealt with so-called private matters (Baxter 1659b, p.485). God expressed His desire to see this Commandment obeyed by annexing a promise to this Commandment.

Here, the conditional promise (unilateral covenant) or motive clause underscored the value God attributed to the purpose underlying honoring practices (Ames 1643, p.353; Ussher 1645, p.256). Contemporaries maintained “society of men among themselves is supposed and established, private or oeconomic, publick or politick” through the Fifth Commandment (Ames 1642, p.353). The conditional promise therefore served to underscore the importance of these societies. It did not serve to establish a legal covenant between mortals and God. Here, God’s commands were not in tension with self-preservation or the preservation of society. Rather, His commands supported both. As Hall writes,

[God] comes to those main precepts which establish our preservation and mutual peace: and begins with the foundation of society and government, to wit, obedience to superiours....Inasmuch as having every one fathers

and mothers of their own, they were thereupon, as under the notion of an officer of power, also enjoined to obedience to the publike father of their country. And therefore, the observation of this precept being so necessary, it is observed to be the first commandment with promise: and the end and benefit of it is plainly annexed, *That our dayes may be long in the land.* (Hall 1654, pp.26-7)

According to Hall here, the purpose of honoring is clear: the practice is the means to our preservation and to our mutual peace. The motive clause or conditional promise was God's way of telling mortals that He highly valued hierarchically structured societies because these societies tended to prolong "our days" in the land. Failure to honor superiors brought "anarchie and confusion," and God did not intend to create a Babel (Andrewes 1650, p.330; Hall 1654, pp.26-7). God wanted human beings to live and to live together in hierarchically structured societies where inferiors honored superiors. As a corollary, the conditional promise underscored that "solitary life," including a monkish life (a jab at Catholicism), was "altogether contrary to the law and will of God" (Ames 1642, p.353; Ussher 1645, p.256).

The conditional promise was no legal covenant here. Instead, it gave mortals information regarding the divinely sanctioned means of preserving the human species in general as well as unique individuals in particular. God was simply informing mortals through the "promise" that without honoring practices "the life of man" cannot abide. He was informing them that "continuation of our life, and of all our quietnesse...depends on the preservation of societies of mankind," and the existence of these societies depended upon honoring practices (Ames 1659, p.238, p.242). The promise or motive clause showed the value God placed upon the preservation of individual life and human life generally and it

provided mortals with the divinely sanctioned means of achieving this end (Ames 1659, p.242).

Another reason contemporaries offered to explain why God annexed a conditional promise was God's concern for glory. I have discussed this concern in Chapter 2. Here, suffice it to say that the conditional promise was God's way to "win" mortals to Him and thereby to gain greater "homage, worship, and honour to himself" (Leigh 1654, p.54; Clarke 1659, p.164). Recall from Chapter 1 that obedience is a form of honoring. It symbolically declares another's relative superiority and it makes this superiority known to neutral observers. Applying this rationale, contemporaries claimed that God offered inferiors benefits in exchange for honoring because honoring ultimately brought glory to God. Honoring mortals glorified God because by honoring mortals honorers obeyed the Fifth Commandment. Their obedience acknowledged God's relative superiority and therefore conduced to His glory (Fergusson 1659, p.412). Here, the conditional promise reconciled God's glory with mortal well-being. As Fergusson further explains,

This duty of obedience in children, as it tendeth to glorifie God in the first place, it being a doing of what is right according to His command; So it tendeth to the advantage of children in the next (Fergusson 1659, p.412).

God's conditional promise is mutually beneficial here, and God had strategic reasons for annexing it to His commandment. It served to enhance His glory on earth.

More importantly, perhaps, contemporaries argued that God annexed the conditional promise to the obligation to honor superiors in order to address mortals on the plane of a worldly horizon.

Promises of long life, prosperity, and success in the World, are and have been ever persuasive Orators to the eare of the Worldling. Long life is a comfortable thing to a Worldling. (Brathwaite 1641, pp.84-85)

Most mortals are worldlings, as described here by poet and royalist Richard Brathwaite. Hobbes agrees. Although he claims there is nothing that is “simply good” (good irrespective of whether it is good for humans),¹⁰² Hobbes asserts there is something “good for everyone,” and this good is self-preservation, along with longevity (Hobbes. *De Homine*, p.48). “The greatest of goods *for each* is his own preservation. For nature is so arranged that all desire good for themselves. Insofar as it is within their capacities, it is necessary to desire life, health, and further....security for future time” (Hobbes *DH*, p.48, emphasis mine).

This worldly concern for life and longevity made it difficult for mortals to obey God’s commands simply because He commanded obedience from them. Here, God’s naked *law* lacked “its commanding power” or force upon worldlings who thought life and longevity in this world (and not in the world beyond) is the greatest of goods (Blake 1658, p.57). As Hobbes similarly attests, simple commands are no longer a sufficient reason to move mortals to perform the action commanded (Hobbes *DH*, p. 7). Granted, if “men were such as they should be,” then God’s laws would be obeyed “for fear of Himself (Hobbes, *DC*, p. 323).” But, men are not “as they should be.”

The motive clause or conditional promise served as a way to supplement the Fifth Commandment’s lack of commanding force upon men. As Fergusson notes,

¹⁰² For discussion of the simply good see Hobbes, *De Homine*, p.48; and *EL*, p.44

That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. Here he sheweth what that promise is, and hereby giveth a second argument to inforce the duty of obedience upon children unto parents, taken from the profit and advantage which should redound unto them by it (Fergusson 1659, p.412)

In offering a “second argument to inforce the duty of obedience,” God considered the capacities of man, and He accommodated His rule to man’s capacities (Emerson 1956, p.137). God knew that mortals “have been long since guilty of disobedience against God” and that “unjust is the name of the far greater part of men” (Hobbes *DC*, p. 371; Hobbes *EL*, p.38). And, He accommodated His rule to man’s capacities by annexing the conditional promise to His Fifth Commandment.

God’s act of accommodation, however, does not make the distinction between actions from duty and actions from self-interest disappear. Self-interest only offers a *secondary argument* for honoring practices. “Our first and chief motive unto duty”---here, the duty to honor superiors---remained “the equity and righteousness which is in the thing it self, as being commanded by God” (Fergusson 1659, p.412). The conditional promise serves only “as a secondary motive and encouragement” (Fergusson 1659, p.412).

Undoubtedly, the need to add a motive clause to the moral obligation to honor superiors revealed the moral weakness of man. It showed worldlings just how “backward” they were in their duty, since the motive clause implied that mortals tended not to honor superiors from duty alone (Slayter 1643, p.342). As Lancelot Andrewes explains,

Because we are not naturally given to perform these duties [found in the 5th Commandment] of obedience and subjection, especially in this manner...Reasons [are] drawn from the duty, as it is expressed and

inforced in Scripture, to induce men thereunto. (Andrewes 1650, p.329-330)

The conditional promise—the reason drawn from duty as expressed and enforced in Scripture—reveals man’s nature as well as God’s incredible mercy. It reveals the latter because an all-powerful Deity freely and happily chooses to “come down” and to provide incentives to duty (Fergusson 1659, p.412; Leigh 1641, p.7; Lawson 1659, pp.187-8). It reveals the former because only base worldlings need incentives to duty. As churchman James Fergusson writes,

Though God, as absolute Lord, might enjoyn us obedience to His commands without giving any promise of a reward: yet so backward are we to our duty, as so mercifull is God, that, to overcome our backward unwillingnesse, He is pleased sweetly to allure us by His gracious promise of a free reward unto our obedience: for here is a commandment with promise. (Fergusson 1659, p.412)

As Fergusson notes here, God’s promise of temporal benefits reveals His incredible love and concern for fallen mortals who, by their nature, tend to embrace all-too-human concerns (Emerson 1957, p.137).

7.5 Honoring and the Promise in Historical Frameworks

Accounts of the Fifth Commandment that focus on the conditional promise or motive clause shift their emphasis away from conceptualizing honoring, and by extension political obligation, as a moral obligation stemming solely from God’s decree.

In the passages I emphasized above, we discover Englishmen situating the practice of honoring superiors within a covenant relation. Here, I want to briefly bring certain *EL* of this covenant into focus. First, we discover that God, out of His own sovereign will and

choice, freely consents to give up rule by decree alone (Cherry 1965, p.331; Miller 1956, p.63). He offers the covenant as a *free-gift*. God does not renounce His sovereignty by offering this covenant, as He is not compelled by force, reason or necessity to give up rule exclusively by decree (Miller 1956, p.63). The unilateral covenant God forges with man does not do away with the obligatory character of His decrees, either. As explained above, the annexation of the conditional promise or covenant only serves to “inforce” or to motivate the obligation imposed upon children by virtue of God’s decree (Fergusson 1659, p.412). By extension, the covenant motivates subjects to fulfill their political obligations to the civil sovereign. First, it motivates them because it makes honoring compatible with self-interest. Second, it motivates them because the freely given covenant summons up the norm of gratitude. Here, subjects and children can show their gratitude to God for His free-gift by honoring His Fifth Commandment (Baxter 1659b, p.143).

Second point about the covenant: God unilaterally forges this covenant between Himself and mortals. There is no backroom bargaining between mortals and God regarding the terms of the conditional promise. That is, inferiors do not negotiate and then agree to the terms of the covenant prior to its promulgation. There are therefore no mutual pledges of reciprocity, and in no sense do inferiors “bind themselves” to God through His unilateral covenant. Consequently, inferiors are not bound to the terms of the covenant as “covenanters” (Cherry 1965, p.337). God simply declares His “will concerning [the] good to be received, and [the] evil to be removed” (Leigh 1641, p.5). Here, inferiors are

not parties to the covenant. They are the parties assumed within God's unilateral covenant.

Inferiors *are* obligated to honor their superiors because God commands it, and because they *are obligated* to obey His commands. However, inferiors *are not* obligated to honor their superiors because God offers them a covenant. The conditional promise enables inferiors to add their *assent* to the Fifth Commandment and thereby give their assent to authority (including political authority). Their assent does not signify their belief that benefits offered are commensurate or proportionate to the costs associated with honoring. The conditional promise only but importantly offers inferiors a reason that supplements their existing obligation honor their superiors. The conditional promise helps generate their assent to authority. It helps motivate inferiors to perform their moral obligation of honoring their superiors, including their political obligations to the civil sovereign.

Third point about the covenant: mortal superiors may have a role to play with respect to the covenant but they are not parties to the covenant. God only offers mortal inferiors a promise. He promises them that they will profit from honoring their mortal superiors. God might induce mortal superiors to maintain their honorers. He might even command mortal superiors to provide honorers with creaturely comforts. But, the unilateral covenant made by God does not, by itself, obligate mortal superiors to preserve or provide for mortal inferiors. Superiors do not enter into a covenant with God. They do not enter into a covenant with mortal inferiors, either. Instead, God unilaterally enters

into a covenant with inferiors. He promises them that they profit from honoring their mortal superiors.

Fourth point about the covenant: it chains God. But, as inferiors do not negotiate the terms of the conditional promise, *they* do not bind God, and He is not obligated *to them* (Cherry 1965, p.332). Instead, God binds Himself through his unilateral covenant (Miller 1956, p.63). Paradoxically, He obligates Himself and is bound to Himself only. That is, He becomes a “covenanting debtour” to Himself (Rutherford 1655, p.16). He restricts and circumscribes Himself through the terms and conditions of His conditional promise. And, as I explained before, God can fulfill His promise in a myriad of ways.

Another point about the covenant: God offers no strong remedy to inferiors if He decides to release Himself from His conditional promise, and He may unbind Himself whenever He wills or pleases. Inferiors who honor their superiors and who expect to live well on account of their honoring may petition God in prayer. They may ask God to keep this part of His conditional promise. But, God is free to decide whether or not to hear their plea and whether and how to act upon it (Hammond 1645, p.322; Blake 1658, p.57). Mortals cannot “force” God to keep His promise, and they cannot ask what right He has to deny His promise. Inferiors have no independent claim to make against God, either. They cannot say that they independently *merit* benefits because they honored their superiors, since they only have a right to receive these benefits because God’s conditional promise generates and transfers this right to them (Fergusson 1659, p.412; Hobbes *EL*, p.84). Thus, inferiors must ground their petition to God upon His unilateral covenant. That is,

they must beg the merciful God to give them the benefits He graciously promised to them, provided that they engaged in honoring practices (Lawson 1659, pp. 166-8).

Thus far, I have been discussing the covenant as if it were a legal document. But, as I have shown, there were Englishmen who wrote about the conditional promise and who *did not emphasize* the notion of a legal covenant at all. That is, there were Englishmen who resisted the tendency to conceptualize the “promise” in legal or contractual terms. Instead, they construed the motive clause—the promise---as offering mortals *the purpose* behind God’s law of honoring (Socino 1980, p.106). Here, authors claimed that the Fifth Commandment, in fact, all the Commandments were compatible with prudence, or self-preservation and social peace. For example, in 1642 William Ames writes,

The proper reason of that promise which is adjoined to this fifth precept, that thou mayest prolong thy dayes upon earth, because without this mutuall observance of superiours and inferiours among themselves, it could not be expected that the life of man should abide in this state. (Ames 1642, p.355)

Implicit in Ames’s argument here is the claim that it is prudent for inferiors to honor their superiors. Ames does not construe the promise as a covenant binding upon God. Nor does Ames construe “Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother” as an imperative dictated by God that obligated children. Instead, he construes the commandment as a precept and the promise as a clause offering the purpose behind the precept. Here, the Fifth Commandment is akin to what Hobbes calls a dictate of reason; it is a conclusion or a theorem concerning “what conduceth to the conservation and defence” of humankind (Hobbes *Lev*, p.200).

Ames was not alone in explaining the annexed promise in terms of prudence. Nor did he singly explain the Fifth Commandment in terms of a precept. Henry Hammond, in his account of the conditional promise uses causal language to explain the connection between honoring and “prosperous peaceable living on earth” (Hammond 1659, p.630). “Obedience to superiors,” which Hammond posits as following from the Fifth Commandment, “is ordinarily an eminent means of security, see Mat 5.5” (Hammond 1659, p.630). Here, honoring or obeying superiors is prudent because it is likely to bring (it is the eminent means to) longevity. This benefit is “promised” in so far as it is the likely consequence of honoring. Likewise, Lancelot Andrewes interprets the annexed promise in prudential terms. The promise offers mortals a prudential reason to honor their mortal superiors. In his discussion of the Fifth Commandment, Andrewes writes,

Where honour is detracted and withheld there the care of preservation is also diminished and by reason thereof, the power of wickedness, and the impudence of naughty men is increased; and the more our estate is troubled, the greater is our unquiet and vexation. Therefore better it is, that due honour be given to them, the better to encourage them to apply themselves to our preservation (Andrewes 1650, p.330).

Andrewes here offers prudential and compelling reasons (supported and even guaranteed by God through the Fifth Commandment’s motive clause) to engage in honoring practices directed at mortal superiors. Andrewes construes the meaning of the “promise” as a prudential rule.

In the passage above, Andrewes asserts that honoring is prudent because it *encourages* superiors to “apply themselves to our preservation.” Interestingly, Andrewes is not here claiming that superiors are contractually bound to preserve inferiors who honor them. He is only saying that honoring *encourages* superiors to preserve inferiors. This assertion

echoes a stronger assertion made by Hobbes who writes, “By natural necessity all men wish them better from whom they receive glory and honour, than others” (Hobbes *DC*, p.219). Later in the same paragraph, Hobbes claims that fathers “intend better” for their children because children honor fathers. And, in *Elements of Law*, Hobbes explains that parents have a “natural affection” for their children who honor them, an affection which is similar to the affection that leads men “to seek to assist those that adhere unto them” (Hobbes, *EL*, p.56). Hobbes calls this natural affection charity, or “the desire to assist and advance others” (Hobbes, *EL*, p.57).

Now, how does this logic work? That is, how does honoring relate to charity? Or, why does honoring encourage superiors to wish or intend inferiors well, to apply themselves to preserve inferiors, or to feel a natural affection towards inferiors, an affection that renders superiors “charitable” to them (Hobbes *EL*, p.56)? If we do not understand these claims in legal-juridical terms, then how do we understand these claims offered by Hobbes and Andrewes?

Here, I want to suggest that Hobbes and other authors situated the connection between honoring on the one hand and the benefits of longevity and well-being on the other within two final frameworks. The first is the framework of gratitude. Since I have discussed the logic of gratitude in some length in this chapter, here I will only offer a passage from Hobbes that re-captures the most important features of this logic. Hobbes writes,

It happeneth many times that a man benefitteth or contribueth to the power of another, without any covenant, but only upon confidence and trust of obtaining the grace and favour of that other, whereby he may procure a greater, or no less benefit or assistance of himself. For by necessity of

nature every man doth in all his voluntary actions intend some good unto himself. In this case it is a law of nature, *That no man suffer him, that thus trusteth to his charity, or good affection towards him, to be in the worse estate for his trusting...* breach of this law of nature is not to be called injury; it hath another name (viz.) Ingratitude. (Hobbes *EL*, p. 90)¹⁰³

When children honor their parents or when subjects honor the civil sovereign, they benefit or contribute to their superior's power because honoring presents the superior as powerful and the presentation effects neutral onlookers. According to the law of gratitude, superiors are obligated to return a benefit for this kindness. They ought to be charitable to their honorers; they ought to show good affection towards them, or as Hobbes elsewhere writes, they ought to show them "a good turn." (Hobbes *DC*, p.140)

The second way to square how honoring leads to kindness, charity, and affection on the part of the person honored is by placing this claim within a hedonistic framework that gestures back to my analysis of honoring as flattery. Recall, that in chapters 4 thru 6, I showed how honoring practices were the means by which inferiors wrought their superior's wills to their own purposes (Hobbes *Lev*, p.237). There, my arguments relied on a hedonistic and behavioralist understanding of human psychology. I explained that honoring superiors through obedience, complaisance, and praise (as well as other

¹⁰³ Similarly, in *DC*, Hobbes writes,

The third precept of the natural law is, that you suffer not to be the worse for you, who, out of the confidence he had in you, first did you a good turn; or that you accept not a gift, but with a mind to endeavour that the giver shall have no just occasion to repent him of his gift. For without this, he should act without reason, that would confer a benefit where he sees it would be lost; and by this means all beneficence and trust, together with all kind of benevolence, would be taken from among men, neither would there be aught of mutual assistance among them, nor any commencement of gaining grace and favour; by reason whereof the state of war would necessarily remain, contrary to the fundamental law of nature. But because the breach of this law is not a breach of trust or contract (for we suppose no contracts to have passed among them), therefore is it not usually termed an injury; because good turns and thanks have a mutual eye to each other, it is called ingratitude. (Hobbes *DC*, p.140)

gestures, practices, words and deeds) was a way to symbolically acknowledge a superior's relative superiority. This acknowledgment won inferiors favor with their superiors because honoring pleased superiors, especially vain ones. And, their feeling of pleasure triggered a reliable or predictable response. Superiors showered favors on inferiors who offered them this pleasure. Honoring practices therefore benefited inferiors, and flatterers engaged in honoring practices for this reason.

We discover a similar hedonistic and behavioralist account of human and divine psychology in accounts explaining why benefits accrue to individuals who obey the Fifth Commandment. Contemporaries argued that inferiors who honored their mortal superiors *pleased* God because they obeyed His Commandment. Here, (the vain?) God took pleasure in being honored through obedience. In Thomas White's *A catechism of Christian doctrine*, a master and a student articulate the relationship between honoring and pleasing God in the following way:

M[aster]. You have pleasure when you hear your self commended, or see your self honour'd and serv'd, so did God get any ...[pleasure]?

S[tudent]. Sir, without doubt it could not but please him. For so I am taught that my good works please God, and my sins displease him. (White 1659a, p.22)

White discusses the passions here. Performing the obedience and subjection entailed by the Fifth Commandment "is well pleasing to God" (Andrewes 1650, p.330). "God is especially delighted, and highly please in it" (Andrewes 1650, p.330). Richard Baxter supports the connection between honoring and pleasing God by summoning Col 3.20. Baxter writes, "Children obey your Parents in all things (that is, all lawful things) for this is well-pleasing to the Lord" (Baxter 1659b, p.489 [Col 3.20, 22]).

Englishmen proceeded by claiming that a “well-pleased” God was likely to reward His honorers, Col 3.20, Gen 31.7 (Clarke 1659, p.264). Exchanging rewards for honoring is not a strategic exchange here. Instead, honoring triggers pleasure and pleasure triggers a reliable response. Honoring “gained upon Him [God] exceedingly,” as God was “much delighted” in receiving honor from mortals (Abbott 1641a, p.739). Honoring was a way of *courting* God. “Worship,” writes Hobbes, is “the sign of inward honour [is directed at] whom we endeavour by our homage to appease if they be angry, or howsoever to make them favourable to us” (Hobbes *DC*, p.295). There is no rational reason offered to account for why God is made favorable. Rather, the assumption made is a pleased God stands to offer “His favour” to those who please Him (Hobbes, *De Homine*, 75). That is, he is *inclined* to reward His honorers (or flatterers) with blessings and gracious dispensations (Reading 1651, p.314).¹⁰⁴ Specifically with respect to the Fifth Commandment, God tends to reward honorers with the favor of longevity and well-being in the promised land.

According to this account, the reason why honorers could have “confidence in the assistance of God” was not that God’s kept His Word, or that He was thankful to those who offered Him the gift of honoring, or that he thought the relationship between honoring and benefits was somehow mutually beneficial. Rather, honorers could have

¹⁰⁴ Calvin makes a similar argument. In his *Institutes*, he writes,

A promise is added by way of recommendation, the better to remind us how pleasing to God is the submission which is here required. . . . The meaning [of the promise] therefore is: Honour thy father and thy mother, that thou mayst be able, during the course of a long life, to enjoy the possession of the land which is to be given thee in testimony of my favour. But, as the whole earth is blessed to believers, we justly class the present life among the number of divine blessings.” (Calvin Book 2.37, p.345)

confidence in God's assistance because He was "a lover, and rewarder of Obedience" (More 1658). Stated more generally, he was a lover and rewarder of honoring practices (More 1658). His love of these practices inclined Him to be gracious to those who courted Him by using them (More 1658). Given this logic, Hobbes could claim, "The end that all states allege of divine worship is this, that by it their god or deities may be made favourable (Hobbes, *DH*, p. 75)."

We can apply this hedonistic and behaviorist logic of honoring to the strictly secular sphere (Hobbes *DH*, p. 75). Here, it becomes rational to contribute to the power of superiors (by honoring them thru obedience, praise, &c) even when there is no covenant between inferiors and superiors. For, inferiors can trust that they will obtain grace and favour through their honoring practices (Hobbes *EL*, p.90). They ground their trust in an understanding of superiors, or human nature generally. Honoring, they reason, pleases superiors, especially vain ones. It is a way of courting them. Honorers who court their superiors become the latter's favorites. And, superiors shower favors upon them, including the means to longevity and well-being. These benefits reliably accrue to honorers because authors situated honoring practices within this hedonistic and behaviorist account of human psychology. The exchange relation between honoring on the one hand and longevity and prosperity on the other serves the honorer's interest. Honoring, and by extension political obedience, is compatible with an inferior's or a subject's self-interest on account of the pleasure honoring gives and the response it triggers.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter explored mid-seventeenth-century-English accounts of honoring that express an awareness of the fact that the Fifth Commandment, conceived strictly as a dictate from God, is not effective in practice. Contemporary authors solved this dilemma by invoking the conditional promise or motive clause annexed to this commandment. God promised inferiors life, long life, well-being, a land, and sometimes even eternal life provided that they honored their mortal superiors. These promised benefits offered inferiors a justification for honoring, and they generated assent to the Fifth Commandment. The promised benefits put mortals in a position to comply with the honoring commandment. They also offered potential honorers incentives to honor their superiors, including the civil sovereign.

The conditional promise enabled mid-seventeenth-century-English authors to conceptualize God as a merciful, gracious and predictable deity. He annexed the promise to the honoring commandment to reconcile the moral obligation to honor superiors, with the mortal concern for comfort and self-preservation. That is, He wedded religious or moral obligation to practical concerns, and considered mortals as they “ought to be” (godly) as well as they “are” (hedonistic and self-interested beings). Here, arguments about honoring, and by extension political obligation, substantiated through appeals to hedonistic calculations or to self-interest are not strictly speaking *secular* arguments. They do not undermine God or religion, since God is the one who offers mortals secular incentives to obey Him. His attentiveness to worldly concerns shores up His incredible mercy and our fallen nature, or our inability to act from duty alone.

Finally, the logic offered in mid-seventeenth-century accounts of honoring and the conditional promise or motive clause permit us to locate honoring, and by implication political obligation, in four distinct frameworks. First, we can situate honoring within a covenant relation, according to which God guarantees a long and prosperous life provided that inferiors honor their mortal superiors. Second, we can situate honoring within a prudential calculation. Third, we situate honoring within the logic of gratitude. Finally, we can place honoring within a hedonistic and behavioralist story about human psychology. All four accounts show how honoring mortal superiors, and by extension political obligation in general, is beneficial to inferiors or political subjects.

PART IV HOBBS AND HONORING

In Part IV, I argue that the legal-juridical portrayal of central elements of Thomas Hobbes's political thought *misportrays* these elements of his thought. More specifically, the legal-juridical account of sovereign authorization in Hobbes identifies five interpretative puzzles but if we appraise the most tenacious efforts to resolve these puzzles from within the legal-juridical account we are led to conclude that these efforts fail. Worse, we are led to conclude that Hobbes's political thought is woefully deficient. My portrayal of sovereign authorization as an act of honoring, however, offers an account of sovereign authorization that more adequately resolves these interpretive puzzles.

I demonstrate that Hobbes's description of the act through which an individual authorizes a sovereign more closely resembles the Christian relationship constituted by a humble individual *honoring* God than it does a legal contract between members of a nascent bourgeoisie. By situating sovereign authorization within a mid-seventeenth-century religious discourse, and by making sovereign authorization correspond to a sacred practice, I challenge the legal-juridical account's dogged reliance upon a secular and word-centered framework for understanding central elements within Hobbes's political theory.

The first interpretative puzzle that the legal-juridical portrayal of sovereign authorization cannot resolve stems from its reliance upon the medium of words at the crucial moment when to-be-subjects declare their will to authorize the to-be-sovereign. The exclusive reliance upon words in the move from the state of nature to political society presents an interpretative puzzle because words cannot securely declare the will. In Hobbes's state of nature, the meanings individuals associate with particular words are multiple, and this multiplicity opens the door for misunderstanding. On the one hand, the meaning of a particular word arises from consensus. But, in the state of nature, this consensus is under continual revision. The core meaning of any particular word is therefore frequently ambiguous. This ambiguity breeds confusion, perhaps even unintelligibility between parties, and is especially exploitable by the cunning. On the other hand, the meaning of a particular word arises from an individual in the state of nature unilaterally designating a certain word to "mark" his or her particular subjective conception. The radical subjectivity Hobbes associates with the meaning of words here may also breed confusion and unintelligibility between parties. These two possible avenues for communicative misunderstanding undermine the to-be-subject's ability to leave the state of nature. For, to leave successfully, the verbal declaration used at the moment of transition must correspond to the to-be-subject's will. And, the to-be-sovereign (who is not a party to the contract) must accept the position of sovereignty and consequently must *understand* the verbal declaration in order for binding obligations to accrue to to-be-subjects. Since words breed misunderstanding, their use at this crucial moment is problematic.

In the course of laying stress upon the inadequacy of words, I advance an account of sovereign authorization as an honoring practice. Far from exclusively relying upon words, my account allows to-be-subjects to declare their will using a combination of words, gestures and actions. This combination of speech, expression and deed significantly reduces the possibility of communicative misunderstanding. Moreover, intelligibility and understanding endure in my account of sovereign authorization as an honoring practice because Hobbes claims that certain honoring practices, such as bowing or lying prostrate, possess “natural” meaning. The meanings of these actions are not constructed, they signify the same thing to all people in all times and all places. Thus, by conceptualizing sovereign authorization as an honoring practice we resolve one interpretative puzzle that the legal-judicial portrayal cannot resolve.

The second interpretative puzzle that the legal-judicial account of sovereign authorization cannot resolve stems from the account’s anachronistic portrayal of to-be-subjects at the moment of sovereign authorization. When to-be-subjects authorize their sovereign representative, the legal-judicial account presents this moment as a moment of positive self-assertion, perhaps even a moment when to-be-subjects positively express their choice. Subjects are here portrayed as bold, autonomous agents who place legally and morally binding obligations upon themselves. And, they are God-like because of their ability to construct political society from an act of willing (Flathman 1993, p.2). I do not deny that Hobbes uses language that supports this portrayal of sovereign authorization. I argue, however, that this depiction is a partial one. Hobbes also describes sovereign authorization as the moment when subjects perform an act of *self-denial* where

they *resign* and *humble* themselves. Conceptualizing the to-be-subject as a positively self-assertive modern voter, the legal-judicial account obscures this humiliating aspect of Hobbes's depiction of the to-be-subject at the crucial moment of authorization.

Sovereign authorization understood as a honoring practice, by contrast, accounts for *both* ways of depicting to-be-subjects. On the one hand, sovereign authorization conceived as an honoring practice presents to-be-subjects as individuals who deny and humble themselves in the presence of the to-be-sovereign. On the other hand, it presents to-be-subjects as individuals who boldly (and with considerable self-assurance) authorize the sovereign.

The third interpretative puzzle that the legal-judicial account of sovereign authorization cannot resolve stems from the account's inability to sufficiently make sense of Hobbes's puzzling claim that to-be-subjects may "transfer" rights to their to-be-sovereign even though the latter already possesses the right to everything. Embedding the notion of "transference" within the structure of an economic or a legal transaction renders Hobbes's claim unintelligible. To avoid unintelligibility here, the legal-judicial account moves in two distinct directions. Either it highlights Hobbes's account of surrendering rights and ignores his notion of transference altogether. Or, it ignores Hobbes's claim that the sovereign in effect possess the right to everything and claims that to-be-subjects give rights to the sovereign who did not possess these rights previously. More persuasive than these inadequate solutions is the solution I provide by construing sovereign authorization as an act of honoring, or worship. An alternative understanding of the notion of "transference" is conjured in my account. This alternative notion renders intelligible the

claim that to-be-subjects may “transfer” rights to a sovereign who already possesses the right to everything.

The fourth interpretative puzzle that the legal-juridical account of sovereign authorization cannot resolve is Hobbes’s claim that to-be-subjects transfer *power* to the sovereign through the act of authorization. This interpretative puzzle aligns itself with another that the legal-juridical account cannot resolve. The second puzzle derives from the question of how it is possible for a sovereign to amass the power necessary to hold subjects in awe. I will rehearse how the legal-juridical account resolves these two puzzles in this chapter. Suffice it to say here that I contend that their resolutions are insufficient and I argue that by conceptualizing sovereign authorization as an honoring practice, we better understand Hobbes’s claim about *transferring* power. Through this conceptualization, we also discover how honoring practices represent the sovereign as powerful within a given linguistic community. This representation inspires neutral onlookers with a sense of awe for the sovereign. In effect, through their honoring practices, honorers constitute the sovereign’s awesomeness.

The fifth interpretative puzzle that the legal-juridical account of sovereign authorization cannot adequately resolve concerns itself with the question of motivation. Legal-juridical accounts of Hobbes present a number of arguments affirming that an instrumentally rational sovereign or a sovereign who endeavors to obey the laws of nature will be motivated to serve subjects in the commonwealth. Consequently, champions of the legal-juridical account argue that sovereign authorization is prudent. To-be-subjects have good

reasons to authorize a sovereign, provided that the sovereign acts according to self-interest rightly understood, or endeavors to act according to the laws of nature. But John Locke challenges these provisions in the *Second Treatise of Government*. He presents his readers with a sovereign whose actions are motivated neither by rational self-interest nor by the fear or the love of God. Locke claims that to-be-subjects who authorize this kind of sovereign are not prudent, since a sovereign thusly conceived is not motivated to provide for or to protect subjects. The puzzle that the legal-juridical account cannot resolve therefore revolves around the following question: How do subjects motivate an irrational sovereign or a sovereign who does not endeavor to obey the laws of nature to protect and provide for them? If a solution to this problem is not found, then sovereign authorization is not altogether prudent. Consequently, subjects will not be sufficiently motivated to authorize the sovereign.

Conceptualizing sovereign authorization as an honoring practice is the first step toward resolving this interpretative puzzle. The next step involves conceptualizing obedience as an honoring practice as well. These honoring practices are “weapons” that to-be-subjects (the weak) utilize against an irrational, ungodly, passionate and vain sovereign. When directed at this sovereign, honoring practices move this sovereign to favor those who engage in these practices. Honoring practices like sovereign authorization and obedience here curry the vain and irrational sovereign’s favor because these practices assuage the sovereign’s vanity and thereby please the sovereign. With this weapon at their disposal, to-be-subjects are better assured that the sovereign they designate will act on their behalf. Construing sovereign authorization and obedience as honoring practices therefore offers

subjects a reason to authorize even instrumentally irrational sovereigns who do not endeavor to follow the laws of nature.

From here, I veer in this part from a concentration on Hobbes's account of sovereign authorization to a concentration on the grounds of political obedience in Hobbes. Much has been written about this topic. I conclude this chapter with a section that shows how the discourse of honoring I analyzed in Chapter 7 points to an overarching mid-seventeenth-century narrative about obedience in which we can embed *all* of Hobbes's various arguments for obedience to secular authority. Here, I challenge two orthodox and rival strands within Hobbes scholarship. According to one, Hobbes's arguments for obedience are thoroughly secular and rely upon notions of contract, promise, prudence, or de facto power. According to the other, Hobbes's arguments for obedience are thoroughly deontological and ultimately rely upon the divine command theory of moral obligation, or Scripture, to generate the moral obligation to obey the sovereign. In my analysis, I show how the overarching mid-seventeenth-century-narrative about obedience that I gestured toward through my analysis of honoring in Chapter 7 accommodates both of these strands. I place Hobbes's arguments for obedience within this overarching narrative.

By using this narrative, I also intend to rattle our current understanding of the sacred-secular binary. For, within the narrative I present, secular arguments for obedience that rely upon self-interest, contract, and power do not challenge or undermine sacred arguments. Instead, God is conceptualized as a merciful deity who promulgates and

sanctions secular arguments for obedience. What orthodox interpretations of Hobbes relentlessly identify as secular arguments for obedience here derive from sacred foundations. These so-called-secular arguments are even sanctioned by God. Thus, the account I offer differs from orthodox accounts because it incorporates both of the rival strands into the larger religious framework of honoring

Chapter 8

Sovereign Authorization as an Honoring Practice

8.0 Sovereign Authorization as Honoring

In all his political writings, Hobbes attempts to offer a firm and secure foundation for political authority on the one hand and political obligation on the other. The theories of divine right and patriarchy discussed in Chapter 1 had significantly lost their persuasive force, at least among the English elite. And, the humanist foundation for political authority and obedience grounded upon the notion of virtue or honor that I discussed in Chapters 4 thru 6 was an unstable foundation, according to Hobbes. It left wide open the possibility of anarchy. For, even if the naturally honorable exist (Hobbes regularly doubts that they do and suggests that vanity is all that is speaking here), there is no definitive way to discover who the naturally honorable are. This uncertainty inevitably leads to revolution (and ultimately chaos), as honorers constantly struggle to establish themselves as the honorable, that is, as the virtuous who possess the natural right to rule over the less virtuous or the dishonorable (Hobbes, *DC*, p. 143).

Hobbes therefore offers---or so the usual story goes---one of the first juristically constructed accounts of the body politic, of political authority and of political obligation. This interpretation of Hobbes's political theory focuses heavily on the *formal procedure* or the means by which terrified and/or instrumentally rational, and equal individuals in the state of nature (directly or indirectly)¹⁰⁵ construct the artificial position of the subject as well as the artificial position of the sovereign, or the office of sovereignty. This modern and juridical account does not focus so much on the qualities of those who hold the sovereign position, as humanist political theories previously had.¹⁰⁶ Rather, the account analyzes the contours of the rights attributed to subjects and sovereigns, their respective jurisdictions, and their respective duties (or lack thereof).¹⁰⁷

According to this familiar story, effective political authority and political obligation come into being when to-be-subjects perform a series of technical procedures. These procedures are disenchanting. Like legal and economic contracts, scholars envision and present these procedures as cold and unimaginative. No visible performance is required to enact them and their content is devoid of poetry and of drama. Moreover, these procedures are bereft of the rhetorical flourish, the pageantry, the pomp and the religiosity that would have certainly been present (as I showed in Chapter 6) if Englishmen actually performed a procedure (I imagine Englishmen and women would

¹⁰⁵ The "subject" position is indirectly created by to-be-subjects. After the sovereign office comes into being, the will of the person or persons who hold this office corresponds to the unified will of the body politic. Subjects then come into being as members of the body politic.

¹⁰⁶ Hobbes writes, "I speak not of the men, but (in the abstract) of the seat of power (like those simple and impartial creatures in the Roman Capitol, that with their noise defended those within in, not because they were they, but there)" (Hobbes *Lev*, p. 2).

¹⁰⁷ Richard Flatham, for example, writes, "Much of his writing on...politics is in the...jural languages of binding law, of obligation and duty, of justice and injustice, and of rights" (Flatham 1993, p. 52).

have been more likely to call these procedures “ceremonies”) in order to remove themselves from the war-torn context of England in the mid-seventeenth-century.

The disenchanted account of the transition out of the state of anarchy and the war of all against all runs something like the following (I present the account as a step-by-step process but it need not be understood as a process or in this order). First, to-be-subjects surrender or transfer their natural rights. Second, they authorize the creation of a sovereign office that serves on the one hand to represent the will and the actions of the body politic and on the other hand to stand-for the wills and actions of subjects (*qua* artificial persons and members of the body politic). The to-be-subjects also assign a particular someone (or a particular group) to hold the sovereign office.¹⁰⁸ This is important. To-be-subjects do not merely create the abstract office of sovereignty. They also place a particular someone (or a particular group) into that office. That particular someone (or particular group) embodies that office. To-be-subjects then take responsibility for the will and for the actions of their sovereign representative (*qua* artificial person). Since their sovereign representative is authorized to bear their person, a relation of correspondence, even identity, emerges between subjects and their sovereign representative. Allegedly, the sovereign representative can cause his subjects no injury, as subjects authorize all their representative’s actions and their representative’s will. His actions and will are consequently theirs, or at least “owned” by them.¹⁰⁹ Thus, whatever

¹⁰⁸ Since Hobbes was partial to monarchy, I will use the singular when discussing the person who holds the office of sovereignty.

¹⁰⁹ So, for example, Skinner (2002). He writes, “Although you will not have performed the actions yourself, you will be legally obliged...to stand by the actions and accept responsibility for them as your own.” (Skinner 2002, p. 179)

their representative commands, they command. At the very least, they speak and act “as if” their sovereign’s commands and actions are “their own.”

What surfaces as most crucial in this juridical account of Hobbes’s political theory, with its emphasis on rights, obligations, authorization and representation, is not the procedure of covenanting where to-be-subjects bilaterally surrender rights or agree to transfer them (Tönnies 1925, p. 302-5). Rather, appointing the sovereign representative (or surrendering oneself to a person designated as sovereign) is identified as the creative act of will that brings the sovereign into being and that imposes obligations upon to-be-subjects. “The crucial concept” is sovereign authorization (Skinner 2002, p.183). It is at the core of the juridical construction of Hobbes’s transition out of the state of nature and into political society (Pitkin 1964, p.908).

8.1 Words and Actions

I argue that this juridical account of some of the central elements of Hobbes’s political theory (the transition out of the state of nature and into political society) creates a series of problems in our understanding of Hobbes. First, an important element in Hobbes’s account of the transition out of the state of nature remains perpetually under-analyzed, if not altogether overlooked. Hobbes tells us that sovereign authorization is that moment when individuals declare their will. Since the will is the invisible last appetite and the unseen beginning of all voluntary motion, it is ungraspable by sentient beings (who are devoid of supersensible intuition) without some form of sensible mediation. The juridical account, rooted as it is in the notion of a bourgeois economic contract or other legal covenant, emphasizes *words* as the form of mediation used by individuals in order to

manifest their will. Individuals use words to authorize the to-be-sovereign. Words are signs here. They enable individuals to communicate their will to authorize the sovereign to neutral-onlookers and the sovereign-to-be (Hobbes *Lev*, p.17). As Hobbes puts it, words enable individuals “to make known to others [their] will[] and purpose[]” (Hobbes *Lev*, p.17).

Champions of the legal-juridical account can marshal passages from the *Leviathan* to support the usage of words at the crucial moment of sovereign authorization. In Chapter IV of the *Leviathan*, Hobbes states that individuals use “*names and appellations*” for “mutual utility and conversation, without which, there had been amongst men, neither commonwealth, nor society, nor contract, nor peace” (Hobbes *Lev*, p.16). Hobbes here quite clearly asserts that words (“names and appellations”) are necessary to establish a Commonwealth. The Introduction to the *Leviathan* also leads to this conclusion. Hobbes there writes,

The *Pacts and Covenants*, by which the parts of this Body Politique were at first made, set together, and united, resemble that *fiat*, or the *Let us make man*, pronounced by God in the Creation.” (Hobbes *Lev*, p. 9-10?)

In this passage, Hobbes describes the creative act that brings the commonwealth into being. To clarify his description, he draws an analogy between man’s political act and God’s act in the creation myth. Hobbes conjures up the notion of the “fiat,” that is, the authoritative *word* pronounced by God in Genesis. Words are the medium through which God’s will is declared. They describe His will. They also do something. Through them, God created man and the natural order. By analogy, mortals use words to describe their will and they create the political order through a vocal pronouncement.

Words, therefore, are necessary to transition out of the Hobbesian state of nature and to create political society. But, are they sufficient? If we take the account of creation in Genesis as the ground for understanding the mortal act of creation in Hobbes, then we may conclude that words are insufficient. The Genesis story presents God as a Being who declares His will through the medium of *words* and *deeds*. That is, God frequently supplemented His performative locutions with non-verbal deeds. For example, God said, “Let there be firmament.” And, (then?) He “made” the firmament, and He “made” two great lights; He “set” these lights into the firmament, and He “divided” the light from the dark. The verbs “to make,” “to set,” and “to divide” suggest a God who engaged in certain practices (making, setting, dividing) when He created the world. God spoke *and* He acted in non-verbal ways. That is, He used words and deeds to create man and world.

I press this reading of the creation myth only because an interpretive problem surfaces in Hobbes’s works if we exclusively rely on words, as the juridical account does, to declare the will and to create political society. The problem surfaces because Hobbes claims that words, when written or spoken in the state of nature, are not always sufficient to declare the will. They are insufficient because words frequently generate collective misunderstanding (Hobbes *Lev*, p.17; *EL* p.82-3; *DC*, p.125).

Collective misunderstanding arises from four principal sources, each of which is premised upon Hobbes’s commitment to nominalism. This philosophy of language posits the artificiality of language and renders the connection between language and reality

artificial as well. The first source of collective misunderstanding arises from the possibility of dissonance between will and word. Nominalism highlights the gap that emerges between what an individual says and what that individual's "intends," or wills (Hobbes *Lev*, p.180). This gap emerges because words are constructs, created in two ways. Either a solitary individual generates words in order to mark his or her private conceptions or private will. Or, individuals come together and agree to ascribe certain meanings to certain sounds (which then become words) (Hobbes *DC*, p. 65).¹¹⁰

Collective misunderstanding arises in the first instance because individuals do not share a common language. Instead, they possess a private language that they use to "mark" their private thoughts, emotions and their private will.¹¹¹ Clearly, collective understanding is not possible here. What an individual says will be registered by others as unintelligible noise.

Second, collective misunderstanding arises when an individual unintentionally misapplies a word, the meaning of which is constituted collectively thru consensus and ascription. Here, an individual applies the wrong word to register his or her private will (Hobbes *Lev*, p.17). Thus, what that individual says does not accurately declare his or her will. Collective misunderstanding arises because neutral-listeners, including the sovereign-to-be, will take what is said for what is intended or willed.

¹¹⁰ Hobbes writes, "Names have their constitution...from the will and consent of men" (Hobbes, *DC*, p.65). Hobbes does not describe in much detail how consensus around the meaning of words arises here. For more on this topic, Flathman (1993).

¹¹¹ For more on the subjective construction of conceptions and words see Flathman (1993).

A third source of collective misunderstanding derives from the medium of language itself. Words, by their very nature, are inconstant signifiers and their inconstancy breeds collective misunderstanding. Hobbes writes, “[T]he significations of almost all words, are either in themselves, or in the metaphoricall use of them, ambiguous; and may be drawn in argument, to make many senses” (Hobbes, *Lev*, p.194). Hobbes here explains that one word can have many meanings. The method of coming together to collectively ascribe a definitive meaning to a particular sound fails in Hobbes’s final analysis. The method fails because it does not circumscribe sufficiently the meaning of a particular sound.¹¹² This under-determinedness generates the necessity for interpretation. That is, words constructed through this method are not self-interpreting. Multiple, perhaps even competing, interpretations of words become a possibility, and this possibility, in turn, opens up the further possibility of collective misunderstanding. Thus, an individual who uses words to declare his or her will uses a medium fraught with ambiguity that is in need of interpretation. And, the many possible interpretations facilitate collective misunderstanding.

The final source of collective misunderstanding derives from the exploitation of interpretive multiplicity. Cunning individuals (Hobbes would probably identify Sir Edward Coke as a prime example) may easily take advantage of this multiplicity. In the context of sovereign authorization, the cunning may use the vagaries inherent in their pronouncement to limit the sovereign’s authority. That is, they can interpret their pronouncement in a way that limits their obligation to the sovereign power. Moreover,

¹¹² For more on this see Kramer (1997). According to Hobbes, one way to better circumscribe meaning is to authorize a sovereign (preferably one person) who will unilaterally ascribe meaning to particular sounds.

their interpretation at one moment might conveniently differ from their interpretation in the next. Additionally, their interpretation might differ radically from how other listeners, including the to-be-sovereign, interpret their initial pronouncement. Here, again, exclusive reliance upon words generates the possibility of collective misunderstanding.

The transition out of the state of nature requires a linguistic webbing that to-be-subjects and the to-be-sovereign collectively understand but words cannot securely provide this webbing. In order to establish sovereignty, the chosen sovereign must understand that he is the person selected for the office and he must understand what kind of office it is.¹¹³

An interpretive problem emerges because the linguistic webbing needed for collective understanding at this crucial moment is not available in the state of nature. As I have shown, the linguistic webbing found therein does not generate sufficient collective understanding. Words fall short. Exclusive reliance upon them disrupts the smooth transition into peaceful political society.

The solution presented by Hobbes is not the solution that the juridical account would inevitably propose. That is to say, to-be-subjects do not behave like lawyers, providing more definitions, more clauses, or longer pronouncements to meaningfully and sufficiently declare their will.¹¹⁴ If a short pronouncement breeds collective misunderstanding, a longer pronouncement only compounds the problem, according to

¹¹³ Again, the sovereign can be female and the sovereign can be a group. I use the masculine singular because Hobbes prefers this choice and for convenience.

¹¹⁴ For example, when discussing legal interpretation, Hobbes wrote, “[W]ritten Laws, if they be short, are easily mis-interpreted, from the divers significations of a word, or two: if long, they be more obscure by the diverse significations of many words” (Hobbes *Lev*, p.191).

Hobbes. (Hobbes *Lev*, p.191). Hobbes does not resolve this difficulty by gesturing to a certain context, that is, to a particular circumstance that provides individuals with the information necessary to circumscribe sufficiently the meaning of words, either. Instead, Hobbes appeals to actions. In Chapter XIV of the *Leviathan*, he claims that non-verbal signs, such as gestures, facial expressions and deeds, help circumscribe the meaning of words (Hobbes *Lev*, p.81). “Most often,” writes Hobbes, individuals will use “both words and actions” to declare their will to authorize the sovereign (Hobbes *Lev*, p.81). This combination enables to-be-subjects to declare their will in a mutually understandable way. That is, the combination of words and actions enables individuals to bridge the gap between their will, their words and the understanding of others (Hobbes *EL*, pp. 82-3; *DC*, p.125; *Lev*, p. 81).¹¹⁵

But, what sorts of actions? My account of sovereign authorization as an honoring *practice* presents an account of sovereign authorization understood as a verbal act and a visual performance. I have provided examples of some of the practices that mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen and women performed when honoring their civil and divine sovereigns in Chapter 1 and 2. There and in Chapter 6, I discussed practices of homage such as kneeling, bowing, hat-doffing, &c, which were typically performed during coronation ceremonies, as well as during ceremonies where to-be-vassals, to-be-servants, to-be-apprentices and to-be-courtiers entered into their to-be-master’s household (Chapter 6). In Chapter 2, I also explained Hobbes’s claim that the meaning of certain honoring practices, such as lying prostrate and kneeling, does not depend on

¹¹⁵ For an interesting account of this argument in the context of religious ordination, see Hobbes (*Lev*), especially p.370.

consent (convention), and I examined Hobbes engagement with mid-seventeenth-century debates concerning this matter. Natural forms of worship, Hobbes argued, are self-interpreting. That is, they do not require interpretation at all. They mean what they mean by nature, in all times and places.

Thus, when we interpret sovereign authorization as an honoring practice we discover a way for to-be-subjects to declare their will through a form of mediation that is not constructed and therefore avoids the problem of collective misunderstanding. Honorers can declare their will to authorize the sovereign by combining these natural honoring practices with honorific speech. Imagining sovereign authorization as an honoring practice (composed of words, gestures, expressions and deeds) therefore takes seriously Hobbes's claim that the act of authorization must declare the to-be-subject's will in a way that neutral-spectators, including the to-be-sovereign, can understand.

8.2 Surrendering and Transferring Right

Imagining the transition out of the state of nature through an honoring practice also offers a more persuasive and historically informed account of Hobbes's discussions of alienation (surrender) and transference of right. Imagined as an honoring practice, the transition incorporates the procedures of alienation *and* transference of right (both) but it places these procedures in a framework distinct from the juridical one.

Scholars who use the juridical framework to help us understand Hobbes's account of the transition out of the state of nature have had lively and persistent debates over how to

incorporate the procedure of surrender on the one hand and of transference on the other into the account.¹¹⁶ Participants in this debate ask: is the transition out of the state of nature a moment when individuals (minus the to-be sovereign) simply alienate their rights (to no one) but in the presence of the to-be-sovereign *or* is it a moment when they transfer their rights to the to-be-sovereign whom they authorize? Textual evidence suggests that Hobbes makes both claims (or allows for both).¹¹⁷ But, within the juridical framework, there is no need for both. The question then turns on which one is sufficient, or necessary, or more compatible with Hobbes's "mature" political theory (found in the *Lev*) or his theory as a whole.

Scholars who favor conceptualizing the transition out of the state of nature as a moment of surrender argue that the procedure of transference is superfluous.¹¹⁸ The sovereign already possesses the natural right to everything. He therefore possesses the natural right to govern others, to kill them, to use them as means, even to act and to will for them or in their name.¹¹⁹ There is consequently no need to transfer any rights to the sovereign in order to establish his authority. The surrendering procedure is preferable to the procedure of transference because it is parsimonious as well as logically sound.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ For more on this matter see Hobbes (*DC*), especially p.169. See also Hobbes (*EL*), especially p.110, 118.

¹¹⁷ Hobbes writes, "When a man divesteth and putteth from himself his right, he either simply relinquisheth it, or transferreth the same to another man" (Hobbes *EL*, p.82). See also, Hobbes (*DC*), especially p.124.

¹¹⁸ See for example (Kaplan 1956, p.391); (Orwin 1975, p.27); (Pitkin 1964, p.911).

¹¹⁹ Assuming, of course, that the sovereign can muster up an argument claiming that these sorts of actions derive from his right to preserve himself, perhaps even his right to live in contentment. The exception here would be if the sovereign dominates or kills others merely out of a love of cruelty (a love that doesn't foster contentment). Hobbes claims that action derived from this source is immoral, even in the state of nature.

¹²⁰ Kaplan, for example, writes, "He [Hobbes] is much too economical a theorist to use an unnecessary argument unless in fact it has a function in his argument....The sovereign does not need to have any rights transferred to him, since he already has the rights to all things, including the right to take the life of everyone else to protect his own life" (Kaplan 1956, p.396).

Other scholars incorporate the procedure of transference into their account of the transition out of the state of nature. These scholars focus extensively upon the procedure of authorization and the notion of artificial personhood (representation). This procedure and notion receive fullest consideration by Hobbes in his *Leviathan*.¹²¹ Scholars claim that the procedure of surrendering rights is insufficient in so far as it fails to create a correspondence, a “lasting bond” or union between the subjects and the sovereign (Pitkin 1964, p.903). The procedure of surrendering rights retains the notion of the sovereign as an “other,” that is, an alien force that stands over subjects, commanding them with a will and with actions that have nothing in common with their will and their actions. Put in another way, the surrendering account lacks the notion of the commonwealth (or body politic) where the sovereign’s will corresponds to the commonwealth’s will and this will corresponds to the will of each subject (*qua* artificial person), or member of the commonwealth (Orwin 1975, p.32).¹²² Given this lack of correspondence, it is hard to imagine how subjects are positively connected to the sovereign. It is consequently hard to imagine how they will be motivated to help him secure the commonwealth (and subjects within it) when internal and external enemies threaten it.

Within this analysis, Hobbes’s account of the procedure of transference is superior to the account that includes the procedure of surrender because the former better aligns itself with an account of sovereign authorization that invokes the notion of an artificial body or person. The notion of an artificial body or person enables Hobbes to forge correspondences between the sovereign, the body politic and the subjects who are members of this body. Here, a common bond between subjects *qua* represented and their

¹²¹ See (Pitkin 1964, p.908-912). See also (Hobbes, *De Homine*, p.83)

¹²² See also (Pitkin 1975, p.48).

ruler *qua* representative appears. When individuals authorize a sovereign to be their actor, or to bear their person or name, a formal correspondence emerges between the author and the actor. It emerges because individuals authorize their “person” or name to correspond (formally) with the will and actions of their designated representative. In turn, their representative’s actions and his will correspond (formally) with the author’s “person,” or name.¹²³

The procedure of transference emerges in this account because scholars claim that to-be-subjects give their authorized representative “a right that he did not have in the state of nature” (Pitkin 1964, p.912). Allegedly, in the state of nature, no man had the right to will or act in the name of anyone else and no man had the right to will in another’s name. After authorization, however, “the representative’s act or will is attributable to the man he represents” (Pitkin 1964, p.912). By authorizing a sovereign representative, the individual *transfers* the right to represent the individual, that is, the right to act and will in the individual’s name to the sovereign representative.¹²⁴

¹²³ These formal correspondences are easier to understand if we explain them through an example taken from the juridical field, the field of law and economics. So, for example, “a man who has the action of purchasing real estate attributed to him on the basis of acts performed by his attorney is an artificial person, though one that is also a natural person (Copp 1980, p.583).” Likewise, the attorney who purchases the real estate in the man’s name acts and wills as an artificial person (a representative), though the attorney is also a natural person. The man “owns” his attorney’s actions here because he authorized the attorney to represent him, that is, to bear his person, or name. And, the actions performed by the attorney correspond with the man’s person (or name). They do not correspond with the attorney as a natural person. Consequently, the man, not the attorney, takes responsibility for these actions, so long as the man has authorized the attorney to be his representative beforehand.

¹²⁴ Individuals do not altogether alienate the right to bear their own name, or person. Only the “use” of this right is transferred to the sovereign. That is to say, when individuals authorize their representative to bear their name or their person they *retain* ownership (and responsibility) for whatever the sovereign commands and does in their name (Pitkin 1964, p.912). Since they retain ownership and responsibility, they do not altogether surrender their right to bear their own person, or name. They transfer the use of this right but they retain ownership and responsibility for whatever the authorized representative wills and does in their name.

Now, the problem I see with the juridical accounts that rely on Hobbes's procedure of surrender as well as those that rely on the procedure of authorization and transference is grounded in the same source. The source is a particular assumption regarding the meaning of transference. This assumption, I would argue, is rooted in a particular notion of what it means to transfer or give, according to which it is superfluous (even illogical) to give a right to someone when that someone already possess that very right. Recall, that the surrender theory relies on this assumption for support when it posits that transference is superfluous (even illogical) given that the sovereign possesses the natural right to everything. But, if this is correct, then we must ask why a theorist of the caliber of Hobbes insists, on more than one occasion, that the transferring of right *is* one way to understand the procedure through which individuals may exit the state of nature. If it truly is superfluous and illogical, then why did Hobbes regularly mention it in all his political works?

With respect to the authorization account, recall that it also relies on the notion of transference for support when it claims that the to-be-sovereign does not possess the right to bear another's person but he acquires it when this right is transferred to him for his use through the procedure of authorization. But, if this is correct, we are left wondering why a theorist of the caliber of Hobbes would insist on more than one occasion that the sovereign remains in the state of nature and an individual in the state of nature possesses (for all intents and purposes) the natural right to everything. If the sovereign did not

posses the right to bear another's person, we would think Hobbes would mention this important caveat---at least once. But, he does not.¹²⁵

The paradox in need of resolution, then, is the following one: how can we meaningfully make sense of the procedure of transferring right when the person to whom the right is transferred already possesses (for all practical purposes) the right to everything? I argue that we can make meaningful sense of this claim if we set aside the juridical account of transference and we think of transference as part of a religious honoring practice like the mid-seventeenth-century honoring practices I described in Chapter 2 and 3. As a corollary to this argument, I also want to re-conceptualize the procedure of surrender as an honoring practice as well. I argue that the procedure of surrender and the procedure of transference are two ways of viewing an honoring practice. I then draw out some of the implications of this argument.

Like the to-be sovereign in Hobbes's account, God, according to the accounts I offered of mid-seventeenth-century English religious thought and practice, has a natural right to everything. This includes the right to govern mortals, to use them as His means, and even, I would suppose, to act in their name. But, as I explained in Chapter 2, God lacks something that only mortals who are external to Him can give or "transfer" to Him. God lacks public or external recognition of His natural rights, including His natural dominion and power. Without this external recognition, God's natural dominion is not acknowledged or publicized by mortals. Consequently, He, along with His right to rule, remain hidden in the shadows of oblivion. Prior to honoring practices, God exists and He

¹²⁵ Hobbes writes, "For seeing that by nature every man hath right to everything, it is impossible for a man to transfer unto another any right that he had not before" (Hobbes *EL*, p. 82-3).

rules through His natural powers but He does not appear in the social world where mortals think and act. He rules mortals naturally but mortals do not acknowledge His rule and therefore their actions are not shaped by the fact of His rule. Moreover, before honoring practices are performed, nothing in the hearts and minds of mortals connects them *to* Him. Mortals do not actively support God. They do not acknowledge His authority. Their obligations to Him are not confessed, and they do not act upon any obligations they might have to Him.

Like God, Hobbes's to-be sovereign in the state of nature possesses the natural right to everything, including the right to govern mortals, to use them as his means, and even to act in their name. But, again like God, Hobbes's to-be-sovereign lacks external recognition of his natural right to govern absolutely. Individuals in the Hobbesian state of nature, proud and self-centered as they are, are not prone to recognize another's right. Rather, they are prone to recognize their own right and to trample upon the right of others in their quest for glory, dominion, self-preservation, comfort, or whatever else their passions and aversions incline them to seek and to avoid. The to-be-sovereign's natural right to rule is not acknowledged; it makes no claim upon others. They see no (and have no) obligation to obey anyone, including their-to-be-sovereign. In short, the to-be-sovereign's natural right to rule remains ineffective, hidden in the fog of war.

As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, an honoring practice (an act of worship) is the means by which a mortal gives testament to or publicly recognizes God's dominion, His superiority, and His greatness. Honoring practices "transfer" something to God here. They give God honor, or a social title. Through honoring practices, honorers "give" God

the title of being a relative superior who possesses the right to rule. Honoring practices also “bring” God into social existence. They transfer Him from a state of natural obscurity and they place Him in the center of mortal thought and action. That is, honoring practices make God most relevant to mortal thought and action. Honoring practices also forge a connection between man and God. By recognizing God’s rightful rule through honoring, an exchange relationship surfaces. In exchange for honoring, many Englishmen argued that honorers were “lifted up,” as I discussed in Chapter 2. Honoring practices removed individuals from a state where their creaturely nature manifested itself, and these practices transferred them to a state where mortals became fully human. Honoring practices also increased the chances of salvation (everlasting self-preservation or eternal motion). The practices served as a “buckler against the fear of death” because some Englishmen argued that God was more likely to save His honorers. Finally, honoring practices were said to bring honorers closer to God because they made honorers “participate” in Him somehow. Through this participation, God was no longer a natural but alien force standing above mortals. Through honoring, honorers were connected to God somehow. In a moment, I will forge the analogy between this practice of honoring God and the practice of authorizing the civil sovereign in Hobbes.

As we have seen, mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen conceptualized honoring practices from two distinct angles. The first angle presented honoring as a moment of self-surrender where honorers only indirectly recognized God’s superior right. Honoring here was a moment of turning away from the self and it was only indirectly a turn toward God. The second angle presented honoring as a moment when individuals recognized the

God's superior right and only indirectly acknowledged their own self-denial. Here, honoring was directly a turn toward God and indirectly a turn away from the self.

With respect to the first angle, recall how Englishmen conceptualized honoring practices as acts of self-denial, or self-surrender, according to which the honorer publicly humiliated or denied himself or herself through speech, deed and gesture in the presence of God. The honorer, for example, bowed his or her head, fell prostrate, crouched and confessed his or her unworthiness in the presence of God. Here, the honorer surrendered any prior claim of equality or superiority (of any kind—including right, power, or strength) in relation to God. Indirectly, through this act of self-surrender, the humble honorer acknowledged God's relatively superiority and His natural right to rule. Through honoring, the humble honorer symbolically "became nothing," and God, in turn, "became all." We can imagine the honorer saying or gesturing something to the effect of "Thy will be done," or "There but for the grace of You go I." These humble words and gestures of self-surrender express two ideas. First, that the honorer will take God's will for his or her own. Second, that the honorer acknowledges God as a protector. The honorer here confesses his or her radical dependency upon God for preservation, and eternal life.

We may conceptualize Hobbes's account of surrendering right in the presence of a to-be-sovereign as akin to a humble act of honoring God through the act of self-surrender.

When individuals in the Hobbesian state of nature come together, they behave like worshippers. They do not meet at the bargaining table to negotiate or to discuss anything

with each other.¹²⁶ Their meeting does not involve dialogue, and the sovereign does not come into being by way of democratic discussion.¹²⁷ Rather, to-be-subjects come together to surrender their rights in the presence of their to-be-sovereign, as they would do in church or in some other sacred meeting place.¹²⁸ They perform their act of self-surrender when they perform a humble act of honoring. Surrendering their right to govern themselves, to-be-subjects, with “humility and patience,” “suffer the rude and cumbersome points of their present greatness [or perceived greatness] to be taken off” (Hobbes *Lev*, 210).¹²⁹ Hobbes uses terms like ‘yielding’,¹³⁰ obedience; ‘giving up themselves’,¹³¹ ‘resigning’,¹³² or ‘renouncing’,¹³³ their rights; and ‘submitting’,¹³⁴ to the to-be-sovereign to describe the moment of surrender. These terms are quite compatible with terms associated with mid-seventeenth-century-English honoring practices.

But, these terms are not compatible with the boldness the juridical account typically associates with sovereign authorization. The juridical account does not take this humble language into consideration. It treats the moment of authorization as a moment of expressive choice, where rational voters select their representatives by boldly asserting themselves, making legally and morally binding pronouncements or promises.

¹²⁶ Contrast this account with Kramer (1997).

¹²⁷ Contrast this account with Kramer (1997).

¹²⁸ I discuss how to-be-subjects might coalesce around a particular person or group of persons as their sovereign later in this chapter.

¹²⁹ When acknowledging their relatively inferior condition in this manner, to-be-subjects are not breaking the laws of nature. Hobbes explains, “For though every man be bound to allow equality to another; yet if that other shall see cause to renounce the same, and make himself inferior, then, if from thenceforth he consider him an inferior, he breaketh not thereby that law of nature that commandeth to allow equality” (Hobbes *EL*, p. 97). See also Hobbes (*DC*), p. 144 and Hobbes (*Lev*), p. 140.

¹³⁰ Hobbes *DC*, p.279

¹³¹ Hobbes *DC*, p.207

¹³² Hobbes, *Lev* p.200

¹³³ Hobbes, *DC*, p.124

¹³⁴ Hobbes, *Lev*, p.200; Hobbes, *DC* p.169-171

Envisioning the surrendering of right as an honoring practice is not compatible with this portrayal. It is, however, more compatible with *some* of the language Hobbes's uses to describe the moment of surrendering right.

When to-be-subjects humbly deny themselves in their to-be-sovereign's presence, they "relinquish the right of protecting and defending" themselves by their "own power," making themselves "a prey" to the to-be-sovereign (Hobbes, *EL*, p.111).¹³⁵ Through their actions and words they signify, "thy will be done." Through this honoring practice, the subject "becomes nothing," and the sovereign indirectly "becomes all." That is, through the social interaction of honoring, a relation of relative inequality of right and power between the subject and the sovereign is acknowledged and it becomes manifest in the social world. And, by performing this humble act of self-surrender, to-be-subjects *qua* honorers distinguish themselves from the proud (who do not leave the state of nature). Unlike the proud, they are "lifted up" and out of the state of nature. Through their practice, they also gain significant assurance of continuous motion in this world.

The second angle through which to view honoring practices presents these practices as deeds in which individuals boldly recognize God's superior right and only indirectly deny themselves. This account of honoring retains the boldness that the juridical account associates with sovereign authorization. Religious accounts of honoring practices construed in this manner contain within them the notion of transference, too. As explained in Chapter 2, when honorers honor God, they "give" God strength and power;

¹³⁵ Hobbes waivers here. In later texts, he claims that men never alienate their right to protect and defend themselves.

they “give” Him glory or honor; they “give” Him sovereignty, or they “give” Him the right to govern them. We should not confuse this conceptualization of giving or transferring with the conceptualization offered in the judicial account. Here, honorers are not handing over rights or powers to a God who lacks these rights and powers. Rather, honorers are freely giving God their testament regarding His existing rights and powers. They are also doing something; they are definitely and publicly acknowledging God’s right to rule over them and they are professing His omnipotence and majesty. It is their profession or testament that they add or give to God, and this establishes His majestic social title. This is their bold and creative act. But, through these honoring practices individuals also indirectly deny or surrender themselves because they indirectly renounce their rights and powers. Through these honoring practices, honorers are “raised up;” they enter into a mysterious communion with God. They participate in God somehow and, according to some Christian authors, their participation renders them more likely to receive salvation.

We can thread this account of transference into Hobbes’s account of the transition out of the state of nature. When a to-be-subject “gives” the sovereign the right to bear his or her person (or any other right), the to-be-subject is not giving the sovereign a right the sovereign lacks but needs in order to make his rule rightful, or legitimate. Rather, a to-be-subject is giving a to-be-sovereign a testament. The to-be-subject is acknowledging the sovereign’s right. Hobbes says, “All that a man doth in transferring of right, is no more but a declaring of the [to-be-subject’s] will” (Hobbes *EL*, p.83). Through honoring, to-be-subjects are certifying or professing their will. But, this profession does something.

It makes manifest the sovereign's relative superiority (in terms of right, power, and strength). And, it gives the sovereign a social title. It also indirectly announces the to-be-subject's relative inferiority and his or her obligation to obey the sovereign. Through this honoring practice (assuming the sovereign accepts it), subjects are lifted out of the state of nature. They enter into a lasting communion with their sovereign whereby they participate in him somehow (as represented and representative, or as part of a mysterious organic unity, the *body politic*, for example). They are also more likely to achieve earthly salvation, or so Hobbes's argument goes.

Honorers who honor the sovereign by directly surrendering themselves to the sovereign or by transferring rights to him also establish a relation of inequality between themselves and the sovereign. Authorization presents the sovereign as a person who is relatively superior. However, the ultimate ground of this declared relation of inequality between subject and sovereign is ambiguous. I have discussed this ambiguity with respect to God thoroughly in Chapter 2. Here, let me thread that account into my account of sovereign authorization in Hobbes. A to-be-subject may honor a particular to-be-sovereign because he or she believes that this sovereign is better able to "save" them, that is, is better able to protect them from violent death.¹³⁶ Here, contrary to arguments frequently presented in the juridical account, the choice of who is sovereign is *not arbitrary*.¹³⁷ Hobbes

¹³⁶ Hobbes writes, "They who submit themselves to another for fear, either submit to him whom they fear, or some other whom *they confide in for protection*...they according to the second [manner], who are not yet overcome, that they may not be overcome (Hobbes *DC*, p. 171).

¹³⁷ Contrast with (Strauss 1963 p.17); (Kavka p. 614), (Mansfield 1971, p. 104), and (Kraynak 1982, p. 841). Strauss writes, "The sovereign is sovereign not because of his wisdom but because he has been made sovereign...Command or will, and not deliberation or reasoning, is the core of sovereignty" (Strauss, 1963 p.17) Hardin writes, "Since we are all relatively equal in any sense that matters, many of us would be plausible candidates for sovereignty, so our coordination problem is a complicated one....If it is up to us to make a choice of one of us over others, we have a difficult problem. 'Thus,' because we are all equal, Leo

sometimes claims that the cause of surrendering or transferring right is “in that one, rather than in the rest” (Hobbes *EL*, p.4). He explains this cryptic claim by writing that individuals freely submit themselves to such as they think “best able to protect” them (Hobbes *Lev*, p.125). A determination is made here. But this determination is not grounded upon the assumption of *natural* inequality.¹³⁸ As explained in Chapter 4, Englishmen frequently grounded honoring practices on opinion. According to Hobbes, *opinions* concerning another’s greater ability to protect are *artifacts*. They are not objective realities. Opinions about another’s superior power (and thus superior ability to protect) are complex ideas constructed by the mind by adding up and comparing what Hobbes calls “signs of power” (Hobbes, *Lev*, p.200). This calculation is positional and relative (“it is not absolute but a thing dependent on the need and judgment” of the honorer). Its validity might consequently be questioned by those positioned differently. Moreover, since “signs of power” are not readily quantifiable, the validity of the opinion might be uncertain, even to the to-be-subject who forms the opinion. Ambiguity makes the formed opinion contestable. It does not, however, make the formed opinion arbitrary.

As I explained in Chapter 2, the testament regarding God’s relatively superiority does not need to correspond to any empirical observation that an honorer previously had of God. Honoring practices that acknowledge a relation of inequality may find their ultimate ground in blind faith. When we apply this account to sovereign authorization in Hobbes,

Strauss writes, ‘the *problem* of sovereignty arises.’ . . . We cannot select from simple reason---there is none—but only from arbitrary will (Hardin 1991, 170).

¹³⁸Distinct, hierarchically ordered essences or chains of being to which we associate categorically distinct powers (intellectual or physical) that are somehow intuited by the faculty of noesis or sense supernatural are not part of Hobbes’s account of honoring. In one of his attacks on Aristotelian and Scholastic thinking, Hobbes writes, “Vain philosophy resolves their conclusions before they know their premises, pretending to comprehend that which is incomprehensible, and of attributes of honor they make attributes of nature.” (Hobbes *Lev*, 4.46.3)

we can conclude that blind faith may ground the to-be-subject's honoring practice. But, faith need not be ground of honoring. Recall from Chapter 2 that honoring practices may be construed as purely ascriptive practices. Here, honoring practices have no ground; there is no essentialized foundation or origin of meaning. In the same way that a worshipper arbitrarily (voluntarism) ascribes attributes like irresistible power, and authority to God, the to-be-subject may arbitrarily ascribe words like "sovereignty" (and all this word entails) onto the to-be-sovereign. Here, whatever the to-be-subject ascribes to the to-be-sovereign need not correspond to any truth about who the sovereign is, or what to be-subjects believe (their faith).

Additionally, as I discussed in Chapter 2, honoring practices may embellish and *idealize* (or idolize) the to-be-sovereign. Here, the inequality declared by honoring corresponds to a fiction. Sovereign authorization here is an enchanted ceremony filled with verbal and visual embellishment. This fanciful embellishment magnifies the relation of relative inequality between to-be-subjects and the to-be-sovereign. Honoring practices here are therefore paradiastolic practices. They re-describe the to-be-sovereign, and the re-description serves to idealize him. Here, sovereign authorization conceptualized as an honoring practice does not reveal a "truth" about either the to-be-sovereign or the unequal relationship between the to-be-sovereign and the to-be-subject. Honoring practices instead disguise the truth. They also do something because they re-describe the sovereign as a relative superior and they re-describe the relationship between subject and sovereign in an unequal and idealized fashion.

8.3 A Sovereign to Hold Them in Awe

There are two importance consequences that follow from my conceptualization of Hobbes's account of the surrender and transference of right as honoring practices. Hobbes develops both consequences but scholars who appeal to the juridical account have argued Hobbes's political theory attends to these consequences inadequately. First, sovereign authorization understood as an honoring practice takes Hobbes's claim about the relationship between power and politics seriously and explains how Hobbes can meaningful say that individuals *transfer power* to the sovereign when they transfer or surrender their rights to him. Second, sovereign authorization understood as an honoring practice takes Hobbes's claims about the relationship between the passions and politics seriously and explains why honoring might move Hobbes's sovereign (who remains in the state of nature) to preserve and to offer comforts to his people.

Scholars who focus upon Hobbes's juridical account of rights and obligations have not failed to discuss Hobbes's realist (and pessimistic) assumption that force is necessary to support the sovereign's rights and to ensure that subjects fulfill their obligations to him (Gauthier 1969, p.76). "Adherence does not follow automatically from the fact that men have given up certain rights and taken on certain obligations....[as] nothing is more easily broken than a man's word (Gauthier 1969, p.76)."¹³⁹ In order for rights and duties to be effective, Hobbes's sovereign must appear in the minds of subjects as the "oppressor of the irrepressible chaos in man" (Schmitt [1996], p.21). As Hobbes puts it, "The Bonds by which men are bound and obliged, bonds that have their strength, not from their own nature (for nothing is more easily broken than a man's word) but from fear of some evil

¹³⁹ See also, (Benn 1992, p.50); (Kaplan 1956, p.390); (Pitkin 1964, p.909); (Pye 1984, p.87).

consequence upon the rupture” (Hobbes *Lev*, p. 81).¹⁴⁰ Here, fear of the sovereign power provides as much for security and peace as notions of rights and obligations do, if not more (Hobbes, *DC*, p.176; Hobbes, *EL*, p.112). Fear terrifies passionate and unreflective individuals into obedience. Fear of the sovereign makes strategic actors calculate that it is not in their interest to disobey the commands of the sovereign power.

But, how does the sovereign become the awe-inspiring power¹⁴¹ that keeps passionate and self-interested subjects in fear and consequently submissive and obedient to his commands, respectful of his rights, and faithful to their obligations? According to Hobbes, mature men in the state of nature are relatively equal, and “the rough equality of powers that men possess in the state of nature make[s] stable power relations impossible” (Benn 1992, p.211). Men in the state of nature are not possessed by an awe-ful fear of the powers of other men. Typically, a belief in equality of power fuels the restless pursuit of power after power that ends only in death. What, then, makes subjects envision the sovereign as someone exceedingly powerful, a vision that triggers a feeling of awe in them? Or, what makes subjects calculate that it is always (or nearly always) unreasonable to thwart the sovereign’s powerful will? Hobbes political theory needs a semiology of power, since the sovereign must signify awe-inspiring power in the hearts and minds of his subjects (Zarka 2001, p.10).

¹⁴⁰ Consider also, “The bonds of words are too weak to bridle mens ambition, avarice, anger and other Passions, without the feare of some coercive Power (*Hobbes, Lev*, p.200). And, “Covenants being but words, and breath, have no force to oblige, contain, constrain, or protect any man, but what [they have] from the publique sword” (*Hobbes, Lev*, p.200).

¹⁴¹ Pitkin writes, “Apparently this power of the sovereign must be very great---great enough to create security, great enough to inspire such fear of punishment that no one in his right mind could want to disobey” (Pitkin 1964, p.909).

On several occasions, Hobbes claims that when individuals leave the state of nature and enter political society they *transfer power* to the sovereign and thereby create a “common power” over them (Benn 1992, p.50; Pitkin 1964, p.909; Kaplan 1956, p.390).¹⁴² But, a difficulty surfaces in this claim: the transfer of power in any “natural manner” through the surrender or transference of right or through the taking up of obligations is impossible (Hobbes, *DC*, p.171; Orwin 1975, p.27; Pitkin 1964, p.909). The establishment of a sufficiently powerful sovereign is necessary. But, since power cannot be transferred “naturally,” the necessity “presents grave difficulties” for Hobbes (Pitkin 1964, p.910).

Recognizing these difficulties, Hanna Pitkin claims that we discover in Hobbes’s later works “a shift in emphasis from obedience and power toward will” (Pitkin 1975, p.47). For Pitkin, excessive power is not as necessary in Hobbes’s later account of authorization and representation as subjects identify their will with their representative’s will. The use of superior power is not as necessary here because “men do tend to perform those obligations they recognize as valid,” and whatever the sovereign wills is valid because subjects take ownership of his will through the act of authorization (Pitkin 1964, p.914). The legitimacy of the sovereign’s will and action thus tempers the necessity for awe-inspiring power.

¹⁴² See Hobbes, *DC*, p. 171. ‘Power’, says Hobbes is “given.” (*Lev*, 2.22.29). Likewise, “The greatest of human powers, is that which is compounded of the power of most men, united by consent, in one person (*Lev*, 1, X) Pye reads these passages and suggests that individuals transfer power through the procedure of authorization. “The terror of the sovereign’s accumulated power and strength...seems to be conferred upon him by the act of authorization itself” (Pye 1984, p.88). Pitkin follows a different path. She presents Hobbes’s claim that individuals “transfer power” to the sovereign when they surrendering their rights, but Pitkin remains perplexed by this claim, as I will discuss presently (Pitkin 1964, p.910).

But, superior and effective power remains a necessary element even within Pitkin's account of Hobbes's theory of authorization and representation. For, in order to "ensure that subjects recognize their obligation to accept his actions as theirs, his will as their own," power is required. Force is required to make wills sufficiently correspond. Pitkin's account of authorization and representation therefore attempts to solve the problem of power but, in the final analysis, superior power remains necessary, given Hobbes's realist assumptions concerning human psychology and the ineradicable separateness of wills (Pitkin 1964, p.913-4).

"The account of sovereignty in Leviathan offers no solution to the problem of establishing sovereign power," writes Gauthier (Gauthier 1969, p.165). And yet, Gauthier and other scholars discover a solution to the problem of power by "tenderizing" Hobbes. Gauthier's solution rests on the assumption that a sufficient number of men in the Hobbesian state of nature and commonwealth will be reasonable and tractable, most of the time. At a minimum, they can be taught to be reasonable and tractable by reading or being read Hobbes's texts in the universities or at church. Hobbesian individuals will therefore possess a "customary disposition to obedience" (Gauthier 1969, p.86).

Consequently, according to Gauthier, most men (most of the time) will instinctively accept, or will be taught to accept, the social regulations and arrangements imposed by the sovereign (Gauthier 1969, p.168).¹⁴³ The sovereign will possess sufficient power to enforce his commands because he will "rely on the general support he may expect from his subjects to coerce recalcitrant individuals whose interests are adversely affected by

¹⁴³ See also Kramer's synopsis of this line of argumentation. (Kramer 1997, p.73).

particular acts which he performs. In this way the sovereign consolidates the power necessary for his rights to be effective” (Gauthier 1969, p.166).

The difficulty with Gauthier’s account is that it excessively sweetens Hobbes’s account of human psychology. If Hobbes thought most men were reasonable and disposed to obedience most of the time, it is hard to make sense of his account of their knavery (and the collective action problems that follow from this knavery) as well as his account of the passions, and how the latter frequently obstruct right reasoning and dispose men to war (Hobbes *DC*, p.148; *DH*, p. 55). If Hobbes thought the matter could be easily resolved through teaching and learning, he would have depicted the Leviathan as a giant schoolhouse or a church. The account represented by Gauthier also renders it difficult to make sense of Hobbes’s claim that individuals in the state of nature have a tendency to concern themselves with their short-term interests over their long-term interest in self-preservation and peace (Hobbes *DH*, p. 55). Finally, Gauthier’s account hardly squares with Hobbes’s claim that in order to frame the will of men to unity and concern amongst themselves (I’m assuming Hobbes means most men here), terror is necessary (Hobbes *EL*, p.106). Tractable, reasonable and obedient mortals are not the mortals Hobbes most frequently describes in his account of the state of nature. In order to make the majority of men tractable, reasonable and obedient, fear of the sovereign must be instilled into them.

Gauthier’s solution, it seems, does not solve anything. And, we are left thinking that “the theory worked out in [Hobbes’s] manuscript does not really explain how the sovereign can acquire this power” to instill fear (Johnston 1986, p.80). We are left with the

conclusion that Hobbes's "hollow" conception of power renders his theory "fatally flawed" (Wolin, 1960, p.283-5). As Richard Flathman puts it,

For all of Hobbes's talk about the absolute authority and fear-inspiring power of the Sovereign, his Leviathan is and on his premises can only be a paper tiger, is and must be incapable of cogently demanding or effectively compelling more than minimal obedience from its subjects. His Leviathan couldn't begin to impose the order and control he wanted. (Flathman 1993, p.7)

To evade this conclusion, some scholars turn to Hobbes's second theory concerning the emergence of the commonwealth, the theory of commonwealth by conquest.¹⁴⁴ Here, the sticky problem of relative equality of power disappears. The strange claim that the act of authorization *transfers power* to the to-be-sovereign requires no analysis, either. Through conquest, a stable power relation appears. The victor signals or makes manifest his relatively superior and effectively irresistible power when he vanquishes others.

According to this account, Hobbes's political theory does not (or need not) rely on an odd coupling of power transference and sovereign authorization. Hobbes's theory is simply a theory of might *making* right, in that the victor's might makes or forces the vanquished to authorize and consent to the rule of the mighty. Hobbes's theory of *de facto power* can be reduced to a phrase Hobbes summons from the Bible. The vanquished are birds trapped in a bramble bush. Hobbes advises these individuals not "to kick against the pricks." That is, he advises them to authorize their conqueror.

By understanding sovereign authorization as an honoring practice, we can make sense of the odd coupling of transference of power with sovereign authorization. That is, we can understand how sovereign authorization gives rise to the sovereign's awe-inspiring

¹⁴⁴ See Skinner (1972); and Strauss (1963).

power. And, consequently, we can make better sense of Hobbes's account of commonwealth by institution. With this understanding, we will not need to reduce Hobbes's theory concerning the transition out of the state of nature to a theory about conquest and consent.

Recall the following claims written by Hobbes, which I presented in Chapter 2.

Now because men believe him to be powerful, whom they see honoured, that is to say, esteemed powerful by others; it falls out that honour is increased by worship; and by the opinion of power true power is acquired. (Hobbes *DC*, p.297)

His end therefore, who either commands or suffers himself to be worshipped, is, that by this means he may acquire as many as he can...to be obedient unto him. (Hobbes *DC*, p.297)

Where a man seeth another [man] worshipped, he supposeth him powerful, and is the readier to obey him, which makes his power greater (Hobbes *Lev*, p.238).

What the first passage from *DC* indicates is the following. First, a *commonly* held belief in the greater power of another can be created by isolated and individual acts of honoring. Those "esteemed powerful by others" are considered powerful by "men." Hobbes presents this as a fact irrespective of whether the initial act of honoring or worship is rooted upon a correct or incorrect tabulation and comparison of "signs of power." Thus, even though acts of honoring might inform others of *relative* and observed power differentials between the honorer and the person honored, acts of honoring are understood by neutral spectators to mean that the person honored possesses greater *absolute* power.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵ This transformation from the particular to the absolute is not uncommon. Hobbes explains that the mind, 'boldly' (Hobbes's phrase) transforms causes derived from particular experiences into universal and

The gist of what Hobbes says in the next two passages quoted above is that honoring practices forge opinions (or create signs) concerning power relations. These opinions or signs are extremely consequential as they lead neutral observers to fear and consequently obey the person honored. Honoring practices therefore trigger a chain reaction. Person X's act of honoring Person Z triggers Person Y to honor Person Z. The reaction stops when all honor the same person.

When we conceptualize sovereign authorization as an honoring practice, we conceive of a to-be-subject foisting an opinion concerning the to-be-sovereign's relatively superior power onto the to-be-sovereign. As Hobbes puts it, honoring practices testify that another "man hath the odds or excess of power" (Hobbes *EL*, p.200).¹⁴⁶ This testament declares the honorer's opinion. It also does something. It "transfers" or projects the reputation of relatively (registered by others as absolutely) superior power onto the sovereign.¹⁴⁷

The act of ascribing relatively superior power to the sovereign through honoring is consequential for two reasons. First, neutral observers behave differently towards an honored person, here, toward the sovereign. They "supposeth him powerful," and are

timeless principles or rules. "The consequence found in one particular comes to be registered and remembered as a universal rule and discharges our mental reckoning of time and place, and delivers us from all labour of the mind, saving the first, and makes that was found true *here* and *now*, to be true in *all times* and *places* (Hobbes *Lev*, I.IV.9)."

¹⁴⁶See also (Hobbes, *DC*, p.115). There, Hobbes writes, "For *honour*, as hath been said in the section above, is nothing else but the estimation of another's power; and therefore he that hath least power, hath always least honour."

¹⁴⁷ In Chapter 4, I discussed how Englishmen writing during this period claimed that honor is in the honorer, that is, the the opinion of superiority, including superior power, resides ultimately in the opinion of the honorer (not in nature) and for it to come into social existence honor needs to be ascribed to the honored poerson by the honorer.

readier to obey him. Recall from Chapter 2 how worried Protestants were when they observed Englishmen and women performing idolatrous honoring practices to the Charing Cross. Following Calvin, Englishmen argued that mortals have a tendency to idolatry, to deify things. Hobbes makes a similar claim in the twelfth chapter of *Leviathan* where he claims that mortals have an incorrigible religious nature are perpetually in search of a divine savior or protector. Through honoring practices, things like crosses become these saviors or protectors. As Hobbes explains, “Not the carvers, when they made images [like the cross], were thought to make them gods, but the people that prayed to them” (Hobbes *Lev*, p.240). Here, worshippers of the cross (not artists who fabricate lies) give the wooden object the reputation of possessing relatively superior, if not godly, power. Through their practices, worshippers add a fictive layer onto the cross, investing it with powers and with a will distinct from whatever powers the cross possessed before worshippers worshipped it. Neutral observers of these honoring practices, especially “weaker brothers,” began to fear the cross. Honoring practices inspired these neutral observers with a feeling of awe for the cross, and they, in turn, began to worship the cross like a god invested with power and will.

Hobbes’s claims concerning the relationship between honoring practices and power rest on a logic similar to the logic that explains this incident of idolatry. The Charing Cross example also helps explain why Hobbes claims that sovereign authorization transfers power onto the sovereign. When to-be-subjects authorize their to-be-sovereign through an honoring practice, they “transfer” the opinion of superior power onto the honored sovereign. They consequently “lift up” his reputation or name within the semiotic field.

Stated otherwise, they advertise and magnify his relative superior power in the community. Here, we cannot imagine sovereign authorization as a private act performed in some hidden corner. We must imagine it as a public, outward act. Honorers authorize the sovereign in the presence of neutral spectators and the latter behold this performance. These spectators can read and understand this sign of honoring.

Within this social milieu, honoring practices instill beliefs and feelings into neutral spectators. These spectators get possessed with the sense of a vast power differential existing between themselves and the to-be-sovereign. This sensed relation of inequality begets reverence for the sovereign. Neutral observers stand in awe of the sovereign, and this feeling of awe leads them to authorize and obey the sovereign.

Honoring practices therefore instill the awe that overtakes neutral spectators and modifies their behavior. Awe here is not the consequence of something the sovereign has done. Nor is it the consequence of who the sovereign “is.” University doctors, divines or political elites (including Hobbes) do not write the myths that instill listeners with awe, either. Rather, awe is produced from *below*. Honorers produce it when they honor the sovereign through sovereign authorization. Honorers constitute a mythical power through their honoring practice. They *transfer power* onto the sovereign when they authorize him because the “sign” of awesome power that they disseminate through their act of honoring generates “true power.” As a sign, honoring practices inspire neutral spectators with awe and their feeling of awe makes them obey and serve the sovereign power.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ For more on power and the sign see (Zarka, 2001, p.10)

A second way to understand Hobbes's claim that sovereign authorization *transfers power* to the sovereign is to recall mid-seventeenth-century claims that honoring practices inculcate and/or transform the beliefs held by honorers. In Chapter 2, I discussed places where authors claimed that honoring practices were said to have a devotional impact. These practices served to *intensify* and/or "stir up" or "infuse" certain thoughts and beliefs into the honorers themselves. We can imagine a case where the act of sovereign authorization itself encourages, or begins to encourage, the author of the act to believe or feel that the sovereign he or she honors possesses relatively superior power over the honorer. Many men, as Hobbes puts it, "stand in awe of their own imaginations...making the creatures of their own fancy their gods" (Hobbes, *Lev*, 1.11.26). Honoring practices here facilitate this type of self-mystification. The artificial layer cast upon the sovereign through the honoring practice starts to appear real, or natural to the artificer. That is, the honored sovereign appears as if he objectively possesses the powers that honorers ascribe to him. Artifice here takes on the appearance of nature, or objective reality. Subsequent honoring practices (such as obedience) may further intensify the honorer's belief in or feeling about the sovereign's "truly" superior power.

8.4 Motivating Sovereign Authorization

So far, the conceptualization of sovereign authorization as an honoring practice has helped us make better sense of Hobbes's description of sovereign authorization as well as his account of what follows from (the consequences of) its performance. The following analysis seeks to demonstrate that the conceptualization of sovereign authorization as an honoring practice also helps us resolve a puzzle that pertains to the motivations (or the causes) underlying authorization. The puzzle that figures centrally here is: why would

individuals authorize a sovereign in the first place? This puzzle has sparked intense controversies among Hobbes scholars. To render sovereign authorization rational, many claim that to-be-subjects must have well-founded reasons to believe that the to-be-sovereign will be motivated or moved to protect them from violent death. Otherwise, why authorize the sovereign in the first place? I argue that sovereign authorization conceptualized as an honoring practice contributes to this debate. My contribution provides an additional answer to the question: why authorize the sovereign? This contribution serves to supplement prior accounts. It gives to-be-subjects added assurance that the to-be-sovereign they authorize can be sufficiently moved to protect and provide for them.

We know from reading Hobbes that he “intends no totalitarian system, or arbitrary despotism, but rather an enlightened monarchy, authoritarian but benevolent” (Gauthier 1969, p.138). We also know that his political theory aims to offer subjects “ample opportunity to make known their needs and grievances” (Gauthier 1969, p.139). Hobbes’s political theory also means to give subjects adequate freedom to engage in meaningful activities within a diverse number of fields, including commerce, science and the arts.¹⁴⁹

But, when we couple Hobbes’s account of sovereign right and sovereign power with his account of human psychology, it is not altogether clear how his theory avoids the consequence of tyranny in practice. Recall that the sovereign possesses the natural right to everything and the power to enforce this right. Add this to Hobbes’s claim that mortals

¹⁴⁹ Granted, the sovereign has oversight over these fields and can limit or forbid them at will.

generally are vain, power-hungry, appetitive and passionate. We get a tyrannical combination. The sovereign's preoccupation with his vanity and his appetitive nature will probably lead him to fight and to kill subjects for arbitrary reasons. Any sign of undervaluing will enrage him. Moreover, his quest for power after power will only encourage him to behave in a tyrannical fashion. This real possibility of tyrannical rule undercuts the rationale for exiting the state of nature. That is, it places in doubt the rationality of sovereign authorization. For, if individuals can expect tyranny, why should they not remain in the state of nature?

Scholars who address this question rescue Hobbes's political theory in two ways. Some place tyrannical rule within a best-of-all-possible-worlds-narrative. Others offer accounts that serve to diminish the probability of tyranny within the Hobbesian commonwealth. With regard to the first solution, scholars assert that Hobbes's political theory is not fail-safe. He did not intend to remedy all possible "inconveniences" associated with politics. One inconvenience his theory does not sufficiently remedy is the possibility of tyranny, which Hobbes defines as nothing but monarchy disliked. These scholars consequently embed the decision to authorize the sovereign within a bleak binary: either authorize the sovereign (and accept the real possibility of so-called-tyrannical rule) or live in a state of war where all fight all. Here, "the question is not whether civil society is unpleasant, but whether it is less pleasant than some possible alternative" (Gauthier 1969, p.164).¹⁵⁰ The more rational and relatively more pleasant choice, according to these scholars, is to

¹⁵⁰ See also (Flathman 1993, p.58).

authorize the sovereign. Life in the state of nature is more dreadful than life under tyrannical rule. Therefore, proceed to authorize the sovereign.

This bleak reading generates, perhaps, the search for arguments within Hobbes's political works that chip away at the claim that his theory most likely leads to tyranny. Scholars who chart this course summon Hobbes's analysis of internal obligations and instrumental rationality in order to decrease the likelihood that Hobbes's sovereign will become a tyrant in practice. First, scholars suggest that the laws of nature, which bind internally, motivate the sovereign to act benevolently toward his subjects. The argument runs like this. If the sovereign is either God-loving or God-fearing, then we can suppose that he will endeavor to obey God's laws. Hobbes explains that the ninth law of nature, the law of gratitude, binds individuals to endeavor to show gratitude for benefits received. Because Hobbes construes the sovereign office as a gift freely given by to-be-subjects, the sovereign who accepts this gift is bound to endeavor to show gratitude to his subjects. That is, he is bound to endeavor to show his subjects what Hobbes calls a "good turn."

Now, Hobbes gives gift-recipients broad latitude with respect to how they endeavor to express their gratitude. The gift-giving exchange is not like a contract. Giver and recipient do not negotiate its terms explicitly or in advance. Moreover, only God has the right to judge whether the sovereign *qua* gift-recipient kept or broke the ninth law of nature, according to Hobbes.¹⁵¹ Only God can punish the sovereign for ingratitude.

Nevertheless, the account of this law provides a God-loving or God-fearing sovereign

¹⁵¹ For more on the sovereign's duties to subjects and how these duties are only to God see (Flathman 1993, p.58).

with a reason to avoid becoming a tyrant because it provides him with a reason to endeavor to show his subjects a “good turn.”

Instrumentally rational thinking also provides the sovereign with a reason to avoid becoming a tyrant. Here, scholars envision Hobbes’s political theory as an egoistic one. Instrumental thinking governs all thought and action, including therefore what is thought and done by subjects and the sovereign. According to this reading of Hobbes, the sovereign will retain his office only so long as his subjects calculate that it is in their interest to keep him there (Hobbes, *EL*, p.136). Instrumentally rational subjects will not retain a sovereign who tyrannizes them. For, it is not in their interest to do so. Assuming the sovereign wants to keep his office, a purely instrumental calculation might motivate him act benevolently, not tyrannically.

The difficulty with these attempts at developing a rationale in favor of authorization stems from the fact that both avoid discussing how the passion of vanity undercuts pious and instrumental thinking.¹⁵² The fear of violent death checks a to-be-*subject’s* vanity. But, Hobbes argues that this fear, whether it be natural or learned, is not to be “reckoned upon” when it comes the sovereign. To the contrary, Hobbes’s sovereign “is made so as not to be afraid” (Hobbes *Lev*, p.21). The fear of violent death tempers neither the sovereign’s reckless pursuit of power after power nor his desire for superior recognition. Hobbes’s sovereign is that “Proud, terrifying, and impervious monster in the book of Job (Job 41:1-34)...[He is] unique, fearless, and prideful” (Feldham 2006, p.43). Hobbes

¹⁵² See (Gauthier, p.73).

even gives the sovereign the epithet, “King of the Proud” (Hobbes, *Lev*, p.210). Scholars have interpreted this epithet to mean that the sovereign rules *over* the proud. But, given the context of this passage, this is not the only interpretation available. Construing the epithet to mean that the sovereign is “the most proud,” is also a possibility. Nothing on earth compares with the sovereign, Hobbes explains. (Hobbes *Lev*, p.210). And, Hobbes writes, “He [The sovereign] seeth every high thing below him” (Hobbes, *Lev*, p.210). Given these claims, we may construe the epithet to mean that Hobbes’s sovereign is the “most proud.” Presumably, therefore, God’s laws will not temper his behavior. For, God, who is “high,” is “below” him. Instrumental calculations will not persuade him to act benevolently, either. For, the inflated view that the sovereign has of his power enables him to imagine himself as someone who crushes any rebellion. He is more powerful than Alexander; he is more powerful than Hercules; he is a “Mortal-God.” When we couple the sovereign’s vanity with his absolute right and his power, tyranny remains a likely consequence of Hobbes’s political theory. And, unless, individuals pessimistically conclude that tyranny is preferable to the state of war, then sovereign authorization is irrational.

In order to avoid the conclusion that Hobbes’s theory leads to tyranny in practice and consequently does not positively motivate the act of sovereign authorization, we must find a practice that turns the sovereign’s vanity to the subject’s advantage. I argue that when we conceptualize sovereign authorization as an honoring practice (alternatively described as flattery), we discover a way for subjects to use the sovereign’s vanity to this end. Here, we take the passion of vanity that Hobbes identifies as dangerous to self-

preservation and peace, and we use it to further the preservation and worldly comfort of subjects. Recall from Chapters 5 and 6 how mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen and women understood flattery as a means of ingratiating oneself, and how widespread this practice had become. Recall Hobbes's claim that to flatter is to honor and recall his assertion that individuals honor or worship mortals and God for the sake of the advantages and the protection that honoring practices (including flattery) reliably secure for them (Hobbes, *De Homine*, p.75). Honoring---best construed as flattery here---was a weapon used by the weak against the vain. Through it, mid-seventeenth-century-Englishmen claimed that flatterers held the vain "in captivity and subjection." Courtiers especially used flattery to live well or to "eat out" great families.

The exchange of security and comfort for honoring practices *is* and *is not* premised upon an instrumental logic. It is premised upon this logic because to-be-subjects (and subjects in the commonwealth) engage in honoring practices that flatter the to-be-sovereign for instrumental reasons. To-be-subjects are therefore instrumental actors here. But, the sovereign is not an instrumental actor in this account. The favors he showers upon his subjects in exchange for their honoring practices rest upon a behavioralist or mechanical understanding of the passions. Honoring practices like sovereign authorization, obedience, paying tribute, and praising, "trigger" two inward responses. First, honoring triggers the inward feeling of pleasure. Honoring practices here please the vain sovereign, especially when individuals perform them freely, not on account of force.¹⁵³ This feeling

¹⁵³ Hobbes writes,

The subjection of them who institute a commonwealth among themselves, is no less absolute, than the subjection of servants [by force]. And therein they are in equal estate; but the hope of those is greater than the hope of these. For he hath hath subjecteth himself

of pleasure mechanically triggers another inward response, or reaction. Hobbes writes, “By natural necessity all men wish them better, from whom they receive glory and honour than others” (Hobbes *DC*, p.219). The sovereign responds to honoring practices by wishing his honorers well. More precisely, he responds by wishing them “better” than those who fail to honor him. As discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, well-wishing elicits an external response. Flattered sovereigns shower favors upon their flatterers. Favors might include protection and other provisions. In Chapter 6, we saw how Englishmen construed flattery as the means by which instrumentally rational subjects “wrought” the sovereign’s will to their purposes. Hobbes contributed to this debate. He explained that inferiors could forge their superior’s will “not by force” but by performing humble honoring practices that triggered benevolent responses (Hobbes, *Lev*, p.2.31.8).¹⁵⁴

When we conceptualize sovereign authorization as an honoring practice that triggers this kind of response, we discover an argument that lessens the probability of tyrannical rule. The logic of exchange summoned here is rooted in Hobbes’s account of instrumental rationality and his account of mechanical determinism. To-be-subjects are instrumentally rational. They honor their to-be-sovereign by authorizing him in order to “wrought” his will to their purposes. The to-be-sovereign, by contrast, is mechanically determined. The honoring practices directed at him trigger responses, including protection and provision.

uncompelled, thinketh there is reason he should be better used, than he that doth it upon compulsion. (Hobbes *EL*, p.132)

¹⁵⁴ Hobbes writes,

Cultivation (cultus) of the divine, or divine worship, is to perform those actions that are signs of piety toward God. For these are pleasing to God, and by them alone can His favour be returned to us. Moreover, these actions are for the most part of the same kind as those we perform whenever we cultivate (colimus) men. (Hobbes, *DH*, p. 75)

One might argue that this determinism radically over-simplifies human behavior and reduces the complexities associated with the social interaction of honoring. Given my historically informed analysis of honoring in Chapters 1 through 7, this is obviously the case. Nevertheless, if we take Hobbes's deterministic account of human behavior as a considerable element within his theory of politics, then we can use his account of mechanical determinism to flesh out another argument for why to-be-subjects might deem it rational to authorize the sovereign. Conceptualizing sovereign authorization as an honoring practice helps us do just this.

8.5 Authorization, Obedience within the Honoring Narrative

I veer now from arguments that support conceptualizing sovereign authorization as an honoring practice in order to focus upon the justifications for political obedience in Hobbes. The mid-seventeenth-century account of honoring secular authority that I analyzed in Chapter 7 points to the existence of an early modern narrative that served to justify obedience to secular authority. One of my goals in Chapter 7 was to explain that early modern narrative. Here, I intend to embed all of Hobbes's diverse arguments for obedience to secular authority, including arguments from fear, prudence, covenant, de facto power, natural law and Scripture into this narrative. There are at least three reasons for doing this. First, the narrative offers us two ways of conceptualizing secular arguments for obedience that rely upon the notion of a motive clause. On the one hand, the narrative aligns obedience with the notion of promising, and the binding obligation that follows from the act of promising. On the other, the narrative aligns obedience with

the notion of prudence. Hobbes appeals to both these justifications to ground his account of obedience to secular authority.

The second reason why we should embed Hobbes's various justifications for obedience into the early modern narrative I presented in Chapter 7 is because the narrative renders arguments for obedience grounded upon secular notions such as passion, contract, prudence and power *compatible with* sacred arguments for obedience founded upon natural law and Scripture. That is, the narrative enables us to tell a story about the relationship between sacred and secular justifications for obedience that differs significantly from stories that pit these two types of justifications for obedience against each other. Understanding the relation between secular and sacred justifications for obedience in Hobbes as a relation of compatibility rather than dissonance is preferable because Hobbes suggests (explicitly and implicitly) that these justifications are somehow compatible.

Finally, I argue that we should embed Hobbes's various justifications for obedience into the early modern narrative that I presented in Chapter 7 because this narrative offers a historically informed and therefore richer understanding the sacred-secular binary. In mid-seventeenth-century England, no high, impenetrable wall separated the sacred from the secular sphere. A tight weave wove these spheres together, along with the logics and languages within these spheres. The narrative revealed through the account of honoring respects this fact about mid-seventeenth-century English life. Specifically, it shows how

an Englishmen in mid-seventeenth-century England could conceive of what we would call a “secular” justification for obedience as a sacred justification for this practice.

Almost every reader of Hobbes will grant that he makes arguments justifying obedience to secular authority on sacred grounds, such as Scripture and natural law, and on secular grounds, such as might,¹⁵⁵ fear, prudence and promising. But, not every reader would grant that Hobbes engages somehow with the notion of honoring when he makes these varied arguments for obedience. I bring Hobbes’s engagement with this notion in his arguments for obedience into focus here. When he crafts his argument in favor of obedience on the basis of Scriptural sources, Hobbes relies upon honoring. Specifically, Hobbes summons this notion when he turns to the Fifth Commandment, ultimately grounding obedience upon the divine command theory of moral obligation. “Honour thy parents,” he writes, is a “command, because the reason for which we are to obey [it] is drawn from the will of God our king, whom we are obliged to obey” (Hobbes *Lev*, p. 168). To press his argument that obeying the civil sovereign is a command that God revealed to mortals through Scripture, Hobbes equates the civil sovereign to a parent, and therefore deploys basic assumptions from patriarchal theory. Hobbes writes, “[T]he command” to “Honour thy father and thy mother” means “nothing else” but that “subjects and citizens, should *absolutely obey* their princes in *all* questions concerning meum and teum, their own and others’ right” (Hobbes, *DC*, p.342, emphases mine).

¹⁵⁵ On some occasions, Hobbes claims that irresistible might makes right. But, there are other passages where Hobbes claims that irresistible might will (or should) cause the vanquished to authorize the mighty. In these accounts, the act of authorization, not naked irresistible might makes right.

When Hobbes appeals to the laws of nature to ground his argument in favor of obedience to civil authority, he summons the notion of honoring again. Accordingly, honoring parents, including civil authorities, is a law of nature (Hobbes, *DC*, p.316). Honoring parents, therefore, is not a law simply because Scripture says that it is. Specifically, it is not a law simply because we find Moses declaring this law to the Israelites after he spoke with God on Mt. Sinai. Nor is it a law simply because in Scripture we find Christ declaring that he came to fulfill (and not to destroy) the old law or because St. Paul proclaimed the law of honoring in his letter to the Ephesians (Hobbes *Lev*, p.399). Honoring parents is a law because it is a law of nature, says Hobbes (Hobbes, *DC*, p.316). It obliges “naturally, being made by God, as the God of *nature*” (Hobbes, *DC*, p.316). Thus, honoring parents is an obligation that binds “even before Abraham’s time” (Hobbes *DC*, p.316). It is an obligation that extends before this time because God “wrote” this obligation directly upon the “hearts” of men before Abraham’s birth (Hobbes *DC*, p.153; *EL*, p. 99, p.182; *Lev*, p. 31).

Hobbes also justifies obedience to civil authority by forging a relationship between awesome power and obedience. Here, too, Hobbes’s summons up notion of honoring, or worship (where worship naturally entails obedience) (Hobbes, *Lev*, p.200). According to Hobbes, the worship we perform to God stems ultimately from His irresistible power. Hobbes claims that mortals have a “natural duty” to worship irresistible power (Hobbes, *Lev*, p.200). This means that mortals have a natural duty to obey God because Hobbes assumes that God possesses irresistible power, and the duty to obey God follows from the duty to worship Him.

Hobbes applies this logic of honoring to justify obedience to secular authorities. The “rules of Honour,” he writes, are the rules that “[r]eason dictateth,” and “[r]eason dictath” that “the weak” should honor “the more potent men” (Hobbes *Lev*, p.200). Thus, if the civil sovereign possesses “more potent” or “irresistible” power, then the “rules of honour” oblige subjects to honor—to obey---the civil sovereign. The logic behind Hobbes’s account of honoring here helps him develop the claim that might, in effect, makes right, although Hobbes sometimes claims that might needs to be followed by an act of authorization in order for it to “truly” make right. If this is the case, then we still see how honoring plays into this picture, since the act of authorization is an act of honoring.

Understanding human nature mechanically, and understanding obedience as a mechanical response to fear, where fear is the fear of violent death, is another route Hobbes takes to explain and perhaps even to justify obedience to the civil sovereign. Here, too, Hobbes summons the notion of honoring. In his chapter on natural religion, Hobbes clothes his mechanical argument concerning obedience in an account of honoring. Chapter 12 of the *Lev* explains how the fear of violent death triggers fearful individuals to honor objects or persons. Pagans, for example, who feared death engaged in honoring practices. They directed these practices at inanimate objects, and Hobbes explains that these practices invested certain inanimate objects (including onions, rocks and leeks) with supernatural powers. Hobbes reveals pagan (and Catholic) irrationality here (as Catholics also worshipped idols). Rational or not, we may imagine fearful individuals in Hobbes’s state

of nature doing the same thing. When they are struck by the fear of violent death, they mechanically perform the act of sovereign authorization. Through this act of honoring, they ascribe incredible power to their to-be-sovereign. Presumably, the to-be-sovereign (like the rock, leek, or onion) does not naturally possess inordinate power since all men are equal in the state of nature. But, it is reasonable to assume that the honored sovereign possesses more power than an inanimate root. Thus, their practice might be more rational than pagan practice.

Pagans, claims Hobbes, continually engaged in their irrational honoring practices. Constantly afraid of death, they repeatedly worshipped inanimate objects, hoping (irrationally) that their honoring practices would appease these “powerful” objects. Honoring practices, they hoped (irrationally), would make these objects use their power for good purposes. That is, they hoped that honoring practices would make these objects use their power to alleviate the honorer’s fear of violent death. Clearly, Hobbes is exposing pagan irrationality here, again. Inanimate objects are not appeasable. They do not possess a will. Moreover, they do not possess strange powers that can cause mortals harm, or good.

If, however, we apply the underlying behavioralist account of honoring to Hobbesian subjects, we arrive at a mechanical and perhaps an instrumentally rational explanation of why subjects obey the sovereign. And, if we assume that Hobbes’s descriptions of human nature are not simply descriptions but rather normative statements about how humans ought to behave, then we can also argue that his mechanical explanation of why

individuals engage in honoring practices is an attempt to justify obedience as well. The logic is as follows: like pagans, fearful subjects continue to honor their sovereign (or they should continue to honor the sovereign) because their fear of violent death continually triggers them to respond (or it should trigger them to respond) in this way. Since the sovereign is animate, subjects who continue to honor the sovereign are more rational than the pagans who continuously honor leeks and onions. Hobbesian subjects are more rational than pagans because the belief that honoring practices (including the practice of obedience) can appease a living sovereign is a plausible belief. It is plausible to believe that honoring practices, such as obedience, can move animate sovereigns to aid in the preservation of the lives of their honorers.

When Hobbes justifies obedience through the notions of prudence and promising, he also summons the notion of honoring. He does so when he conceptualizes the Fifth Commandment in terms of an exchange relation where children or subjects honor their parents or the sovereign in exchange for preservation and maintenance. This exchange relation, Hobbes writes, “accordeth with the fifth commandment” (Hobbes *Lev*, p.223). In Chapter 7, I suggested that Hobbes’s prudential account of the Fifth Commandment was neither heretical nor radically new. Many leading mid-seventeenth-century-Christian scholars analyzed the motive clause annexed to the Fifth Commandment. In their analyses, they frequently rendered the Fifth Commandment a rule of prudence. Honoring parents was prudent, they claimed, because Scripture said that honoring will make one’s “days” “long in the land.” Honoring was also prudent because Scripture said that by honoring it “will be well thee.” Hobbes’s claim that the “preservation of life” is “the

end” for which “one man becomes subject to another” is not incompatible with early modern renderings of the Fifth Commandment (Hobbes *EL*, p.130). When he writes that his prudential account of honoring “accordeth” with the Fifth Commandment, we need not depict Hobbes as a heretic, an atheist, or a radical innovator (Hobbes, *Lev*, p.223). We can depict him as an incredible thinker making arguments that made sense (and did not rattle any existing logics) in mid-seventeenth-century-England.

Moreover, because Englishmen recalled that St. Paul explicitly identified the Fifth Commandment as the first commandment containing “a promise,” it was not strange to associate honoring practices, including the practice of obedience, with the act of promising. When Hobbes declares that parents receive “the promise of obedience” from their children in exchange for maintenance and preservation, we can imagine that Hobbes is offering his account of “the promise” annexed to the Fifth Commandment (Hobbes, *EL*, p.130; *DC*, p. 212). Hobbes explicitly summons the notion of honoring when he discusses the parent/child relationship. He says that parents maintain their children because the latter promise to honor them. They primarily honor them through the practice of obedience. But, they also honor them through other “external signs of honour[ing]” (Hobbes *Lev*, p.223). We may transpose this logic to the political sphere, as mid-seventeenth-century-Englishmen certainly would, given their familiarity with patriarchal theory. Subjects therefore offer their civil sovereign “the promise of obedience,” because the sovereign maintains and preserves them. Like children, subjects are bound by their promise here, and it is a promise that God sanctions through his Fifth Commandment.

So far, I have cited passages from Hobbes's texts in order to demonstrate that Hobbes summons up the notion of honoring when he makes his different arguments in favor of political obedience. I have also claimed that Hobbes's account of honoring is not a radically strange one, and I grounded this claim upon the historical analysis of honoring that I conducted throughout Chapters 1 through 7. I have also suggested that we can understand the arguments Hobbes makes for obedience based upon the notion of promising and prudence in a different way. We can understand these arguments as an attempt by Hobbes to engage with the Fifth Commandment, and not as his attempt to engage with an emerging contractual discourse deployed by a rising merchant class. Specifically, we can understand Hobbes's arguments from promising and prudence as his attempt to engage with the motive clause annexed to the Fifth commandment, and with St. Paul's claim that the Fifth Commandment is the first commandment containing "a promise."

Let me now say something about how embedding Hobbes's arguments for obedience into the account of honoring I offer changes how we understand the relationship between the "secular" and the "sacred" justifications for obedience in Hobbes's texts. In his works, Hobbes casually shifts from sacred to secular justifications for obedience. Apart from claiming that one can understand the laws of nature either as prudential rules discovered by reason (a faculty which God "hath put into our hands") or as the "Naturall Word of God," Hobbes does not indicate how his secular justifications for obedience relate to his sacred justifications (Hobbes *Lev*, p.200. His relative silence on this matter, perplexes scholars today. In our minds, secular and sacred justifications are distinct (Cooke 1996,

p.1). More precisely, a wall separates these two languages of justification. Each language belongs to a different “world,” or “worldview.” Moreover, time separates these two languages of justification. Sacred justifications belong to the pre-modern period; secular justifications belong to the modern one; and Hobbes’s texts cannot live in two periods at once (or so some scholars suggest).

Providing both sacred and secular justifications for obedience in one text is therefore puzzling. How these justifications relate to each other is even more puzzling. Rather than offer a detailed critique of all the ways scholars have accounted for Hobbes’s puzzling and unexplained combination, I will briefly describe and challenge some of the most common accounts. Then, I will turn to the narrative offered in the mid-seventeenth-century discourse of honoring. I will embed Hobbes’s justifications within this narrative and explain the new interpretation that this narrative offers us.

There are a few ways scholars have accounted for Hobbes’s combination of sacred and secular justifications for obedience. The first and least intellectually satisfying way ignores one set of justifications altogether. Two rival strands of scholarship present this myopic account of Hobbes’s arguments for obedience to civil authority. According to one, Hobbes’s argument for obedience is *thoroughly* secular. Here, his justifications solely rely upon notions such as fear, contract, prudence, or de facto power. Which of these secular justifications is most foundational remains controversial within this camp. According to the other strand of scholarship, Hobbes’s justifications for obedience are *thoroughly* deontological. The ultimate ground of obedience here is a sacred ground. It is

God's will. Here, debates surface with respect to whether the unseen laws of nature (the "Natural Word of God") or Scripture (the artificial Word of God) best reveal God's will.

More persuasive and intellectually satisfying solutions to the puzzle are those that faithfully grapple with the secular and the sacred set of justifications offered in Hobbes's texts. One way scholars make sense of these two sets of justifications is by labeling one "foundational" and the other "local," or "historical." Philosophers study the first set; historians the second. Scholars who present this argument generally attach the label "timeless" or "foundational" to the secular set of justifications for obedience to civil authority. Curiously, their reasons for supporting the assumption that the secular, and not the sacred, set of justifications merits the label of "foundational" are rarely given. Why do the secular (and not the sacred) justifications for obedience "transcend" time and history? Might the secular set of justifications be as historical and as local? Might these justifications be the time-bound products of an emerging bourgeois society, for example? Scholars who ignore this critique also ignore Hobbes's claim that religion is part of "human nature," as such. Ultimately, therefore, their way of resolving the puzzling fact that Hobbes uses sacred and secular justifications to establish obedience to secular authority is not sufficiently persuasive.

A third way scholars make sense of these two different sets of justifications for obedience is by labeling one of them Hobbes's esoteric teaching and the other his exoteric teaching (Kaplan, 1956). Here, the esoteric teaching corresponds to the secular teaching (Kaplan, 1956). It is the teaching for the wise few (Kaplan, 1956). The exoteric teaching, by

contrast, corresponds to the sacred teaching, which Hobbes intended for the unenlightened many.

This way of resolving the puzzle is also unpersuasive. It simply ignores the historical context of mid-seventeenth-century-England and it ignores the structure of Hobbes's texts. Englishmen and women in Reformation England did not conceive of the "many" as godly. Englishmen versed in Calvinist theology, recognized the elect "few" as God's chosen ones. God implanted faith and the laws of nature (understood as God's laws) into these few. As Hobbes puts it, the laws of nature "are Laws to them only to who God hath so sufficiently published them" (Hobbes, *Lev*, p. 282). As laws, they obliged only those "to whom in particular God hath been pleased to reveale [His laws]" (Hobbes, *Lev*, p. 282). The apparent "godliness" of the many was only that: an appearance. According to Calvin's doctrine, God did not implant faith in the many. Nor did He clearly write the laws of nature into their hearts.

What follows from this argument is the claim that only "creaturely" justifications for obedience, such as justifications rooted in self-interest and passion, effectively motivated the many to obey civil authority. Justifications rooted on sacred foundations that required genuine faith and sufficient understanding of the laws of nature did not effectively motivate the many. Given the context of mid-seventeenth-century-Reformation England, it is therefore more plausible to assume that Hobbes targeted the "many" with his secular justifications and offered the predestined "elect" his sacred justifications for obedience to civil authority.

The structure of Hobbes's political texts also serves to undermine the argument that Hobbes intended the secular justifications for the wise few, and the sacred justifications for the unenlightened many. For, if Hobbes intended the sacred justifications for the vulgar, we would assume that he would have placed these justifications at the beginning of each of his political works. The "vulgar" many, assuming they read, are not patient enough to slog through hundreds of pages that offer primarily secular justifications for obedience in order to arrive finally at sacred foundations. Only the "wise" few have the patience to do this. Thus, if the structure of the text tells us something, then it is more likely that it tells us that Hobbes directed the religious justifications for obedience found in the second part of his political writings towards the few, and not the many.

A fourth way scholars have resolved the puzzling fact that Hobbes offers both secular and sacred justifications for obedience in his texts brings the structure of Hobbes's text heavily to bear on the puzzle. According to this account, Hobbes intended the secular justifications for obedience found in the early chapters of his texts to cast doubt upon, and eventually to undermine, the sacred justifications for obedience offered in later chapters of his texts. The secular justifications in the early chapters equip readers with the tools necessary to destroy the sacred justifications in later chapters. According to this reading, there is a dynamic relationship between the secular and sacred justifications offered by Hobbes. He is a closet atheist who spreads his doctrine in an extremely clever fashion.

This explanation for the inclusion of sacred and secular justifications for obedience lacks considerable persuasive force for several reasons. First, the argument bestows salience upon the fact that Hobbes offers rigorous secular arguments for obedience and less-than-robust sacred arguments. Presumably, this disparity reveals Hobbes's preference for secular arguments as well as his intention to undermine the sacred arguments he offers. But, this presumption derives in part from a lack of historical understanding. In Reformation England, sacred arguments do not require a long and rational defense. Sacred arguments are grounded ultimately in faith. When matters of faith are concerned, Hobbes, like Luther before him, advises individuals to "captivate" their understanding and "forbear" contradiction (Hobbes *Lev*, p.270). Unearthing contradictions in Scripture is not, according to Hobbes, a means of shaking faith since faith does not ground itself upon the Aristotelean (pagan) principle of non-contradiction.

Hobbes invokes passages, however absurd, from Scripture to support obedience to secular authority. Like devout Anglicans who came before him, Hobbes offers many Scriptural passages to justify obedience to secular authority. Hobbes also supports obedience to secular authority by appealing to the laws of nature. He calls these laws God's commands (which God wrote in the "heart") and Hobbes encourages his readers to "read themselves." In terms of a sacred and reformed argument for obedience to secular authority, what more is there to ask of Hobbes?

Hobbes does offer more to support his sacred justifications for obedience to secular authority. In Chapter 1, I argued that his materialist philosophy defends sacred

justifications for obedience made by Anglicans (and other conformists), against arguments for and against obedience offered by non-conforming sects in mid-seventeenth-century-England. It has been claimed that Hobbes's materialism undermines all his sacred foundations for obedience. But, we do not need to agree with this position. Instead, we can argue that Hobbes deployed a materialist metaphysics to attack non-conforming Protestant theologies that appealed to the ethereal "Spirit" as the ultimate authority in religious matters. As I discussed in Chapter 1, non-conformists pit this authority against the "Word." They then appealed to the "Spirit" to undermine justifications for obedience to secular authority. Hobbes's radical critique of Aristotlean metaphysics, a metaphysics that posited the existence of immaterial substances, is a critique of the very foundations that support non-conformist appeals to the "Spirit." Moreover, by forging a connection between Spirit-talk and pagan philosophy, Hobbes further challenged non-conforming theologies and theologians. The latter claimed that their "reformed" theology was "pure," that is, "purified" from pagan influence. But, Hobbes exposes that their theology is far from pure. Its foundation is Aristotlean. Thus, we may interpret Hobbes's critique of spirit-talk as, on the one hand, a critique of non-conforming Protestant Christianity and, on the other hand, as an argument in support of Conformist theologies that rely upon the Word (interpreted by the civil sovereign, not the pope), and not the Spirit as the final authority in religious matters

Scholars who press the claim that Hobbes's secular justifications for obedience intend to cast doubt upon his sacred justifications also appeal to Hobbes's curious discussion of Biblical authorship to develop their argument that Hobbes is a closet atheist pushing a

secular agenda. Hobbes argues that mortal, and potentially cunning, men wrote the Bible. Human hands tarnish the text. It is not the “pure,” unmediated word of God. With this argument, scholars pressing the atheist view claim that Hobbes intended to undermine all sacred justifications that appeal to the Bible. Is this argument persuasive? As I discussed in Chapter 1, pious Englishmen and women were well aware that mortals influenced Biblical translation and interpretation. During Hobbes’s life-time, a “Bible war” was raging in England. The question of whether to make the “Great Bible,” the “Bishop’s Bible,” the “Geneva Bible,” or the “King James” Bible the nation’s Bible was a hotly contested issue. Englishmen and women who were abreast of the fact that translating God’s will into the Word required human intervention were not atheists. They were pious Reformation believers, aware that the Bible was easily “corrupted” by man in the process of translation and interpretation.

A final cluster of claims that scholars deploy in order to push the atheistic solution to the puzzle over the use of sacred and secular justifications are discoverable in passages where Hobbes warns readers to beware of false prophets, to be suspicious of miracles, to disbelieve all talk of demons, and to be wary of the men of the robe. Although I cannot go into specific detail here, these arguments are not incompatible with theological arguments presented by reformers in England. Moreover, Hobbes’s assertion that secular authority is the final human arbitrator with respect to religious matters conforms to Anglican doctrine. It does not point to Hobbes’s atheism. It points to his allegiance to the Anglican faith.

If we imagine mid-seventeenth-century-Englishmen and women living in two separate worlds, we discover another explanation for why Hobbes offered both secular and sacred justifications for obedience to civil authority. The sacred and the secular world are distinct here. Each world has its own language and its own set of assumptions. Hobbes offered both sets of arguments in order to convince readers who thought through these discrete languages. Sacred and secular justifications for obedience to civil authority stand side by side in this account. Although they have equal validity, a wall separates them. They talk past each other. But, this argument is anachronistic and therefore not persuasive. Englishmen and women in mid-seventeenth-century. Granted, rational arguments cannot puncture faith. These modes of generating belief or disbelief are distinct. But, aside from this, Englishmen and women did not inhabit a world that radically divided the sacred from the secular sphere. As I have shown repeatedly in this dissertation, sacred languages and logics were deployed to understand mortals and the secular order. Englishmen also deployed secular languages and logics to understand God, His behavior, and His relationship to mortals. The rigid sacred-secular binary that is so familiar to Western scholars today was not as rigid or as familiar to mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen and women. Therefore, using this rigid binary to understand Hobbes's various accounts of political obedience does not provide a historically attuned account of the relationship between Hobbes's sacred and secular justifications for obedience.

I argue that the narrative of honoring that I presented in Chapter 7 loosens this stark sacred-secular binary. The narrative also offers a space for all of Hobbes's justifications

for obedience to secular authority. It gives a different story that might explain how the diverse justifications for obedience in Hobbes fit together in a harmonious and satisfying way. I turn to this narrative here.

According to it, God commanded subjects to honor secular authority. He, as Hobbes says, revealed this command through the laws of nature as well as through Scripture. And, subjects were morally obligated to obey God's natural and revealed will. That is, they were morally obligated to honor secular authority. This obligation did not depend upon whether God's command was arbitrary or not, or whether His command was in or against their interest. God was a natural sovereign. As such, He could will whatever He wanted to will. His will was not constrained by anything and subjects were obligated to obey whatever He willed. We found Hobbes establishing the claim that God is the natural sovereign and that mortals are naturally obligated to obey Him within all his political writings.

But, according to the narrative of honoring, the Christian God was unlike the God of the Old Testament. The Christian God was not an arbitrary or evil being. He was a merciful, forgiving and benevolent being. The narrative of honoring revealed the existence of this God by telling the story of God coming down to accommodate for man's weaknesses. Men are self-interested, the narrative assumes. God's commands do not sufficient motivate most mortals, the narrative of honoring supposes. And, Hobbes makes these assumptions, too, when he acknowledges that men are not as they "should be," and when he asserts that "unjust is the name of the greater part of men" (where "unjust" means

failing to endeavor (internally) to obey God's natural laws) (Hobbes, *DC* p.232, p.371; *EL*, p. 38; *DH*, p.7).

According to the narrative of honoring, the Christian God showed His infinite mercy and benevolence by accommodating His laws to man's weaknesses. Here, God "came down" and provided incentives to duty. He made mortals a promise: in exchange for promising to honor (and honoring) civil authorities, God would guarantee that the honorer's "days would be long in the land," and that all would be "well" with them. As I showed in Chapter 7, God could fulfill his end of the bargain in a myriad of ways. And, there is no contract between subjects and the civil sovereigns here. There is only a promise offered by God. This benevolent deity also annexed a motive clause to His Fifth Commandment. This clause told mortals that it was prudent to honor civil authorities, since long and good days would follow from this practice. Again, God would act as guarantor here. He would ensure that honoring secular authority proved prudent. There was no explicit exchange relation between subjects and the sovereign. The "secular" justifications for honoring civil authorities, including the argument from prudence and the argument rooted in promising, were divinely sanctioned arguments. But, acting upon these justifications did not render the actor a "just" person in the eyes of God. Rather, they exposed man's weakness and God's infinitely merciful nature.

According to the narrative of honoring, therefore, secular justifications for obedience relate to sacred justifications as supplements, or powerful secondary justifications. Secular justifications do not undermine sacred justifications. This-worldly reasons for

obeying civil authorities or for promising to obey these authorities are reasons that God accommodates. He even offers mortals these secular and prudential arguments for obedience in Scripture. Such accommodation does not undermine the obligatory nature of God's commands. Nor does it call His existence into question. The accommodation does not render secular justifications supreme, either. Instead, by providing these justifications for honoring civil authority, God reveals mortal weakness, He teaches humility and He exposes His glory through an act of infinite mercy and beneficence.

8.6 Conclusion

Let me recap what I have argued in this chapter. I claim that we should set aside the legal-judicial portrayal of sovereign authorization and replace it with an account of sovereign authorization as an act of honoring. We should do so for six reasons. First, the latter account enables us to envision sovereign authorization as a practice that uses both words and actions to declare the to-be-subject's will. It therefore diminishes the possibility of communicative misunderstanding. Second, imagining sovereign authorization as an act of honoring enables us to understand this act as one that contains the element of self-denial on the one hand and confident self-assertion on the other. Third, sovereign authorization as honoring enables us to make sense of Hobbes's notion of "transference." Fourth, it helps us account for his claim that individuals transfer power to the sovereign when they authorize him. Fifth, sovereign authorization conceived as an honoring practice demonstrates how awe is constituted. It is constituted from below through honoring practices. Sixth, conceiving of sovereign authorization as well as obedience as honoring practices offers to-be subjects a logic, according to which it is

rational to authorize an irrational and vain sovereign. Honoring practices can move a vain and irrational sovereign to act on the behalf of honorers.

In this chapter, I also showed that Hobbes placed each of his justifications for obedience alongside and within an honoring narrative. Based on my analysis of this mid-seventeenth-century narrative, a different account of how Hobbes's secular and sacred justifications for obedience fit together presents itself. According to this different account, sacred and secular justifications are compatible. The latter justifications are sanctioned by God and serve to demonstrate His mercy and man's weakness. Moreover, the narrative of honoring presents secular justifications for obedience grounded on the one hand in prudence and on the other hand in notions of promising and contract. The narrative of honoring therefore accounts for Hobbes's sacred and secular justifications for obedience and, I argue that it enriches our understanding of how these diverse arguments might fit together in Hobbes's political thought.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

This dissertation has had four principal ambitions. The first was to supply a careful analysis of the social practice and the discourse of honoring in mid-seventeenth-century-England. The second was to place Thomas Hobbes's account of honoring within its historical context and to show where Hobbes's account corresponds to and deviates from familiar mid-seventeenth-century English accounts. The third was to argue that Hobbes's account of sovereign authorization was an account of honoring; that authorizing the sovereign was an honoring practice. This reading challenges interpreters of Hobbes who use a legal-judicial framework to understand Hobbes's account of sovereign authorization. The fifth was to embed Hobbes's justifications for sovereign authorization and obedience into a mid-seventeenth-century honoring narrative and to offer a different narrative explaining how the secular and sacred justifications for authorization and obedience fit together in Hobbes's political thought.

9.1 Re-Configuring Honor

As indicated in the Introduction, contemporary scholars who investigate the concept of honor in the history of political thought tend to focus upon those who pursue honor or

those who seek to preserve their honor.¹⁵⁶ I have suggested that we gain a different understanding of the concept of honor when we explore how Englishmen in the mid-seventeenth-century discussed the practice of honoring and how they used the verb “to honor,” and synonymous verbs. Englishmen who wrote about honoring focused upon the social interactions between individuals of different status groupings. Specifically, they focused their analyses upon the honorer who, through a variety of mediums, acknowledged a superior. They also focused upon neutral spectators who observed honorers performing honoring practices.

An examination honor from this vantage point reveals some of ways Englishmen hierarchically ordered human beings, and how they justified a hierarchical order in society. In Chapters 1 through 3, I discussed how honoring practices reflected a hierarchical ordering that Englishmen claimed derived ultimately from God. In Chapters 4 through 6, I discussed how honoring reflected a hierarchical ordering the foundation of which was the notion of virtue. In Chapters 4 through 6, I also discussed how flattery—a form of honoring---reflected a hierarchical order grounded in power. The flatterer honored those individuals who held powerful stations in society.

However, in these chapters, I also discussed the possibility of understanding honoring practices as amplifying and even constituting hierarchical relations. According to the latter analysis, hierarchy is not the cause of honoring. Hierarchy is a consequence of honoring. That is, the practice of honoring constitutes hierarchies in society. Honoring

¹⁵⁶ See especially, Krause, Sharon. *Liberalism with Honor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. And, Berger, Peter “On the Obsolescence of the Concept of Honor.” In *Liberalism and Its Critics*. ed. by Michael Sandel. New York University Press: New York pp149-158.

practices make hierarchies appear within society. The honorer therefore is responsible for bringing hierarchical relations into social existence through his or her performance.

Honoring practices consequently change existing social relations in this account. They re-organize social relations by presenting the honored person as the honorer's superior.

Moreover, my examination of honoring in mid-seventeenth-century England explores how honorers used honoring practices to rise above their given station within a hierarchically ordered society. Honoring practices therefore played a paradoxical role in England. On the one hand, they revealed, amplified, preserved and even constituted hierarchical relations in society. On the other hand, Englishmen, namely flatterers, performed honoring practice to close the gap between themselves and their superiors. And, because honoring practices could suborn their superior's will, flatterers used these practices to reverse the hierarchical order and to rule over their superiors.

The historical chapters of the dissertation also explored the motives and motivations that Englishmen associated with the practice of honoring. Political theorists have not hesitated to ask what motivates a person to pursue or to preserve honor. But, the question, "Why honor someone?" has received less scholarly attention. Englishmen in mid-seventeenth-century answered this question in a myriad of ways. Some claimed that honorers were like machines, necessarily responding to honor by honoring. Others claimed that honorers had no choice but to honor; those who failed to honor their superiors received harsh punishments. Englishmen also argued that honoring was a moral obligation resting ultimately upon one's obligation to obey God's command. Still others claimed that

honoring was what a “lower-friend” owed his virtuous, or to-be virtuous “higher friend.” Here, it was just to honor a virtuous superior. There were also Englishmen who argued that self-interest motivated honoring practices; friends and flatterers stood to gain by honoring others, even God. Alternatively, some Englishmen claimed that honorers honored their superiors as a way to undermine them. Finally, there were those who embedded honoring practices within a religiously sanctioned exchange relationship. In exchange for honoring, God promised honorers a long and a good life in the land. These different accounts of why honorers engaged in honoring practices enrich our understanding of this complex early modern social interaction.

The consequences that follow from honoring receive scant attention in the scholarship on honor as well. The historical chapters in the dissertation reveal how mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen associated honoring practices with proselytizing in the religious sphere, propaganda in the political sphere, or advertising in the economic sphere. Honoring practices are useful rhetorically. They serve to persuade neutral spectators of the superiority of the person honored. Christians, for example, honored God publicly in order to spread His glory far and wide. To honoring practices Englishmen here attributed the capability of altering the opinions and beliefs held by neutral spectators. Honoring practices could also alter the honorer’s opinions and beliefs. Englishmen argued that honorers sometimes came to believe what their honoring practices signified. That is, they came to believe that the honored person was relatively superior to them. Finally, honoring practices could change how the honored person thought about himself or

herself. Flatterers depended on this assumption when they used honoring to undermine their superiors.

9.2 Hobbes's Account of Honoring

Commentators who investigate honor in Hobbes also tend only to investigate Hobbes's account of the few who pursue honor and the dangers that Hobbes associates with their pursuit. In this dissertation, I have shown that we can learn a great deal more about Hobbes's political theory if we investigate his analysis of honoring while keeping the historical context in mind.

In Chapter 1 of the dissertation, I unearthed those passages where Hobbes appeals to the Bible, specifically the Fifth Commandment, to justify the practice of honoring the civil sovereign. In his account of the Fifth Commandment, Hobbes forges the familiar analogy between parents and political authorities. Like his contemporaries, Hobbes also forges a distinction between inward and outward honoring practices. Hobbes maintains that subjects should inwardly honor parents and secular authorities. But, Hobbes does not charge the civil sovereign with the task of ensuring that subjects honor these superiors inwardly. Hobbes only gives the civil sovereign the authority to maintain outward appearances. The civil sovereign determines what manner subjects should outwardly honor their parents and the civil sovereign. Two ways of honoring suggested by Hobbes include obedient action and reverential speech and comportment. The civil sovereign ensures that subjects perform these honoring practices.

When Hobbes summons the language of exchange to explain the Fifth Commandment, I have suggested that Hobbes is not deviating from Scripture. Nor is he deviating from analyses made by his contemporaries. In Chapter 7 of the dissertation, I analyzed the discussions generated by the motive clause annexed to the Fifth Commandment. If we embed Hobbes's account of the Fifth Commandment into this historical discussion, his seemingly unorthodox account of the Fifth Commandment no longer seems unorthodox, or worse, heretical. As contemporary theologians noted, the merciful Christian God annexed the promise to the Fifth Commandment to encourage obedience. God promised children who honored their parents that all "would be well with them" and that they would receive "long life in the land." Hobbes's assertion that children and subjects honor their parents and the civil sovereigns to receive secular benefits therefore shares similarities with contemporary orthodox accounts of Fifth Commandment's motive clause.

A careful analysis of Hobbes's account divine worship also provides new insights into our understanding of Hobbes's thought. One reason Hobbes favored a unified and national form of religious worship was to avoid bloodshed. My analysis of religious worship in Chapter 2, however, develops another reason why Hobbes favored unity in religious worship. As I have shown, Hobbes argued that unified worship brings glory to God and spreads His glory far, and wide. Diversity in religious worship brings confusion. Religious diversity does not amplify God's glory to the same extent or degree that uniform worship does. The argument Hobbes develops here is a challenge to scholars who claim that Hobbes seeks to spread atheism and to undermine God's glory. For,

through his argument, Hobbes shows a civil sovereign how to spread and magnify God's glory within the commonwealth. That is, Hobbes shows a civil sovereign how to be a good Christian, since Christians have a duty to honor God, and to spread His glory.

Hobbes's account of religious worship also reveals his preference for Anglicanism. As discussed in Chapter 2, Hobbes encourages the civil sovereign to destroy all images. Hobbes is therefore critical of Catholic religious services. Hobbes also criticizes Catholic worship by forging an analogy between their form of religious practices and pagan forms of worship. Both are idolatrous because both worship secondary causes, such as crosses (or sticks). By encouraging worship to be "sober," and worshippers to use "premeditated words," to address God "considerably," and to use "poetry" and "music" during worship, Hobbes reveals his Anglican proclivities. Services performed by Puritans and other non-conforming sects were reputed to be "rash," "vulgar," "light" and "plebian." Hobbes's preference for "beautiful" and "well-composed" forms of worship gestures towards Anglicanism. His openness to practices such as kneeling, bowing, and falling prostrate distance him from the Puritans and other non-conformists, and reveals his preference for Anglican worship.

Hobbes construes honoring as a self-directed activity and Hobbes aligns honoring with the concept of power. This distances Hobbes from the humanists who construed honoring as other-directed activity and who aligned honoring with the concept of virtue. According to Hobbes, individuals honor others, including God, for self-interested reasons. And, honorers honor those who possess relatively greater power. Hobbes's account of

honoring would disturb Englishmen nursed upon accounts of honoring practices performed in “virtuous,” republican Rome. However, it is likely that Hobbes’s account of honoring was compatible with how Englishmen practiced honoring daily. In their practices, they honored the powerful. And, associating honoring with self-interest and with power is not incompatible with certain Christian teachings. As I have shown, there were respected Christians living in mid-seventeenth-century England who maintained that the omnipotent God favored those who honored Him. As I discussed in Chapter 2 and 3, these Christians argued that honoring was how humans curried the favor of a powerful, jealous and vain God.

9.3 Sovereign Authorization and the Honoring Narrative

As discussed in the Introduction and in Chapter 8, using a legal-judicial framework to understand Hobbes’s political thought is commonplace. It has been my ambition to retell Hobbes’s story in a historically informed way through an analysis of honoring. I have provided a reading of sovereign authorization as an honoring practice and I have suggested that Englishmen would have imagined the act of sovereign authorization as a solemn act of honoring. In the dissertation, I have also argued that we should embed Hobbes’s justifications for sovereign authorization and obedience into a Christian narrative about honoring.

To imagine authorizing the sovereign as honoring the sovereign forces us to think about sovereign authorization *as a practice*. Scholars who provide an analytical or hypothetical reconstruction of Hobbes’s transition from the state of nature into political society equate

this practice with a formal legal “procedure.” Their account does not reflect how Englishmen would have performed sovereign authorization in the mid-seventeenth-century. But, more importantly, imagining sovereign authorization as an honoring practice helps us better understand what Hobbes says about sovereign authorization. We understand better Hobbes’s claim that individuals usually use their body and their speech to authorize the sovereign. We can accommodate Hobbes’s claim that sovereign authorization is an act of self-surrender and an act of self-assertion. We can imagine individuals surrendering and transfers rights to the sovereign through authorization. We also better understand how it is possible to transfer power to the sovereign through authorization. Although I will not rehearse the arguments again here, sovereign authorization conceived as a solemn honoring practice helps us solves some important interpretative puzzles that surface in Hobbes’s text which legal-judicial accounts have not been able to solve.

Embedding Hobbes’s justifications for sovereign authorization and obedience into a Christian narrative about honoring also challenges scholars who impose a legal-judicial framework upon Hobbes’s political thought. The narrative of honoring I use to frame Hobbes’s many justifications for obedience renders Hobbes’s secular arguments sacred, or at least compatible with the designs of a merciful, Christian God. The narrative of honoring I offer therefore undermines the following assumption made in the legal-judicial framework: that Hobbes’s arguments for authorization and obedience are thoroughly secular and his accounts of self-directed action are somehow irreligious, or reflect his atheism.

I hope that my account of the Christian honoring narrative and my account of solemn honoring practices will encourage others to conduct further research into the Hobbes and honoring. In the future, I plan to explore more ways that Hobbes engages with mid-seventeenth-century Protestant reformers whose scholarship offers interesting accounts of human practices and how these practices reflect and constitute the way man relates to himself, to his fellow man, to his civil sovereign, and to God.

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