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International Anarchy & the American Leviathan.

– A study in the moral and empirical applications of Hobbes' concept of anarchy to American Foreign policy.

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Abstract.

The current president of the United States, Donald Trump, has been identified as the reason for a large shift in American foreign policy towards a doctrine closer to that of political realism. This claim has led us to examine if this transformation could be detected and described if we analyzed and compared Trump's foreign policy doctrine with his predecessor, Barack Obama, through the lens Thomas Hobbes, whose ideas are at the core of the three modern schools of political realism. Accordingly, in this thesis, we deduce an analytical framework from the original corpus of Hobbes, where anarchy is divided into *moral* and *empirical* variables, identified as the primary factors for behavior in international settings. This is then applied inductively via a comparative qualitative content analysis to two primary documents, the National Security Strategies of 2010 containing the foreign policy doctrine of Obama, and the National Security Strategy of 2017 containing the doctrine of Trump. Our thesis shows a large shift in how the Presidents view the world in *moral* terms, or how they see it fit for the American executive to act on the international stage. And a relatively minor shift in *empirical* terms, or their perception of the foundational reality of the world system which they both consider to be of an anarchical nature closely connected to the theoretical model presented by our interpretation of Hobbes.

Keywords.

Thomas Hobbes, American Foreign Policy, Political Thought, International Relations, Realism, National Security Strategy, International Morality, Anarchy, Donald Trump, Barack Obama.

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1. Introduction.

Thomas Hobbes is a figure of widely debated importance in the field of international relations scholarship. Hobbes was an English philosopher, born in 1588 in Westport, Wiltshire, to an uneducated family of little local and even less national importance. Following his first few contributions to the academy in England he moved to Paris out of fear for persecution for his royalist alliances, making him a sectarian participant in the turmoil surrounding the English civil war. After moving to the capital Hobbes began to involve himself with famous scholars like Descartes but is not really established as a noteworthy contributor until his book *De Cive* is published in 1641. In 1651 he publishes his magnum opus *Leviathan* in England with the express intent to re-emigrate there (Malcom 2007). The impact of *Leviathan* is far reaching, it impacted Hobbes directly as it made him notorious for his critique both of academia and the church. But the work also contains his latest rendition of his theory about mankind, its inherent attributes and detriments, the reason for the formation and maintaining of societies making it a cornerstone for the formation of modern politics. *Leviathan* has over the years become one of or perhaps even *the* most fundamental book in the western political tradition. It is still frequently studied and consulted and has in later years become commonly used not only by political scholars but also by International Relations theorists. Hobbes' attempt at an all-encompassing explanation for the behavior of human society and the proposed guidelines for its organization and practices are filled with implications for interstate relations, even if his texts per se largely focuses on intrastate phenomena. The book *Leviathan* describes how human beings seek to gain collective security through the surrendering of natural human rights to a supreme, all-powerful leader, the Leviathan. Hobbes' thesis builds on many assumptions about the "natural order" or in his words "the State of Nature" of which many is directly translatable to the broader global arena (Donnelly 2000, Baldwin 2016). However, the possibility to disconnect each of the basic assumptions made from the whole of Hobbes' work makes for great possibility to distort, misinterpret or disagree on the meaning and importance of them for the modern studies of international relations and foreign policy.

The phenomenon of foreign policy has always been of essential interest to political scholars. The reasons for, and consequences of a state's behavior towards other states has been explored for as long as there have been any states at all. Thucydides explore these actions in 400 BC and other historians and political thinkers like Herodotus, Caesar, Chen Shou, Hobbes, Locke and many others throughout early societies were attempting to answer the same question by exploring the nature of state to state relations even though it was often

centered around the history of conflicts. Since the rise of modern nation-states and the establishment of international relations as scientific field, interest for the subject has only increased. In the post war period of the 40's and 50's there was a striving for an understanding of the period of violence that was the late 19th and early 20th century. Many different schools of thinking were established during this time like political realism, international liberalism and various Marxist interpretations (Slaughter 2011, Brown 2009). Today foreign policy is a vital part of any internationally active politician's practice as the increased ease with which information can be exchanged leaves possibility for more instant feedback than ever before, both from domestic parties of interest, like the voting citizenry, and from outside actors in other states.

The United States of America is of particular interest when studying modern international relations as they are portrayed as a hegemonic western power with great influence on the happenings of the entire world. The American foreign policy has since the creation of the nation been largely or exclusively conducted by the executive branch of the government, the President. The current American President Donald J. Trump is supposedly representing a monumental shift in his foreign policy towards a more realist agenda. Whether this is true or not can provide great insight as to what we can expect from him on the international arena. Since Hobbes work is arguably the foundation that all currently active schools of international political realism is founded on, exploring the connections between Hobbesian thought and the portrayal of the world that guides Trump's foreign policy could provide us with evidence for or against the necessity of understanding political thought when analyzing foreign policy as well as explain the proposed shift towards a seemingly more realist behavior. This leads us to ask: To what degree is Trump's foreign policy doctrine more Hobbesian than his predecessor Obama? How is the international realm Perceived by Trump and Obama in the National Security Strategies? And how do the National Security Strategies prescribe America to act within the international realm? In the following chapters we seek to answer this question.

2. Literature Review.

In this chapter we present contemporary and historical scholarship on the importance of foreign policy and its implications. We argue that The United States of America present a particularly interesting and relevant case to study. We present evidence for the relevance on approaching these issues from a realist perspective and outline the different schools of political international realism. Then it is argued that Hobbes original works present a better theoretical ground than the established schools of international realism. Lastly, we present what we seek to contribute to these fields with our thesis.

2.1. Foreign Policy

The definitions of foreign policy are many and diverse as authors in the field seem to disagree on what is the defining essence of the concept. One traditional definition comes from Peter Calvert's assertion that foreign policy is activities and decision concerning relations between one state and others (Calvert 1986). This definition seems difficult to question but it's also reveals little of what foreign policy actually is. American author Cecil V. Crabb Jr. has a more complex definition where he identifies the two main components of foreign policy to be goals called "objectives" and "means" i.e. what you seek to achieve and what instruments you possess to do so. The relation between these factors is what determines how a state interact with its surroundings (Crabb 1972). Marxists traditionally define foreign policy somewhat differently, as the outward policy of the national ruling class enacted by their official tools of power (Petrič 2013). Christopher Hill seems to largely accept, with some caveats, this definition as well, even if he refrains from Marxist remarks in his text. He asserts that foreign policy is the total of all official or public foreign relations enacted by any one independent actor, usually the State (Hill 2003). What becomes clear from these definitions is that they all agree on that the primary actor in foreign policy is the State. But they differ in what goals the State should have and how they should achieve them. Walter Carlsnaes argues that foreign policy is only a tool for official representatives to achieve their goals in areas that are outside their perimeter of traditional control, representing the interest of sovereign communities in areas where they have little or no legitimate claims (Carlsnaes 2002). Ernest Petrič describes foreign policy as "... an activity of the State with which it fulfills its aims and interests within the international arena." (Petrič 2013: p. 1). Petrič continues by highlighting the fact that any attempt to condense the essence of foreign policy

to a single definition is to reduce its complexity by such an extent that any single definition becomes practically useless if applied to any real-world case. That may well be true, but the fact that every author agree on certain points gives us a good understanding of the general meaning of the term. Firstly, that it is the official out looking policy of a community. It is an activity of and by the State, where the vessels of the state create and implement foreign policy. Secondly, that it is about promoting national interest or at least to protect them in situations where they may clash with others, or in any situation where the official policy may connect to other States. These national interests may differ but seem centered around prosperity and protection or security. From this summary of the definitions it is clear that foreign policy is an academically established but highly debated topic. It is evident that activities of a state are inherently politically interesting, and their foreign policy may provide a good understanding for how any particular State operates as it is an activity that is historically almost exclusively managed by the state establishment itself, i.e. not influenced by other factors to the same extend as domestic policy may be. But there are still restrictions on how foreign policy is developed and implemented. States are limited by many different factors such as wealth, geographical position and power, which all influence their foreign policy (Petrič 2013). For this reason, it is more likely that the foreign policy of a rich and powerful state reflects the de facto vision of its political actors than a small and powerless nation that is more likely to approach the issue of foreign policy in the light of pragmatic compromises.

2.2. American Foreign Policy

The United State of America is certainly one of if not the most powerful country currently interacting with other nations on the global arena. It also has a unique modern history providing us ample examples of its foreign policy. Joseph Fry provides evidence for the unique geographical position of the United States as a primary reason for its ability to tailor its foreign policy to a greater extent than those bound by contested borders or hostile nations. Highlighting that American natural protection provided by the two oceans makes it less likely to face direct retaliation as a result of foreign policy decisions (Fry 2012). It is evident that foreign policy is seen as a vital part of American political practices both in the country and around the world. Johnstone & Priest highlights the seemingly unarguable effect that foreign policy has on domestic voter patterns, suggesting that the foreign policy of the nation is

considered of utmost importance even for the citizenry, who punish or reward presidential candidates in accordance with their foreign policy (Johnstone & Priest 2017). Zeiler & McMahon describes U.S. diplomacy as the primary factor in turning the United States from a poor former British colony to a world superpower, arguing for the importance of diplomatic efforts both in peace and in war time (Zeiler & McMahon 2012). This highlights the importance of understanding American foreign policy as it seems to largely affect both domestic policy decisions, but also because it has left America as the arguable world leader and thus any decisions made can have an impact on the larger global arena. Gaining a deeper understanding in what motivates American foreign policy can provide us with a crucial tool for understanding previous behavior and for predicting future reactions that the U.S. may have to conflicts of interest presented on the world stage. As American foreign policy is largely, or exclusively, produced and enacted by the executive branch of the American government, understanding the mindset and fundamental beliefs of the commander-in-chief is a vital first step of exploring American foreign policy.

2.3. Trump and the Shift in Foreign Policy.

The current president of the United States is Donald J. Trump. He surprised the American political establishment when he as an inexperienced outsider won the 2016 presidential election. He has been a contrast to traditional American political behavior and rhetoric since he first began campaigning for the presidency (Kivisto 2017). Many academics argue that the same is true for his foreign policy. Traditionally the U.S. foreign policy has been largely consistent with some shifts stemming from international events that rearranged international power hierarchies (Inboden 2008, Zeiler & McMahon 2012). Since Trump released his National Security Strategy (NSS) in 2017 many voices in the field suggest that there is a stark contrast between Trump's suggested foreign policy and that of the traditional political establishment in the U.S. where the primary observation seems to be an increasingly realist position on foreign affairs. Podhoretz writes "That is why I think what Trump and his people have done over the past 14 months represents a new and genuine realism" (Podhoretz 2018: p. 16). Khalilzad agrees, "The hallmark of the Donald Trump administration's National Security Strategy (NSS), which was released in December, is the idea of "principled realism." This marks a decided shift from the policies of Trump's two immediate predecessors." (Khalilzad 2018: p.27). This suggests there is an observable shift in American foreign policy

between the current American president and his predecessors. But why is the seeming shift occurring? And is there a shift at all? As we argue above, the American foreign policy is largely stipulated by the president himself and as such it would provide interesting support for, or refutation of this claim to determine whether or not we can observe a similar shift in the personal beliefs of the president when compared to previous executives. To determine whether or not this shift is connected to the individual worldview of the president we must examine a few things. We must determine to what extent the current American president, Trump, differs in his worldview from his predecessors. If the shift in policy is in fact a result of a shift in personal beliefs we should expect a great shift in their personal worldview. If the current President is not painting a different picture of the world in general terms than that of other presidents, this shift must be explained by other means, if indeed there is a shift at all. To be able to explore this question we must first establish what beliefs it is plausible to expect.

2.4. International Realism and Thomas Hobbes.

The realist tradition is in many ways the first theory of international interactions. It specifically tries to explain how and why states will interact and does so by extrapolating ideas from classic political philosophy to the international realm. There are three primary philosophical contributors that form the backbone of the realist tradition, Thucydides, Machiavelli and Hobbes. Thucydides, being the first of the three by a large margin, presents his ideas of the significance of power in his work *The History of the Peloponnesian war*. Thucydides depicts the Peloponnesian war as a struggle between the Greek states for power, as a conflict guided by competition and not morals (Thucydides 431 BC). The next great contributor, Niccolò Machiavelli, asserts that morals is of no concern for those who seek political success. In his work *The Prince*, he guides an Italian noble in his future political career and explains how morals makes a leader weak and ineffective (Machiavelli 1515). Both Machiavelli and Thucydides highlights that it is the facts of human nature that prohibits morals from being effective or even desired. Continuing that thought process is arguably the most important philosophical contributor to the realist tradition, Hobbes, who outlines the state of humanity as being dependent on a created framework of juridical rules in order to avoid constant conflict (Hobbes 1994). Hobbes describes the state that humanity finds

themselves in before these rules are created, as the state of nature. This has in modern times arguably become the backbone for the realist traditions portrayal of the international realm.

The realist tradition began in the 20th century as a critique towards idealist ideologies that at the time dominated the field of international politics. Primarily spearheaded by Edward Hallett Carr and Hans J. Morgenthau, the realist movement tried to provide a comprehensive explanation for the world of international relations that would explain the seemingly unending stream of international violence that the late 19th and early 20th century provided. This led them to adopt Hobbes theories of the state of nature and proclaim that the world was fundamentally the same as the one Hobbes portrayed in his works (Korab-Karpowicz 2017). As the movement developed further, and time elapsed, the international realm changed from the earlier days of the 20th century, and proponents of idealism began to surface within the field on international relations and even within the movement of realism itself. These contributors became known as neorealists as they combined traditional realist ideas with ideas of pluralism and interdependence (Korab-Karpowicz 2017). Many consider Robert Keohane to be the most famous of these neorealist thinkers. But recently the school of realism are experiencing a revival. Authors like Kenneth Waltz are criticizing what he portrays as a simplistic rendition of the world both on the part of the pluralists and on the part of the classical realists. Claiming that realism has held on to a too conservative view of international relations where only states are considered legitimate actors (Korab-Karpowicz 2017, Keohane 1986). This critique of both pluralists and the traditional realists has been dubbed neo-classical realism and leaves us today with no less than three major schools of thought within the realist tradition (Korab-Karpowicz 2017).

What unites these three schools of realism is their reliance on Hobbesian thought as a cornerstone for their interpretation of the international system (Korab-Karpowicz 2017, Keohane 1986, Beitz 1979). Due to this division, we argue for the value in backtracking these assumptions to their source, namely the works of Hobbes. Doing this will allow us to potentially shed light on why he is so important for international relations, something that many has undoubtedly tried in the almost five hundred years since his publication of *Leviathan*, but more importantly it will allow us to bypass any potential partisan bias in the interpretation of his works that might have occurred in the intradisciplinary struggle for supremacy that may be a result of the differing views that exists within the field of political realism. The fact that we do not have to adhere to any particular school of interpretation when approaching Hobbes' works gives us a better opportunity to discern eventual contradictions,

theoretical nuances and philosophical complexities that his works contain. Therefore, we seek to formulate our own interpretation of Hobbes political theories to better be able to apply them in our research. The word Hobbesian has to this point in the text been used to mean an academic likeness to Hobbes' works, largely shared by the field of international relations and foreign policy. From this point onward the usage of Hobbesian refers to our personal interpretation of Hobbes' ideas and the theories presented in depth in chapter three of this thesis.

2.6. What we seek to Contribute.

Our vision for this thesis is to use the theoretical principles of Hobbes and apply them to the case of American foreign policy. More specifically, we seek to determine whether or not Donald Trump's foreign policy provides any considerable shift in terms of its theoretical connection to Hobbes from his predecessor Barack Obama. As presented above ample studies have been done that presents the pragmatic shift that Trump has made in his interactions with the outside world, but none have so far studied his ideas in connection to a Hobbesian understanding of the world. We argue that providing evidence for or against such a connection can help us understand on what grounds this shift in policy has been made. In line with the authors that have studied Hobbes in an international setting, we believe that his relevance can not be ignored for these questions. Therefore, we seek to determine whether the motivations given by the Presidents for their foreign policy can be connected to a Hobbesian model, and if so to what extent? Trying to answer if and to what extent Trump's foreign policy is more Hobbesian than his predecessor by analyzing how they understand the world and how they want to act within it. America is a great case to study as the President has principal power over how foreign policy is envisioned and enacted, giving us the possible task of trying to discern the underlying motivations for such policy. The fact that the U.S. is seemingly less hindered than many other countries by power limitations puts greater value on the core beliefs that form its foreign policy as they have a great possibility to act on those beliefs.

3. Theoretical Framework.

In this chapter we create the theoretical foundation for this thesis. We present our interpretation of Hobbes works and how we construct our own understanding of Hobbes political theory through reason and deduction and how we see that fit to apply to an international setting. We highlight the difference in moral conditions that exist before and after the creation of the social contract and what implications that have for the international realm. Finally, we create a theoretical framework consisting of an empirical and a moral dimension deduced from Hobbes work, containing indicators that are possible to apply to our selected data presented in chapter five.

3.1. Hobbes and Anarchy.

Here we will explore the nature of Hobbes' concept of anarchy, the reasons for it, what role morality plays in his conception of anarchy, the consequences of anarchy focusing on fear and conflict and the connection that Hobbes makes to the international realm. First, we establish what Hobbes mean with "*the state of Nature*". Then, we continue by exploring Hobbes moral dimension and introduce the morality of the "*law of Nature*" and explain why an established system of laws are required to allow a transition to more sophisticated moral behavior. Finally, we highlight how the social contract and the creation of the institution of a sovereign allows for that creation of *civil laws* and how that affects morality and why that matters for the international realm.

In the *Leviathan* Hobbes gives us his last take on what is referred to as the State of Nature in chapter 13 "On the Natural Condition of Mankind, As Concerning Their Felicity, and Misery". We argue that the state of nature is to be understood as a hypothetical tool constructed to explain fundamental concepts of human behavior rather than as an historical depiction of an actual period in time. The Natural Condition of Man refers to a system in which no governing body has been established to force individual's behavior to cohere to societal laws and expectations, and so they must act in accordance only with their own primary motivating forces. In other words, how mankind has (and should) behave in the state of Anarchy. Hobbes describe individuals in the state of nature as equal. With this he does not mean that there are no differences between individuals, but that there is a unifying factor that surpasses potential differences in ability of intellect or strength, namely the ease with which anyone can be killed by others "For as to the strength of the body, the weakest has the

strength to kill the strongest, either by secret machination or by confederacy” (Hobbes 1994: p.74). This equality leads to competition, as anyone has the possibility to claim the finite resources of the world. Hobbes outlines that the resources can be of various nature, not only material. He gives three reasons for why conflicts may occur in the state of nature, vanity (personal glory), diffidence and competition (Hobbes 1994: p.76). The common thing for all these is that they are not something that can possibly be shared equally with others.

Competition is a personal motivator that drives individuals to outperform their fellows in order to achieve various goals. Glory cannot be equally shared, or no one is in fact glorious at all. And diffidence is the result of unequal distribution of material or spiritual wealth or resources. And the competition, always fundamentally created by equality, inevitably leads to hostilities.

“If any two men desire the same thing, which nevertheless they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies... And from this diffidence of one another, there is no way for any man to secure himself so reasonable as anticipation that is, by force or wiles to master the persons of all men he can, so long till he see no other power great enough to endanger him”(Hobbes 1994: p.75).

The only reasonable thing to do in the absence of law is to secure your position to such an extent that no one any longer can pose a feasible threat to your life and accumulate power that is great enough relative to your competitors that you are not in danger. Hobbes highlights that the accumulation of power necessary to be sufficient protection in the state of nature is not determined by any certain thing, but in relation to the power of others. “The multitude sufficient to confide in for our security is not determined by any certain number, but by comparison with the enemy we fear...” (Hobbes 1994: p. 107). This leads Hobbes to describe the state of nature as a place of constant war, where it is innately impossible to trust others as no institution exist to enforce agreements between parties, and as such everyone must fend for themselves in accordance with their own interests. But this is not at all a description of a never-ending conflict wherein mankind is constantly struggling in physical battle with each other, rather it is a state of constant fear for such a conflict and the realization that the threat of violence is ever looming over every individual, “For WAR consisteth not in battle only, or the act of fighting, but in a tract of time wherein the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known” (Hobbes 1994: p.76).

But he continues to clarify the motivations for behavior in the state of nature through introducing a moral dimension to his reasoning. “In such a war of every man against every man, this is also is consequent: that nothing can be unjust” (Hobbes 1994: p.78) which we argue does not only speak of *jus in bello* but also to *jus ad bellum*, i.e. that neither the *behavior in*, or *reasons for* war is of any concern for individuals in the state of nature. This stems from the absence of established laws, and in the absence of rules, how could anything be unjust? Hobbes’ conclusion from this is that mankind will band together through covenants, a social contract, and serve a supreme leader that can establish a juridical framework that ends the war of all against all, and eliminate the constant fear of harm, a Sovereign referred to as the Leviathan. This has led to a strong debate on the morals or absence thereof present in the state of nature, famously involving Leo Strauss, Noel Malcolm and others (Malcolm 2002, Strauss 1950, Keohane 1986). We argue that Hobbes does make a moral evaluation of individuals in the state of nature. Hobbes does speak of the moral realm in so far as he considers there to be universal moral aspects to the actions of individuals at least at some level. The terms *just* and *unjust* which Hobbes use frequently, are to be considered *jural* in their nature as they refer to the ability to conform or diverse from laws rather than to the moral standing of a certain action. There is an abundance of concepts that can be described as universally moral explored by Hobbes in the *Leviathan*, such as equity, inequality and pride, all these are clearly connected to a concept of virtuous and vices that seemingly precede the establishment of a sovereign. As such we argue that the moral dimension is seemingly inherent to humanity even in the state of nature and that it is the mere absence of regulations that forces individuals to adapt their behavior to their physical situation. The most prominent of these moral assertions is the undeniable right to personal security, or the right to protect yourself from harm by any means necessary, specified in Hobbes concept of the *law of nature*.

“A LAW OF NATURE (*lex naturalis*) is a precept or general rule, found out by reason, by which a man is forbidden to do that which is destructive of his life or taketh away the means of preserving the same, and to omit that by which he thinketh it may be best preserved” (Hobbes 1994: p.79)

This seems to be understood as a natural right by Hobbes and a firm basis for our assertion that there is an existence of morality that predates the establishment of a society or a system of laws. We argue that the main point of confusion is the misconstruction of Hobbes’ use of Justice and Injustice as the prime *moral* component “Justice and Injustice are none of the

faculties neither of the body, nor mind. If they were, they might be in a man that were alone in the world, as well as his sense and passions. They are qualities that relate to men in society, not in solitude” (Hobbes 1994: p.78). When examining this topic further, we can see that Hobbes differentiates between different types of law.

“Civil and natural law are not of different kinds but different parts of law, whereof one part (being written) is called civil, the other (unwritten), natural [law]... But the right of nature, that is, the natural liberty of man, may by the civil law be abridged...” (Hobbes 1994: p.175).

If we approach this paragraph with a previous understanding that Hobbes does consider morality as preexistent in the state of nature, this statement supports that idea. The description of his natural law is easily translatable into a modern interpretation of a “natural right”-system of morality (Timmons 2013: pp.71-89). This is unarguably connected to a notion of morality that seemingly predates the social contract as he argues that it is *wrong* for individuals to break the law of nature even without an established system of laws. Hobbes makes it exceptionally clear that he does not believe in juridical practices predating the social contract and as such this assertion becomes much more understandable if we consider natural law to be a statement regarding natural rights in the moral sense rather than in the juridical. But, after the creation of the covenant of the social contract, the sovereign creates an environment in which humanity can act in accordance with a moral framework through a juridical system of laws. Hobbes clarifies that the sovereign is not bound by the social contract, “... because the right of bearing the person of them all is given to him they make sovereign by covenant only of one to another, and not of him to any of them, there can happen no breach of the covenant on the part of the sovereign...” (Hobbes 1994: p.111). Crucially, even though the sovereign is the sole judge of what is sufficient protection for his subjects, the whole institution of the sovereign is driven by that very purpose, to protect those who covenanted away their natural freedom via the social contract.

“And because the end of this institution [the sovereign] is the peace and defence of them all, and whosoever has right to the end has right to the means, it belongeth of right to whatsoever man or assembly that hath the sovereignty, to be judge both of the means of peace and defence, and also of the hindrances and disturbances of the same, and to whatsoever he shall think necessary to be done, both beforehand (for the

preserving of peace and security) and, when peace and security are lost, for the recovery of the same.” (Hobbes 1994: p.113).

The reason for entering the social contract and covenanting away the natural rights and freedoms is to achieve physical safety, and as such we argue that the Sovereign is depicted as a *de facto* supreme *moral* actor with duty to ensure this outcome. Even though Hobbes is careful to explain the impossibility for the sovereign to break the social contract, because he is not a part of it, it is clear that he considers the sovereign to be driven by achieving the purpose for which his institution was erected in the first place and as such we argue that the sovereign is considered to have a moral obligation to abide by the given purpose, even if he is the *de facto* creator of it since he can decide what constitutes peace and security. As such the creation of a *jural* framework also creates a supreme moral because the same process creates a sovereign who is inherently driven by moral incentives to fulfill his duty, and has the possibility to act in accordance with this moral commandment as there is now, after the social contract, a possibility to establish civil laws that guarantee the desired effect of this moral attribute.

To conclude, we identify two main aspects of Hobbes’ State of Nature connecting to the International Realm, *moral* and *empirical* claims. Empirical claims made by Hobbes’ are statements where the world is portrayed in a certain way or *how the world is*. As explained above he does this in multiple ways throughout his texts and this is arguably the foundation for his entire corpus. We separate these empirical claims from his moral claims. With moral claims we mean the normative suggestions that Hobbes gives to his readers regarding how an individual or sovereign is supposed or required to act within his empirically established system. It is necessary to separate these dimensions from each other to be able to analyze a third party’s (i.e., Trump’s or Obama’s) similarity to Hobbes with any clarity as there is a potential for disagreement over both the moral and empirical dimensions. An actor may be inclined to portray the world in accordance with Hobbes’ views but differ on its implication i.e. the moral aspects of such a system. Likewise, the opposite may be true, where the world may be described in a different way but the implications for actors in the system may be the same as those suggested by Hobbes.

3.2 Connection to Foreign Policy: Hobbes' Empirical Claims.

Hobbes makes relatively few remarks to the nature of the international realm in his works. Most of *Leviathan* (and many of Hobbes' other works) are centered on the domestic political realm and, as described above, the maintaining and creation of society itself. But there are mentioning's in Hobbes works on the nature of the international realm as well.

“Concerning the offices of one sovereign to another, which are comprehended in that law which is commonly called the law of nations, I need not say anything in this place, because the law of nations and the law of nature is the same thing” (Hobbes 1994: p.233).

Here we see a clear portrayal of the international system as anarchical like the state of nature. Hobbes clarifies that when multiple sovereign institutions interact, they will follow the same rules as individuals did in the state of nature, ergo accumulate power great enough in relation to his adversaries to ensure that his goals are achieved. The goals for a sovereign, as explained in paragraph 3.1. must be the physical security of the subjects. As such the law of nature is expanded from referring to the unquestionable moral conviction with which any *individual* can protect his own life and transfers the same right to the sovereigns extended right and duty to protect the *collective* life of all his subjects. As all sovereign who may interact on the global arena posses the same right to this end, they are all justified in taking any and all actions that contribute to this goal, leaving them in a state of competition in which not all can succeed. Much like the state that individuals experience in the state of nature. Indeed, when Hobbes speaks directly of International Relations it is often on a question of international conflict or war,

“But though there had never been any time wherein particular men were in a condition of war one against another, yet in all times kings and persons of sovereign authority, because of their independency, are in continual jealousies and in the state and posture of gladiators, having their weapons pointing and their eyes fixed on one another, that is, their forts, garrisons, and guns upon the frontiers of their kingdoms, and continual spies upon their neighbours, which is a posture of war” (Hobbes 1994: p.78).

Signifying the importance of conflict on the international arena, which like in the state of nature, is driven by the competition for means of power. But like in the state of nature, this war is not an allegory for open conflict, but rather an understanding that nothing will prevent

a conflict from escalating if one of the parties engaged perceives it to be beneficial for their interests. As explained previously, it is referring to a state of fear, rather than a state of constant physical confrontation. From this we conclude that Hobbes empirically views the world as anarchical even on the international level, but the shift to a post social contract world creates an international realm, that is home to supreme moral agents in sovereigns, creating fundamentally different *reasons* for acting in accordance with the law of nature.

3.3. Connection to Foreign Policy: Hobbes' Moral Claims.

The previous section establishes a perceived readiness for war as commonplace for nations, but to make the conclusion that war is therefore the primary objective or modus operandi of sovereigns may be a rushed conclusion.

“... the Militia [in modern terms: military, authors note], was of old reckoned in the number of the gaining Arts, under the notion of Booting or taking Prey; ... But this kind of riches, is not be brought into rule and fashion: For the Militia in order to profit, is like a Dye wherewith many lose their estates, but few improve them.”
(Hobbes 2013: p.293).

This suggests a shift from his interpretation of the state of nature to his view on the international realm. Here it is suggested that it is futile to seek expansion for the purpose of prosperity, contrary to the state of nature, where glory and competition is considered perfectly acceptable motivators for physical conflict. It is true still, that Hobbes advocates for the necessity of readiness for battle and states it as a fact that nations seem to behave in this way. But the seeming importance of conflict may not be motivated by the same things as it is for individuals. Rather it seems to be motivated by the sovereign's prime responsibility to protect his subjects.

“The benefits of subjects respecting this life only, may be distributed into foure kindes. 1. That they be defended against forraign enemies. 2. That Peace be preserved at home. 3. That they be enrich't as much as may consist with publique security. 4. That they enjoy a harmelesse liberty; ...” (Hobbes 2013: p.287).

And that to do so requires the possibility to intervene against other hostile forces.

“...its necessary for the peoples defence, that they be fore-armed. ... before the danger be instant; for the listing of Souldiers, and taking up of Armes after a blow is given, is too late, at least if not impossible” (Hobbes 2013: p.289).

As covered in paragraph 3.1. Hobbes perceives it as necessary for the sovereign to be motivated by a moral presumption that it is the duty of the institution of the sovereign to protect the greater good, and that the greater good specifically is the physical security of his subjects. It is important to remember that this physical security is not that of every individual subject but of the greater whole who covenanted to institute a sovereign, and as such sacrifice of life is perfectly acceptable if it serves to preserve peace and security. In fact, any means are acceptable to reach the goals of securing the covenanting citizenry “And every sovereign hath the same right, in procuring the safety of his people, that any particular man can have, in procuring safety of his own body” (Hobbes 1994: p. 233). From this fact, that actors on the international stage is driven by one lone concern, Hobbes primary moral claim, is the unquestionable righteousness which any sovereign has in securing the safety of his subjects and his supreme duty to do so.

3.5. Research Framework.

As we have presented above, we identify two main dimensions in which Hobbes' ideas are relevant for interpreting claims about the world, the empirical and the moral. These two categories will be the foundation of our theoretical framework. Furthermore, we have decided to focus on specific areas of interest for analysis in the data that we have determined inductively from the material, in which our selected data present claims. Doing this is not an attempt to be selective with our evidence but rather an assurance that we can plausibly compare the texts in a clear way by comparing them topically instead of wholly. The topics we have selected are: Military and Nuclear Weapons, International Allies and The International System and Americas Role. All these topics are plausibly connected to the perceived empirical and moral facts of the international system and does therefore serve us well when trying to determine how the texts examined in the analysis portray the world in those terms and how connected they may be to our interpretation of Hobbes' original theory.

Table 1. Research Framework.

Is Trumps Foreign Policy Doctrine increasingly Hobbesian compared to his predecessor Obama?	Trump – The 2017 National Security Strategy.	Obama – The 2010 National Security Strategy.	Hobbes – Claims made in text. What to look for in the analysis.
<u>Empirical Assertions on:</u>			
Military and Nuclear Forces.	?	?	Highlighting the importance of self-reliance in defense questions.
America and International Allies.	?	?	Highlighting the untrusting nature of cooperation and alliances if not for direct purposes of defense.
The International System and America’s Role.	?	?	The world is a place of anarchy where actors must do their best to maintain their physical protection.
<u>Moral Assertions on:</u>			
Military and Nuclear Weapons.	?	?	The right and necessity of ensuring protection of the nation/sovereignty by any means.
America and International Allies.	?	?	No inherent value in cooperation. Prosperity secondary to security.
The International System and America’s Role.	?	?	No moral requirement to safeguard interests outside of the community.

4. Specified Aim and Research Question.

The aim of this study is to examine if American foreign policy can be understood with the theoretical frame of reference provided by Hobbes in his works. Furthermore we aim to test if Donald Trump's seeming shift in policy correlates with an increasing likeness or disconnection from Hobbesian thought compared to his predecessor Barack Obama. We will do this by comparing their first National Security Strategies in office, Obama's from 2010 and Trump's from 2017. We will analyze the texts and compare them to Hobbes with our two identified themes: morality and empirical claims, leading us to the specific research question:

To what degree is Trump's foreign policy doctrine more Hobbesian than his predecessor Obama? How is the international realm Perceived by Trump and Obama in the National Security Strategies? And how do the National Security Strategies prescribe America to act within the international realm?

These themes will be applied to three specific topics: Military and Nuclear Weapons, International Allies and The International System and Americas Role, in the National Security Strategies to further clarify our comparison. These topics are chosen inductively from the two National Security Strategies and will be analyzed with a qualitative text analysis for which we provide details in chapter 5.

5. Method and Design.

This paper aims to compare the 2010 and 2017 National Security Strategies of the United States of America on a theoretical level to the texts of Hobbes. We will analyze the language of the texts and see to what degree they can be connected to a Hobbesian world view by analyzing two different primary factors: the empirical and the moral. In this chapter we will argue for our case selection and describe how we are going to approach the analysis, as well as argue for the strengths and weaknesses of our choices from an academic standpoint.

5.1 Design: A comparative study between the 2010 and 2017 National Security Strategies and Thomas Hobbes' works, an Inductive Strategy.

To be able to apply our presented theoretical framework to the data, this paper will employ a comparative design seeking to compare the findings in the national security strategies from 2010 and 2017. The comparative approach will allow us to identify any potential likeness or difference between the texts themselves and the likeness or difference between any one of them and our theoretical proposal. The study will be focused around our two main theoretical concepts namely Hobbes empirical and moral claims on the international realm, that we arrived at through a process of deduction and reasoning, detailed in chapter three. To be able to compare our data we have used our theoretical framework to identify indicators of language that we argue are indicative of a theoretical likeness to our model of Hobbesian thought. But for the purposes of this study, the primary objective is to discern the portrayed worldview of American presidents in the data, and as such we will analyze the data inductively to ensure that potential diversions from our theoretical framework are not disregarded. The inductive approach will also allow us to interpret the reasonings presented in the data more carefully and be able to detect any potentially obfuscated references that are indicators in line with or against our proposed theoretical model, thus maximizing our chances of finding all relevant statements and contexts necessary to answer our research question.

5.2 Our source of Data: National Security Strategies.

This study will use two National Security Strategies as material for the comparison, one written under the Trump presidency in 2017, the other under Obamas presidency in 2010. We consider them to be primary sources containing the executives' vision for foreign policy. We argue, that the choice to examine primary source instead of secondary will give us a more authentic view of the respective executives world view. The National Security Strategies contains goals for American foreign policy and claims about the state of the world that requires action on the part of the American executive. The fact that other scholars in the field sees the National Security Strategies as indicative of foreign policy engagements as presented in chapter two, reaffirms the decision to study these texts. We have inductively decided to focus on three topics in the data: Military and Nuclear Weapons, International Allies and The International System and Americas Role. These topics are selected from their recurrence in the text and from the fact that these can be compared between the two primary documents as they both contain sufficient claims made on these topics to provide a ground for interpretation.

What is lost when disregarding secondary sources such as media or academic texts are the opportunity to scrutinize and comment on the specific actions taken by the Presidents' as the National Security Strategies only contains normative suggestions and descriptions of the world rather than executive orders. We do not consider this inability to be a hindrance for this study as we only seek to examine to which degree the worldviews of the executives' can be connected to a Hobbesian model, rather than to explore the factual outcomes of their suggested actions.

5.3 Method: Content Analysis.

There are two established form of text analysis frequently used by scholars in the social sciences and International Relations and Political science in particular: Discourse Analysis and Content Analysis (Halperin & Heath 2017). Discourse analysis, though useful if seeking to establish a better understanding of a behavior or action as a consequence of larger multidimensional structures, is ill-suited for an analysis of a specific statement or set of statements if they are to be understood by themselves. The aim of discourse analysis is to reveal how discursive practices creates meanings through production and consumption of various texts and as such is better suited for a study interested in those things. As our question

does not need to examine those effects in order to be answered we opt to employ a traditional content analysis instead. Content analysis is a method that can be used on a wide variety of texts and since this paper is concerned with two different primary documents, we find it suitable to apply in this case. Through a process of coding we aim to interpret and compare the chosen National Security Strategies for analysis with our interpretation of Hobbes to be able to answer our question. There are several options available within this method with the two most prominent in the political and international relations tradition being the contextualist approach championed by the Skinner's school on the one hand, and Marxists of various denominations on the other, and the textualist school of interpretation associated with Leo Strauss among others. This paper employs the latter method close of textualist analysis as we aim to examine the National Security Strategies as they are written and not to compare them to their respective political environment and culture or other outside factors. Instead we want to approach them in the way we believe the writers intended and search for statements and concepts within those texts that we can compare to the theoretical basis we have established in chapter three. This is an inductive method of interpretation where we will seek to find eventual connections to our theoretical model rather than deduce our findings in accordance with specific indicators, and therefore the best fit for our elected design.

5.4 Limits of the Research, the Inability to Generalize.

The purpose of this study is to answer a very specific topical research question. The chosen design and method will not lend itself to generalizing claims of the conclusions. Similarly, the data chosen is too narrow to allow us to make generalizing conclusions, with one exception. The data selected is representing two different politically established figures of prominence in modern American politics (as both attributed authors are elected American Presidents) that are considered to be from different political bases, and thus in the event that we find a strong connection to our theory in both of the primary documents analyzed it will allow us to make some limited claims as to the likelihood of the relevance of Hobbesian thought in modern American politics. To be able to say something certain about this more data would need to be analyzed of course, and as such and claims of generalization that could potentially be presented connected to this topic will be done in an effort to further interest in that specific question rather than in an effort to dissuade other academics from investigating the particular topic of Hobbesian relevance in international contemporary politics by

providing an answer to it. Another potential critique of this thesis is the reliance on the personal motivation of Trump and Obama, rather than seeking to interpret the outcome of their foreign policy and what effects it has or have had on America and the rest of the world. This seeming obstacle is not a crucial hindrance for this study, as we argue for the worth in exploring to what extent personal motivations place a role in foreign policy in this case. As well as the inherent worth in exploring the foundational beliefs held by the executives of one of the most powerful nations in the world.

5.6 Validity, Reproducibility and Reliability.

The choice of an inductive method is not necessarily an issue for the reproducibility of this study, but it requires potential re-attempts at creating this study to fully understand and accept our theoretical reasoning presented in chapter three. It also requires us to carefully motivate any connections drawn between our interpretation of Hobbesian theory and claims in the data. As we endeavor to present any similarities or dissimilarities regarding the two primary documents and our theoretical framework, we argue that there is a high level of reproducibility in the study even with the caveats presented above. The same is true for reliability. We see no reason to doubt the reliability of this study provided the acceptance of our method and our theory. To conclude we find both reliability and reproducibility to be strong in this paper, and consider it a strength of the thesis, even if it does require a full acceptance and understanding of our theoretical model in order to achieve this.

When it comes to validity, we argue that our careful presentation of the arguments should be sufficient for an internally valid study. The risk of “missing the mark” on our topic seems plausibly small as we have established the prominence of this debate throughout previous chapters. There is of course a risk for the study to produce a result that leaves our theoretical construction entirely useless. It is possible to imagine that neither of the primary documents contains enough claims to clearly state one thing or the other regarding our theoretical base, but this risk is plausibly small for reasons explained throughout previous chapters and even if that were to be the case it does not reduce the internal validity of the study. Given that we manage to analyze the material in the data with the employment of our theoretical framework, we still perceive the study to be internally coherent and see no reasons to argue otherwise. As already presented, the external validity of the study is not a concern for the

importance of this study. The inability to generalize is not important for answering our research question and as such we will avoid making generalizing claims.

6. Analysis.

In this chapter we will apply our theoretical framework presented in chapter three to our selected material presented in chapter five, to be able to perform our close textual analysis and answer our research question To what degree is Trump's foreign policy doctrine more Hobbesian than his predecessor Obama? How is the international realm Perceived by Trump and Obama in the National Security Strategies? And how do the National Security Strategies prescribe America to act within the international realm?

In order to answer this we will analyze three topics in the material: military- and nuclear forces, International allies and The International System and America's Role in the world, and compare them on the two theoretical levels connected to Hobbes' work presented in chapter three: empirical and moral statements. After finishing this comparison, we seek to be able to answer our research question in our results chapter, as well as possibly explore the relevance of Hobbes' work as a theoretical component in a modern political setting from an academic perspective.

For the purpose of this analysis we have decided to divide this chapter by separating the materials to be able to first analyze them individually and thereafter compare them. We argue that this creates better understanding for our arguments and will allow the reader to better follow our process of reasoning by being as transparent as possible with our analytical approach.

6.1. Obamas' 2010 National Security Strategy.

Obamas' 2010 National Security Strategy was the first NSS he was responsible for as President. It contains many statements about what world he has inherited from his predecessor but lacks in direct references to the Bush administration. He also presents his vision for how America should act given these circumstances. This is the first time when the so called "Obama doctrine" is established, a doctrine that is commonly referred to as the doctrine of "necessary force". He predictably covers a wide variety of topics with a varying degree of detail but as we have elected to focus on three specific topics to aid in our evaluation of the document and the comparison to Trumps' NSS from 2017 we will here present our findings on the chosen topics in order, refraining from excessive comments on the document as a whole.

6.1.1. Military and Nuclear Forces.

Obama highlights almost immediately in the document that "This Administration has no greater responsibility than the safety and security of the American people." (National Security Strategy 2010: p.4) This statement in itself is just a general claim too vague to assert specific meanings to, but in the context of the NSS it provides us with some clues as to the priorities of the President at the time. Over all we identify a clear focus on the necessity for a strong, capable and ready military to be able to combat the enduring and emerging threats posed by the international realm. But to determine to what degree these assertions stem from a Hobbesian understanding of the world system we must examine the precise statements closer.

It is clear that Obama still perceives engagement with historically common international adversaries, i.e. hostile foreign nations as a continuously important part of his foreign policy strategy, but also that he does not see this as the only or even primary security risk facing America. "The threats to our people, our homeland, and our interests have shifted dramatically in the last 20 years. Competition among states endure [...] In addition to facing enemies on traditional battlefields, the United States must now be prepared for asymmetric threats..." (National Security Strategy 2010: p. 17). By this statement alone it is clear the Obama does view international competition as inevitable, something we can definitely find support for in Hobbes remarks on the competitive nature of relationships between sovereigns. However, Obamas' focus on inter-state conflict is highly specified. Although he holds it as a realistic threat in the current world climate, he goes further and specifies how he imagines

such a conflict would take shape. "... There is no greater threat to the American people than weapons of mass destruction, particularly the danger posed by the pursuit of nuclear weapons by violent extremists and their proliferation to additional states." (National Security Strategy 2010: p. 4). Following the same logic of a nuclear threat, he also argues for the necessity to not only disarm others but the U.S. as well.

"While this goal [a world without nuclear weapons] will not be reached during this Administration, its active pursuit and eventual achievement will increase global security..." (National Security Strategy 2010: p.23). "And we will seek a new treaty that verifiably ends the production of fissile materials intended for use in nuclear weapons" (National Security Strategy 2010: p.23)

This highlights the belief that a nuclearized world would not only increase the severity of outcome in case of a conflict, it increases the risk for conflict altogether and that nuclear weapons poses a security threat in and of themselves. So, a nuclear disarmament of U.S. nuclear stockpiles along with the capabilities of American adversaries is clearly depicted as desirable. Obama continues to address states that are at the time of writing pursuing nuclear weapons capabilities (North Korea and Iran) with a threat of a nothing's-of-the-table solution to the perceived increased risk to the United States. "If they ignore their international obligations, we will pursue multiple means to increase their isolation and bring them into compliance..." (National Security Strategy 2010: p.24). Contemplating this sentence, it seems like the increased risk of conflict is not necessarily stemming from an increased foreign hostility but from the obligation to protect American lives resulting in a necessitated possibility to de-facto start a conflict preemptively to neutralize the foreign nuclear threat. This portrays a fundamental belief in both the moral correctness in defending your group as the sovereign elect, even at the cost of lives on both sides. Much like our interpretation of Hobbes greater good approach described in chapter three. And, the understanding of the possibility to act in such a way within the current world system, also coinciding with Hobbes' view of inter-community interactions.

6.1.2. International allies and the United States.

Obama's strategy is centered around the concept of American allies in many ways. Both for the purpose of American and global prosperity as well as joint security.

"...we will pursue bilateral and multilateral trade agreements that advance our shared prosperity..." (National Security Strategy 2010: p.4) "America's national security

depends on these vibrant alliances, and we must engage them as active partners in addressing global and regional security proprieties and harnessing new opportunities to advance common interests.” (National Security Strategy 2010: p.11).

This reliance on cooperation both in matters of security and prosperity is highly contradictory to Hobbes essential self-reliance and also contradicts Obama’s own statements on the importance of military self-reliance highlighted in section 6.1.1. and thus, we must examine the meaning of these statements more closely as they are in many ways incompatible with previous statements.

For the purposes of cooperation in security one specific statement stand out among the rest as distinguishing Obama from the Hobbesian ideas, “We are working to build deeper and more effective partnerships with other key centers of influence, ... with the recognition that power, in an interconnected world, is no longer a zero sum game.” (National Security Strategy 2010: pp. 3). This reveals a lot about Obama’s view of the world in both its current and past states. The notion that the world has previously been in a state of zero-sum power relations is an acknowledgement of both that the world has been in a position of international anarchy and that the right thing to do in such a situation would have been to increase and solidify relative power. But the assertion that this is no longer the case also reveals a fundamental belief in a cooperative system where the survival and prosperity of the community is not only reliant on its self-sufficiency but connected to the global arena through its interactions with other nations. The 2010 NSS also asserts The United States’ willingness to adhere to international norms.

“... [The 2010 NSS] reaffirms America’s commitment to pursue our interests through an international system in which all nations have certain rights and responsibilities.” (National Security Strategy 2010: p. 1). “This engagement [with other countries] will underpin our commitment to an international order based upon rights and responsibilities” (National Security Strategy 2010: p. 3).

But, the wording of these statements reveals an underlying idea that the world may not be as orderly as it seems. The idea that the United States are committed to follow international norms could be interpreted as the wanting to change the world towards this system instead of providing the evidence for that this system is already governing interstate interactions. The fact that they have to be committed i.e. that they are not forced to follow these rules suggests that the rules are not actually binding, but voluntary and as such they must only be followed

to the degree to which it benefits the agents in a specific interaction. This would mean that the international realm, at its core would be of an anarchical structure that is more recognized when the topic of military action is covered in the previous section. If we insert these values into our framework of empirical and moral dimensions of the world system, we find a clear evidence for Obama's desire to create a world system where self-reliance is not as important, and cooperation and non-competition are both fruitful and effective ways to solve disputes, something that contradicts Hobbes theory of anarchy. But there is also an underlying acceptance of a current empirical reality where nations still have the choice to obey the rules or go their own way and may have to be coerced by force to comply with a desired course of action, seemingly accepting Hobbes description of unavoidable anarchy in system that lacks a supreme power.

6.1.3. The International System and America's Role.

The core assertion made in the 2010 NSS on the topic of America's position and the international system, is the claim that America is the de-facto world leader and that both the United States and the rest of the world is better off because of it. In every aspect of inter-state and institutional interaction it is better not only for the U.S. but for everyone if American values and norms guide those interactions. "We have the worlds' largest economy and most powerful military, strong alliances and a vibrant cultural appeal, and a history of leadership in economic and social development" (National Security Strategy 2010: p. 9). The claims made about the current status of American military might and economic strength are difficult to challenge, but the conclusion that this makes America a suitable leader for the world is not as obvious.

"The United States must renew its leadership in the world by building and cultivating the sources of our strength and influence. Our national security depends upon America's ability to leverage our unique national attributes, just as the global security depends upon strong and responsible American leadership." (National Security Strategy 2010: p.7).

This notion of the importance of American leadership in an international setting can be interpreted as Obama's view that the international realm is fundamentally interconnected. This is partly detected in the high value placed on international allies, but it goes further than that. The 2010 NSS in some ways claims that prosperity of other international communities directly affects the prosperity of the American citizenry.

"We want a better future for our children and grandchildren, and we believe that their lives will be better if other peoples' children and grandchildren can live in freedom and prosperity. The belief that our own interests are bound to the interests of those beyond our borders will continue to guide our engagement with nations and peoples." (National Security Strategy 2010: p. 3).

If this view is taken for granted it means that it would be in the interest of not only the United States but for everyone participating in global interaction to enhance the prosperity of every other international actor. On this view it seems natural that the community with the highest prosperity would take on increased responsibility to assure such an international flourishing and not expect equal financial and diplomatic engagement from other less prosperous actors. If we were to accept this view it would mean that the world view detected in previous

paragraphs is contradicted. We find no support in Hobbes' work for this notion of a reciprocal or even altruistic approach to prosperity and security and as such this would contradict our findings on military and alliances stated previously. If we draw from our theoretical understanding of Hobbes in chapter three, he would assert that self-reliance is the only trustworthy course of action to reach desired outcomes. Furthermore, he does not see an inherent connection between the welfare of others and the welfare of the community even when bearing in mind that Hobbes notion of welfare is mostly limited to avoidance of harm. As such the idea of an interconnectedness that is not only a fact but also desired goes against the Hobbesian tendencies we have discerned when other topics are covered by the 2010 NSS.

On the other hand, we can interpret the projection of American values onto the international system as a more callous attempt at expanding the American sphere of influence via soft power i.e., means of power projection that does not involve monetary or military assets. The focus on the importance of maintaining American leadership in international institutions and American leadership in bilateral and multilateral agreements could be an attempt to further national interest rather than enhancing common prosperity. But even if we were to take this more cynical approach to the statements, it provides no seeming conclusion to the contradiction above. For one, the vast amount of statements found that seemingly genuinely underpin the belief in the existence of an interconnected world gives us no reason to question its authenticity. Secondly, it brings us no closer to a reconciliation with Hobbesian ideas. As explained in chapter three, Hobbes clearly cautions the sovereign from expanding the community for any other reason than increased physical protection. In fact, any other motivations for conquest or territorial and influential expanse would return the community to following the rules of the state of nature. Overall, this seem to largely contradict Hobbesian ideas both in moral and empirical terms, showing a genuine belief in the importance of collective prosperity as well as a decreased value placed on self-reliance.

6.1.4. Obama and the 2010 National Security Strategy, Summary.

The 2010 National Security Strategy and by extent, President Obama, is difficult to tie down to a specific set of beliefs about the international realm that would govern his actions. Our applied theory of Hobbesian anarchy fits some of the assertions made in the previous sections, but not to all of them. And even when it does, it is in a camouflaged manner. We identified that he believes in Hobbesian international anarchy on an empirical level, but that his moral conclusions from this differs from Hobbes. He sees the world as anarchical but chooses to portray it as if it were not, as he believes that to be a preferable reality. One exception to this moral diversion is the topic of the military, where he clearly advocates for a sufficient conventional military and nuclear deterrent to ensure national security. This reflects a clear acceptance of an anarchical international system to be governing military matters, and the need it brings for ensuring physical protection. His focus on nuclear disarmament does not contradict this even if it seemingly advocates for reduced military capacity. This is due to the reasons given for this suggested disarmament, the fact is that Obama perceives nuclear weapons to be a threat to physical security in and of themselves and as such must be dealt with just like any other threat to physical security would be. Furthermore, his commitment to disarm hinges on others doing the same and as such he is in no risk of losing relative power by disarming as other nations power would decrease by the same relative amount. On the other topics examined he places a high value on not only national but international prosperity, something that is at its core opposite to the ideas of Hobbes. This could be interpreted as the need to increase prosperity to reduce risk and thereby increase physical security, but this is a stretch of the imagination with little evidence to back it up found in the text. As such, we are content with concluding that on topics aside from military, Obama is not acting in accordance with Hobbesian *morals* even if he seems to accept the core assertion of international anarchy on an *empirical* level.

6.2. Trump's 2017 National Security Report.

Compared to the 2010 NSS the 2017 version is less strategically coherent, which in turn makes it arguably even more interesting to analyze. In contrast to the 2010 NSS it is less clearly divided between strategic vision and current reality but instead presents challenges and solutions in an intertwined manner. A complication with the style of writing in the 2017 NSS is the tendency to portray a great need for restoration of various American properties, be it material or not, as a result of degradation in previous years. This leads the 2017 NSS to be a document that spends a lot of time in criticizing its predecessors seemingly by principle, muddling the actual foreign policy proposals. However, we believe that if we carefully study the statements made, there are indeed underlying values that must have a basis in a fundamental world view i.e. a world view we should be able to discern.

In this section we will analyze the 2017 NSS in the same manner as the 2010 NSS to be able to compare the two on the topic of Hobbesian likeness.

6.2.1. Military and Nuclear Forces.

Much in the spirit of traditional American foreign policy (Ettinger 2018) the 2017 NSS focuses excessively on the importance of military supremacy. It focuses on the inherent importance of having a large-scale combat machinery capable of sustained long-distance operations in multiple locations simultaneously, including national borders and territories of international allies, as well as operations in hostile territory. This focus on scale is not only connected to personnel but also to materiel such as vehicles and weaponry. This exceeds the traditional emphasis on military capability for defensive purposes. The purpose of this focus might partly be to highlight the incompetence of previous commanders-in-chief, but also reveals a view of the world as a place where military action is necessary and that the competence for such is desirable. This belief is very easy to connect to our understanding of the importance of self-reliance in inter-community conflict. The connection between the 2017 NSS and Hobbes here is uncanny, Trumps focus on the numeric scale of the forces is easily recognizable in Hobbes' focus on relative community-scale to deter outside aggressors and highlights the importance of relative power advantage.

This posture is somewhat contradicted by the nuclear weapons posture in the 2017 NSS. The importance of nuclear deterrence and possibility of nuclear exchange as a realistic strategic option seemingly reduce the importance of a large-scale conventional force. Traditional nuclear policy usually requires the maintaining of conventional military capabilities as the

nuclear option is considered off the table for any other purpose than retaliation and defense. But Trump's position is to hold the nuclear option available for military use without considering potential retaliation a prevention for such actions. "Fear of escalation will not prevent the United States from defending our vital interests and those of our allies and partners" (National Security Strategy 2017: p. 31). This contradicts the moral claim made in our theory, that is it the moral duty of the sovereign to protect the citizens of his nation. As described in chapter three, Hobbes cautions against seeking gains at the cost of security no matter what the gains might be. The protection of secondary interests is not seen as important if they endanger the community's ability to avoid harm. Not to consider a nuclear retaliation is to directly endanger the community for other gains (other American interests) such as territorial control, access to materials or the projection of values. The diversion from focusing on physical security contradicts our interpretation of the moral responsibility of the sovereign. However, these motivations perfectly match Hobbes' description of the prime motivators for individuals to engage in conflict in the state of nature, diffidence, glory and competition, detailed in chapter three, and as such reveals an understanding of the international realm as fundamentally anarchical. In conclusion we see a strong empirical connection to Hobbesian anarchy on this topic, even if Trump seemingly diverge from the prescribed actions of a sovereign.

6.2.2. International Allies and the United States.

On the topic of international allies Trump's opinion in the 2017 NSS differs from those portrayed by Obama in 2010. The key to this difference is connected to their view of the international realm in moral terms rather than in empirical ones. Trump is directly explaining the competitive nature of the world and how such a nature affects the desired outcomes and what actions are reasonable to get there in contrast to Obama's more subtle hints at the current world order. The specific distinction has to do with the moral implications of the system. Trump in many ways follow closer to the Hobbesian strain of thought connected to individuals in the state of nature and argues that if the world is competitive, winning the competition is important. Allies can serve a great role in doing this, but they are not inherently valuable if they do not contribute directly to American interests or American relative power.

"A central continuity in history is the contest for power. The present time period is no different" (National Security Strategy 2017: p. 25). "In ongoing contests for power,

our diplomats must build and lead coalitions that advance shared interests and articulate America's vision..." (National Security Strategy 2017: p.33).

The 2017 NSS views the world primarily as a stage for conflict rather than cooperation, and as such alliances are only valuable in so far as they help America reach a higher level of power within the current system. There is indeed still a mentioning of shared goals and likeminded efforts, but these seem to be a result of coincidence rather than a matter of principle. It seems evident that Trump holds other countries as independent agents with different goals than those of the United States, even those countries that are considered allies. "When the United States partners with other states, we develop policies that enable us to achieve our goals while our partners achieve theirs." (National Security Strategy 2017: p. 37). Even the historically most famous examples of American foreign aid are portrayed as good, not in and of themselves but because they were beneficial to the status of the United States. "Working with these countries [that were given aid in the post Second World War and post Cold War periods] made the United States wealthier and more competitive." (National Security Strategy 2017: p. 38). The idea that the world is a place of constant competition is very reminiscent of Hobbes notion of anarchy. The suggestions of how to behave in an anarchical system is also following the same Hobbesian line. If there is an anarchical state of competition as in the state of nature, cooperation and trust is feeble and unwise, instead one should focus on enhancing personal safety by increasing relative power. The reluctance to accept common goals as anything other than coincidence is also indicative of a belief in that every actor is striving for personal gain something that is a cornerstone in how we interpret Hobbes description of life in anarchy. So, in this case, it is clear that Trump's view of the world is anarchical, and he places high value on accumulating sufficient relative power to be self-reliant in achieving his goals.

6.2.3. The International System and America's Role.

The 2017 NSS asserts that "America possesses unmatched political, economic, military and technological advantages." (National Security Strategy 2017: p. 3). But in addition, Trump conveys a message of caution. He asserts that the advantage, though still present, is shrinking due to increased capability of international competitors: "However, U.S. advantages are shrinking as rival states modernize..." (National Security Strategy 2017: p. 3). This continues the trend, first identified in previous section, where Trump views the

international realm as a place for international competition. The fact that the U.S. has advantages is something desirable and he argues that economic, political and military development must continue in order to maintain the position as a world leader and not lose relative power. The 2017 NSS is clearly focused on what actions may benefit America and its citizenry directly. One example is the presented view on multi- and bilateral agreements. Trump holds a national-focused view, most clearly explained by his trade policy. “By strengthening the international trading system and incentivizing other countries to embrace market-friendly policies, we can enhance our prosperity” (National Security Strategy 2017: p. 19). The keywords in that sentence being *our prosperity*. It becomes evident that the purpose of trade and international interaction is not to enhance the universal level of prosperity but to increase American wealth and power. Overall, the 2017 NSS contains few references to policy for how or why to advance or assist development and international interaction for any other purpose than direct U.S. benefit. There is of course some mentioning of “American values” such as liberty, religious freedom etc. in the 2017 NSS, but these seem to mostly guide domestic policy rather than Americas role on the international arena. But it is important to note that Trump seem to believe that these values provides inherent benefits. “We learned the difficult lesson that when America does not lead, malign actors fill the void to the disadvantage of the United States. When America does lead, however, from a position of strength and confidence and in accordance with our interests and values, all benefit.” (National Security Strategy 2017: p 3.) This shows Trump’s belief in American values as beneficial not only for the U.S. but for everyone universally. This might seem like a contradiction to the other quotes, where the National Security Strategy places little or no value on the prosperity and security of others outside the nation, but if read carefully we still detect a strong emphasis on the outcome for America. When others lead this creates a disadvantage not for the entirety of international actors, but specifically for America. This still shows that the primary concern is to achieve American goals for the good of the U.S. The fact that others prosper as well, even if it is not explained how they would in fact do so under American guidance, is not contradicting this focus on increased American power. Rather, this seem to be a biproduct of increased American power. If interpreted cynically we could say that this suggestion of increased international wellbeing under American guidance is just a false-flag attempt to justify American accumulation and display of power. But we don’t have to go that far to establish that the primary motivator for making this claim, is not to increase global prosperity, but to solidify Americas position of international leadership. On

this topic Trump is very consistent, he describes the world in the same way throughout the 2017 NSS including how he views the international system and how America should morally act within it. As such, the connection to Hobbes' ideas remain the same as previously established. It is clear that Trump does subscribe to a model of international Anarchy where competition for power is a constant fact, therefore, the U.S. should make sure it is able to compete and win against other communities inhabiting the international sphere, and that his role as the American sovereign allows or even demands him to increase American power. This view on moral responsibility is certainly close to Hobbes description of behavior in an anarchical system. Even if it is not clear how antagonizing foreign countries heightens the physical security of American subjects, the accumulation of relative power is still performing the moral assignment of ensuring the protection of the subjects of the sovereign as described in chapter three. Empirically, Trump still asserts that the international realm is competitive and hostile, not contradicting his previous portrayal of the world as anarchical.

6.3.4. Trump and the 2017 National Security Strategy, Summary.

In this chapter we have aimed to identify to what extent the two Presidents use Hobbesian ideas in their foreign policy suggestions. Trump is clearly more overtly accepting of these ideas. He portrays the world as a competitive place where constant power-gains are important to ensure security for the U.S. and he does so across all the topics we examined. As shown on the topic of the international system and Americas role, he sees cooperation and international norms as tools for pursuing increased power, something that fits well with Hobbes' description of individuals action in the state of nature, as well as the sovereign's responsibility to protect his subjects. As a result of this belief in international anarchy, he believes in self-reliance across the other specific areas of foreign policy as well. Militarily he sees increased power as the ultimate end-goal and wants to increase American capabilities, not only because he sees a direct need for it but because he sees it as important to remain far ahead of potential aggressors. This idea clearly projects a belief in relative power, i.e. America can't let other nations get stronger and do nothing, even if it is still strong by some other measure, also reminding us of Hobbes' state of nature and its focus on relative power. But the reluctance to consider consequences of engaging international adversaries portrays a diversion from our presented theory of Hobbes moral requirement that a sovereign put the security of the sovereign's subjects before any other objectives. His view on international cooperation and allies follows the same empirical line but adds likeness to Hobbesian morals as well. Trump does not view alliances as useless as they may serve a purpose in furthering

American interests, but they are not inherently valuable. This goes for both economic and military alliances, where he believes they are only desirable in so far as they contribute directly to American interests. He also focuses on the point that these agreements should be “fair”, meaning that the other party should not gain more from the alliance than the U.S. does. Even if the 2017 NSS does mention other important aspects of foreign policy, such as values, none of the policies suggested actually takes these into account but instead focuses on increasing relative power. Overall, we argue that the 2017 NSS is easy to connect to Hobbes ideas of anarchy, especially to the importance of self-reliance and deterrence in both empirical and moral terms.

7. Results.

In this chapter we discuss what findings we perceive to be most interesting and use those findings to compare the 2010 NSS with the 2017 NSS. We will then revisit our theoretical framework presented in chapter three and complete it with our findings from the analysis. Finally, we will use this completed framework to answer our specific research question.

7.1. Summary of the Findings.

The topic where both Presidents largely agree is on military and nuclear forces. They both highlight the importance of military dominance and the necessity to modernize current capabilities to face contemporary security challenges. But they differ in moral terms on why this accumulation is important, with Obama highlighting the safety of American subjects while Trump is more focused on the inherent value of power.

Perhaps the most interesting find made is the fact that Obama, while he does not follow the theory for prescribed behavior in a state of anarchy i.e. seek relative power accumulation, portrays a vision in some ways more closely reminiscent of the duties of a sovereign than Trump does, as it emphasizes the importance of protecting national citizens safety. Trump is seemingly accepting the notion of international anarchy but sometimes suggests actions more in line with how an individual would behave in such a system i.e. tries to increase his relative power, instead of behaving as a sovereign caring primarily about the security of his subjects. One example of this would be Trump's rhetoric when talking about nuclear deterrence and his commitment to not let a nuclear exchange be prevented by potential fear for harm coming to his citizens, showing that the security of the citizenry is not always worth considering. While Obama is consistently focusing on the goal of protecting the physical security of his subjects even if his methods often contradict those suggested by our interpretation of Hobbes.

This suggests that the shift in the motivations for foreign policy from 2010 to 2017 may not be as fundamental as previously assumed, at least not in empirical terms. There is indeed a quite distinctive difference in the style and tone of the two documents analyzed, where the 2017 NSS is less concerned with nuanced arguments and prefers a more direct or "America first" approach to foreign policy. This is of course not a surprise in and of itself. More interesting is the finding that the difference in fundamental beliefs regarding the world system is not as distinctive as the difference in tone may suggest. There is an acceptance of

international anarchy in both documents even if the proposed actions that follows from that acceptance differ greatly. We argue that both documents present the world as anarchical in empirical terms, showing an acceptance of, or likeness to Hobbes' empirical claims. But they differ in their moral outlook on foreign policy. Trump is more closely following the moral framework presented by our interpretation of Hobbes theories, as he suggests behavior perfectly in line with what we can expect in an anarchical system such as power accumulation and competitiveness, with caveat mentioned previously. While Obama suggest a heightened importance of behavior that furthers global prosperity on the international stage. This then, seems to provide us with two examples of how agents can react to anarchy, as Trump and Obama seem to react differently in their National Security Strategies even if they largely accept the same empirical claims. Interestingly it does not seem necessary that an agent would behave as an individual or a sovereign would in the state of nature just because he accepts the fundamental claim of anarchy but instead it is possible to view the world as anarchical but still act on other moral principles or convictions.

To conclude, on the topic of military and nuclear forces, Obama and Trump agrees on the empirical question of the importance of military capability which is easily reconcilable with our interpretation of Hobbes theory, but differ in their moral understanding. Obama is more closely following the fundamental role of the sovereign in that he is seeking to protect his subjects at any cost, while Trump is acting more like an individual would in the state of nature, where he primarily seeks to accumulate power for achieving his various goals. On the topic of International Allies, Trump is, from the data analyzed, Hobbesian in both the moral and empirical sense as he holds cooperation to be difficult in a world based on competition. While Obama is only Hobbesian in some of his empirical claims, the 2010 NSS shows acceptance for the world as fundamentally anarchical even if some norms and regulations do exist that tries to change this. But he differentiates from Hobbes as he believes that cooperation is mutually beneficial, seemingly giving little thought to the notion of relative power. Morally, Obama shares few connections to our Hobbesian theory on this topic as he fundamentally trusts his allies which contradicts our Hobbesian theory of self-reliance and competition. On the topic of the International System and Americas Role, Trump again portrays ideas that are possible to connect to our Hobbesian interpretation in both moral and empirical terms. Morally he asserts that the U.S. accumulation of relative power is justifiable as America is in constant competition with international adversaries. Empirically he describes foreign actors as competitors with private agendas that cannot be reconciled with American

interests. Obama on the other hand continues his distinction between moral and empirical likeness to our Hobbesian model. The 2010 NSS still reveals a belief that the international system is at its core anarchical as no body of regulation is strong enough to enforce international rules. In moral terms Obama places great value on the prosperity and security of individuals outside his borders, something that contradicts our interpretation of the sovereign's moral duty.

Table 2. Theoretical Framework After Analysis.

Is Trumps Foreign Policy Doctrine increasingly Hobbesian compared to his predecessor Obama?	Trump – The 2017 National Security Strategy.	Obama – The 2010 National Security Strategy.	Hobbes – Claims made in text. What to look for in the analysis.
<u>Empirical Assertions on:</u>			
Military and Nuclear Weapons.	Military Self-Reliance crucial. Conventional and nuclear deterrence is the backbone of defense.	Military Self-Reliance crucial. Conventional and nuclear deterrence is the backbone of defense.	Highlighting the importance of self-reliance in defense questions.
America and International Allies.	Allies follow their own agendas that may differ from U.S. interests. Unwise to trust allies for this reason.	Possible to share interests and values directly with foreign actors.	Highlighting the untrusting nature of cooperation and alliances if not for direct purposes of defense.
The International System and America’s Role.	Fundamentally the world system is anarchical. The world is a stage for constant international contests.	International system is at its core anarchical. But a system of rules exists, and countries are wise to abide by it.	The world is a place of anarchy where actors must do their best to maintain their physical protection.
<u>Moral Assertions on:</u>			
Military and Nuclear Weapons.	Increase military capacity to out-scale competitors increases security. Increased capabilities are crucial. Necessary to not let fear of escalation prevent conflict.	Modernization more important than increased scale. Arms reduction desirable. Necessary to carefully weigh costs of action vs. costs of inaction.	The right and necessity of ensuring protection of the nation/sovereignty by any means.
America and International Allies.	Only seek alliances that directly empower the U.S. Allies only desired if directly aligned with U.S. interests.	Use alliances as a tool to increase global prosperity. Allies inherently valuable.	No inherent value in cooperation. Prosperity secondary to security.
The International System and America’s Role.	Position of U.S. international leadership important to further U.S. interests. Only strengthen international cooperation if it furthers U.S. interests.	Position of U.S. international leadership important to increase global prosperity. Desirable to uphold international rules of conduct.	No moral requirement to safeguard interests outside of the community.

Table 3. The Results Theoretical Connection to Hobbes, Clarified.

Is Trumps Foreign Policy Doctrine increasingly Hobbesian compared to his predecessor Obama?	Trump – The 2017 National Security Strategy.	Obama – The 2010 National Security Strategy.
<u>Empirical Assertions on:</u>		
Military and Nuclear Forces.	Hobbesian. Describes an understanding of the necessity for defense and self-reliance.	Hobbesian. Describes an understanding of the necessity for defense and self-reliance.
America and International Allies.	Hobbesian. Describes the futility and unreliability of cooperation.	Quasi Hobbesian. Describes cooperation and partnership as reliable and valuable in contrast to Hobbes who highlights self-reliance. Still shows the world as anarchical at its core.
The International System and America’s Role.	Hobbesian. Describes the world as a contest between every actor like in the State of Nature.	Hobbesian, world is anarchical even if regulating institutions exist.
<u>Moral Assertions on:</u>		
Military and Nuclear Forces.	Not Hobbesian. Highlights the importance of relative power but forgoes the primary moral duty of protecting his subjects.	Hobbesian. Describes the importance of security at any cost, can be achieved by other means than exclusively self-reliance.
America and International Allies.	Hobbesian. Although valuing alliances, this is only to the extent that it empowers the U.S.	Not Hobbesian. Trusts in allies, and cooperation.
The International System and America’s Role.	Hobbesian. Assuming that Hobbes would favor the use of an international system to further power-gains.	Not Hobbesian. Places a much higher value on the outside group than Hobbes recommends.

7.3. Answering the Research Question.

With our analysis we sought to answer the question: To what degree is Trump's foreign policy doctrine more Hobbesian than his predecessor Obama? How is the international realm perceived by Trump and Obama in the National Security Strategies? And how do the National Security Strategies prescribe America to act within the international realm?

After filling in our theoretical framework established in chapter three it becomes evident that from the materials analyzed, the Trump doctrine is largely more Hobbesian than his predecessor Obama. This is neither unexpected nor controversial, but the interesting findings made is that the difference between the two Presidents are perhaps not as great as could have been anticipated after reading other current literature on the topic. Even though the Presidents examined differ to a large degree on their policy suggestions we have shown that their view of the international system is fundamentally the same, and furthermore, that it is strongly reminiscent of Hobbes description of anarchy. Both Presidents display the world in *empirically* similar terms in their National Security Strategies. But they differ in *moral* terms, where Trumps foreign policy doctrine is more closely reminiscent of our interpretation of Hobbes, even if he is failing to embrace the moral duties of the Sovereign on the question of Military- and Nuclear forces.

8. Conclusions.

This project attempted to examine if President Trump employs a more Hobbesian foreign policy than his predecessor President Obama. We have clearly demonstrated that this is the case, but our analysis also shows some unanticipated results. We anticipated our findings to show that Trump was indeed more Hobbesian than Obama but the extent to which the 2010 NSS portrays the world as anarchical was higher than we expected. The fact that Obama portrays the world in largely Hobbesian terms even if his policies are not guided by it, is quite interesting in itself. Also, the fact that we could identify Hobbesian themes to such a high degree in both documents is surprising.

Even if Hobbes' theories are largely considered vitally important for political philosophy the fact that they have such a high degree of predictive power even in a modern setting, especially in the case of the 2017 NSS, further shows the relevance of the continued employment of Hobbes' ideas. The fact that our results details a nuanced reality further signifies the importance of considering primary political texts instead of secondary schools of thought like international realism.

Our findings do portray a shift in American foreign policy from Obama to Trump, but it does so in largely *moral* terms, something we would have been unable to detect if we employed an amoral framework. In *empirical* terms our analysis does not portray a difference that is significant enough to constitute a mayor shift. Leaving us questioning if the shift towards political realism suggested by other authors (presented in chapter two) has other explanations than the personal beliefs of the respective executive. Or if the shift is not in fact as large as they claim it to be, but that the failure to consider a theoretically nuanced argument enhances the seeming magnitude of the differences in foreign policy between Trump and his predecessors, and that the difference between political realism and Hobbes original texts are too great to arrive at the same conclusion. A third alternative is that the shift in outcome of foreign policy that was observed by those authors is in fact a result of the difference on moral claims between Trump and Obama. If a shift in the outcome of foreign policy is occurring and it is as large as other authors have claimed, the only conclusion we can draw from this study is that this shift has to be connected to a corresponding shift in individual moral convictions or to other external factors we have not examined, as the 2010 and 2017 NSS presents the world too similarly in empirical terms to justify a claim that a shift of a grand scale has occurred.

We have also detected some other interesting findings connected to the topic of Hobbes' political theory and foreign policy that we did not anticipate when we started our analysis. One such thing is the distinction between Hobbes theory of anarchy and his theory of the social contract. It became clear to us that the acceptance of anarchy does not necessarily force the President to behave as a sovereign would in those circumstances. Hobbes describes the sovereign's responsibility to be towards the security of his people not to the prosperity of his subjects and much less to the prosperity of other sovereigns and their subjects.

This raises the question about what course of action does in fact heighten the physical security of the commonwealth in an anarchical system, as there are seemingly an argument to make for that peacemaking and good relations are a more reliable way to avoid that physical harm is produced on the community than readiness for conflict and hostile rhetoric. To answer this question, research would have to be carried out on what effects different styles of foreign policy have and is not something we had the opportunity to examine within this paper, but it would certainly serve as an interesting starting point for further research on Hobbesian schools of thought in the 21st century.

Another topic that would serve for interesting further research more closely connected directly to the two Presidents we studied in this paper would be to examine to what extent their discerned understanding or vision for the world actually coincides with the actions taken by respective U.S. leader. For this to work one would probably need to wait until the Trump presidency is finished or at least until it has had more opportunities to show its modus operandi on the international arena, but a comparison between the asserted world views in the National Security Strategies and the actions taken in response to international challenges and opportunities could shed additional light on the relevance of understanding a sovereigns self-proclaimed world view. Even though we have argued for the inherent worth of a theoretical understanding, empirical evidence on the ability to predict actions on the basis of the held world view of an executive could increase or reduce the usefulness of our findings and potentially encourage or dissuade others from trying to replicate this study in other circumstances.

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