

**Professor Quentin Skinner is Barber Beaumont Professor of the Humanities at Queen Mary, University of London. Before coming to London, he served as Professor of Political Science (1979-1996) and Regius Professor of History (1996-2008) at Cambridge. He is a Fellow of the British Academy, The American Academy, the Academia Europaea and the Accademia dei Lincei, and has been the recipient of honorary degrees from many major Universities, including Chicago, Harvard, and Oxford. His influential scholarship has won him many prizes, including the Isaiah Berlin Prize, the Lippincott and David Easton Awards of the American Political Science Association, the Wolfson Prize for History, the Bielefeld Wissenschaftspreis and the Balzan Prize.**

Professor Skinner's research interests are diverse, ranging from modern intellectual history to speech-act theory, and from the nature of interpretation and historical explanation to the concept of representation and the character of the State. He is also a leading expert on the works of Machiavelli and Hobbes and a founding and principal member of the Cambridge School. Among his many influential publications are *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (1978), *Machiavelli* (1981), *Liberty Before Liberalism* (1998), and *Hobbes and Republican Liberty* (2008).

In his Spinoza Lectures, collectively titled 'Thomas Hobbes and the State', Professor Skinner brings together elements of his research into Hobbes shaping them into an exciting coherent whole. In the first lecture Professor Skinner investigates the idea of state personality and assesses the political significance of the changes this idea has undergone. In the second lecture Professor Skinner investigates the complex iconographical frontispieces Hobbes used and their relation to rhetorical theories of proof and persuasion. The lecture examines the insights offered by these illustrations into the character and development of Hobbes's theory of the state.