Scholars have pointed out the increasing popularity in Europe at the end of the sixteenth century of three terms that expressed and incorporated the essentials of a new constitutional consciousness: Reason of state, Sovereignty and Fundamental laws. Fundamental laws (*leges fundamentales* or *imperii*) functioned both to restrict and to legitimize power as they preserved elements of the past (tradition), laying the foundations of the new (absolutistic) monarchies at the same time (change). Privileges were often taken for fundamental laws, both in the sense that they protect freedom(s), and that they lay out the contours of power. Popular as the terms may have been by the end of the sixteenth century, Thomas Hobbes in 1651 still remarked that he “could never see in any Author, what a Fundamentall Law signifieth” (*Leviathan*, c. 26).

One of the authors who accepted Hobbes’ challenge was the Frisian jurist Ulrik Huber (1636-1694), who used the concept of fundamental laws both in his *De jure civitatis* (1672) and his *Heedendaegse rechts-geleerdheid* (1686). Drawing a sharp distinction between fundamental laws (based on convention, and binding on both sides) and privileges (based on the Prince’s liberty and grace, and only binding the Prince) he foreshadowed with no pretention of saying something new some of the revolutionary ideas of the years to come. Unwritten general fundamental laws in his theory secure and place under legal protection the basic goods of human liberty and property. Specific fundamental laws (either written or not) lay out basic structures of a specific state.