

Hobbes and locke essay samples

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Locke, like Hobbes, considers the individual as the basic element and treats the state as a result of the social contract between individuals, concluded in order to stop natural condition. The teaching about the natural state does not act as a theory about the appearance of the state, about how it really occurred, but it is a theory that explains what the state is, and thus legitimizes the state. However, Locke has a more moderate version of the notion of the individual and the state than Hobbes.

Hobbes thought that since people have the same rights and seek to implement them, between them inevitably comes a struggle, a universal principle of which is the "war of all against all." As a result, a normal life becomes impossible. In the "natural state" everyone is equally in danger of being exterminated. Fear of death makes people prone to peace and reason dictates the appropriate conditions of peace, by which people can come to an agreement. The result of such an agreement is the state. In contrast to Hobbes with his thesis about the "war of all against all," Locke believes that the initial absolute freedom of people is not the source of struggle, but the expression of their natural equality and willingness to follow reasonable natural laws. This natural willingness of people leads them to realize that for the common good is necessary, while maintaining the freedom, a part of the function to give to the government, which is intended to ensure the further development of society. In such way a social contract between people is reached, and so occurs a state. I think that Locke is correct as individuals tend to move from the natural state in a politically organized society because they are aware that it would be safer to live in an orderly society than in natural state. The main goal of the state is the protection of the

natural rights of people, the right to life, liberty and property. In modern world the aims of each state are the same as ones proposed by Locke. It is easy to see that Locke significantly departs from the theory of Hobbes. Hobbes stressed the absolute power of the state over society and people. Absolute state, which is not subject to the political and the legal limitations, is necessary as a guarantee from the shortcomings of human nature. For Hobbes the purpose of the state is to ensure peace, guarantee the survival of the individual. Locke emphasizes something else: people give the state a portion of their natural liberty. The state is obliged to protect their natural rights to property, life, liberty. The more rights a person has the wider is the range of his obligations to society. The state thus does not have absolute arbitrary power. Social contract implies, according to Locke, the state's responsibility to its citizens. If the state does not fulfill its duty to the people, if it violates the natural freedoms - people have the right to fight against such a state. Such fight has occurred during the Arab Spring when people were not satisfied of their governments.

Locke is credited with developing the theory of separation of powers between the legislature and the executive, under which priority is given to the legislature, representing the majority, thereby the supremacy of the Parliament is approved. Such system is now present in most states of the world and is considered as one of the most successful systems.

Works Cited

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