

Q What is the concept of State of Nature as given by Thomas Hobbes? Also describe its Social Contract.

Answer 1-

Introduction

"Nature of State varies by various philosophers..."

(-Touqueen Husain)

Thomas Hobbes gave a different concept of State of Nature. In fact, he observed turbulence period in his life and gave his view about the State of Nature. However, he also led to the formulation of 'Social Contract' as the need of the state. Therefore, Thomas Hobbes was a great philosopher.

2-

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679 AD): a brief introduction

"Thomas Hobbes was a great English

philosopher."

(Faisal Bari)

Thomas Hobbes born in England. He was inspired by Nicholo Machiavelli. In his life, he saw reign of James I, Charles I and II, and also saw a turbulence period of civil war in England. Therefore, he decided to open the chapter of history with gathering of people.

3- Concept of State of Nature by Thomas Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes gave concept of 'State of Nature' as below:

a) Nature of Human being in the state

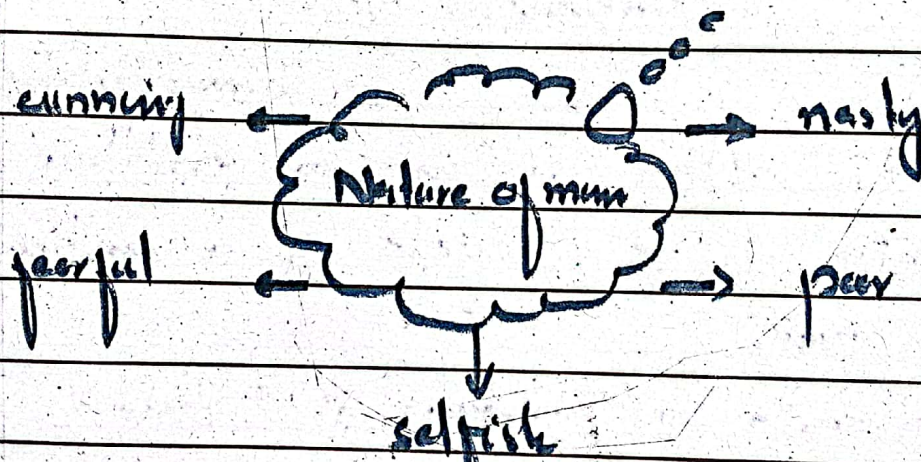
"Man is brutish and nasty."

(Thomas Hobbes)

Thomas Hobbes described the nature of human in formation of the state. He regarded man as brutish and nasty.

"Man is selfish,
fearful, cunning
and poor."

(- Thomas Hobbes)



He showed self-interested and self-emotional nature of a man. Therefore, he laid foundation of 'State of Nature' by the nature of a man.

B- State of nature by Thomas

Hobbes

"State is an endless struggle."

(- Thomas Hobbes)

Thomas Hobbes described 'State of Nature' as an endless struggle. He regarded that states are in continuous tussles.

"State is in a continuous war."

(- Thomas Hobbes)

Hence, state is in an endless attempt in a cycle of a continuous war.

Following are features of 'State of Nature':

- i) War of all is against all
War of all is against all in "State of Nature". In Hobbes view, people are in continuous tussle of all other.

"Attack of one is
retaliation of all"

(- Thomas Hobbes)

Thus, war of all is against all.

(ii) Might was right

Moreover, might was
right. According to Hobbes,

"laws are given by
men, and are
implemented by
men."

(- Thomas Hobbes)

Therefore, might was right.

(iii) Survival of fittest

Survival of fittest was
the most important feature of 'State
of Nature'. Everyone was in an
attempt of survival.

(Man was full of
solitariness, poor and
nearly nature...)

(← Thomas Hobbes)

Thus, everyone is in an attempt of survival of fittest.

Features of State of Nature

War of all's against all.

Might was right

Survival of fittest

4- Social Contract of Thomas Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes gave an idea of social contract. He felt need of gathering of people in a contract.

"I authorize and give up my all rights to this man."

(← Thomas Hobbes)

Further, Thomas Hobbes said as:

"I surrender my rights,
liberty, and freedom
before an absolute
power."

(-Thomas Hobbes)

Thomas Hobbes described contract by
surrendering his rights. But, he
also explained as,

"My life and property
is under responsibility
of an absolute
power."

(-Thomas Hobbes)

Thomas Hobbes not only surrender
of rights, but also led to suprem-
e authority to sovereign power.

"Even in case of
failure of an absolute
power, I will not
go against to
it."

(-Thomas Hobbes)

In short, all powers are given to only one, an absolute power in 'Social Contract' of Thomas Hobbes.

5. Critical Analysis of 'Social Contract' by Thomas Hobbes

Critical Analysis of 'Social Contract' is as below:

a) Unilateral contract

Thomas Hobbes' contract was unilateral. Social contract was not an agreement between a ruler and sub-ordinates.

'Social contract of Hobbes was an agreement

between sub-ordinate

to sub-ordinate."

Hence, it was a unilateral contract.

b) Irrevocable contract

Further, it was an

irrevocable contract. None can go against an absolute power.

↓ "An absolute power was a supreme body."

Therefore, 'Social Contract' was also irrevocable contract.

c) Creates an absolute ruler

'Social Contract' created an absolute ruler. All powers were given to one.

• All people surrendered their respect to ruler."

Hence, 'Social Contract' created an absolute ruler.

Unilateral

or absolute ruler



Social Contract by
Hobbes

↓
Irrevocable

6 Conclusion

Thomas Hobbes presented a dark picture of "State of Nature".

Thomas Hobbes described a dark picture of 'State of Nature' with a dark view of a man. In fact, he led to 'Social Contract' by describing 'picture of State'. Therefore, Thomas Hobbes regarded contract in his 'State of Nature'.