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| During and after the English Revolution (1642-88), different English thinkers reacted differently toward the revolution, based on their own life experience and philosophical outlook.  Of them, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke stood out as two outstanding thinkers who argued in opposite ways, one for absolute kingship, and one against.  On one level, their differences showed how historical experiences shaped one's outlook and influenced one's argument.  On the other hand, they were remarkably similar in their approach to the question, which was the use of reason, not divine rights, to justify or oppose absolute kingship.  They both represented a growing trend in European society in the 17th and 18th centuries to use reason as the final judgment of things, including the conduct of kings. |

*1. The state of nature vs. society*

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| Thinkers of the 17th-18th centuries often hypostasized (made out of nothing) a state of nature, as a way to discuss the conditions of society and government. The logic is that whatever good things people had in the state of nature should not be lost when one entered into society.  This would be the condition upon which they evaluated governments: whether a government would bring better results to people than they would to themselves in the state of nature or worse would help justify or invalidate a government.  Both Locke and Hobbes used this trope in their arguments. |

*2. Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679): mathematician and social thinker.*

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| Hobbes’ relationship to the royal family: tutor to Charles II in mathematics.  The emergence of the idea of society and its conditionality.  For Hobbes: condition of rule was the cruelty of man in the state of nature. |

*3. John Locke (1632-1704)*

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| Mathematician, founder of modern educational theories, politician and social thinker.  Served Lord Shaftsbury, chief opponent to James II (r.1685-88).  Similar to Hobbes, adopted the idea of conditionality of society, but with a very different conclusion. |

*4. Comparing Hobbes and Locke*

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| *Views toward the "state of nature"*   * Hobbes compared the English Revolution to the “state of nature”, which was brutal, and his negative view of the revolution led him to conclude that society needed a strong king. * John Locke, believed that  the state of nature  was good.  Hence if governments could not do as much for people than they did for themselves in the state of nature, government could be dismantled.   *Views toward human nature*   * Hobbes has a negative view toward human nature “nasty, brutal….”; * John Locke’s view: the human mind is like a blank slate.   *Comparison and contrast of views on government*   * Hobbes: a contract exists between the king and the people; but once the king becomes king, he cannot be overthrown and obtains absolute power. * John Locke: government conditional and can be overthrown if it does not represent the people |