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Locke Views on Absolute Monarchy vs. State of Nature

Locke's dispute against absolute monarchy starts off saying, "In *absolute monarchies* indeed, the subjects have an appeal to the law, and judges to decide any controversies..." (Locke Section 93, TToG) In an absolute monarchy subjects have the bonus of further sanctuary as compared to the state of nature.

He follows this with an unsubstantiated premise that "This everyone thinks necessary". People may find it better to instead live in the state of nature prescribed by Locke himself .

Further, one against the absolute monarchy becomes "a declared enemy to society and mankind." This follows, since one is undermining the hierarchy the ruler sets to retain order.

Similarly, the monarch is good to the subjects for maintaining his own power and his subject's happiness to "keep those animals from hurting, who labor and drudge only for his pleasure and advantage; and so taken care of, not out of any love the master has for them, but love of himself..." (Section 93, TToG)

Nothing halts monarchs from being tyrannical since no one can counter "the violence and oppression of this absolute ruler?" This is to contemplate why anyone would want monarchy considering the power bestowed without rebuttal.

Additionally, the sovereign must be “absolute, and is above all such circumstances;” The circumstances being the laws that subjects must follow.

Furthermore, the monarch “has power to do more hurt and wrong, it is right when he does it.” (Section 93, Chapter VII, Book II, Two Treatises on Government) This is *reductio ad absurdum*, whereby Locke is mockingly presenting the perils of a monarch to further his disagreement.

Rebellion is asking how one may be protected from grievance. Enquiring how your safety is secured is doubting the ruler and consequently rebellious.

Interestingly, Locke finds persons, “quitting the state of nature nettered into society, they agreed that all of them but one should be under the restraint of laws, but that he should still retain all the liberty of the state of nature, increased with power.” (Section 93, TToG) Leaving nature and giving supremacy without consequence is hazardous to one’s conservation.

Lastly, Locke declares men, “take care to avoid what mischiefs may be done them pole-cats, but are content, to be devoured by lions.” The pole-cat represents the state of nature and lions represent an absolute monarch’s authority.

In conclusion, Locke believes it better to live in the state of nature than under an absolute monarchy.

Locke erroneously understands the way societies form monarchies. Ironically, the very structure he is against permits him sustenance and the facility to write philosophy. If everyone were self-governing (such as in nature) and authoritative, since he believes it outlandish to bequeath one so much power, no society would function. Let us not overlook that the state of nature, according to Hobbes is “solitary, poore, nasty, brutish and short.” (Hobbes Ch.13, Leviathan)

People must delegate superfluous influence on someone to avoid living a life fending off the plights of the forest. A monarch may be tyrannical but is no riskier than the virtually certain life-and-death scenarios one encounters every day in the state of nature.

If his premise were to hold, then maybe his conclusion would also hold. If Locke does have such robust feelings on the subject, he should depart the society he has existed with. That society was created by men who formerly and presently abandoned the state of nature and permitted a sovereign to lead. This was to better guard their own survival. Locke has elected to live under such a structure that he scorns while advising anarchy as a better resolution.