

## John Locke's Philosophy

John Locke is considered to be the most famous philosopher to live in the era when England was torn apart by constant conflicts between the English politics and scholars. These battles turned England into a battlefield where the Crown and the parliament were in constant war. Rivalry among the Protestants, Anglicans and Catholics was at its peak, too. These conflicts would later lead to Civil war in 1640. Locke's philosophic ideas emerged as a response to the lack of knowledge and misconceptions about human rights in the society. Thus, Locke was encouraged to come up with his principles of humanity (Locke 2). The philosopher's ideas could then help shape people's way of thinking. The main reason for Locke to create his principles of social life was to help end the war in England. The philosophies that John Locke came up with are still used in the present time. He is credited to be the most famous and influential philosopher in the world.

Born in Wrington, Somersetshire, England in 1632, John Locke attended Westminster School in London. He studied natural science and philosophy. He excelled well in his education and finally attained a doctorate philosophy (Locke 5). Locke was lucky to have a friend who introduced him into medicine. The philosopher-to-be did extremely well in medicine to achieve a doctorate in this field as well. Due to the friend's influence in many areas, Locke was later on introduced to politics. With his friend's help, Locke entered the political scene and was appointed several times to various political offices. As he engaged into politics, he made many allies. He was able to visit France where he met other political leaders and made allies with them, learning the peculiarities of the French culture. In France, he was able to expand his knowledge on philosophy that could later make him the author of the idea of liberalism.

John Locke was an influential person in England and had great authority among the English people. Being a politician in an era where conflicts and rivalry were at their peak was quite a challenge that Locke coped with easily. John Locke could not fathom the fact that people were suffering from the lack of knowledge. He began opposing the administration of the Crown and the Anglican Church, which brought many skirmishes that threatened him and his life. He was forced to go into exile in Holland where he participated in political movements.

While in exile, he played a big role in enlightening his fellow citizens to fight for their rights and their country. He discoursed of the ways that could help overthrowing the then present leader out of the crown. His efforts were no in vain – as a result of Locke's activities, James II was expelled from the crown. In turn, William of Orange was appointed as the leader in England. Having campaigned and representing himself as a big supporter of William of Orange, Locke finally returned to England and chose a quiet private life to the public speeches and the world fame. He devoted himself to studying philosophy. He died peacefully in 1704 having been a physician philosopher, politician and teacher. Locke was an outstanding philosopher, as he was a man who never renounced his point of view.

As a philosopher, John Locke came up with many ideas that are applicable even to the present day. Among numerous theories that he offered was the idea of human nature. In this thesis, Locke urged that human beings were social animals. By such bold statement, he implied that human beings were not devoted to the state, but had the freedom to live and interact as much as they needed. He emphasized the fact that no man was condemned by law to social relationship, yet everybody is involved into social interactions. Hence, no natural law can restrict a man from socializing. The conflicts

among the churches fueled, so this law could end up the rivalry among Catholics, Protestants and Anglicans.

This philosophy of man being a social animal has gained its new meaning in the XXI century. Currently, there is no rule that restricts man to being a social creature. One is free to socialize as much as (s)he can. Once a common practice in the ancient times where the government could restrict its citizen from interacting with people from other countries, the prohibition to communicate with other people is no longer a threat to the society. According to Locke's philosophy, the idea of cultures merging became obvious, and the restriction of man to a particular state was considered colonialism. Locke's theory defined man as a prisoner who could not be naturally free to socialize. Locke was one of the few philosophers who were able to give a man the liberty to exercise his rights as a social being.

The philosophy that John Locke put more emphasis on was the idea that men by nature had their own rights (Tully 201). However, in his ideas, Locke found numerous opponents, including Hobbes. The latter stressed that man was bound by the law that governed him. This was an indication that the government was the determiner of a man's right to live. The idea of complete control exercised by the law was harshly opposed by Locke who responded to Hobbes' ideas quickly. For Locke, it was clear that naturally the man had the right to life, property, good health and knowledge. According to John Locke, each man possessed an indefeasible right to live and to choose his/her track of life; and no government could determine which rights were applicable to a particular person.

The rights for life, health, and knowledge are fundamental aspects that have been implemented in many sectors around the world. Any violation of human rights results in harsh penalty. Presently, the rights of a man are respected both by the

government and by the ruling bodies. It is an obvious fact nowadays that a man is able to live in harmony with the other people while respecting the rights of the other. The government has come up with laws that make sure that any man has his own rights protected. Properties, life and health are protected by the law. The same goes for the sphere of knowledge where every individual has the right for education.

Due to the rivalry that existed in the government, John Locke came up with treatises that could help the then government to understand the extent of its power. Locke offered to the world the first and the second treatise (Laslett 68). In this discourse, his main aim was to criticize Sir Robert Filmer's thesis. Locke felt that Filmer's theories were misleading and could drive people to complete absurdity. According to Filmer, the virtue of free will was merely a fiction. He urged that the Biblical first man, Adam, possessed boundless power over the world. This, therefore, meant that any Crown ordained is divine and, thus, a crown is bound to be hereditary.

Filmer further suggested that Adam, being the first father, was rightfully the owner of all humankind and, hence, possessed power over all human beings. This was a way to state that the kingship was a hereditary from Adam's lineage. This was a way to emphasize that the Kingship was to go down the lineage of the elite. According to Filmer, God had granted Adam the power to rule over all the lands and animals. This, therefore, meant that Adam was the crowned King over the land. Any ruler was to come from the lineage of Adam and this meant the crown was to remain in one lineage as long as the kingdom reigned (Abrams 157). Hence, the monarchy was bound to reign and dominate with its kingship being passed from one generation to the next.

This philosophy was harshly condemned by Locke, who emphasized the fact that God was the supreme ruler of all the earth. Locke maintained the philosophy that God was the creator of human being and, hence, people cannot claim to own any other

person; thus, adults cannot own their children and, therefore, make the children his/her heirs. Locke continued to disagree with Filmer's philosophy, predicting a downfall to any government that could adapt it. In his scripts, he wrote that Adam was not given the entire dominion over human beings, animals and plants (Abrams 152). Instead, he was to rule over plants and animals, yet he was incapable of possessing the authority over men. Locke challenged Filmer's philosophy stating that there was no way possible to detect who was the real heir of Adam that the crown was to belong to.

In the modern world, Locke's philosophy is commonly used, adapted by many countries where people vote for their leaders. The free will to exercise one's democratic rights stems from Locke's idea that men have the natural freedom to choose what they feel is right for them. In this case, the free will to vote for a government leader is the natural free will granted to human beings. The philosophy was a revelation, since in some states people found it hard to admit that leadership and kingship was not meant to be of a particular lineage or group of people. Locke's first treatise is commonly implemented all over the world with very few countries striving for monarchy.

The human nature and God's purpose is a philosophy that was devised by Locke. The thesis concerning God's purpose is commonly applied in many sectors in the present life. According to Locke, all human beings are God's properties, that is, God's servants. This ideology meant that human beings were not supposed to be used by other human beings for the latter's own pleasure. Locke's philosophy was to ensure that no human beings are subordinate to the others. This philosophy has been implemented in many sectors, from the abolition of slavery to any work place. The implementation of rules that govern working area to ensure that no man is overlooked borrowed a leaf from the Locke's philosophy.

Under the human nature and God's purpose thesis, Locke stated that no man has the authority to destroy himself or any other creature, man or animal. This could take a form of suicide, murder, violence and in any divine wish. This is mainly because it was the God's right to end life at his own free will. Currently this philosophy is widely practiced. Laws implemented to ensure that no human being is subjected to murder, violence and the right to end his own life. Locke's philosophy ensured that human beings had the right for freedom, life, good health and ownership of properties (Locke 307).

Locke came up with the social contract theory, in which he claimed that all ruling governments came to power through dubious ways, which could have been the result of bloodshed or struggle. He claimed that this principle could be linked to the survival of man where people co existed without any rules. It was only through the fights that the strongest carry the day.

Locke's philosophy is widely adopted in the modern life. It is evident that many nations have attained their liberty through battles. Some of these conflicts are severe enough to end up in bloodshed. In the modern world, liberty cannot achieved without struggle and war either. One of the most evident examples was the Civil war in the United States. This was a true sign that for any nation to attain its independence where it can govern itself, bloodsheds were the only way out. Currently this is widely seen as nations have to fight each other in order to govern themselves on their own. This is quite close to the law of the wild, which says that only the strongest survive while the weak perish. The strong keeps on undermining the weak, instead of striving for equality. The survival of human beings depends on who is much stronger in power, finance or authority. The more powerful a man is, the more he enjoys his life; while the weaker the man is, the harder the survival comes.

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning that John Locke was the philosopher who had an insight into the life of a human being. Through his ideologies, a man has been liberated from laws that could have imprisoned him by his own state and country. It is with Locke's postulates that morals are attained and put into practice. Most importantly, Locke's enlightenments exceed any other scholars that had existed in the time. He paved the way to other philosophers who continued Locke's philosophical searches numerous currently existing philosophic theories. Locke was a thinker whose thoughts went beyond the horizon.

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