

Leviathan

After reading the background information, match the main principles of Thomas Hobbes' Leviathan with the actual excerpt. Write out the principles in full phrases.

The Leviathan by Thomas Hobbes is a major dissertation on political philosophy. In its entirety, it also includes ideas on metaphysics, ethics, and epistemology. The name Leviathan is a biblical term describing an all-powerful sea monster. The following excerpts summarize the main arguments for the theory of the social contract.

Political Philosophy Principles of Leviathan

- description of life for an individual who has to protect himself
- People band together for mutual protection.
- Rulers should be given absolute power.
- Self-preservation is basic to human life.
- The value of the state is the ability to protect its individuals.
- By giving absolute power to the ruler, security of the state is maintained.
- description of man in the precarious state of nature
- definition of the social contract

Excerpt 1-Leviathan, Chapter 13

Nature hath made men so equal in the faculties of the body and mind, as that, though there be found one man sometimes manifestly stronger in body or of quicker mind than another, yet when all is reckoned together the difference between man and man is not so considerable as that one man can thereupon claim to himself any benefit to which another may not pretend as well as he.

Main principle described:

Excerpt 2-Leviathan, Chapter 13

Men live without other security than what their own strength and their own invention shall furnish them withal. In such condition, there is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain, and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea: no commodious building; no instruments of moving and removing such things as require much force, no knowledge of the face of the earth: no account of time, no arts, no letters, no society, and, which is worst of all, continual fear and danger of violent death, and the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

Main principle described:

Excerpt 3-Leviathan, Chapter 14

Again, one of the contractors may deliver the thing contracted for on his part, and leave the other to perform his part at some determinate time after, and in the meantime be trusted: and then the contract on his part is called 'pact' or 'covenant'; or both parts may contract now to perform hereafter; in which cases he that is to perform in time to come, being trusted, his performance is called 'keeping of promise,' or faith, and the failing of performance, if it be voluntary, 'violation of faith'

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Main principle described:

Excerpt 4-Leviathan, Chapter 17

The only way to erect... a common power, as may be able to defend [human beings) from the invasion of foreigners and the injuries of one another, and thereby to secure them in such sort as that, by their own industry, and by the fruits of the earth, they may nourish themselves and live contentedly; is, to confer all their power and strength upon one man, or upon one assembly of men, that may reduce all their wills, by plurality of voices, unto one will: which is as much as to say, to appoint one man, or assembly of men, to bear their person; and everyone to own and acknowledge himself to be author of whatsoever he that so beareth their person, shall act, or cause to be acted in those things which concern the common peace and safety; and therein to submit their wills, everyone to his will, and their judgments, to his judgment.

Main principle described:

Excerpt 5-Leviathan, Chapter 17

And he that carrieth this person, is called sovereign, and [is] said to have sovereign power; and everyone besides, his subject.

Main principle described:

Excerpt 6-Leviathan, Chapter 14

When he seeth men proceed against him by violence whether they intend his death or not. And lastly the motive and end for which this renouncing and transferring of right is introduced is nothing else buy the security of a man's person in his life and in the means of so preserving life, as not be weary of it.

Main principle described:

Excerpt 7-Leviathan, Chapter 17

The final cause (purpose), end, or design of men who naturally love liberty and dominion over others, in the introduction of that restraint upon themselves in which we see them live in commonwealths, is the foresight of their own preservation, and of a more contented life thereby. .

Main principle described:

Excerpt 8-Leviathan, Chapter 14

From this fundamental law of Nature by which men are commanded to endeavour peace, is derived this second law, 'that a man be willing, when others are so too, as far-forth as for peace and defence of himself he shall think it necessary, to lay down this right to all things, and be contented with so much liberty against other men as he would allow other men against himself.'

Main principle described: