**Q: Critically explain the views of Hobbes on Sovereignty.**

The sovereign power is created on the basis of contract between a power full man and the people. According to him, the person to whom rights were surrendered was the sovereign – a great Leviathan and are have to bow before him. He is the preserver of prosperity, development and security. He said, *“By this authority, given to him by a particular man in the commonwealth, he has the use of so much power and strength conferred in him, that by error thereof, he is enabled to form wills of them all, to peace at home and mutual aid against their enemies abroad. And in him consists the essence of commonwealth and he shall think expedient, for the peace and common defense.”*

Thus, from his statement it can be said that Hobbes vests the sovereign with absolute and supreme powers. The sovereign power cannot be challenged by the people because they voluntarily have surrendered their rights to him. The sovereign power of Hobbes has some salient characteristics and these are mentioned as follows;

**Salient characteristics**

1. Sovereign shall not be party to the contract and shall remain above all laws.
2. The sovereign cannot be guilty of violating the contract.
3. He shall accordingly retain all the rights which he used to enjoy in the state of nature.
4. Sovereign is the custodian of rights of the people.
5. None should challenge the sovereign on the ground of infringing his rights.
6. The sovereign is above the law or the constitution, he had no constitutional check.
7. The sovereign is the prime interpreter of law.
8. No contract can be quoted against the sovereign because he is final authority to approve all contracts. There should be any contract against him.
9. Once the individuals submit consent they have not right to withdraw consent without the permission of the sovereign.
10. The minority has no rights of object to the choice of the majority in the selection of the sovereign.
11. Sovereign is the source of distinction between good and bad, moral and immoral, just and unjust.
12. Sovereign power can declare war and make peace
13. Hobbes gives to the sovereign power all sort of power viz. executive, legislative and judicial.

Thus, from the above mentioned regarding sovereignty as mentioned by Hobbes it can be said that he has created absolute, indivisible and inalienable sovereign. His sovereign was a one kind of dictator and undemocratic in its nature.

**Criticism**

1. Hobbes vested the sovereign power the absolute power. The power holder is unrestrained by any customary or legal law of the land. But, in actual practice, the sovereign power is not unrestrained. Even some the dictator has to respect the customs and tradition of the people. Again, the international laws also some prevent the sovereign not to use its power unlimitedly.

1. Hobbes granted the right of resistance to the people in extreme cases. According to Prof. Jones the right of resistance to the individual is inconsistence to his theory of sovereignty.
2. Hobbes says that sovereign did not surrender his rights. According to his theory, those who did not surrender their rights remain in the state of nature and thus become uncivilized.
3. Another drawback of Hobbes theory is that the sovereign is quit in unsafe position. He viewed that the contract which was executed between sovereign and the individuals and if the former dies then what will happen to the society? Hobbes did not give a clear picture for that situation.
4. Again difficult with Hobbes’s Theory of sovereignty is that he wants to commend over his subjects by force and not by their natural willingness. It is not possible to govern a nation only by force. In this context T.H Green said, it is will and not the force that matter in governing the people.
5. The sovereign theory of Hobbes is ‘pernicious and impossible’. The theory leads to mere despotism there is no checks against the oppressive and tyranny of the sovereign.
6. Rousseau one of the contractualists deadly opposed the Hobbes’s theory of sovereignty. According to him, this theory is self-contradictory and revolting in nature. He said the rights and liberty are the natural and therefore, nobody can renounce them for any supposed benefit. Renouncing these means the renouncing the manhood.

**Conclusion**

Despite this criticism of his theory of sovereignty it can be said that Hobbes has provided a clear picture of sovereignty. Most of political thinkers supported him for his clear ideas about the supreme power of the state. According to Sabine Hobbes theory of sovereignty was most revolutionary theory of sovereignty at the time of his inception and was one of the most important contributions to the political thought. It exercised profound influence of the development of political philosophy in the subsequent years.

**Human Nature** **according Hobbes**

In the Leviathan, Thomas Hobbes talks about his views of human nature and describes his vision of the ideal government which is best suited to his views.

His view on human nature is the basis of his political philosophy. Therefore, it desirable to explain the nature of human being from the angle of his political thought.

1. According to him the individual is not naturally rational. He is the embodiment of passions, emotions and desires.
2. Hobbes believes that person’s conception regarding bad and good of any aspect of his life is not fix. It is always subjective, not an objective and changes according to changing time and situation.
3. According to Hobbes man is highly self-centered. He is always busy to fulfill his own desire, then others.
4. He also believes that all people are created equally. Some have better mental faculties and some are physically better.
5. Hobbes believed that the nature of human leads people to seek power that ceased only after death.
6. He said that when two or more people want the same thing, they become enemies and attempt to destroy each other.  When men oppose each other war occurs He said that there were three basic causes for war, competition, distrust and glory.

In short, Hobbes says that man is essentially selfish, contentious, quarrelsome, wicked, non-rational, impulsive and self-centered. In this respect his view is quite similar with Machiavelli. The difference between them is that while Machiavelli did not assign any reason s for the bad nature of man Hobbes tried to explain it in scientific manner.