UNIT 1: PLATO AND ARISTOTLE

UNIT STRUCTURE

1.1 Learning Objectives
1.2 Introduction
1.3 Plato
    1.3.1 Theory of Justice
    1.3.2 Theory of Ideal State
1.4 Aristotle
    1.4.1 Theory of Citizenship
    1.4.2 Theory of Revolution
1.5 Let Us Sum Up
1.6 Further Reading
1.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
1.8 Model Questions

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to :

- discuss Plato's theory of justice
- describe Plato's idea of ideal State
- analyse Aristotle's theory of citizenship
- examine Aristotle's idea of revolution

1.2 INTRODUCTION

The history of western political thought began with the two great Greek politial philosophers Plato and Aristotle. The views and opinions of these two philosophers greatly influenced society and politics of their time. In this unit, we will discuss Plato's views on different issues, such as his theory of justice and theory of ideal state. Efforts will also be made to discuss Aristotle's theory of citizenship and revolution. By studying these theories, you will be acquainted with the political ideologies of the ancient Greek society in general as well as Plato and Aristotle in particular.

1.3 PLATO

The works of Plato (427 BC - 347 BC) are a blend of philosophy, poetry, science, arts, ethics, and metaphysics. Plato was tremendously influenced by Socrates whom he regarded as his master. Plato was greatly dissatisfied with the norms and ruling traditions of the society of that time. So, he developed his own ideas on different issues. He felt that the state must be ruled by the wisest and the best people in society. His most important work *The Republic* is a great contribution dealing with politics placed under the domination of ethics. Some of his other important works are- *The Statesman* and *The Laws.*

1.3.1 Theory of Justice

Plato was of the view that justice should be the basis of the state. Plato saw in

justice the only remedy against the political and social ills of the city state. According to his concept of justice, every citizen performs the functions of which he is most capable and does not interfere in others' functions. Thus, each class efficiently performs its role in the state. Therefore, the state naturally progresses towards peace and prosperity.

Plato's Justice has an ethical and a philosophical character. Justice for Plato means that one individual should perform only one function which is best suited to his natural aptitude without meddling with the functions of others. In other words, Platonic justice hints at specialisation of functions. Thus, justice means the fulfillment of one's duty. In short, according to Plato, in a just society, everyone does his own proper business, without interfering in the affairs of others.

Plato struck an analogy between the human organism on the one hand and social organism on the other. According to Plato, human organism contained three elements, namely, Reason, Courage and Appetite. Corresponding to these three elements of human nature, there were three classes of social organisms. These classes were - philosopher class or the ruling class which represented the element of reason; auxiliaries or the warrior class representative of the element of courage; and the worker class consisting of farmers, artisans, carpenters and other workers which represented the element of appetite. Plato asserted that when every class of the society performed its own assigned duty without interfering in the affairs of others, then justice in the real sense would exist. Thus, Plato's concept of justice establishes functional specialisation which demands from every social class to specialise itself in the work allotted to it.

According to Plato, perfect justice can only be in the ideal state which is based on proper education, principle of communism, functional specialisation and perfect wisdom of a philosopher king.

However, Plato's theory of justice is subject to the following criticisms:

- Plato did not mention about law, courts and other judicial provisions for the settlement of disputes.
- This theory assigns a static character to both the individual and to the social order. It asserts that a person had to be satisfied only with one type or nature of work.
- In the modern democratic state, justice means equality. However, Plato through his concept of justice did not mean equality for all.
- Plato's theory of justice requires perfect and strict division of labour which is not applicable in the modern state due to the large population of the states.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Mention the names of any two important books of Plato.

.....

Q2) Plato's concept of justice was in favour of functional specialisation. (True/False)

.....

1.3.2 Theory of Ideal State

Plato provided his theory of ideal state in his famous book *The Republic*. Plato's ideal state was based on certain fundamental principles, such as- classification of people into three classes, i.e. guardian class, auxiliaries and producing class; establishment of justice; state-regulated system of education; communism of property and family.

According to Plato, state is the product of human soul which is composed of three elements, such as reason, courage and appetite. Corresponding to these three human elements, there are three classes of people- guardian class,auxiliaries and producing class. Plato advocated for functional specialisation and division of labour among these three classes of people. When these three classes of people perform their respective duties without interfering in each other's affairs justice would prevail. Thus, in an ideal state, the philosopher king was to rule the state, the soldiers were to be in charge of defence of the state and the producing class were to produce food and other necessary goods for all. According to Plato, if all the people performed their allotted task without interfering in the affairs of others, then peace and prosperity would prevail in the state. The Philosopher king or the guardian class attained the necessary skill and knowledge through state-regulated system of education. The state-regulated education system aimed at developing wise rulers and virtuous citizens in the ideal state. The ideal state was also marked by the presence of the system of communism of property and family. Under this system of communism, the philosopher king or the guardian class had no right to family and private property. Plato considered attachment towards family and private property as the greatest obstacles in the way of achieving unity of the state. Therefore, he advocated communism of private property and family for the guardian class under which they would not have private property and family of their own and ultimately which would help them to devote themselves in the service of the state.

Plato's theory of ideal state is subjected to severe criticism which can be mentioned as follows:

- Plato's ideal state is a utopian state. It cannot be realised in practice. His concepts of philosopher king, communism of property and family are anti-human in nature.
- In Plato's ideal state there was no provision for law. The philosopher king was not bound by any law.
- Plato's ideal state was anti-democratic. In such a state all powers were concentrated in the hand of the philosopher king or the guardian class and opinions of other people were not given any importance.

W CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q3) In which book Plato provided his theory of Ideal State?

.....

Q4) Mention any two principles of Plato's ideal state.

.....

1.4 ARISTOTLE

Aristotle (384 BC-322 BC) was greatly influenced by his master Plato. Aristotle had profoundly contributed towards enriching political philosophy. In fact, Aristotle is regarded as the father of Political Science. Some of the important works of Aristotle are- *The Politics, The Constitution of Athens, Organon,* etc.

1.4.1 Theory of Citizenship

Aristotle discussed his views on citizenship in his book *The Politics*. Aristotle was in favour of giving citizenship status to a limited number of people. According to Aristotle, "A high degree of moral and intellectual excellence is required to participate in the deliberative and judicial functions of the state" (Gogoi, Purandar Prof. (2007). Degree Political Theory. Guwahati: Banalata Publication). He pointed out that all those who lived in a state are not citizens. Aristotle excluded certain classes of people from the purview of citizenship. He specifically mentioned certain characteristics of citizens. According to Aristotle, a person who had the capacity to take part in the administrative and judicial affairs of the state could become a citizen of the state. A citizen should be wise and intelligent and must have the capacity to rule and to be ruled. A citizen had to possess the capacity to discharge social responsibilities in an efficient manner. He must possess leisure so that he can discharge all his social, political and judicial responsibilities in an efficient manner. According to Aristotle, a citizen must possess property and slaves and should be free from economic worries.

Aristotle excluded certain categories of people from the purview of citizenship. He opined that children, women, slave, peasants, labourers and artisans were not to be given the rights of citizenship.

Aristotle's concept of citizenship is criticised on the following grounds:

- Aristotle's view of citizenship was applicable in the Greek city-state only. In the context of modern nation state, it is not applicable at all.
- Aristotle's concept of citizenship is against the principle of equality. He was not in favour of giving the status of citizenship to all the people of the state.
- Aristotle's views on citizenship deprived a large section of people from gaining political consciousness because without participating in the affairs of the state, people would not be able to acquire knowledge about the functioning of the government.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q5) Mention the names of any two important books of Aristotle.

.....

Q6) Mention any two qualities of citizen as stated by Aristotle.

.....

1.4.2 Theory of Revolution

Aristotle discussed his theory of revolution in his book *The Politics*. Frequent changes in the governments of the city states, due to decadence and deterioration in political life, made Aristotle think and formulate his views on revolution, their causes and preventive measures. Aristotle divided revolution into two kinds- total revolution and partial revolution. Total revolution referred to complete change in the constitution and partial revolution referred to changes taking part with regard to the ruling authority without any change in the constitution. Aristotle identified the general and particular causes of revolution thus:

- **General Causes of Revolution:**
  - The first cause is due to different interpretations of the principles of justice. The variety of interpretation given by different class of persons leads to clash of interests which brings about revolutionary conditions.
  - Secondly, revolution takes place when men suffer dishonour or when they see others honoured.
  - Thirdly, if a person or body of persons occupies a position of strength which is too great for the state, revolutionary conditions come into existence.
  - Fourth, fear also promotes sedition. Wrong doers, who are afraid of punishment and persons who are likely to suffer a wrong doing may promote ***sedition.***
  - Fifth, the disproportionate increase of a part of the state is also another cause of revolution.
  - Sixth, election intrigues are sometimes responsible for revolutionary conditions.
  - Seventh, willful negligence, the appointment of persons of doubtful character or of a doubtful loyalty to high office and the failure to bring about changes in the Constitution in the right time are also responsible for the existence of revolutionary conditions.
  - Eighth, heterogeneity or varied differences in people may also bring revolutionary conditions into existence.

. ***Sedition:*** Actions or speech urging rebellion against the authority of a state or ruler.

- **Special Causes of Revolution:**
  - The first cause is ***insolence*** and ***avarice***. According to Aristotle when the magistrates are insolent and grasping, they conspire against one another and also against the constitution from which they derive their power making their gains either at the expense of individuals or of the public.
  - Secondly, in aristocracies revolutions are possible if power is concentrated in the hands of a few, if some persons of great ability are ill-treated or if a man of ability and high reputation is debarred from office and honour. But the actual downfall of aristocracies is chiefly due to deviation from the principles of justice. In monarchies, the resentment of insults, confiscation of property of the individual, unjust expression of the people, fear or the

. ***Insolence:*** Rude and disrespectful behaviour. ***Avarice:*** Extreme greed for wealth or material things.

desire for fame may also bring into existence revolutionary conditions. In tyranny, similar conditions may occasion the outbreak of revolutions.

Prevention of Revolution: According to Aristotle, two methods can be adopted to prevent revolutions i.e. general and particular.

- **General Method:** The most important thing according to Aristotle is to maintain the spirit of obedience to law and watch the beginning of change carefully. Extreme measures must be avoided as they invite resistance and disobedience. Secondly, too much political power should not be allowed to be concentrated in the hands of one person or one class of persons. Thirdly, honours and rewards must be distributed as widely as possible because inequalities of office and honours lead men to rebellion more than those of wealth. Fourthly, political office must be within the reach of everyone capable of performing his duties well. The smaller office must be of long duration and higher offices of shorter duration. Strangers should not ordinarily be given offices. Monopoly of power should not be with any class of citizen. The government of the state should be so organised so that it becomes impossible for power holders of powers to take bribes and other kinds of illegal gratifications. Fifth, the administration of public finances must be left to public scrutiny. Sixth, education must be spread among the masses and they must be well acquainted with the constitution. Education helps to bring unity among the masses. Seventh, in the oligarchies or democracies, the ruling minority or majority should be given equality or even preference in all public offices, except the highest. The highest offices must be left for men of administrative experiences, integrity of character, and loyalty to the constitution. And lastly, in a democracy, the property of the rich, and in oligarchy, the rights and dignity of the poor should be respected.
- **Particular Methods:** Firstly, in democracies, the rich should not be exploited and their property should be protected. Secondly, in oligarchies a good deal of attention should be paid to the poor. They should be protected from the domination of the rich. Thirdly, in aristocracies honours and offices should be distributed evenly and the principle of distributive justice should be observed. Fourthly, in monarchies a polity of moderation should be adopted. Provision of good administration, paying heed to public opinion and honouring the virtuous can help prevent revolutions.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q7) Aristotle discussed his theory revolution in his book ……..……
(Fill in the blank)

Q8) What are the two types of revolution provided by Aristotle?

.....

Q9) State any two general causes of revolution.

.....

2 1.5 LET US SUM UP

- Greek political philosopher Plato had greatly contributed towards the discipline of political science. Some of his important contributions are - theory of justice, theory of education, theory of communism, theory of ideal state.
- While discussing the theory of justice, Plato said that human organism contained three elements- reason, courage and appetite. Corresponding to these three elements of human nature, there are three classes of social organism. These classes are - Philosopher class or the ruling class which represents the element of reason; auxiliaries or the warrior class are the representative of the element of courage; and the worker class represents the element of appetite.
- Plato asserts that when every class of the society performs its own assigned duty without interfering in the affairs of others work, then justice exists in the real sense. Thus, Plato's theory of justice provides for specialisation of functions.
- Plato put forward his theory of ideal state which was based on certain fundamental principles, such as- classification of people into three classes, i.e. guardian class, auxiliaries, producing class; establishment of justice; state regulated system of education; communism of property and family.
- Aristotle, another great Greek philosopher, known as the father of Political Science, had also greatly contributed towards political philosophy. Some of his important contributions are theory of citizenship, theory of slavery , theory of revolution, theory of ideal state.
- Aristotle's theory of citizenship had provided citizenship status to limited categories of people. According to Aristotle, a person who was wise and intelligent, had the capacity to take part in the administrative and judicial affairs of the state and who had the capacity to discharge social responsibility in efficient manner could become a citizen of the state.
- While discussing the theory of revolution, Aristotle divided revolution into two kinds- total revolution and partial revolution. He has identified general and particular causes of revolution. He had also suggested particular and special methods for the prevention of revolution.

O 1.6 FURTHER READING

1) Gogoi, Prof. P. (2007). *Degree political theory*. Guwahati: Banalata Publication.
2) Johari, J.C. (1994). *Traditions of political thought*. Bombay: Himalayan Publishing House.
3) Rao, V.V. (1998). *A history of political theories*. New Delhi: S. Chand and Company.
4) Sharma, R.P. (1984). *Western political thought*. New Delhi: Sterling Publications Ltd.

K1.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: *The Republic, The Law*

Ans to Q No 2: True

Ans to Q No 3: *The Republic*

Ans to Q No 4: Establishment of justice and state regulated system of education

Ans to Q No 5: *The Politics, The Constitution of Athens*

Ans to Q No 6: (i) A citizen should be wise and intelligent and must have all the capacity to rule and to be ruled.

(ii) A citizen had to possess the capacity to discharge social responsibility in efficient manner.

Ans to Q No 7: *The Politics*

Ans to Q No 8: Total revolution and partial revolution

Ans to Q No 9: (i) Revolution takes place when men suffer dishonour or when they see others honoured.

(ii) If a person or body of persons occupies a position of strength which is too great for the state, revolutionary conditions come into existence.

M1.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions

Q 1: Who is regarded as the father of Political Science?

Q 2: In which book did Aristotle provide his theory of citizenship?

Q 3: Mention any two special causes of revolution as stated by Aristotle.

B. Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Briefly explain the drawbacks of Plato's theory of Justice.

Q 2: Explain the relevance of Plato's theory of ideal state.

Q 3: Write a short note on Aristotle's theory of citizenship.

C. Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Critically discuss Plato's theory of justice.

Q 2: Discuss Aristotle's theory of revolution.

Q 3: Examine Plato's theory of ideal state.

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UNIT 2: ST. AUGUSTINE AND ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 Learning Objectives
2.2 Introduction
2.3 Political Thought of St. Augustine
  2.3.1 Views on Human Nature
  2.3.2 Views on State
  2.3.3 Views on City of God
  2.3.4 Views on Justice
  2.3.5 Influence or Contribution of St. Augustine
2.4 Political Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas
  2.4.1 Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas
  2.4.2 St. Thomas Aquinas' Views on the Origin of the State
  2.4.3 Views about Reason and Faith
  2.4.4 Views on Classification and Functions of Government
  2.4.5 Views on Supremacy of Church
2.5 Let Us Sum Up
2.6 Further Reading
2.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
2.8 Model Questions

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the political philosophy of St. Augustine
- describe St. Augustine's views on human nature and views on state
- discuss St. Augustine's views on city of god and views on justice
- analyse contribution of St. Augustine to political philosophy
- describe the political philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas
- analyse the contribution of Aquinas to political philosophy.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, we have discussed about the various theories of the two great Greek philosophers i.e. Plato and Aristotle. In this unit, we will discuss the views of two medieval political thinkers i.e. St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. Medieval political philosophy is mostly associated with the views of two great philosophers, St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. In the views of these two great philosophers, the influence of the Church was very prominent. In this unit, efforts will be made to examine how the views of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas on various issues had contributed towards the political philosophy of that time.

2.3 POLITICAL THOUGHT OF ST. AUGUSTINE

St.Augustine (354 AD-430 AD) lived in a transitory period which saw the ending of

the ancient and starting of the medieval age. He was deeply influenced by his predecessors like Plato, Cicero, Christianity and the stoic philosophy. St. Augustine's most important works was *De Civitate Dei (City of God)* a treatise written in the Latin language. The book is divided into 22 books. Most of his books are devoted to the defence of Christianity and the construction of City of God. Through *De Civitate Dei*, he had attempted to explain the cause for the fall of the Roman Empire. According to some philosophers, St. Augustine probably had a greater influence on the subsequent medieval political thought than any other philosopher of the early Middle Ages.

2.3.1 Views on Human Nature

St. Augustine's view on human nature was greatly influenced by Christianity. People in a state should always obey the church and they should be of high moral values. According to Augustine, human body belongs to the state and the human soul to the church. While the human body is material, the soul is immaterial (non-physical) and superior to the body. He opined that human beings have a dual nature. Similarly, the needs of human beings are also of two types, such as- temporal needs and spiritual needs. Temporal needs of human being can be fulfilled in the earthly state. But, the spiritual needs can be fulfilled only in the City of God. By this, St. Augustine firmly held that human beings could attain spirituality or fulfill their spiritual needs only with the help of Christianity.

2.3.2 Views on State

According to St. Augustine, the state was of divine origin and inferior only to the city of God. Augustine believed that the state came into existence to provide divine remedy to the people for all their sins. He opined that the ruler of the state was the representative of God on earth and due to this reason, he commanded obedience from the subjects.

According to Augustine, a state which had adopted Christian rule was that of God while a non-Christian state would be marked by injustice. Every man should obey such a state based on Christian principles because only then they would be serving the purpose of God. Augustine believed that in the Christian States, every action of the state authorities was guided by a divine plan and purpose owing to which there prevailed perfect justice. Unlike Plato and Aristotle, Augustine was of the view that the state was subordinate to the higher authority of God. According to Augustine, only those laws should be obeyed which were moral from the point of view of the church. A Christian always obeys the state authorities and the state laws because through them the ultimate higher will of God is attained. So, he had subordinated the state to the Church.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Name the most important work of St. Augustine.

.....

Q2) State the names of any two philosophers who had great influence on the philosophy of Augustine.

.....

Q3) St Augustine believed in divine origin of the state. (True/False)

.....

2.3.3 Views on City of God

St. Augustine provided his concept of *City of God* in *De Civitate Dei.* According to Augustine, the world we live in consists of two cities, one is the earthly Commonwealth or city and the second is the Heavenly Commonwealth or the City of God. He formulated his concept of two cities primarily to explain the downfall of Roman Empire. The earthly commonwealth is marked by self-interest and the presence of greedy and possessive impulses of lower human nature. This earthly commonwealth is termed as the kingdom of Satan. It is full of human sins and is not permanent but perishable. But, there is one city which is eternal and imperishable. That is the heavenly commonwealth or the City of God. The heavenly commonwealth or the City of God shows the way to peace and spiritual salvation. It is founded on the love of God and truth and is permanent and immortal. Augustine opined that human beings who have faith in Christianity can become members of the City of God.

Augustine believed that the Roman Empire perished away because it was an earthly city. Restless love for power was the cause of down fall of the Roman Empire. Due to the sins of human beings, the Roman Empire had vanished. He attributed the fall of Rome to a number of human faults, such as cruelty, pride, luxury etc. But the city of God, according to Augustine was permanent and people could attain their spiritual salvation only in the City of God. In the City of God, there was peace, justice, universal brotherhood, love and order.

Augustine believed that all human history is a dramatic story of struggle between these two cities, i.e. earthly city and city of God. He was convinced that the ultimate victory belongs to the city of God through which people would be able to aspire for greater goals of life.

2.3.4 Views on Justice

According to Augustine, justice is the basis of state and it can prevail only in the city of God. Without justice the state would turn into a state of robberies. Justice means respect for duties and imposes obligations on human beings. Justice also implies respect for the Church. Christianity is above everything and absolute justice is possible only in the universal city of God in which universal laws were obeyed. A state will be unjust if it violates universal order. Justice exists when the people worship true God.

2.3.5 Influence or Contribution of St. Augustine

St. Augustine was one of the most important political thinkers of Medieval Europe. It is said that Thomas Aquinas and Dante were largely influenced by his writings. He also influenced Martin Luther. His conception of Christian Commonwealth became the basis of Holy Roman Empire to a great extent. He gave the idea that political authority was not absolute and that there was also a higher authority over the state. He also challenged the

established idea that state laws should be obeyed. His ideas remained alive throughout the middle ages and his concept of *City of God* became the basis of all philosophy and borrowed by both Protestants and Catholics equally during that age.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q4) Who according to Augustine could become a member of the *City of God*?

.....

Q5) Augustine opined the earthly commonwealth or state is marked by the presence of earthly, greedy and possessive impulses of lower human nature. (True/False)

.....

Q6) Mention the names of two political thinkers of the medieval age who were greatly influenced by the philosophy of St. Augustine.

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2.4 POLITICAL THOUGHT OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

St. Thomas Aquinas (1227-1274 AD) was one of the most outstanding personalities of the middle ages. He was an intellectual and liberal thinker. He attempted to revive Aristotelian philosophy. During the time of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Roman Church was already a huge organisation. He was a follower of the Christian religion. His writings were mainly influenced by Stoics, Aristotle and Cicero. Some of his important works are- *Summa Theologica, Summa Contra Gentiles,* etc.

2.4.1 Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas

St. Thomas Aquinas' main contributions to the political philosophy are:

- **Idea of Welfare State:** Through his philosophy, St. Aquinas promoted the idea of the welfare state which will look after the poor, provide justice to all and maintain peace which are regarded as functions of a welfare state even today.
- **Idea of Constitutional Government:** St. Aquinas was in favour of the system of Monarchy, but to him that should not be absolute. Such a government should be bound by the laws of the state. In keeping with the same, he had put forth the idea of constitutional government.
- **Classification of Law:** According to St. Aquinas laws should be linked with justice. So, he has classified laws based on reason. He was of the view that laws should be the product of reasonable thinking and laws should be obeyed not only because they are the command of the superior authority, but because they are based on certain reasons.
- **Revival of Aristotle's Philosophy:** St. Aquinas was mainly responsible for the revival of Aristotle's philosophy in the west. He supported Aristotle's philosophy so long as it did not clash with the ideals of the church.
- **Basis of State:** St. Aquinas believed that the state was a moral institution and stood to promote the welfare to its people. He opined that state came into existence

due to social instincts of human beings. He put forward the view that the state does not perform only negative functions, but it has greater positive role such as promoting good virtues, welfare of people etc. Thus, Aquinas provided a natural and moral basis to the state.

- **Idea of Nation-State:** St. Aquinas contributed to the idea of nation-state. He substituted national sentiments for religious authority.
- **Concept of Natural Law:** St. Aquinas subordinated human law to natural law and gave a systematic concept of natural law. His idea of natural law had influenced a number of political thinkers, such as Locke.

2.4.2 St. Thomas Aquinas' Views on the Origin of the State

During the medieval period, the Christian thinkers opined that the state existed due to the sins of human beings. According to them, the state existed only because of the weakness in human nature.However, St Thomas Aquinas brought a radical change regarding the theory of origin of the state. Unlike the medieval Christian thinkers who attributed unethical or sinful reasons for the origin of the state, St. Aquinas believed that man was a social animal by nature and the state was natural to man. St Aquinas strongly believed that state was not an artificial, sinful and conventional institution; rather it was a natural institution. He argued that since nobody could be self-sufficient, people needed each other's assistance for fulfilling their social requirements. In this way, the state was a natural institution. The people joined the state for their fullest development and also for attaining perfection. So, the state has a positive role and it provides essential services to the people. State exists for the moral welfare of the people. Along with the state, the society is also essential for human nature which makes the people virtuous and moral. According to St. Aquinas, monarchy was the best suited form of government as it was the inevitable law of nature that the superior should rule over the inferior. It was also in the interest of the inferiors that they should be ruled by superiors. If the inferiors are ruled by superiors, i.e. by persons with more virtues, higher knowledge and excellence, then the inferiors would also be able to develop their virtues. Thus, St. Aquinas justified the educative role of the state.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q7) Who was the author of the book *Summa Theologica*?

.....

Q8) According to St. Aquinas laws should be based on …… (Fill in the Blank)

Q9) According to Aquinas state was an artificial, sinful and conventional institution. (True/False)

.....

Q10) Mention the argument put forward by St. Thomas Aquinas to justify the rule of superior over inferiors.

.....

.....

2.4.3 Views About Reason and Faith

St. Aquinas had laid stress on both reason and faith which should guide human behaviour. According to him, both reason and faith had a common source, i.e. God. Thus, he provided a ***synthesis*** between Christian dogma and philosophy of the ancient Greek philosophers.

. ***Synthesis:*** The combination of parts to form a connected whole.

2.4.4 Views on Classification and Functions of Government

St. Aquinas provided his scheme of classification of government on the basis of two principles - whether the supremacy is the result of man's sins or whether it is the result of social instinct of man. St. Aquinas, just like Aristotle, classified government into normal and perverted forms in which the former included monarchy, aristocracy and polity (modern democracy) and perverted forms were tyranny, oligarchy and democracy. He, however, always favoured monarchy in limited manner which restricted government from becoming tyrannical or oppressive. He opined that government should be bound by laws. According to him, no form of Government was absolutely good or bad, but it depended on the functions which were performed. St. Aquinas stressed greater emphasis on civil government. He classified civil government into four categories, such as- sacred, royal, political and economic.

Regarding the functions of the government, St. Aquinas opined that a good government was only one which performed good functions for its citizens. In fact, Aquinas emphasised such functions of the state which reflected the concept of modern welfare state. The state should provide better administration, justice, civic facilities and ensure defense of its citizens. In simple words, the functions of the state should be to look after the poor, to ensure unity, to pave the way for virtuous life, to keep roads safe and free, etc. A good government should always ensure happiness, security and virtuous life of citizens. Aquinas also emphasised on the role of the government in promoting moral life of the people. He however did not favour the idea of assigning any negative functions to the government. He opined that the government should avoid unnecessary taxation and provide economic relief to the people. The government should remove all the obstacles to ensure welfare of the people.

. ***Ex-communicate:*** Officially bar or prevent one from the services or sacraments of the Church

2.4.5 Views on Supremacy of Church

St Aquinas considered Church to be the supreme authority. The Church, according to St. Aquinas, was the only agency which promoted unity out of the universal disorder and anarchy. It was supreme in all matters. According to him, a secular state should always work under the guidance of the Church as the church was the guiding and controlling authority. The Church had authority to ***ex-communicate*** a ruler. Therefore, a Pope should be obeyed both in secular and religious affairs. According to him, authority of the church over the state was indirect rather than being direct and as such interference in the affairs of the state should be minimum. Aquinas was of the view that the Church and the state should always work in cooperation with each other.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q11) What is the source of reason and faith as mentioned by St. Thomas Aquinas?

.....

Q12) St. Aquinas categorised government into ……..……. forms. (Fill in the blank).

Q13) Mention any two functions of the government as stated by St. Aquinas.

.....

.....

Q14) Which was the agency, according to St. Aquinas, that could maintain unity out of the universal disorder and anarchy?

.....

2.5 LET US SUM UP

- St. Augustine was one of the most important medieval political thinkers. His most important works was- the *De Civitate Dei* (*City of God*). St. Augustine through his philosophy tried to glorify Christianity.
- The most important concept of St. Augustine is the *City of God*. According to Augustine the world we live in consists of two cities, one is the earthly Commonwealth or city and the second is the Heavenly Commonwealth or the *City of God*.
- The earthly state is full of human sins and is not permanent. The heavenly commonwealth or the *City of God* shows the way to peace and spiritual salvation. It is founded on the love for god and truth. It is permanent and immortal. Augustine opined that human being who had faith in Christianity could become a member of the *City of God*.
- One of the important philosophies of St. Augustine was his view regarding human nature which was greatly inspired by Christianity. To him, human being has a dual nature and two types of needs, such as- temporal needs and spiritual needs. Temporal needs of human being can be fulfilled in the earthly state. But the spiritual needs can be fulfilled only in the *City of God*.
- St. Augustine believed in the divine origin of the state. According to Augustine, the state came into existence to provide divine remedy to the people for all their sins and the state was inferior only to the *City of God*.
- Another important concept of St. Augustine was his concept of justice. According to Augustine, justice is the basis of state and it could prevail only in the *City of God*. Augustine opined that justice implied respect for the Church. It also meant respect for duties.
- Another important thinker of the medieval age was St. Thomas Aquinas. Some of his important works are- *Summa Theologica, Summa Contra Gentiles*, etc.
- Regarding the origin of the state, St Aquinas opined that state was not an artificial, sinful and conventional institution; rather it was a natural institution. He argued that

since nobody could be self-sufficient people needed each other's assistance for fulfillment of social requirements and for this reason the state came into existence. St. Aquinas believed that man was a social animal by nature and the state was natural to man.

- St. Aquinas viewed that reason and faith should guide human behaviour. The source of both reason and faith is God.
- St. Aquinas provided his scheme of classification of government into two categories- normal form and perverted form. Normal forms included monarchy, aristocracy and polity (modern democracy) and perverted forms were tyranny, oligarchy and democracy. He always favoured monarchy in limited manner which restricted government from becoming tyrannical. He opined that government should be bound by laws.
- Regarding the functions of the government, St. Aquinas mentioned that the government should ensure welfare of its citizens. It should give better administration, justice, civic facilities and ensure defense of its citizens. A good government should always ensure happiness, security and virtuous life of citizens. Aquinas also emphasised the role of the government in promoting moral life of the people.
- St. Aquinas considered Church to be the supreme authority which promoted unity amidst the universal disorder and anarchy. According to him, a secular state should always work under the guidance of Church as it is the guiding and controlling authority. Aquinas was of the view that the Church and the state should always cooperate with each other.

2.6 FURTHER READING

1) Masih, Y. (2006). *A critical history western philosophy (Greek, Medieval and Modern)*. Delhi: Motilal Banarisdass Publishers Private Limited.

2) Sharma, S.K. and Sharma, U. (2003). *Western political thought, From plato to Burke.* Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors.

3) Singh, G. (Ed.). (2008). *Western political thinkers*. New Delhi: Omega Publications.

2.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: *De Civitate Dei*

Ans to Q No 2: Plato and Cicero

Ans to Q No 3: True

Ans to Q No 4: According to Augustine human being who had faith in Christianity could become member of the 'City of God'.

Ans to Q No 5: True

Ans to Q No 6: Thomas Aquinas and Dante

Ans to Q No 7: St. Thomas Aquinas

Ans to Q No 8: Reason

Ans to Q No 9: False

Ans to Q No 10: According to St. Aquinas the superior should rule over the inferior. It was in the interest of the inferiors that they should be ruled by superiors. If the inferiors are ruled by superiors, i.e. persons with more virtues, higher knowledge and excellence, then the inferiors would also be able to develop their virtues.

Ans to Q No 11: God

Ans to Q No 12: Norman and perverted forms

Ans to Q No 13: (i) The government should look after the poor.

(ii) The government should ensure defense of its citizens.

Ans to Q No 14: The Church

2.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

Q 1: Who was the author of the book *De Civitate Dei*?

Q 2: Mention the names of two important books of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Q 3: Who revived the Aristotelian philosophy in the medieval period?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Briefly write about St. Augustine's view about human nature.

Q 2: Explain St. Aquinas opinion regarding the function of the government.

Q 3: Write a short note on St. Augustine's view regarding the state.

C) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss St. Augustine theory of city of God.

Q 2: Describe St. Aquinas view regarding the origin of the state.

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UNIT 3: NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Learning Objectives
3.2 Introduction
3.3 Views on Human Nature
3.4 Views on Forms of Government and the Preservation of the Dominion
3.5 Views on Ethics and Politics
3.6 Contribution of Machiavelli to Political Thought
3.7 Let Us Sum Up
3.8 Further Reading
3.9 Answers to Check Your Progress
3.10 Model Questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss human nature as stated by Machiavelli
- analyse the views of Machiavelli on the forms of government and the preservation of dominion
- explain Machiavelli's views on ethics and politics
- evaluate the contribution of Machiavelli to political thought.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

With Machiavelli middle ages came to an end and political philosophy entered a new phase. He was more a practical politician than a political philosopher. Machiavelli had a practical approach and outlook to every problem that the Italy of his times had confronted but unfortunately he was not successful in placing his ideas into actual practice. The entire philosophy of Machiavelli is contained in his two great works, *The Prince* and *The Discourses*. In this unit, we will discuss about Machiavelli's views on human nature, forms of government, preservation of dominion, ethics and politics and his contribution to political thought.

3.3 VIEWS ON HUMAN NATURE

Machiavelli has discussed at some length about human nature. He has given a very dark picture of human nature and has even equated that with animal nature. According to him, human beings are ungrateful and selfish. His views upon human nature as depicted in *The Prince* are as under:

- Man is self-centred and thinks about his own interests rather than the interests of anybody else. He always cares for himself. He is a greedy creature.
- Human beings are always aggressive and everyone is interested to acquire more. They are, therefore, always struggling with each other, thereby creating conditions of anarchy.

- Man is always timid and creature of his habits. Being timid he follows the line of least resistance. He wants to follow only well-established customs so that he is not opposed by the society.
- Machiavelli is of the view that by nature men love private property more than their kith and kin.
- Men are stupid and irrational and are always attracted by desires, ultimately resulting in their ruin.
- He again says that human beings are prone to wickedness and they act morally only under compulsion.
- All human beings want maximum liberty and they wish to be independent of others.

Briefly speaking Machiavelli like Hobbes believes that human beings are essentially selfish and the common factor in these selfish human beings is the desire for security.

Criticism of Machiavelli's Viewpoint: Machiavelli has been criticised for the views which he has advanced on human nature. It is evidently clear that human nature is not as bad as he has tried to portray. Human beings are of course not completely good but at the same time they are not completely bad as well. Moreover, nowhere has he stated as to why he considers human beings as bad and selfish. He has given no rational explanation for that. Thus, his ideas about human nature are not very sound and present only one side of the picture.

3.4 VIEWS ON FORMS OF GOVERNMENT AND THE PRESERVATION OF THE DOMINION

Machiavelli, like Aristotle, has classified the government into normal and perverted form. In its normal form, the government is monarchy, aristocracy and limited democracy or constitutional democracy while correspondingly perverted forms being tyranny, oligarchy and democracy. He however, agrees with Polybius and Cicero that only a mixed form of government is the best or ideal attainable one. As a realist, he feels that in a government, there should be close relationship between economic development and political stability. According to him, the stability of a government depends on the economic development of its subjects. He prefers the rule of many on elected basis rather than the rule of one on hereditary basis. He has definite preference for elected elements over hereditary system. Moreover, Machiavelli argued that the people are no doubt unable to understand complicated policy matters but their sharing of government in ordinary affairs is bound to bring stability to the government. Therefore, Machiavelli is in favour of a republican form of government. Because, he believes that only in a republican form of government, people can enjoy maximum level of individual liberty and the city can achieve greatness. It does not happen in a princely state.

Machiavelli's views are very significant regarding the preservation of the dominions. The rule that Machiavelli suggests for preservation of dominion is respect for the established institutions and customs of the land. He also suggests their all-time assistance to the

prince. He also states that the prince must keep in his hands property and women. He should create a situation where the people appreciate him. The prince should also encourage commerce and agriculture and should refrain from taxation. He states that the prince should have the quality to change according to circumstances. He again says that the ruler should have the quality of a lion and a fox i.e. the quality of aggressiveness and cunningness. The ruler should have proper knowledge of the art of war. He must learn the most important skill of using force effectively. Machiavelli says that military duty should be compulsory for every citizen. They should not be dependent on any group for defense. By way of suggesting republican form of government as well as various means regarding the preservation of dominion, Machiavelli demonstrates his realist and modern political outlook.

t ACTIVITY 3.1

Try to find out the characteristics of the republican form of government.

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w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Machiavelli's depiction of human nature is dark and negative. (True/ False)

.....

Q2) According to Machiavelli, which is the best form of government?

.....

Q3) Mention any one suggestion made by Machiavelli for the preservation of dominion.

.....

Q4) Mention four points regarding Machiavelli's views on human nature.

.....

3.5 VIEWS ON ETHICS AND POLITICS

Machiavelli regards the state to be the highest form of human association. Hence, it has a superior claim to man's obligation. As the state is the creator of law and morality, its acts cannot be judged by individual ethics. He, therefore, prescribes double standard of morality, one for the ruler and the other for the private citizens. The ruler is about law and morality. It may be noted that the state for Machiavelli is a non-ethical identity. The efficiency of the state machinery is to be judged from the point of view of the safety of the state.

While maintaining power in the state, Machiavelli is not concerned with the ethics of the means employed to achieve the goal. It is because he believes that the Prince must maintain power in whatever way possible. Otherwise power may decline and the state may expire. Machiavelli in this context is particularly influenced by the developments in his own country i.e. Italy. It may be noted that Italy disintegrated and power declined because of the failure of the rulers to expand and sustain the state. That is why, for Machiavelli, what is more important is to maintain power at all cost so that the state can be maintained without decay.

3.6 CONTRIBUTION OF MACHIAVELLI TO POLITICAL THOUGHT

Machiavelli is regarded as the last of the medieval and first of the modern political thinker. In fact, it is through his methods as well as the areas that he selected for an intellectual discourse obviously made him the first ever modern political thinker. Here, an attempt has been made to evaluate the contribution of Machiavelli and to make a proper assessment of his position in the history of modern political thought.

Methodology:

Since Machiavelli deals with different problems, it is therefore natural that he has adopted different methodology for the study of different areas. According to him, the best method for the study of political problems is historical. He is of the view that the study of the past would be highly helpful to find solutions to political problems. Accordingly, history is the most celebrated approach adopted by Machiavelli. There are critics who believe that in the actual sense Machiavelli's approach is not entirely historical. It is an approach which is based on empiricism and is used in the historical spirit. In fact, Machiavelli's abandonment of the medieval method of Theology has made him the son of Renaissance and the first ever philosopher of the modern political thought.

2 LET US SUM UP

Renaissance was a period of intellectual upliftment when people were gradually coming out from ignorance to knowledge, from faith to reason and from humiliation and complete subordination to reasoning and self-understanding. By this time, it had been discovered that the 'earth is round'. This was against the common belief which had been preached by the pastors that the earth was flat. The supremacy of church and blind faith was weakened. Renaissance brought a new idea regarding humanism which believed in individual capacity. It is based on the idea of self-made men. Renaissance also brought both economic and political change. Ideas of realism and empiricism were also the blessings of renaissance.

- **Machiavelli's Treatment of Human Nature:** Human nature is the study of psychology and politics is the study of state. The state is unthinkable without individuals. No study of political theory could be completed unless it is related to the nature of individuals. Such a relationship between politics and human nature is to be found in case of Machiavelli. It may be mentioned here that Machiavelli's emphasis on the treatment of human nature from the psychological point of view has made him the first modern political thinker. But at the same time, it should be remembered that Machiavelli's remarks about human nature in the 'Prince' are very damaging. They go entirely against that side of human nature that has been described as social and divine.
- **Separation of Religion and Politics:** Machiavelli's attitude towards the question of religion and politics is directly governed by his conception of human nature. During the entire course of medieval period, politics and religion was considered to be inseparable. At the same time, the state-church controversy dominated the entire

course of medieval period. But Machiavelli is the first political thinker who ensured the separation of religion and politics. In this way, Machiavelli demonstrates his scientific approach in studying the issues of religion and politics and established his position as a modern political thinker.

- **Views on the Extension of Dominions:** Machiavelli is not merely satisfied by developing a body of doctrine in relation to morality and religion. He also puts forward practical suggestion in relation to his dominion. Machiavelli has discussed the question of the extension of the power of the prince. He suggested that the prince should not only be satisfied with the acquisition of territory but should also try to extend these territories. It is through his doctrine of extension of dominion that Machiavelli demonstrates his realist and modern political outlook.
- **Influence of the Environment:** Machiavelli is an excellent epitome of his time. In fact, it is his extreme individualism and pragmatism and the rejection of the relationship between religion and politics, obviously makes him the first ever modern political thinker. Modern political thought in reality begins with Machiavelli. The reason is that Machiavelli, more than any other individual is influenced by his environment. Being a remarkable and modern political thinker, Machiavelli analysed the conditions as a historian. He wanted to promote certain great policies and systems and draw the same from ancient history. At the same time, he was one of those rare thinkers who had observed human nature in the most objective manner.
- **Doctrine of Power-Politics:** Machiavelli has been regarded as the pioneer of power politics. Being a realist, Machiavelli looks forward to the concept of sovereignty and nation state. He completely rejected the feudal conception of a complex political organisation and prefers the nation-state system with sovereign status. Accordingly, initiating the doctrine of power- politics, sovereignty as well as nation-states, Machiavelli obviously contributes towards the modern political thought. In reference to the ideas of the political philosophy of Machiavelli, it is seen that there are traces of modernism and realism that have made him the first ever political thinker in the history of modern political thought.

t ACTIVITY 3.2

Try to find out the influences of Renaissance on Machiavelli.

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w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q5) Machiavelli made a separation between ethics and politics. (True/ False)

……

Q6) Who is regarded as the first modern political thinker?

……..

Q7) Machiavelli separated religion from politics. (True/ False)

.....

Q8) Write a note on Machiavelli's views on separation of religion and politics.

.....

Q9) Explain Machiavelli's views on Doctrine of power-politics.

.....

3.7 LET US SUM UP

- The entire philosophy of Machiavelli is contained in his two great works, *The Prince* and *The Discourses*.
- Regarding human nature, Machiavelli has depicted a very dark and negative picture and has even equated that with animal nature.
- According to him, human beings are ungrateful and selfish.
- Machiavelli is of the view that by nature, men love private property more than their kith and kin.
- Machiavelli like Hobbes believes that human beings are essentially selfish and the common factor in these selfish human beings is the desire for security.
- Machiavelli has regarded the mixed form of government as the best and ideal one. Being a supporter of individual liberty, he preferred the republican government.
- For the preservation of dominion, Machiavelli has entrusted various responsibilities on both the prince as well as the citizens.
- By way of suggesting republican form of government as well as various means regarding the preservation of dominion, Machiavelli demonstrates his realist and modern political outlook.
- Machiavelli has made a separation between ethics and politics.
- The contribution of Machiavelli to the history of political thought can be analysed from various aspects such as his methodology, treatment of human nature, views on religion and politics, views on the extension of dominions, influence of the environment as well as his doctrine of power politics etc.
- Machiavelli is the first political thinker who ensures the separation of religion and politics.
- Machiavelli has been regarded as the pioneer of power politics. Initiating the doctrine of power politics, sovereignty as well as nation states, he obviously contributes towards the modern political thought.

3.8 FURTHER READING

1) Jha, S. (2010). *Western political thought: From Plato to Marx*. New Delhi: Dorling Kindersley.

2) Nelson, B. R. (1996). *Western political thought: From Socrates to the age of ideology*. New Delhi: Dorling Kindersley.

K3.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: True

Ans to Q No 2: Republican form of government

Ans to Q No 3: Respect for the established institutions and customs of the land

Ans to Q No 4: The four points regarding Machiavelli's views on human nature are-

a) Man is self-centred and thinks about his own interests rather than the interests of anybody else. He always cares for himself. He is a greedy creature.

b) Human beings are always aggressive and everyone is interested to acquire more. They are always struggling with each other, and thus, creating conditions of anarchy.

c) Man is always timid and creature of his habits. Being timid he follows the line of least resistance. He wants to follow only well-established customs so that he is not opposed by the society.

d) Machiavelli is of the view that by nature, men love private property more than their kith and kin.

Ans to Q No 5: True

Ans to Q No 6: Niccolo Machiavelli

Ans to Q No 7: True

Ans to Q No 8: Machiavelli's attitude towards the question of religion and politics is directly governed by his conception of human nature. During the entire course of medieval period, politics and religion was considered to be inseparable. At the same time, the state-church controversy dominated the entire course of medieval period. However, Machiavelli is the first political thinker who ensures the separation of religion and politics. It is in this way that Machiavelli demonstrates his scientific approach to study the issues of religion and politics and establishes his position as a modern political thinker.

Ans to Q No 9: Machiavelli has been regarded as the pioneer of power- politics. Being a realist, Machiavelli looks forward to the concept of sovereignty and nation state. He completely rejects the feudal conception of a complex political organisation and prefers the nation state system with sovereign status. Accordingly, initiating the doctrine of power-politics, sovereignty as well as nation states, Machiavelli obviously contributes towards the modern political thought. In reference to the ideas of the political philosophy of Machiavelli, it can be seen that there are traces of modernism and realism that have made him the first ever political thinker in the history of modern political thought.

M3.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

Q 1: Mention any two human natures as depicted by Machiavelli.

Q 2: Mention any two qualities necessary for the prince for the preservation of his dominion.

Q 3: Machiavelli is the first political thinker who ensures the separation of religion and politics. (Write true or false)

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Explain Machiavelli's views on the forms of government.

Q 2: How Machiavelli looks the relationship between ethics and politics?

Q 3: Write a short note on Machiavelli's views on human nature.

C) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Evaluate the contribution of Machiavelli as the first modern political thinker.

Q 2: Discuss Machiavelli's views on the forms of government and the preservation of the Dominions.

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UNIT 4: THOMAS HOBBES

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning Objectives
4.2 Introduction
4.3 Views on Human Nature
4.4 Views on State
4.5 Let Us Sum Up
4.6 Further Reading
4.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
4.8 Model Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- analyse the views of Thomas Hobbes on human nature
- explain the views of Hobbes on state
- describe the contributions of Hobbes towards the development of political thought.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

In the tradition of social contract theory, Thomas Hobbes is known as the first contractualist. The most important work of Hobbes is 'Leviathan'. He is essentially a product of his times and to think of him and his philosophy without his times will be rather an incomplete study. In this unit, we will discuss the views of Hobbes regarding human nature and state.

4.3 VIEWS ON HUMAN NATURE

Since Hobbes says that to understand the state, the first thing we must do is to grasp 'its matter and artificer', both of which is man, let us begin with his view of human nature. His idea about human nature is also the fountain-head of all his philosophy. In fact, his conception of human nature is the pivot round around which his whole philosophy revolves. Hobbes has made a fundamental departure from his contemporaries by saying that man is essentially nasty, brutish and an uncivilised creature. He has made individual, as against society, the center of his thought. Before him Plato, Machiavelli and St. Augustine had developed their philosophies. But they considered society and not the individual as the main theme.

A human being, for Hobbes, is matter in motion, there being two kinds of motion: vital motions, like the circulation of blood or the beating of one's pulse, and voluntary motions. Voluntary motions or 'endeavour', as Hobbes calls them, are basically of two kinds: either towards an object or away from an object. This endeavour, when it is towards something, is called Appetite or Desire and when the endeavour is away from something, it is generally called Aversion. Human beings are nothing but bundles of appetites and aversions, and life consists in fulfilling one desire after another. Desire or appetite is never

fulfilled. There is no end of our desire and it ends with the death of human beings. Life itself is about the continuous fulfillment of one's desires and human beings take the help of their reason in order to satisfy their desires. Human beings do not just have passions, they have reason too. But, their reason is a mere slave of their passions and its role is to devise the most efficient means of achieving these passions.

For Hobbes, all men are free, all men are equal and all men are rational. Every individual is free to decide what is good or bad for him and free in making choice by using his rational capacity. Every individual should get equality of opportunity. According to Hobbes, reward is given on the basis of merit and hard working. Every individual has the capacity to differentiate between good and bad. Along with these, Hobbes has said that all men are self-interested and egoistic. Hobbes again has mentioned that men by birth are equal in intelligence but it is desire for having the same thing which makes them quarrel with each other. Men would never have quarreled had they not desired to gain the same thing. He believes that competition makes people brute and quarrelsome. It was an uncontrolled society with desirous human beings which changed the entire concept of basic principles of the society.

For Hobbes, happiness remains the goal of life. Defining happiness or felicity as the continuous satisfaction of our desires, Hobbes makes desire the engine of all human action. This desire makes men fight with each other. It is the desire which makes men nasty and brutish in the state of nature and makes him stand against the valid desires of others to satisfy his own desires.

Criticism:

Hobbes' views on human nature have been criticised by the political thinkers on many grounds. Among them, the main points of criticism leveled against his views on human nature are given below:

- According to the critics Hobbes has perhaps either not understood human nature or has tried to adjust that to suit his requirements. On the one hand, he draws that they are disunited and isolated individuals having no concern for each other and in the other, they are united and like civilised citizens realising needs and necessities of others and most willing to cooperate with each other as well. He has, thus, made men savage animals and civilised creatures at the same time. What he thought of man and his nature is not clear.
- Hobbes has depicted the nature of man as savage and brutish but that is not correct. History is evidence to it that man by nature is a social animal and wants to live in peace with his fellow beings. Who does not know that even the most savage of the tribes, in most remote and primitive days, had their code of conduct based on peaceful living. Man was never savage and as such the very foundations of his social contract are shaky and slippery.

Having such criticisms does not mean that his entire theory and political philosophy is faulty. To think so will be just underestimating the importance of this great philosopher.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Mention the name of the most important work of Thomas Hobbes.

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Q2) Explain any one human nature as depicted by Hobbes.

.....

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.....

Q3) Hobbes has said that all men are self-interested and egoistic. (True/ False)

.....

4.4 VIEWS ON STATE

Hobbes was the great political thinker of his age who believed that the state came into being as a result of the social contract executed between the individuals and the sovereign. According to him, before men came to the state, they were living in the state of nature where neither their life, nor their property nor anything else was secured. Because, in the Hobbesian state of nature, there was no state, no authority, no ruler and no politics which made peoples' lives solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short. To overcome this situation, people would eventually enter into an agreement voluntarily and this agreement was known as the social contract. Through this contract, all the individuals in the state of nature were to make a promise to each other that they would each give up their natural rights in favour of the sovereign and would obey his laws to secure their life and property. They promised each other that in choosing their sovereign, they were to be understood as authorising all his future actions. It is to be mentioned here that through the social contract all the people were to give up all the powers to the sovereign power except the right to life.

5 LET US KNOW

Hobbes says that although there is no state, no political authority, no written laws in the state of nature, there are some laws of nature. These laws of nature are the product of human reason or individual rationality. Individuals themselves know what is good or what is bad. According to Hobbes, there are 19 laws of nature. But the problem is that nobody follows the laws of nature and there is no authority to implement these laws of nature.

Social contract is not binding on the ruler. The ruler is excluded from the contract. Thus, Hobbes started with that all men are free, equal and rational, but he ended with a very powerful authority.

The social contract creates a sovereign, and at the same time, another new entity called the state. The fact that it is by choosing a sovereign that the people also create the state. The nature of this state is absolute, indivisible and inalienable. The state is an artificial person and therefore, needs a natural person to bear its persona, without this persona, it cannot act. Therefore, they are to choose an individual to bear this persona. When he acts, it is the state that is acting. It is the state that is repository of power, with the sovereign

as its representative, and the subjects owe allegiance to the sovereign as the representative of the state. The sovereign is the outcome of the consent of the people, freedom of the people and the rationality of the people.

In the state when the sovereign is created, people can enjoy only those liberties which are provided by the sovereign. So, in the state under the sovereign, the liberty of the people depends on the laws of the sovereign. In the state of nature, there is no ruler, but there would be excessive liberty of the people. Although in the state under the sovereign, there also exists liberty, yet people can enjoy liberty by abiding the laws of the sovereign. Otherwise, they would be punished. The sovereign could decide everything without consulting the people. He could do anything. Because there was no restriction on the sovereign and he had no obligations towards his subjects as he was not a part of the social contract. Nobody had the right to question, criticise and overthrow the monarch as he was the own creation of the people. In order to overthrow the monarch, the social contract would have to be dissolved by the people and for this they had to take permission from the monarch and no doubt, he would never give such permission. If the social contract would dissolve, then the people would go to the same anarchical state of nature. If the people oppose the social contract, it would be the opposition against their own decision. So, there was no way left for them.

5 LET US KNOW

Hobbes considered two types of liberty - unrestricted liberty or negative liberty and restricted liberty or positive liberty. Unrestricted liberty exists in the state of nature where people would enjoy liberty without any restriction. On the other hand, restricted liberty exists in the state under the sovereign according to which people had to enjoy liberty within restriction followed by laws or fear of punishment.

Earlier, the monarch did not just represent the state; he or she was the state. Hobbes posited the state as independent of the king, who was just someone who acted for the state. Hobbes introduced a distinction between the sovereign and the state, with far reaching consequences. What Hobbes did was to not only separate the king from the state, but also to distinguish between the people and the state. For Hobbes, whether the state was represented by a democratic government or a monarchical one, the seat of sovereignty was the state, not the king or the people. For Skinner, it is with Hobbes that a new discourse of the state enters political thought.

Criticisms: The Hobbesian conception of state is also not free from criticism. It has been criticised on the following points as discussed:

- Hobbes says that the sovereign or absolute monarch will run a minimal state. According to him, although the ruler has the absolute power, he makes few laws only for the protection of the state. He does not make any laws which can interfere in family, economic, religious and other fields of the individuals. A good monarch is one who, by not interfering in the private life, allows his subjects the maximum amount of liberty to pursue their desires. But, according to the critics this is not acceptable as an absolute ruler always tries to create an absolute state. Moreover, Hobbes also

assumes that all rulers are good. He has not given any conception about a bad ruler. In this regard, he has not given any answer.

- Another criticism has been raised against the reason behind political obligation. Hobbes says that people have political obligation towards the sovereign and the state because of morality as the sovereign is the own creation of the people. But, the critics have argued that the people obey the sovereign and the state not because of morality but only because of fear, their own protection and security.

In spite of such limitations, the significance of Hobbesian theory of state can never be ignored. It was the result of his political philosophy that nation's attention was diverted from theory of 'Divine Origin of the State' to a new trend of political thought. By considering 'human being' the pivot of his philosophy, he gave due place to the individuals in the political set up. He was perhaps the first English philosopher in political thought that pleaded and stood for more freedom for individuals.

t ACTIVITY 4.1

Try to find out the characteristics of the early liberal tradition or social contract tradition.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q4) In the philosophy of Hobbes, the state comes into existence as a result of social contract. (True/ False)

.....

Q5) What is the nature of the state according to Hobbes?

.....

Q6) Write one criticism against the Hobbesian conception of state.

.....

2 4.5 LET US SUM UP

- In the tradition of social contract theory, Thomas Hobbes is known as the first contractualist. The most important work of Hobbes is 'Leviathan'. His idea about human nature is the fountain-head of all his philosophy.
- Regarding human nature, Hobbes has made the observation that men are nasty, brutish and uncivilised creatures.
- Human beings are in motion to fulfill desire after desire. There is no end of desire and it ends with the death of human beings. Life itself is about the continuous fulfillment of one's desires and human beings take the help of their reason in order to satisfy their desires.
- Human beings do not just have passions, they have reason too. But their reason is merely enslaved to their passions. They are always seekers for powers. For Hobbes, all men are free, equal and rational. Along with these, all men are self-centred and egoistic.

- Hobbes again has mentioned that men by birth are equal in intelligence but it is desire for having the same thing which makes them quarrel with each other. Men would never have quarreled had they not desired to gain the same thing. He believes that competition makes people brute and quarrelsome. For Hobbes, happiness remains the goal of life.
- According to Hobbes, the state is the outcome of a social contract executed between the individuals and the sovereign in the state of nature. Through the social contract all the people give up all the powers to the sovereign power except the right to life. The social contract creates a sovereign, and at the same time, another new entity called the state.
- The nature of the state in the social contract theory of Hobbes is absolute, indivisible and inalienable. It is the state that is repository of power, with the sovereign as its representative, and the subjects owe allegiance to the sovereign as the representative of the state.
- In the state when the sovereign is created, people can enjoy only those liberties which are provided by the sovereign. So in the state under the sovereign, the liberty of the people depends on the laws of the sovereign.

4.6 FURTHER READING

1) Dhariwal, U.K. (2008). *Western political thought*. New Delhi: Arise Publishers & Distributors.
2) Gogoi, P. (2007). *Degree political theory*. Guwahati: Banalata Publication.
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7) Singh, G. (Ed.). (2008). *Western political thinkers*. New Delhi: Omega Publications.

4.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Leviathan

Ans to Q No 2: For Hobbes, all men are free, all men are equal and all men are rational. Every individual is free to decide what is good or bad for him and free in making choice by using his rational capacity. Every individual should get equality of opportunity. According to Hobbes, reward is given on the basis of merit and hard working. Every individual has the capacity to differentiate between good and bad.

Ans to Q No 3: True

Ans to Q No 4: True

Ans to Q No 5: Absolute, indivisible and inalienable

Ans to Q No 6: One of the criticisms raised against the reason behind political obligation. Hobbes says that people have political obligation towards the sovereign and the state because of morality as the sovereign is the own creation of the people. But, the critics have argued that people obey the sovereign and the state not because of morality but only because of fear,their own protection and security.

4.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

Q 1: Mention any two points in favour of Thomas Hobbes as an individualist.

Q 2: What kind of liberty do the people enjoy in the state under the sovereign?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Write any four points about the nature of human beings mentioned by Hobbes.

Q 2: Under what circumstances people sign the social contract and create the state? Briefly explain.

C) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Write a note on the depiction of human nature by Thomas Hobbes.

Q 2: Critically analyse the views of Thomas Hobbes on state.

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UNIT 5: JOHN LOCKE

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives
5.2 Introduction
5.3 Views on Human Nature
5.4 Theory of Social Contract
5.5 Views on Individualism
5.6 Views on Liberty of Women
5.7 Views on Private Property
5.8 Let Us Sum Up
5.9 Further Reading
5.10 Answers to Check Your Progress
5.11 Model Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- grasp John Lock's perspective on human nature
- evaluate Locke's theory of social contract
- explain Locke's views on individualism
- analyse Locke's views on the liberty of women
- describe Locke's views on private property

5.2 INTRODUCTION

John Locke is the second social contractualist in the tradition of social contract theory. He is also regarded as the father of classical liberalism. He started his theory with all the premises of liberalism i.e. all men are free, equal and rational and also ended with liberalism i.e. constitutional monarchy. The most important work of Locke is 'Two Treatises of Government'.

5.3 VIEWS ON HUMAN NATURE

Basically and fundamentally Locke agreed with Hobbes that the state is neither a mechanical growth nor product of any supernatural power but that it is the result of a social contract. This social contract has come into existence because the individuals feel it necessary both for their well-being, social security and prosperity. But beyond that, they part with each other. Locke, unlike Hobbes, believes that men are capable, efficient and rational beings.

Locke believes that if all are given proper opportunities they are bound to have equal mental development. According to him, it is mental and not physical development which is always counted. He is agreed with Hobbes that men have desires and want to substitute their pains for pleasures. He, however does not agree with Hobbes that for the sake of pleasures men become quarrelsome, savage and brutish. On the other hand, he feels

that people always want to achieve ends by peaceful and rational methods. He also believes that nature itself has blessed mankind with sparks of reason which motivates their actions in the darkness. Everyone is equally free to order their actions and to exercise power and jurisdiction. Mankind, being all independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possessions. In pre-state civil society it is peace, good will, mutual assistance and preservation which prevail and govern their social relations.

5.4 THEORY OF SOCIAL CONTRACT

If in the state of nature people enjoy peace, prosperity and there is no fear of war why do they leave the state of nature? According to Locke, it is the internal desire of the society to establish social contract which motivates the people in this direction. The uncertainty of a common decision and a common interpreter of acceptable social laws is another factor which makes them think of leaving the state of nature. Their inability to keep their natural rights against injustice is another reason forces them to think leaving the state of nature.

According to Locke the people abandon the state of nature and join the civil state in order to avoid inconveniencies and confusions which arise in the state of nature. In order to get rid of such inconveniencies of state of nature, individuals have decided to sign a social contract. After entering into the social contract, people set up a civil society or political society. Locke has used the two terms 'civil society' or 'political society' interchangeably. In this society, there is political authority and political power. Locke says that in the social contract, people do not give up their natural rights i.e. right to life, liberty and property. The government will protect the natural rights of the members of this new civil/ political society. They do not want the government to become absolute. Rather, they want a limited government whose powers are divisible and alienable. The prime duty of the Lockean government is the public good or common good. Public good can be maintained by the government by protecting the rights of the individuals. This government is based on the consent of the people. If the government fails to protect their rights and fails to maintain public good, people can dissolve the government by dissolving the social contract. Then the people will form another government with their consent in civil society.

5 LET US KNOW

Even though Locke distinguishes the state of nature from the state of war, he lists certain inconveniences in the state of nature which persuade human beings to leave the state:

- Private property and class conflict is the most important problem in the state of nature.
- There are certain laws of nature in the state of nature which people have to follow. But there is no authority to punish the people if anyone does not follow the laws of nature.
- In the state of nature, people have three political powers - executive, legislative and

wage war. But they have no power of judgement.

Thus, the Lockean social contract ends the pre-political state and enters into a political state. It is a contract in which sovereign is not excluded but remains a part of it. He is neither above his fellow beings nor does he remain in the state of nature. The men of pre-political state give only interpretative powers and not their rights. The contract vests powers in the hands of the society as such and not in the hands of any individual. To Locke, the idea of absolute monarch is foolish because monarchs are also human beings with emotions of both love and hatred.

Criticism: The theory of social contract put forwarded by Locke has also faced some criticisms as mentioned below:

- It has been said that Locke believes that natural men have some property, authority and he wants that a good government should protect those rights as well. In other words, he stands for the protection of the propertied class - a philosophy which cannot be justified on the basis of equality and common principles of justice.
- Locke, like Hobbes has also misunderstood the nature of man. If men are not nasty, brutish, cruel and uncivilised as Hobbes depicts, they are never gentle, self-realising and responsible to the extent to which Locke thinks of. At no stage of human history, men have acted as restrained persons in the absence of any authority. Therefore, he is equally a victim of miscalculation of men's nature and their basic instincts.
- It is equally doubtful whether Locke has created a society or a government. Government is an agency which has executive, legislative and judicial powers. But in case of Locke it has only limited legislative functions which are assigned to the supreme authority and that too only in interpreting laws.
- There is also a criticism against the Lockean concept of consent. Locke says that everybody gives consent to the social contract to create a government. But this idea is wrong because only the majority has given the consent. As majority gives consent, it is assumed that everybody has given their consent. Therefore, Locke fails to make the differentiation between active consent and tacit consent. Lockean consent is not based on willingness of each and every human being.

In spite of such criticisms, it cannot be ignored that Locke wanted to create a limited government based on the consent of the people whose prime motive would be public good or common good.

t ACTIVITY 5.1

Try to find out the relevance of the political philosophy of John Locke in the present context.

5.5 VIEWS ON INDIVIDUALISM

Locke is one of those few political philosophers of his age who stood against the tide of his time and has boldly expressed his political ideas. He is not convinced that individual has no standing whatsoever and that he is only an insignificant and subordinate organ of

the society. On the other hand Locke believes that individual has a definite standing. According to him individual is everything and that the state stands for preserving the rights and freedoms of the individuals. Locke believed that a state is best where the interests of the individuals are best protected. It is the foremost duty of the state to preserve, protect and honour the inborn and natural rights of the individuals.

In fact the sole intention of Locke is to subordinate government to the community on the whole. Locke emphasised that the government exists only for the welfare of the individuals. His love for individualism is expressed in his ideas on the rights of the people to revolt against their sovereign. According to him, the people have power, although not the right, to remove a government whose policies they find are curtailing their rights. Like an individualist, he is of the opinion that people have certain basic minimum rights and that no authority in the state has any right to snatch these rights from them.

Locke's love for individualism is also clearly reflected when he assumes that individual is everything and that state is only means to achieve certain ends. It is the supreme duty of the state to preserve natural rights of men and that revolution is justified when such rights are disregarded or disrespected.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Who is regarded as the father of classical liberalism?

……

Q2) Locke has provided the same view with Hobbes regarding human nature. (True/ False)

……

Q3) To Locke, what is the prime motive of the government created by social contract?

……

Q4) According to Locke, individual is superior to the state. (True/ False)

……

5.6 VIEWS ON LIBERTY OF WOMEN

The idea of creating a society ensuring equality between the sexes has never been considered by most political theorists. They have either endorsed or accepted the assumption that there is a natural inequality of the sexes which ought to be preserved in civil society.

Locke believed that there was a natural inequality between the sexes and that men were superior. This superiority ordinarily gave them a right to command obedience from their wives. It also seems clear that Locke believed that the source of women's inferiority lay in her reproductive capacities, and that he regarded this as a natural rather than a conventional disadvantage.

Through his book “Two Treatises of Government” Locke opined that the natural condition of women was to be in the family i.e. the subjection of women by men was the subjection of wife by husband. Interestingly, nowhere in his treaties Locke talks about

single woman. Women, according to Locke are married women and, therefore, most women are under the subjection of men. And most women are married women, because it is women's nature to reproduce children which she is incapable of providing for on her own. Thus, it is the natural fate of women to be married as a consequence of their reproductive capacities, and to be subjection of their husbands because they are dependent on him for support of their offspring. Locke, thus assumes that the family and the structure of authority within the family are natural phenomena created in the state of nature.

Thus, Locke thinks that liberty of women lies on natural conditions of women and women are subjugated by men by virtue of men being "more abler and stronger".

5.7 VIEWS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

According to Locke in the state of nature, people enjoy three important natural rights - right to life, liberty and property. As nobody will harm each other in the life, health, liberty and possessions, people will have private property in the state of nature.

Locke said that God has created men and they are his creatures made to serve his purposes. As his creatures, men have the duty to preserve their life. As Waldron explains, "Lockean self-preservation is as much a duty as a right". So the concept of suicide was never supported by Locke as human beings did not have the right to kill themselves. He says that in order to preserve their life they must have property. According to him, property should be private property. Private property is something in which people have exclusive rights.

Locke says that God has given all the natural resources in common. This is the concept of common property. But if someone mixes his or her individual labour with natural resources, it is called private property. However, in the state of nature, there are certain limitations on the right to private property such as:

- Locke says that in order to have private property one has to mix up labour power with natural resources. So, only that amount of property can be acquired which results from one's own labour.
- In order to sustain in the world, people need private property. But they should acquire only that amount of property which is necessary for sustenance. Because people have no right to spoil the natural resources.
- The third limitation, Locke states, is that one must leave as much and as good for others. Because all the natural resources are common to all the people and they have equal rights on those resources.

Therefore, Locke has given the theory of limited property in his very famous book *Two Treatises of Government*. But he has changed his idea of limited property immediately to unlimited property and also suggests three means or ways to have unlimited property:

- People can buy labour power, and by using this labour power, legitimately acquire large amounts of property. So one can have unlimited property by buying other's labour.

- When money becomes the medium of exchange, the condition of spoil gets refuted because money is not a thing which gets spoilt. So, spoilage limitation is done away with, with the invention of money.
- Locke uses a productivity of labour argument to get rid of the third limitation. His claim is that if land and labour are the two factors needed for agricultural production, the contribution of land to that production is merely 10 percent, while that of the labour is 90 percent. So, when one labours to acquire property, one is only increasing the stock of mankind.

Thus, Locke has changed his theory of limited property to unlimited property. Locke says that the theory of private property will create a class society. The people who are hard-working and take more initiatives will become rich and others will become poor. Thus, Locke's explanation of the emergence of private property in the state of nature becomes a justification of severe inequalities of wealth in it. In this regard C. B. Macpherson says that Locke is a bourgeoisie political thinker. Because Locke has provided a class society where some people are rich and others are poor and a class society always helps the rich class. Moreover, he has given more importance to the right to private property than the right to life and liberty.

However, Locke said that he had used the term 'equality' only in political aspect. But it did not mean economic equality when he defined the state of nature as a state of equality.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q5) According to Locke, women are naturally superior to men. (True/ False)

.....

Q6) According to Locke, what are the natural rights enjoyed by people in the state of nature?

.....

.....

Q7) Locke says that the theory of private property will create a class society. (True/ False)

.....

Q8) Write two suggestions given by Locke with regard to unlimited property.

.....

.....

5.8 LET US SUM UP

- John Locke is regarded as the father of classical liberalism. The most important work of Locke is 'Two Treatises of Government'.
- Locke has given a completely different picture of human nature from Hobbes. Unlike Hobbes, Locke believes that men are essentially peace loving creature. He believes that men are capable, efficient and rational beings. Everyone is equally free to order their actions and to exercise power and jurisdiction.

- Locke says that in order to get rid of the inconveniencies found in the state of nature, the individuals feel the necessity of signing a social contract. Through this contract, they create a limited government whose prime motive is public good or common good.
- After entering into the social contract, people set up a civil society or political society. Locke has used the two terms 'civil society' or 'political society' interchangeably.
- As an individualist, Locke has made the individual the center of his philosophy rather than the state. According to him, the state is only a means to an end.
- Locke believes that a state is the best where the interests of the individuals are best protected. It is the foremost duty of the state to preserve, protect and honour the inborn and natural rights of the individuals.
- Locke assumes that the family and the structure of the authority within the family is a natural association created in the state of nature.
- Locke regards the right to property as one of the most important natural rights of human beings. According to him, private property is essential for the preservation of life of human beings. Locke says that the theory of private property will create a class society in the state of nature.

5.9 FURTHER READING

1. Dhariwal, U.K. (2008). *Western political thought*. New Delhi: Arise Publishers & Distributors.
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7. Singh, G. (Ed.). (2008). *Western political thinkers*. New Delhi: Omega Publications.

5.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: John Locke

Ans to Q No 2: False

Ans to Q No 3: Public good or common good

Ans to Q No 4: True

Ans to Q No 5: False

Ans to Q No 6: Right to life, right to liberty and right to property

Ans to Q No 7: True

Ans to Q No 8: Two suggestions given by Locke to have unlimited property are:

1) People can buy labour power, and by using this labour power, legitimately acquire large amounts of property. So one can have unlimited property by buying other's labour.

2) when money becomes the medium of exchange, the condition of spoil gets refuted because money is not a thing which gets spoilt. So, spoilage limitation is done away with, with the invention of money.

5.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

Q 1: Highlight any two arguments in favour of John Locke as the father of classical liberalism.

Q 2: According to Locke, what is the nature of the government created by social contract?

Q 3: What is the concept of private property according to Locke?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Make a comparison between Hobbes and Locke regarding their views on human nature.

Q 2: Briefly explain John Locke's position as an individualist.

Q 3: Write a note about the views of Locke on the liberty of women.

Q 4: What are the limitations on the right to private property in the state of nature?

C) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Critically analyse the theory of social contract of John Locke.

Q 2: Evaluate the theory of private property as provided by John Locke.

*** ***** ***

UNIT 6: JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Learning Objectives
6.2 Introduction
6.3 Theory of Social Contract
6.4 Theory of General Will
6.5 Rousseau's Contribution to Political Thought
6.6 Let Us Sum Up
6.7 Further Reading
6.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
6.9 Model Questions

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss Rousseau's theory of social contract
- grasp Rousseau's theory of general will
- analyse the contribution of Rousseau to political thought.

6.2 INTRODUCTION

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1770 A.D.), was a French thinker whose ideas have profoundly influenced the realm of political thought even in the contemporary period. Rousseau was greatly influenced by thinkers like Plato, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Montesquieu. Some of his important books are- *Two Essays Written for Academy, Contract Social, The Dialogues and The Reveries.*

Rousseau may be the third thinker in the social contract tradition, but he remains one of the first thinkers to offer us a strong critique of modern social and political institutions in the name of the modern values of equality, liberty and democracy. Rousseau's pulling down of modern institutions is not done in the name of their having overturned the natural order of hierarchy; instead, he shows us again and again their failure to match their promise of embodying equal and free rights for all. In a very important sense, Rousseau begins the counter. Tradition of questioning the progressiveness of modernity. In this unit, we will explain Rousseau's theory of *Social Contract* and *General Will* and his contributions towards the development of political thought.

6.3 THEORY OF SOCIAL CONTRACT

Rousseau provided his theory of social contract in his book *Contract Social*. According to Rousseau, people deliberately created the state to protect their freedoms and rights which were exploited by the rich. Prior to the emergence of the state, the majority of people were in miserable conditions which led to misery, violence and crime in the state of nature. In order to put an end to the exploitation and to protect the freedom and rights of the people, political association or the state was formulated by the people through a contract

based on consent of the people.

Rousseau says that with the development of agriculture, the inequality amongst the people had started. With the starting of cultivation in agriculture, the concept of private property had emerged. People wanted to acquire more and more property. So, there emerged a class society where few people became very rich and others became poor. When there emerged the concept of private property, the need for the protection of private property was felt by the people particularly by the rich class. For this purpose, the rich class and the poor class decided to sign a social contract to form a government.

However, this social contract was based on economic inequality. So, this government worked only for the protection and promotion of the interests of the rich class. In actual sense, this social contract was only a trick played by the rich on the poor. Therefore, the poor people were very unhappy with the first social contract and decided to sign a second social contract after overthrowing the first social contract. This second social contract was based on the concept of 'general will'. In the second social contract all the people came together and they decided to give all the powers to themselves. They did not give up all the powers and liberty to one person or a group of person as was in the case of Hobbes and Locke. They create sovereign power and this sovereign power is based on general will. This power lies with all the people.

Thus, according to Rousseau, soon after the private property entered the society, the entire peaceful atmosphere and order was disturbed and men began to feel the necessity of bringing about the old order of calm and happy life. This problem was solved by the creation of a social or political association to which all the members of the society agreed. Rousseau agreed with Locke that individual's consent was necessary to bind him in the contract. Individual surrendered everything to the society and yet as a member of society he retained everything with himself. In this contract everyone seemed to be gainer and none appeared to be a loser. Through this social contract Rousseau wanted to establish popular sovereignty whose nature was absolute, indivisible and inalienable.

Rousseau's social contract was double-sided. According to Rousseau, the individual was bound both to the sovereign and other individuals. The state was formed with the object of protecting each person and his or her freedom and property with the entire force of the community. In such a contract, the individuals would remain as free as before. The state which emerged as a result of the contract was a moral and a collective body. It was an association, related to the life of every individual and each individual contributed to this association consciously or unconsciously. The state is very important for the existence of individuals and without the presence of the state, the individual cannot enjoy their liberty and rights.

Rousseau's social contract theory was characterised by the presence of equality. He opined that this principle of equality would make all surrender their rights. Under this contract, individuals would surrender their rights to the society or the sovereign and as a member of the society they would retain all their rights and freedoms with themselves. Another important point which Rousseau expressed through his theory of social contract is that under the guidance of the state individuals could develop their instincts, such as

justice and kindness towards their fellow human beings.

6.4 THEORY OF GENERAL WILL

Rousseau's theory of General Will occupies an important position in political theory. According to Rousseau's social contract theory, each individual places his or her power and position under the supreme direction of the general will or the community. The polity which is created out of this contract is the possession of supreme power. The respected will of all the citizens are merged into the General Will. The aim of General Will is to achieve general good for all. General will must come from all and apply to all. According to Rousseau, the General Will is rational and it is not self-contradictory. It is based on reason and wisdom and is concerned about the good of all.

Rousseau was of the opinion that men having grown sick of the anarchy which the private property brought in the society thought of creating a sovereign. The contract was concluded by a pact between the individuals and the community consisting of the individuals who formed the society. The individuals surrendered all their powers and rights to the community as a whole and bowed before the general will, which in the ultimate analysis was the sovereign.

According to Rousseau, 'general will' is the sum total of all the wills of the individuals which are based on reason and farsightedness of the individuals. In other words, it is the will of all the individuals for collective welfare. It is common consciousness. Rousseau believes that in general will none is slave or subordinate to anyone else and everybody is free.

5 LET US KNOW

Rousseau has tried to distinguish between the *general will* and the *will of all*. He believes that general will considers about the good of the community in entirety whereas will of all is based on self-interest. In the general will, all people from the government, all are rulers, all are obeyers and all are implementers.

Rousseau says that the meaning of general will can be analysed in the following features:

- General will is general in origin. It means that everyone should be the part of social contract. No person can be left from the social contract.
- General will is general in object. It means that the end and purpose of the general will is common good. It will not be selfish.
- General will is general in form. It is related to law-making. This law will be general, not particular. This general law should be implemented, obeyed and benefitted by all. In framing the law, the language or content of the law should be general. It should not address any particular group.
- Rousseau says that people will have private property, though it will lead to corruption. He says that to have same amount of property to everyone is not possible in any

society. But he says that the gap between the people in terms of private property should not be extreme. It means that one class should not have so much private property to buy someone and one class should not have so less property to sell themselves. Rousseau says that the gap between the rich and the poor should be minimum. Thus, there should have economic equality.

- The nature of the general will as depicted by Rousseau is absolute, indivisible and inalienable. Once divided it will not be called general will but only sectional will.
- According to Rousseau, people have no right to delegate their authority of representing themselves by anybody else. He believes in the theory of direct democracy through general will.

The theory of general will as formed by Rousseau has been put to severe criticisms as discussed below:

- Rousseau says that only in a direct democracy, people can have general will. But in the contemporary scenario, the concept of direct democracy is impossible because of its geographical size and population. Moreover, in a diverse country it is totally impossible. It is possible only in a homogenous country.
- Rousseau says that general will is general in its origin. It means that all people are part of general will. But Rousseau by telling 'all the people' only talked about men excluding the women. It reflects the particular character of the general will.
- Rousseau says that general will is not represented by others. But again he says that the will of women can be represented by men. Thus, according to critics Rousseau is himself contradictory in his own views.
- According to the critics, general will does not give the right to life to the people. As all the people are part of the *general will*, all of them must follow the decision taken by all. If a person's life is threatened because of the decisions taken on the basis of *general will*, there is no other option left for him but to follow the decision of general will.
- General will is also problematic in its object. According to general will, people will think of common good. But according to the critics everyone may not think for the common good. Thus, if force is put upon the people then people will not have liberty.

Though there are criticisms against Rousseau's theory of General Will, it undoubtedly has great value in political theory. This theory of General Will establishes the fact that the basis of the state should be the will of the people, not force. Apart from this, Rousseau's theory of General Will also put social interest before individual interest which helps in establishing an ideal state.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) The first social contract of Rousseau is based on economic equality. (True/ False)

.....

Q2) To Rousseau, what is the outcome of the social contract?

.....

Q3) What is the basis of the social contract according to Rousseau?

.....

Q4) According to Rousseau, what is the nature of the general will?

.....

6.5 ROUSSEAU'S CONTRIBUTION TO POLITICAL THOUGHT

Rousseau is one of those political philosophers of 18th century whose influence has been immense in his own times and is also gradually increasing in our days. It has also been said that his theory of general will become one of the springboards for subsequent political philosophers who were interested in asserting the rights of men and believed in individualism. His theory of general will and his writings were considered thought-provoking throughout the 18th century.

Another contribution of Rousseau to the theory of political philosophy is that after Aristotle he had preached that man is a political animal. This is against the political philosophy preached by Machiavelli and Hobbes who believed that man is egoistic and aggressive and that his impulses should be checked. He thus, moved away from to the traditional theories of middle ages.

Rousseau did not believe in the idea of nation state, as he believed that free citizenship was rather impossible in those days. He, however, contributed to the philosophy of his age by saying that there must be national solidarity and unity. Though not a nationalist himself, he stood for nationalism.

It has been said of Rousseau that his philosophy preached unity, solidarity and national integration and as such like Bodin and Hobbes he was responsible for giving the nation the conception of nationalism.

Rousseau has contributed to the philosophy by saying that people are the ultimate authority and source for giving all political authorities and that government is simply an agency to execute the directives given by this sovereign authority.

We find that Rousseau's political philosophy had its due influence on his age. One can hardly deny that his concepts of liberty and equality are responsible for the French Revolution of 1789. His political philosophy is not only a source of inspiration but a guiding force for the French people after the Revolution and at least till the rise of Napoleon.

We can sum up his contribution by saying that the concept of general will is the crux of Rousseau's system and probably his most important contribution to political thought. He considered people as the ultimate source of political authority and stressed the view that state is social organisation, a common conscience and a general will. He maintained the doctrine that true basis of political obligation was consent.

t ACTIVITY 6.1

Try to find out the similarities and dissimilarities among the political philosophy of the three social contract theorists i.e. Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q5) According to Rousseau, man is a political animal. (True/ False)

……

Q6) Who are the ultimate sources of authority according to Rousseau?

……

Q7) Write two drawbacks of Rousseau's theory of General Will.

……

……

2 6.6 LET US SUM UP

- Jean Jacques Rousseau, a French thinker, was another important political thinker of the modern period. Some of his important books are- *Two Essays Written for Academy, Contract Social, The Dialogues* and *The Reveries*.
- According to Rousseau, for the first time the necessity of signing a social contract is felt by the people particularly by the rich class in order to protect the private property. But the first social contract is dissolved as it is based on economic inequality.
- The second social contract is signed taking general will as its basis. Through this social contract Rousseau wanted to establish popular sovereignty.
- Rousseau regarded general will as the will of all the individuals for collective welfare. General will is general in its origin, object as well as form. General will represents economic equality.
- The nature of the general will is absolute, indivisible and inalienable. He believes in the theory of direct democracy through general will.
- The greatest contribution of Rousseau to the history of political thought is the concept of general will.
- He has contributed to political theory by saying that people are the ultimate repository of power. Apart from these, his philosophy accepts man as a political animal and supports unity, solidarity and national integration.
- Though there are criticisms against Rousseau's theory of General Will, it undoubtedly has great value in political theory. Apart from this, Rousseau's. Theory of General Will also placed social interest before individual interest which is helpful establishing an ideal state.

O 6.7 FURTHER READING

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6.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: False

Ans to Q No 2: Establishment of popular sovereignty

Ans to Q No 3: General will

Ans to Q No 4: Absolute, indivisible and inalienable

Ans to Q No 5: True

Ans to Q No 6: People

Ans to Q No 7: Two drawbacks of Rousseau's theory of general will are:

1) According to the critics, general will does not give the right to life to the people. As all the people are part of the general will, all of them must follow the decision taken by all. If on person's life is threatened because of the decisions taken on the basis of 'general will', there is no other option left for him but to follow the decision of general will.

2) General will is also problematic in its object. According to general will, people will think of common good. But according to the critics anyone may not think for common good. So, if force is put upon the people then people will not have liberty.

6.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

Q 1: What are the basis of the first and the second social contract of Rousseau?

Q 2: What is the meaning of 'general will'?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Briefly explain the social contract theory of Rousseau.

Q 2: Highlight any four characteristics of Rousseau's general will.

Q 3: "General will is general in its origin, object and form". Explain briefly.

C) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Critically analyse the theory of general will of Rousseau.

Q 2: Discuss the Social Contract theory of Rousseau.

Q 3: Evaluate the contribution of Rousseau to the history of political thought.

*** ***** ***

UNIT 7: JEREMY BENTHAM AND JOHN STUART MILL

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Learning Objectives
7.2 Introduction
7.3 Main Characteristics of Utilitarianism
7.4 Jeremy Bentham: Views on Utilitarianism
7.5 John Stuart Mill: Views on Utilitarianism
7.6 Let Us Sum Up
7.7 Further Reading
7.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
7.9 Model Questions

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the characteristics of utilitarianism
- analyse the views of Jeremy Bentham on utilitarianism
- explain the views of John Stuart Mill on utilitarianism

7.2 INTRODUCTION

After discussing the contractualist views i.e. Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau in the previous units, now we will discuss another important theory of J. Bentham and J. S. Mill namely- utilitarianism. But, before we discuss utilitarian philosophy, it may be mentioned here that this was not any new or original philosophy. It appears that as early as in 1872, Richard Cumberland expressed utilitarian ideas in his treatise on 'Natural Law'. Francis Hutcheson gave this idea in a more concrete form by defining it as 'greatest good of the greatest number'. Priestley in England and Helvetius in France were among several others who were forerunners of this school of thought. Even, the credit of coining this term does not go to the first of the utilitarian's namely Bentham but to Mill who used this word in one of his treatises. In the present unit, our discussion will be focused mainly on the theory of utilitarianism forwarded by J. Bentham and J. S. Mill.

7.3 MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF UTILITARIANISM

There are various characteristic features of utilitarianism. Among them, some are mentioned below:

- Man weighs everything in terms of pleasure and pain. He always hunts for pleasure and what gives him pleasure is good and what gives him pain is bad.
- The utilitarians believe in moral values and judge everything from that viewpoint. It is most essential that people should have high moral character and maximum moral development.
- They use inductive and experimental methods of study. This is essential because

they are practical in their approach to every problem. They do not remain within the four walls of the lecture halls but expound their theories in the light of what is practical and actually relevant or ocurring in our day-to-day life.

- They believe that men and society are inseparable. In other words, they emphasise the idea that man is an integral part of the society without which it shall not be possible for him to lead a happy and joyful life.
- They stand for the greatest good of the greatest number of people. This can be obtained by promoting moral development of the people, looking after their progress and uplifting them socially, economically and culturally and even mentally, morally and physically.
- They are of the firm view that state is a necessary evil and must be respected as without the state authority, man cannot make uninterrupted progress. The State is essential to curb hindrances on the normal development and progress of the people.
- The utilitarians believe in the idea of greatest happiness of greatest number of people. In other words, they are of the opinion that pleasure should not be the monopoly of only a section or class in the society but of the greatest number of people. The very existence of state can only be justified on how and to what extent state promotes happiness.
- Utilitarians are of the view that the state is never a natural necessity but a product of man's desire to satisfy his needs. The state shall protect natural rights of people. They try to combine ethics with politics and feel that a state cannot be devoid of ethical considerations. They also believe that state is not an end in itself but only means to an end.

7.4 JEREMY BENTHAM: VIEWS ON UTILITARIANISM

Jeremy Bentham is an English political philosopher who is credited for giving utilitarian philosophy a systematic touch and putting that on scientific footing by making it a school of thought. His ideas are modified by Mill, but in spite of that his philosophy is studied very seriously even today. He has written so many works out of which *Constitutional Code* and *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* are considered as most important. He is associated with a very important group called 'Philosophical Radicals'.

Bentham had started his idea of utilitarianism by saying that "Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well to determine what we shall do." Bentham referred to these two aspects as sentiments, not reason. Naturally, these are two important sensations by which people are affected. These are the two general desires of people to maximise pleasure and minimise pain. People always moved towards that direction which creates more happiness and less pain. People liked to repeat the same act which can generate more happiness. Bentham regards this act as utility which could create more happiness. Utility signifies the usefulness of a particular action. Bentham also stated that the act not only had the capacity to maximise happiness but also the capacity to minimise

pain.

When Hobbes talked about pleasure and happiness, there was the absence of morality. But according to Bentham, maximum pleasure should be for maximum people. So, Bentham's theory is moral. In other words, in Hobbesian theory, there was only self-happiness, not of others. But in Bentham's theory, when one person creates maximum pleasure, it should be also maximum pleasure for maximum number of people at the same time. It can be called as the "greatest happiness of the greatest numbers". This is the concept of utility in Bentham's theory.

Thus, according to Bentham, utility is always dependent on the production of maximum happiness for the majority people. Bentham says that if a particular action creates pain for some people it can also create happiness for the majority and then the act can also have utility.

Bentham stated that happiness and pleasure can be calculated. He provides a scientific method called 'Felicific Calculus'. Therefore, he regarded utilitarianism as scientific or objective theory. Bentham provided various scientific ways to calculate pleasure. These are as follows:

- **Intensity:** Some acts are more powerful than others. Such acts give more happiness than others.
- **Duration:** For how many times the happiness remains. It also decides how strong happiness is.
- **Certainty or uncertainty:** When we do certain things, it may or may not give happiness as result.
- **Propinquity:** How happiness is closely connected to individual.
- **Fecundity:** An act of pleasure should always be followed by another act of pleasure. It is a continuous pleasure.
- **Purity:** An act of pleasure should not be followed by an act of pain.
- **Extent:** It implies the number of people influenced by the act of pleasure.

Bentham says that an individual can generate happiness only for a limited numbers of people in a society. Therefore, there should be some neutral organisation in the society which can create maximum happiness for maximum people. This neutral organisation is obviously the state according to him. He is in favour of a liberal democratic state because only a liberal democratic state can ensure greatest happiness of the greatest numbers.

5 LET US KNOW

The state is referred as the political society by Bentham. According to him, the state is not the outcome of any social contract. Regarding the laws of the state, people do not obey the laws because the laws are not the outcome of any social contract. He is a critique of contractualism. People only follow the laws when they are based on utility. People will obey those laws which can generate greatest happiness of the greatest numbers. If any law cannot generate greatest happiness of the greatest numbers, then

such laws will be overthrown.

Criticism: Bentham's theory of utility has been severely criticised on the following grounds:

- Bentham's principle of greatest happiness of the greatest numbers was in favour of the majority. He has been criticised on the ground that he has completely ignored the happiness of the minority. So, Bentham's theory of utilitarianism is a majority-biased theory.
- Bentham's concept of 'Felicific Calculus' is also criticised. Because the measurement of pleasure and pain mathematically is totally impossible.
- Another weakness of his theory is that he had failed to understand the importance of society as a whole. He laid stress only on individual pleasure. In fact, the basis of his theory was neither society nor state but the individual. He had absolutely forgotten that human beings are social animals and must depend on society and that individuals without society were incomplete.

It is, thus found that his theory of utility expounded on pleasure and pain theory is not only faulty and impracticable but when taken to its logical conclusion is bound to indicate that the philosopher had a narrow vision of things. He has tried to explain certain basic facts according to his own ideas and has not very much succeeded in that.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Mention the name of any one utilitarian political philosopher.

.....

Q2) According to the utilitarians, the state is a necessary evil. (True/ False)

.....

Q3) What is the main principle of Bentham's utilitarian philosophy?

.....

Q4) What is the form of state Bentham supports?

.....

Q5) What is the scientific method of calculating pleasure according to Bentham?

.....

t ACTIVITY 7.1

Try to find out the functions of the liberal democratic state in Bentham's utilitarian philosophy.

7.5 JOHN STUART MILL: VIEWS ON UTILITARIANISM

John Stuart Mill was the eldest son of James Mill. He was born in London and was highly influenced by his father and father's friend Jeremy Bentham. He started his philosophical career as a committed utilitarian. He was a prominent member of the group called 'Philosophical Radicals' founded by Bentham and James Mill. This group believes in utilitarianism and its principle i.e. "every desire of human being aims at one particular

thing that is happiness". One of the important persons whom he regarded very highly was his wife Harriet Taylor an English Philosopher and women's rights advocate. Some of the very important works of Mills are *Utilitarianism, On Liberty*, *The Subjection of Women, Considerations on Representative Government, Principles of Political Economy* etc.

Mill was living in an age when the doctrine of utility by Bentham was gaining ground. Bentham had preached that pleasure should be the only measuring rod for each and every activity. In other words, Bentham believed that sole aim of life was to attain enjoyment. Life was to be enjoyed and pleasure to be derived out of it. In a few quarters, this theory of Bentham was interpreted as immoral and degrading. The main task, thus before Mill, was to save Bentham's theory from this attack. Mill, however, without any hesitation and with all courage declared that fundamentally he agreed with Bentham's principles.

Mill regards those actions as 'right' in proportion when they tend to promote happiness and 'wrong' when they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. In other words, only pleasure and the absence of pain are intrinsically desirable. Everything else is desirable only in so far as it enhances pleasure and diminishes pain. Mill has made a distinction between higher pleasure and lower pleasure. The distinction between higher and lower pleasure pertains to values and not choices.

Mill, however, differs from Bentham in so far as details are concerned. Bentham has held the view that it is quantity and not the quality of pleasure which matters. But, Mill stands for qualitative pleasure instead of quantitative pleasure. He differs from Bentham when he says that it is not the pleasure that matters alone but along with that there is another factor as well i.e. 'prestige'. Bentham has asserted that all human beings are governed by two masters, 'pleasure' and 'pain' only but Mill believes that prestige dominates the same. "It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied."

Mill believes that individual pleasure does not give maximum pleasure but it is collective pleasure that gives maximum happiness and joy. He thus, believes that pleasure comes from outside and not from within.

Mill differs from Bentham in so far as the concept of liberty is concerned. According to Bentham, utility is greatest happiness of the greatest number of people. He believes that liberty has nothing to do with utility. But, Mill does not agree with this. According to him, liberty is essential for utility and minority rights can be protected only when each and every one enjoys liberty. In this regard, he prefers to give equal rights to women. Mill says that when women are given equal rights, then there will be maximisation of happiness of women. Then in the society, women will also be happy along with men. Then maximum number of people will be happy in the society. It will lead to the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people in the society. Thus, Mill relates utility to women.

Criticism: Mill has been criticised regarding the modification of utilitarianism. As against quantitative pleasure of Bentham, Mill stands for qualitative pleasure. But, the criticism here is that although he has made a distinction between higher pleasure and lower pleasure, he has not said anything regarding any authority that would give the judgement of pleasure.

Mill is the last great utilitarian whose place and contribution received divided opinion. According to some, Mill has contributed nothing new to Bentham's political philosophy but has simply adjusted that to suit his ideas and context. In spite of all these, it must be admitted that he holds a very important and pride place in English political system. He had improved utilitarianism in such a fashion that it could face the challenge of his time and could survive in the face of all odds. Had Mill not appeared in the scene it would have been a different story altogether.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q6) Mill stressed on equal rights for women. (True/False)

……

Q7) Mill stood for quantitative pleasure. (True/ False)

……

7.6 LET US SUM UP

- Utilitarianism was not any new or original philosophy. It appears that as early as in 1872, Richard Cumberland expressed utilitarian ideas in his treatise on 'Natural Law'.
- The credit of coining this term does not go to the first of the utilitarian's namely Bentham but to Mill who used this word in one of his treatises.
- Jeremy Bentham is credited for giving utilitarian philosophy a systematic touch and putting that on scientific footing by making it a school of thought.
- According to the utilitarians, men weigh everything in terms of pleasure and pain. They believe in moral values. They use inductive and experimental methods of study. They are of the view that men and society are inseparable and state is a necessary evil.
- The state is never a natural necessity but product of man's desire to satisfy his needs. They believe in the principle of greatest happiness of the greatest number of people.
- Bentham's theory of utilitarianism is based on the principle of greatest happiness of greatest numbers. He provides a scientific method called ‘Felicific Calculus’ to calculate pleasure and happiness.
- Bentham feels the necessity of state, particularly a liberal democratic state to create maximum happiness for maximum people.
- Mill propounds his political philosophy only to safeguard Bentham's theory of utilitarianism. Although Mill has agreed with Bentham's utilitarian philosophy, yet he differs from Bentham in certain issues such as the issue of quantitative pleasure and qualitative pleasure, concept of liberty etc.
- Mill believes that individual pleasure does not give maximum pleasure but it is collective pleasure which gives maximum happiness and joy. He thus, believes that pleasure comes from outside and not from within.
- Mill is the last great utilitarian whose place and contribution received divided opinion.

O7.7 FURTHER READING

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K7.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Jeremy Bentham

Ans to Q No 2: True

Ans to Q No 3: Greatest happiness of the greatest numbers

Ans to Q No 4: Liberal democratic state

Ans to Q No 5: Felicific Calculus

Ans to Q No 6: True

Ans to Q No 7: False

M7.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

Q 1: Mention two fundamental features of utilitarian school of thought.

Q 2: How can Bentham's theory be called ethical?

Q 3: Mention the name of any two important works of John Stuart Mill.

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: According to the utilitarian philosophy, state is a necessary evil- Explain.

Q 2: What do you mean by Felicific Calculus? Point out the scientific ways to calculate pleasure?

Q 3: How has Mill related utility to women?

C) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss the characteristics of utilitarianism.

Q 2: Explain the utilitarian view of Bentham's political philosophy.

Q 3: Critically analyse how Mill is differed from Bentham's utilitarian philosophy.

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UNIT 8: ENGLISH IDEALISM: T.H. GREEN

UNIT STRUCTURE

8.1 Learning Objectives
8.2 Introduction
8.3 T.H. Green and English Idealism;
8.4 Green on the State
8.5 Green on Freedom and Rights:
    8.5.1 Green's views on Freedom,
    8.5.2 Green's views on Rights;
8.6 Green on War
8.7 Other key concepts of Green: Punishment,Property, Natural Law, Society
8.8 Let Us Sum Up
8.9 Further Reading
8.10 Answers to Check Your Progress
8.11 Model Questions

8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the basic ideas of English Idealism and the contribution of T.H. Green.
- discuss Green's views on the State and its functions.
- discuss Green's concept of Freedom and Rights.
- describe Green's ideas on War.
- examine Green's thoughts on Punishment, Property, Natural Law and Society.
- explain the overall significance of Green's political philosophy.

8.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall learn about the views of the prominent British idealist thinker T. H. Green whose ideas greatly shaped modern political thought.Through his focus on moral development, social welfare and the common good, Green laid the foundation for modern liberalism.

8.3 T.H. GREEN AND ENGLISH IDEALISM

Thomas Hill Green (1836–1882) was one of the most influential figures in the tradition of British idealism that flourished in Englandand Scotland in the second half of the nineteenth century and early in the twentieth century. He belonged to a school of thought known as English Idealism, which was inspired mainly by German philosophers like Hegel and Kant. English Idealism is a philosophical movement in 19th-century Britain that argued reality is shaped by the human mind, moral values, and social relations-not just material facts. It emphasised that individuals can develop only within a moral and cooperative society. Green's contribution is most significant figure here because of his applied Idealist principles to politics and ethics, redefining liberalism in moral terms. Green argued that the State

must create conditions that allow individuals to realise their best selves. His ideas on positive freedom, rights, and the common good are central contributions to English Idealism. He believed that the purpose of the state and society is to help individuals develop morally and spiritually. He draws that the state has a duty to promote the common good, and individual rights are constrained by the concept of common good.

Green lived during a time of rapid industrial growth, inequality, and social problems. His philosophy was a response to these problems and tried to provide a moral foundation for liberal democracy. Green argued that empirical knowledge is the workmanship of the human mind, that reality depends on thought and the possibility of objectivity requires the existence of a single corporate or divine consciousness of which individual minds are proper parts. For Green, the only defensible form of idealism is the absolute idealism, in which all aspects of reality are operations of a single consciousness. He provides the philosophical foundations for a new progressive form of liberalism that transcends the laissez-faire liberalism characteristic of some strands in nineteenth century liberalism.

Green is known for revising traditional liberalism. Earlier liberal thinkers, like Jeremy Bentham and J.S Mill, focused on individual liberty and believed that the state should interfere as little as possible. Green argued that such a view was incomplete. According to him, real freedom does not simply mean the absence of restriction. Real freedom means the ability of individuals to achieve their full potential.

Thus, he gave liberalism a moral, social and positive character - a shift known as New Liberalism.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Write briefly about English idealism.

.....

.....

8.4 GREEN ON THE STATE

Unlike some classical liberals who view the state as a potential threat to individual liberty, Green sees the state as an instrument for promoting freedom. He argues that the state should intervene positively to rectify social and economic inequalities, provide education, and ensure conditions for individuals to develop their capabilities. Thus, Green rejected the view that the State is a “necessary evil”. Instead, he believed that the State is a positive and moral institution whose purpose is to promote the common good.

Key points of Green’s idea of the State:

- **Stateas a Moral Institution:**Green viewed the State not merely as a force of authority but as a moral agency. Its main task is to create social conditions - such as education, public health, basic welfare, and equal opportunities - that allow individuals to grow morally and intellectually. Without these conditions, people cannot fully develop their capacities.

- **State as an Organ of the Common Good:** For Green, individuals by themselves cannot always secure the common good, especially in conditions of inequality. It is the duty of the state to take the step in to remove obstacles like poverty, exploitation, and lack of education. By doing so, the State ensures that every person can participate meaningfully in social life.
- **Harmony between State and Individual:** Green rejected the idea that the State and the individual are naturally in conflict. Instead, he argued that they support each other. The State provides the framework for moral development, and individuals, through their actions and responsibilities, strengthen the moral fabric of society. Thus, society functions best when there is cooperation between both.
- **Justified State Intervention:** Green believed that State intervention is justified when it increases real freedom, that is the actual ability of people to live good lives. For Green, all the laws related to labour welfare, factory safety, education, and public health are legitimate because they protect individuals from conditions that limit their personal growth.

Green altogether rejected the night-watchman role of state. Moving one step ahead of J.S Mill, Green advocated that the role of state is to create such an environment in which approximate equality can be generated under which all individuals would enjoy all the basic opportunity to real growth, which would be the path of freedom to choose and develop themselves as per their desire.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q2) Explain why T.H. Green describes the State as a 'moral institution'. (Within 60 words)

.....

Q3) Discuss Green's justification of State intervention. How does he differentiate between necessary and unnecessary interference? (Within 60 words)

.....

8.5 GREEN ON FREEDOM AND RIGHTS

8.5.1 Green's Views on Freedom

T.H. Green's conception of freedom occupies a central place in the tradition of English Idealism. Unlike the classical liberals of the nineteenth century—such as Herbert Spencer—who identified freedom mainly as the *absence of external restraint*, Green introduced a moral and positive interpretation of freedom. For him, the mere removal of restrictions does not guarantee that individuals can live meaningful or purposeful lives. True freedom, he argued, is realised only when individuals possess the necessary moral, social, and material conditions to develop their higher capacities. Thus, Green shifted the focus of political philosophy from negative liberty to positive freedom, a contribution that later influenced modern liberal theorists.

Green begins by distinguishing between the formal idea of freedom and the real possibility of acting freely. Formally, any individual may be considered free if the law does not prevent them from choosing among various actions. However, real freedom requires something deeper: the ability to act according to one's rational and moral will. A person who suffers from poverty, poor education, addiction, or social exclusion cannot be said to be genuinely free, even if no law directly restricts them. Real freedom therefore depends on the presence of enabling conditions. Green's view is comparable to Rousseau's idea that individuals become truly free only when they live in a social environment that allows the development of their moral autonomy.

Green's argument is further grounded in his ethical idealism. He believed that every individual possesses a rational self, capable of identifying moral ends and pursuing them. Freedom, then, is the capacity for self-realisation—of living according to this rational and moral self. Freedom is not license or the mere ability to do whatever one wants; it is the power to choose actions that contribute both to personal development and to the common good. In this sense, Green's theory combines individual moral autonomy with social responsibility.

Moreover, Green believed that the State plays a crucial role in securing real freedom. Contrary to the laissez-faire views dominant in his time, he argued that State intervention may be necessary to remove obstacles—such as poverty, disease, ignorance, or exploitation—that prevent individuals from developing their capabilities (Green). Freedom must be supported by proper laws and social institutions. Public education, health measures, labour regulations, and welfare policies are examples of legitimate State action because they make freedom meaningful for all. This view is closer to the welfare state tradition of the twentieth century and stands in contrast to Spencer's minimal-State liberalism.

Green's theory of freedom also has a moral dimension. Since individuals act within a social context, their pursuit of freedom must not harm the moral well-being of others. The freedom of one person cannot undermine the conditions of freedom for another. Thus, Green believed in what later theorists would call interdependent freedom- the idea that the freedom of all members of society is mutually reinforcing. Individuals realise their freedom best when they participate in a community aimed at justice, cooperation, and the common good.

8.5.2 Green's Views on Rights

Green's theory of rights flows naturally from his broader conception of freedom and moral development. While classical liberal thinkers often treated rights as natural, pre-political entitlements belonging to individuals, Green viewed rights as social and moral claims necessary for the realisation of human potential. Rights, according to him, are not absolute possessions but socially recognised conditions that enable individuals to act freely and responsibly.

Firstly, Green defined a right as a power or capacity that society considers essential for the good of the individual and the community. In this sense, rights are grounded in

moral purpose. They exist because they contribute to the flourishing of individuals and help maintain a moral social order (Green). A right is therefore justified not by individual self-interest alone but by its contribution to the common good. This understanding places Green in contrast with thinkers like Locke, who believed that rights are natural, pre-social, and founded on individual self-ownership.

Secondly, Green argued that rights are dependent upon social institutions. Without a functioning legal and political system, rights cannot be meaningfully claimed or protected. The State must therefore ensure the conditions under which rights can be exercised. Green did not see the State as a threat to rights; rather, he regarded it as the guarantor of rights. Rights such as education, health, and fair working conditions emerge from collective efforts to promote real freedom, and they require active State support. This position anticipates the development of modern *social rights* as written by T.H. Marshall in the twentieth century.

Thirdly, Green rejected the idea that rights are unlimited or unconditional. Since rights exist for the sake of human development, they must be balanced against the rights of others and the moral aims of society. An individual has no right to use their liberty in ways that hinder the development or freedom of others. Thus, rights carry responsibilities, and the proper exercise of rights must align with the moral self of the individual.

Furthermore, Green believed in the developmental nature of rights. As societies advance morally and intellectually, new rights emerge to reflect higher ideals of human welfare. For example, rights related to workers' protection, public education, and social security did not exist in earlier times but became important as society recognised their role in human development. Green's theory thus supports an evolving, progressive understanding of rights rather than a fixed catalogue.

Finally, Green's idea of rights is fundamentally linked to citizenship. Individuals, by participating in social and political life, help shape the moral order that recognises and protects rights. Citizenship is therefore not a passive status but an active moral relationship between individuals and the community.

In conclusion, Green offers a sophisticated and ethical account of rights that integrates individual development, social welfare, and the role of the State. His theory stands as a precursor to modern welfare liberalism and continues to influence contemporary debates on human rights and social justice.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q4) What does T.H. Green mean by 'positive freedom'? How is it different from 'negative freedom' ?

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Q5) Explain Green's argument that rights are socially recognised conditions necessary for moral development. Why does Green oppose the idea of natural, pre-social rights ?

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8.6 GREEN'S VIEWS ON WAR

Green did not consider war an ideal or desirable activity. For him, war is a sign of moral failure. T.H. Green's view on war must be understood within the ethical framework of English Idealism, which sees the State as a moral institution aimed at promoting the common good. Green held that war is generally a consequence of moral failure and a disruption of the conditions necessary for human development. Unlike Hegel, who regarded war as a rational moment in the life of the State and a means of reaffirming national spirit, Green rejected any glorification of conflict. In contrast to Kant, who advocated perpetual peace through international federation and cosmopolitan law, Green accepted that war may be morally justified only when it protects fundamental rights, security, and long-term peace. His approach is also distinct from J.S. Mill, who defended national self-determination and sometimes saw war as a source of civic virtue. Green's position remains more ethically cautious: war must never serve ambition, expansion, or national pride, but only the restoration of moral order. Thus, Green represents a middle path—neither absolutist like Kantian pacifism nor affirmative like Hegel's statism—grounded instead in the belief that war is permissible solely when it secures the moral conditions necessary for human freedom. Green opposed the romantic idea that war builds character or heroism. Instead, he believed that war destroys moral progress. Therefore, according to him, the state should work to prevent war by promoting justice, cooperation, and international understanding. Green wanted nations to follow moral principles, not self interest or aggression.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q6) Green held that war is generally a consequence of moral failure and a disruption of the conditions necessary for human development. (True/False)

Q7) Green wanted nations to follow ……., not self interest or aggression. (Fill in the Blank)

8.7 OTHER KEY CONCEPTS OF GREEN: PUNISHMENT, NATURAL LAW, SOCIETY

T.H. Green's political philosophy includes several important concepts that extend beyond his theory of freedom and the State. These ideas- punishment, property, natural law, and society—together form the ethical foundation of English Idealism.

Firstly, Green's idea of punishment is rooted in his moral view of human nature. He did not support punishment as mere retribution or physical suffering. Instead, he argued that punishment should have a *reformative* and *protective* purpose. The offender is not a permanently corrupt being but someone capable of moral improvement. Therefore, punishment must aim to restore the offender's capacity to act responsibly and reintegrate into society. It also protects the community by discouraging harmful behaviour, but always within a framework that respects human dignity and moral potential.

Secondly, Green's view of property challenges classical liberal ideas of absolute private ownership. He accepted that property is necessary for individuals to develop their abilities, but he insisted that property rights must serve the common good. When property leads to exploitation, extreme inequality, or prevents others from exercising real freedom, the State is justified in regulating it. Thus, property is not a natural, unlimited right but a social institution whose purpose is to promote human welfare and moral development.

Thirdly, Green's understanding of natural law differs from traditional notions of fixed, universal rules given by nature. He argued that moral principles evolve through human reason, social practices, and collective experience. Natural law, therefore, represents the growing moral consciousness of a society rather than static commandments. It guides individuals and institutions toward higher ethical standards, reflecting an ongoing process of moral development.

Finally, Green placed great emphasis on society as the essential context for human growth. Individuals are not isolated or self-sufficient; they develop their personality, values, and goals within a network of social relationships and institutions. Society provides education, language, moral norms, and opportunities—conditions necessary for the realisation of freedom. Thus, for Green, society and the individual are mutually supportive, not antagonistic.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q8) Green argued that punishment should have a reformative and ……...…….. purpose. (Fill in the Blank)

Q9) Green placed great emphasis on society as the essential context for human growth. (True/False)

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2 8.8 LET US SUM UP

- T.H. Green was a leading English Idealist who gave liberalism a new, moral direction.
- He believed that freedom is not just absence of restraint but the positive ability to develop one's potential.
- Rights are social claims that support freedom and moral development.
- The State has a moral role: to promote common good, welfare, education, and justice.
- War is undesirable but may be necessary to protect moral order.
- Green emphasised reformative punishment, regulated property, evolving natural law, and society as a moral community.
- His ideas influenced modern welfare states and remain relevant to contemporary debates on freedom, rights, and the role of the State.

O 8.9 FURTHER READING

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8.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: English Idealism is a philosophical movement in 19th-century Britain that argued reality is shaped by the human mind, moral values, and social relations-not just material facts. It emphasised that individuals can develop only within a moral and cooperative society.

Ans to Q No 2: T.H. Green describes the State as a moral institution because it exists to create conditions for individuals' moral and intellectual development. Unlike classical liberal views that see the State merely as a restraining power, Green argues that the State promotes freedom, education, health, and equal opportunities. By ensuring these conditions, the State helps individuals realise their potential and live ethically responsible lives, making it a positive moral agent rather than a neutral or coercive body.

Ans to Q No 3: Green justifies State intervention when it enhances real freedom by removing obstacles like poverty, ignorance, or exploitation. Necessary interference includes education acts, labour laws, and public health measures that allow individuals to develop their moral and social capacities. Unnecessary interference occurs when the State restricts personal choices that do not harm others or impede development. Thus, intervention is moral, purposeful, and limited, aimed at enabling human growth rather than controlling private life.

Ans to Q No 4: Positive freedom, according to Green, is the ability of individuals to realise their moral and rational potential. It requires enabling conditions like education, health, and social opportunity. Negative freedom, in contrast, is mere absence of external restraint. A person may be formally free yet unable to act meaningfully without these conditions. Green emphasises that real freedom is not liberty from interference alone, but the power to act in accordance with one's moral self and contribute to the common good.

Ans to Q No 5: Green argues that rights exist to secure the conditions in which individuals can develop morally. They are socially recognised claims, not fixed, pre-existing

entitlements. Rights such as education, labour protection, or health support positive freedom and moral growth. He opposes natural, pre-social rights because they ignore social realities and human interdependence. Without a functioning society and legal institutions, rights cannot be exercised meaningfully, and therefore, rights are inherently linked to the moral and social context in which individuals live.

Ans to Q No 6: True

Ans to Q No 7: moral principles

Ans to Q No 8: protective

Ans to Q No 9: True

8.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: What is T.H. Green's concept of positive freedom?

Q 2: Define Green's idea of a moral State.

Q 3: What is the purpose of punishment according to Green?

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss T.H. Green's theory of freedom and rights. How does he connect individual moral self-realisation with the role of the State?

Q 2: Examine Green's conception of the State as a moral institution.

Q 3: Critically analyse Green's views on punishment, property, natural law, and society.

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UNIT 9: UTOPIAN SOCIALISM: ROBERT OWEN

UNIT STRUCTURE

9.1 Learning Objectives
9.2 Introduction
9.3 Concept of Utopian Socialism
  9.3.1 Meaning and Origin
  9.3.2 Main Features of Utopian Socialism
9.4 Robert Owen: His Views and Contribution
  9.4.1 Early Life and Intellectual Influences
  9.4.2 Theory of Human Character
  9.4.3 Property and Communism
  9.4.4 Cooperative Communities
  9.4.5 Education and Social Reform
  9.4.6 Experiments of Robert Owen
9.5 Assessment of Robert Owen's Contribution
9.6 Let Us Sum Up
9.7 Further Reading
9.8 Answer to Check Your Progress
9.9 Model Questions

9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the basic ideas of Utopian Socialism.
- discuss Robert's views on the concept of Utopian Socialism.
- discuss Robert's experiments as a Utopian socialist.
- explain the overall significance of Utopian Socialism and its limitations.

9.2 INTRODUCTION

Utopian socialism represents the earliest systematic critique of industrial capitalism and social inequality that emerged in Europe during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It developed in response to the social disruptions caused by the Industrial Revolution, particularly the exploitation of labour, widespread child labour, urban poverty, and the decline of traditional community life. Early proponents of Utopian socialism are Charles Fourier, Robert Owen, Henri de Saint-Simon, Étienne Cabe attempted to imagine alternative forms of social organisation based on cooperation, harmony, and moral reform rather than conflict or revolutionary struggle.Among the early utopian socialists, Robert Owen (1771–1858) occupies a central position for his concept of 'new harmony' an experimental co-operative commune in USA. Unlike many contemporary thinkers who confined themselves to theoretical speculation, Owen sought to translate socialist ideals into practical experiments. His thought centred on the belief that human character is shaped by social environment, and that cooperative communities and moral reform could transform society.Philosopher*Frederick Engels*wrote about Owen,

"Every social movement, every real advance in England on behalf of the workers links itself on to the name of Robert Owen."

In this unit, we examine the following aspects: the meaning of utopian socialism, its emergence, and its role in the further development of socialist thought. The chapter also explains why it is important to understand the ideas of Robert Owen and his contribution to these debates. Additionally, this unit introduces the major criticisms of utopian socialism, highlighting how later socialist thinkers criticised it for its lack of scientific analysis and revolutionary methodology. Nevertheless, the historical significance of utopian socialism in shaping socialist thought remains undeniable.

This unit primarily explores the concept of utopian socialism and critically examines Robert Owen's life, ideas, social experiments, limitations, and overall contribution to political thought.

9.3 CONCEPT OF UTOPIAN SOCIALISM

9.3.1 Meaning and Origin

Utopian socialism refers to a body of socialist ideas that emphasise the creation of ideal or perfect communities based on cooperation, equality, and shared ownership of resources. The term "utopia" was first used by Sir Thomas More in his work *Utopia* (1516) to describe an imaginary ideal society. In the nineteenth century, the concept was applied to socialist thinkers who proposed ideal social arrangements without outlining a clear political strategy for achieving them through organised struggle. Simply, it was Sir Thomas More who coined and applied the term 'utopia' to mean an imagine communist society.

Utopian socialism developed primarily in England and France before the rise of Marxist or scientific socialism during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Thinkers such as Robert Owen, Charles Fourier, and Henri de Saint-Simon criticised the inequalities of early capitalism and proposed alternative social systems based on moral and social reform.Thus, Robert Owen initially was a Welsh manufacturer who tried to bring the socialism idea into practical experiments by establishing a co-operative society among his workers. Since it was not work successfully, his ideas had been framed into the 'utopian', this unit will elaborate those.

9.3.2 Main Features of Utopian Socialism

A defining feature of utopian socialism was its focus on designing ideal societies without any first-hand experiments of those ideas or without any historical processes or class relations analysing. Utopian socialists were more concerned with imagining how society ought to be organised than explaining how social change actually occurs.

Utopian socialists come to emerge by offered a strong moral critique of capitalism, specifically after emerging of industrial revolution in Europe which produced the huge inequality among the workers. As a result of their analysis of its causes, they condemned private property, competition, the profit motive, and the exploitation of labour that

characterised early industrial capitalism. Thus, how capitalism was viewed as the root cause of inequality and social suffering.Utopian socialists believed that cooperation was morally superior and that social harmony could be achieved through collective living and shared economic activity. Therefore, they emphasised on cooperation among the workers and owners over competition as a crucial solution of those political-socio-economic suffering. However, it has been noted that Utopian socialism didn't influence by violent revolution as a means of social change. These thinkers believed that society could be transformed peacefully through education, moral persuasion, and the demonstration of successful social models. Robert Owen, for instance, set up library for children workers, reduced the working hours for them and he recommended that villages of "unity and cooperation" be established for the unemployed.

According to utopian socialist, moral and ethical reform formed the core value of any social change. Social problems were attributed to unjust institutions rather than to human nature. If social institutions were reformed, human behaviour would improve naturally. Therefore, many utopian socialists attempted to establish experimental or model communities to demonstrate the practical feasibility of their ideas. These communities were intended to serve as examples of cooperative and harmonious social life.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Write about the meaning and origin of socialism?

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Q2) Explain the main features of Utopian Socialism.

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9.4 ROBERT OWEN: HIS VIEWS AND CONTRIBUTION

9.4.1 Early Life and Intellectual Influences

Robert Owen was born in 1771 in Newtown, Wales, into a modest family. As he began working at a young age and later became a successful textile manufacturer,his direct experience as an industrialist played a decisive role in shaping his social ideas.By the age of thirty, Owen became the manager and later co-owner of the New Lanark cotton mills in Scotland. After the arrival of industrial revolution,the harsh working conditions of the time, including long hours, child labour, and poor living standards, deeply influenced him and led him to search for alternatives to the existing capitalist system.Owen's ideas were influenced by Enlightenment rationalism, humanitarian reform movements, and his empirical observation of industrial society. Unlike revolutionary thinkers, his socialism

developed primarily from practical experience rather than abstract philosophical theories. His basic ideas of social change were achieved through education for worker, cooperation over the competitiveness, basic health & hygiene facilities etc describes as a more humanistic nature within him. This section will discuss Owen's views and contribution as an early utopian socialist which are as followed.

9.4.2 Theory of Human Character

One of Robert Owen's most important contributions was his theory of environmental determinism. He believed that human character is formed by social conditions rather than by individual choice. Human nature is shaped by the external circumstances only that they are simply product of the environment. For Owen, people are neither naturally good nor inherently evil; their behaviour is shaped by education, institutions, and environment. That is why, Owen argued that crime, poverty, and immorality result from defective social conditions rather than individual failure. He maintained that if society reformed its institutions, human behaviour would improve automatically.

9.4.2 Views on Property and Communism

During the Owen's period, industrial revolution produced invisible inequality among people. These circumstances led Owen to strongly criticised the capitalist system for promoting inequality and exploitation. He argued that private ownership of productive property created social divisions and that profit-driven competition harmed both workers and society. Industrial capitalism, in his view, reduced human beings to mere instruments of production. Therefore, he suggested for cooperative united society. However, unlike Karl Marx, Owen did not advocate class struggle. He believed that capitalists could be morally persuaded to adopt cooperative principles and accept social reform.

9.4.3 Cooperative Communities

As an alternative to capitalism, Owen proposed the establishment of self-sufficient cooperative communities. Owen recommended that villages of "unity and cooperation" be established for the unemployed. Each community was expected to consist of approximately 1,200 people living and working together in a cooperative manner. Each family would have its own private apartment and the entire care of their children would be taken cared by the community. Parents would have access to them at meals and all other proper times. Owen suggested that such communities could be established by individuals, by counties, or even by the state; in each case there would be supervision by duly qualified persons. Work, enjoyment and all outputs of its result would be shared collectively. These communities were to be based on collective ownership and organised around cooperative labour where agriculture and industry would be combined, and all members would receive equal education, employment and other opportunities.Owen believed that such communities would eliminate poverty and unemployment and promote social harmony.

9.4.4 Education and Social Reform

Education occupied a central place in Owen's social philosophy. He believed that education should begin in early childhood and focus on moral and practical learning rather than punishment and competition. Education was seen as the primary means of shaping human character.At New Lanark, Owen established one of the earliest infant schools, which later influenced modern educational reforms. His approach emphasised encouragement, discipline through understanding, and social cooperation.

9.4.5 Experiments of Robert Owen

A) New Lanark Experiment

Robert Owen sought to translate socialist ideals into practical experiments. The New Lanark experiment is a proper example one of them, which was conducted between 1800 and 1825, was Owen's most successful practical achievement. At New Lanark, he reduced working hours, restricted child labour, and provided workers with housing, sanitation, education, and healthcare. However, despite these reforms, the enterprise remained economically profitable. The success of New Lanark demonstrated that industrial efficiency and social welfare could coexist.

B) New Harmony Experiment

Encouraged by the success of New Lanark, Owen attempted to establish a fully cooperative community known as New Harmony in Indiana, USA, in 1825. This experiment aimed to replace capitalism entirely with cooperative living.However, New Harmony failed due to lack of discipline, absence of clear leadership, and ideological differences among members. The failure highlighted the practical difficulties involved in sustaining utopian communities. This failure of Owen led to face the criticism for lack of his scientific understanding of the society.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q3) Discuss Robert Owen's theory of human character.

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Q4) Describe the experiments of Robert Owen, with special reference to New Lanark.

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9.5 ASSESMENT OF ROBERT OWEN'S CONTRIBUTION

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels criticised Owen for ignoring class struggle and overestimating the role of moral persuasion. They argued that Owen lacked a scientific

analysis of capitalism and classified his ideas as utopian rather than scientific socialism. Other criticisms point to the economic inefficiency of cooperative communities, dependence on ideal human behaviour, and failure to sustain long-term experiments. However, Robert Owen's significance lies in his introduction of socialism as a moral critique of capitalism. He demonstrated that practical reforms could improve industrial conditions and influenced cooperative movements and labour legislation. His ideas laid the foundation for later socialist thought by transforming socialism from a purely theoretical idea into a social experiment. Robert Owen remains one of the most humane figures in the history of political thought. His utopian socialism was based on optimism about human nature and faith in social reform. Although his ideas lacked scientific rigour and political strategy, they exposed the moral failures of early capitalism and industrial revolution.

While utopian socialism was later overshadowed by Marxism, Owen's emphasis on education, cooperation, and social responsibility continues to influence modern welfare policies and cooperative movements. His legacy highlights the importance of moral commitment in the pursuit of social justice.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q5) Critically examine the contribution and limitations of Robert Owen's utopian socialism.

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9.6 LET US SUM UP

- Utopian socialism emerged as an early moral critique of industrial capitalism in response to exploitation, inequality, and social dislocation caused by the Industrial Revolution.
- It emphasized cooperation, equality, and shared ownership while rejecting competition, profit motive, and violent revolution.
- Robert Owen was a leading utopian socialist who sought to apply socialist ideas through practical social experiments rather than abstract theory.
- Owen's theory of human character stressed that behaviour is shaped by social environment and institutions, not by individual nature.
- His cooperative community model aimed to eliminate poverty and social conflict through collective ownership and social reform.
- The New Lanark experiment demonstrated that industrial productivity and workers' welfare could coexist under humane conditions.
- Despite its limitations and later criticism as unscientific, utopian socialism laid an important foundation for modern socialist thought and social reform.

9.7 FURTHER READING

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9.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Utopian socialism refers to the earliest form of socialist thought that emerged in Europe during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as a response to the social problems created by the Industrial Revolution. Rapid industrialisation led to exploitation of workers, child labour, poverty, and inequality, which prompted thinkers to search for alternative social arrangements. The term "utopia" was originally used by Thomas More in his work *Utopia* (1516) to describe an imaginary ideal society. In the nineteenth century, it came to describe socialist thinkers who imagined ideal communities based on cooperation, equality, and shared ownership, without providing a clear political strategy to achieve them. Utopian socialism developed mainly in England and France, and its prominent thinkers included Robert Owen, Charles Fourier, and Saint-Simon. These thinkers believed that society could be transformed peacefully through moral reform, education, and example rather than through revolution or class struggle.

Ans to Q No 2: Utopian socialism was characterised by a strong moral critique of early industrial capitalism. Utopian socialists opposed private property, competition, and the profit motive, which they believed caused inequality and exploitation. They focused on designing ideal societies rather than analysing historical forces or class conflict. Cooperation was regarded as morally superior to competition, and social harmony was considered achievable through collective living. Utopian socialists rejected violent revolution and believed that peaceful methods such as education, persuasion, and moral appeal could bring about social change. Another important feature was the emphasis on ethical reform, as social problems were attributed to unjust institutions rather than human nature. Many utopian socialists also attempted to establish experimental communities to demonstrate the practical possibility of cooperative living. However, these experiments often failed due to organisational and practical difficulties.

Ans to Q No 3: Robert Owen's theory of human character forms the foundation of his social philosophy. He believed that human character is shaped entirely by environmental conditions such as education, social institutions, and economic circumstances. According to Owen, individuals are neither naturally good nor inherently evil; rather, their behaviour reflects the conditions in which they live. He

famously argued that "man's character is formed for him, not by him." On this basis, Owen explained social problems such as crime, poverty, and immorality as outcomes of defective social institutions rather than personal failure. He maintained that if society reformed its institutions and improved living and working conditions, human behaviour would automatically improve. This belief led Owen to emphasise social reform, education, and cooperative institutions as the means to create a harmonious and morally improved society.

Ans to Q No 4: Robert Owen attempted to put his socialist ideas into practice through social experiments, the most successful being the New Lanark experiment in Scotland between 1800 and 1825. As the manager and co-owner of the cotton mills, Owen introduced several reforms aimed at improving workers' living conditions. These included reducing working hours, restricting child labour, providing decent housing and sanitation, and offering free education and healthcare. He also established one of the earliest infant schools. Despite these welfare measures, New Lanark remained economically profitable, proving that industrial efficiency and social welfare could coexist. Encouraged by this success, Owen later attempted to establish a fully cooperative community at New Harmony in the United States, but it failed due to organisational problems and lack of discipline. Nevertheless, New Lanark remains a significant example of practical utopian socialism.

Ans to Q No 5: Robert Owen made a significant contribution to socialist thought by presenting socialism as a moral critique of capitalism and demonstrating practical reforms within industrial society. His emphasis on cooperation, education, and humane working conditions influenced later cooperative movements, labour reforms, and welfare policies. Owen's experiments, particularly at New Lanark, showed that social reform was possible without sacrificing economic productivity. However, his ideas also had important limitations. Critics argued that Owen lacked a scientific analysis of capitalism and ignored the role of class struggle in social change. He was highly criticised for heavily rely on moral persuasion and assumed that people would naturally cooperate under improved conditions. His cooperative communities had also failed to sustain themselves in the long run. For these reasons, Marx and Engels described his ideas as utopian rather than scientific socialism. Despite these limitations, Owen's humanitarian vision remains historically important in the discourse of political science.

M 9.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Mention any two main features of utopian socialism.

Q 2: What did Robert Owen mean by the formation of human character?

Q 3: What was the significance of the New Lanark experiment?

Q 4: Why did Marx and Engels criticise utopian socialism?

B. Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss the concept and main features of utopian socialism.

Q 2: Examine the life and social ideas of Robert Owen.

Q 3: Critically analyse the contribution and limitations of Robert Owen's utopian socialism.

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UNIT 10: KARL MARX

UNIT STRUCTURE

10.1 Learning Objectives
10.2 Introduction
10.3 Theory of Dialectical Materialism
10.4 Theory of Class Conflict
10.5 Theory of Alienation
10.6 Let Us Sum Up
10.7 Further Reading
10.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
10.9 Model Questions

10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- analyse the theory of dialectical materialism of Karl Marx
- explain the theory of class conflict of Karl Marx
- discuss the theory of alienation of Karl Marx.

10.2 INTRODUCTION

Karl Marx, the founder and chief exponent of communism was the most revolutionary author, thinker and philosopher of his age. By his writings, he changed the very course of history and an altogether gave it a new and different outlook with a new basis and orientation. On account of his revolutionary and radical ideas, he had to remain in exile, was expelled from one state to another and had to sacrifice his personal comforts and family life. However, still he continued with his efforts and with all firmness tried to achieve the mission of his life. The basic principles of his philosophy were the outcome of his struggle with life which was based on his practical experience. His philosophy was, therefore, not based on theory but on hard realities of life. It had a great practical touch and therefore appealed to all those who were toiling and suffering. He put his philosophy on scientific footing and made that logical and convincing.

10.3 THEORY OF DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM

The theory of dialectical materialism constitutes the most fundamental premise of the Marxian political philosophy. It is called dialectical because the course of development of human civilisation is dialectical while the interpretation as to why the change occurs is materialistic.

The word 'dialectics' means movement of history. Marx says that the world or the reality is material. The entire world changes because of the change in the material forces. Marx borrowed his idea of dialectical materialism from Hegel’s dialectical idealism. Hegel says that the world is based on ideas or spirit or reason and the world changes because of the change in the ideas or spirit. Hegel says that every idea will give rise to an opposite

idea and the sum total of both these ideas is a higher idea. The idea is known as thesis, the opposite idea is known as anti-thesis and the higher idea is known as synthesis. Marx also borrowed this idea. But, he used the material forces in the replacement of ideas. According to Marx, not ideas but material forces change the world. So, he gave the idea of dialectical materialism instead of dialectical idealism of Hegel.

Main **features** of dialectical materialism are as discussed below:

- The first fundamental feature of dialectical materialism is that change may be both quantitative as well as qualitative. All changes have a clear-cut quantitative aspect. But, the quantitative change cannot go on indefinitely. After a particular point, the quantitative change may become qualitative change.
- Another feature of dialectical materialism is the struggle of opposites. The struggle between the two opposites i.e. thesis and anti-thesis is a process of nature because of the existence of contradictory positions between them.
- Another feature of dialectical materialism is the law of unity. It may be noted that the two contradictory positions through continuous struggle would result in the position of synthesis. The synthesis represents the unity between the two.
- The theory of dialectical materialism is also based on the doctrine of negation. In the dialectical process, anti-thesis negates the thesis and synthesis negates the anti-thesis. As a result of this negation of negation, synthesis has emerged as a positive reality. Soon after synthesis would again be converted into thesis and the dialectical process would be repeated till all antagonism comes to an end in communism.

Criticisms: The theory of dialectical materialism has been criticized on the following grounds:

- The first criticism is against the universal application of dialectical materialism. Marx says that dialectical materialism is the only method to know the reality. So, he applied it to study historical development. But, critics have said that there were many developments in the field of science and technology in the 18th and 19th centuries which did not follow the process of dialectical materialism.
- The critics are of the view that there has been an overdose of materialism in this theory. The importance of non-material aspect of life has been completely ignored by Marx.
- Marx and Engels have said that due to dialectical materialism, we always have a higher truth. But, critics have said that in politics, the outcome of a conflict may not be a higher development. Because, conflict leads to nothing but devastation and damage to the society.
- Marx has said that dialectics is an active force that goes on and on. It is a continuous process. With dialectical materialism, the society is also continuously developing. But, he has not mentioned any stage after communism and any sort of conflict in communism. So, the critics have asked if the communist society is stagnant, what happens next as stagnation of society cannot be historically applicable. Therefore, silence of Marx regarding what happens after communism has been criticised by

the critics.

But, in spite of these limitations, dialectical materialism is a core concept in the political philosophy of Marx and has been widely used as a key to understand the process of change and development of human history.

10.4 THEORY OF CLASS CONFLICT

The concept of class constitutes a very significant part of the political philosophy of Karl Marx. The class refers to the class of people having identical economic status at an average level. Marx believed that in each stage of human civilisation, except primitive communism as well as communism, there were classes. While, some of the classes which were the controller of the mode of production, constituted the rich and the exploiter class, and those who actually were involved in the mode of production, constituted the poor and exploited class. Accordingly, in Marxian analysis, class is an inevitable aspect of the process of understanding change in the society.

Primitive Communist Stage: According to Marx, it is the earliest stage of human civilisation. There were no classes in this stage. It was an absolutely classless society and the people lived an equalitarian life. But at the same time, in the later part of primitive communism, some intelligent people had discovered certain instruments of wood and iron that could be used conveniently to collect the basic necessities of life. With the discovery of instruments there emerged a small group of people who started controlling the mode of production including control over the labour. In other words, a small group of people had collected food and other commodities for basic existence and deposited them with the masters. The masters kept the commodities in store and a small amount was handed over to the people who had actually collected them from nature. As a result, a surplus was created in the economy. The class which secured the surplus became rich and those who did not have access to surplus became poor. Thus, the emergence of surplus in the economy was primarily responsible for the rich-poor division and the creation of classes.

Classes in the Slave Owning Society: There were two main classes in this society namely- the masters and the slaves. The handful of people who provided various kinds of weapons in the primitive communist system became the masters. On the other hand, the people who were involved in the process of procuring food and other commodities became the slaves. Thus, in the slave-owning society, the masters were the rich class as they had complete access over the production process and the produced.

Classes in the Feudal Stage: There were two classes in the feudal stage namely- the feudal lords and the serfs. The feudal lords were the owners of the land that was given to the slaves in the last part of the slave owning system. As the conditions of the slaves declined in the slave-owning system, land was allotted to each of the slaves as an additional guarantee of livelihood. In the process, agriculture became the primary activity in the economy. The serfs were the actual cultivators who cultivated in the fields owned by the landlords. But, the economic conditions of the serfs were pathetic. While they had to resort to hard labour for livelihood, they did not have access to the produced. The land lords were the owners of the produced and out of that amount a portion was given to the

serfs. At the same time, the serfs were not in a position to leave the field as no other alternative guarantee was available for livelihood. In other words, the condition of the serfs was such that they were tied to the land that they cultivated.

Classes in the Capitalist Stage: In the initial stage of capitalism, there were three main classes namely- bourgeoisie, petty bourgeoisie and the proletariat. But, the exploitation of the big bourgeoisie was so sharp and severe that the petty bourgeoisie cannot bear this exploitation and was reduced to proletariat. Accordingly, in the monopoly stage of capitalism, the entire polity would be polarised between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Class Struggle in the Capitalist Stage: According to Marx, class struggle is a phenomenon of the highest stage of capitalism. It takes place between the two contending classes namely- the bourgeoisie and the proletariat to enhance their bargain and to establish their superiority over the other. It also prepares the ground for revolutionary conditions. At the highest stage of class struggle, there would be revolution. Marx predicted that revolution would usher in a new era of dictatorship of the proletariat.

Classes in the Dictatorship of the Proletariat: It would be established after revolution. There is only one class in dictatorship of the proletariat i.e. the proletariat itself. The governing principle of this stage is "each according to his ability".

Classes in Communism: From dictatorship of the proletariat, communism would be established. The governing principle of communism is "each according to his needs". It means that all the needs of people would be fulfilled in communism when class contradictions come to an end.

Criticism: The critics have pointed out that the theory of Class Conflict is a speculative theory and there is no empirical basis to this speculation. In other words, it is a one-sided, partisan and biased projection of class contradiction amongst people.

But at the same time, Marxian philosophy cannot move without class analysis and class conflict constitutes the turning point of human history which prepares the ground for the great proletarian revolution leading to ultimate establishment of communism.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) What is meant by 'dialectics'?

.....

Q2) From whom has Marx borrowed the idea of Dialectical Materialism?

.....

Q3) According to Marx, the world changes because of the change in ideas. (True/ False)

.....

Q4) Which factor is responsible for the emergence of class according to Marx?

.....

Q5) In which stage of human history does class struggle take place?

.....

10.5 THEORY OF ALIENATION

Marx has used the concept of or word 'alienation' in the context of capitalism and his "*The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*" has given us a detailed study about how a man is alienated in a capitalist society and he has also analysed various stages in which alienation takes place.

According to Marx, human beings are essentially very productive in nature. They are very interested in doing something. In doing any activity, human beings always use their skills, creativity, imagination etc. But Marx says that capitalists deny creativity, human skills etc. because they are only interested in producing more and more or in making profit. So, capitalism has 'commodity fetishism'. This commodity fetishism ultimately leads to alienation. Marx has further analysed this alienation which takes place at four different levels. These are as follows:

Alienation of the Workers from their Production: The workers make production by their labour and the commodities are sold by the capitalists on the basis of demand and supply. So, the labour of the workers is just an object for which the workers may go against their own product. Hence, products acting against the interest of the workers lead to alienation of the workers.

Alienation from the Conditions of the Work Process: It takes place as workers have no control on the process of production. The workers do not own the means of production. The capitalists take all the decisions of the production process. In the capitalist production process, a particular worker does only one part of the commodity. So, a worker does a dull repetitive work in the production process but they have no other options left for them.

Alienation from Other Men: A worker feels alienation from his fellow people. The workers do not have the feeling of oneness. Because, there is competition amongst the workers. The workers do not have fellow-feeling towards the capitalists as the capitalists are concerned about profit.

Alienation of the Workers from Themselves: Such alienation ocurs as it is only the work which dominates their life. They have no time for relaxation and have no time to devote to their other faculties. As a result, they are alienated from themselves. It makes human beings very egoistic.

5 LET US KNOW

Following these four types of alienation, Marx says that he wanted to bring about a radical revolution to establish communism. He thought that with this revolution and with the establishment of communism this kind of alienation of human beings from themselves would come to an end and human beings would eventually integrate. According to him, it would be the return of individuals to their own selves and there would be an end of self-alienation. With this, human beings would be free in the true sense. So, according to Marx, only in communism, there would be freedom.

Criticism: Like all other theories of Marx, the theory of alienation is also not free from

criticisms which are discussed below:

- The theory of alienation was revived in the 1950s and 1960s. Heavy criticism came from the Stalinists and the Structural Marxists. According to them, the concept of alienation written by young Marx is replaced by certain words in later works of Marx like 'class', 'domination', 'exploitation', 'division of labour' etc. However, in reply to the critics, the Marxists had stated that the concept of alienation cannot be explained by any replacements.
- Critics are not ready to accept the concept of self-alienation. According to them, human beings are not alienated from their self but are alienated from freedom and creativity. Self-alienation is not an essential element of human nature.
- There arose a debate whether alienation applies to the individual or to the entire society. Those who say that alienation applies only to the individual are of the view that the non-adjustment of the individual to the society in which he lives is the sign of alienation. Many others say that a society can also be sick or alienated. In such a case, an individual who cannot adjust to the existing society is not necessarily alienated. Thus, alienation is just a psychological concept referring to a feeling or state of mind. It is not necessarily a product of capitalist mode of production.

In this way, Marx tried to show as to how there was a close link of alienation with economic order. He made it clear that alienation has made a worker incapable of revolting against a situation that was not acceptable to him. Alienation has made workers an abstraction and resulted in their moral degradation. Owing to the extensive use of machinery and to the division of labour, the work of the proletariat has lost all individual character and consequently all charm for workman. Human dignity under the concept of alienation has been subordinated to wage and profit relationship, which is the worst of capitalist system.

t ACTIVITY 10.1

Try to find out the main sources of the political philosophy of Marx.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q6) In what context Marx has used the concept alienation?

……

Q7) Mention any one type of alienation faced by the workers in capitalist system.

……

Q8) Mention two levels of alienation analysed by Marx.

……

2 10.6 LET US SUM UP

- Karl Marx is the founder and chief exponent of communism.
- Dialectical materialism is a core concept to understand the process of change and development of human history. Dialectical materialism indicates that the world or the

reality is material and the entire world changes because of the change in the material forces.

- Transformation of quantity into quality, struggle of the opposites, law of unity and negation of negation are the fundamental features of dialectical materialism.
- Marx believes that in each stage of human civilisation, except primitive communism as well as communism there are classes.
- According to Marx, class struggle is a phenomenon of the highest stage of capitalism. It takes place between the two contending classes namely the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.
- Class conflict constitutes the turning point of human history which prepares the ground for the great proletarian revolution leading to ultimate establishment of communism.
- The theory of alienation basically provides a detailed study about how a man is alienated in a capitalist society and also analyses various stages in which alienation takes place.
- According to Marx, alienation takes place at four different levels - alienation of the workers from their production, alienation from the conditions of the work process, alienation from other men and alienation of the workers from themselves.

10.7 FURTHER READING

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10.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Movement of history

Ans to Q No 2: Hegel

Ans to Q No 3: False

Ans to Q No 4: Emergence of surplus in the economy

Ans to Q No 5: Capitalist stage

Ans to Q No 6: In the context of capitalism

Ans to Q No 7: Alienation of the workers from their production

Ans to Q No 8: Two levels of alienation analysed by Marx are:

1) The workers make production by their labour and the commodities are sold by the capitalists on the basis of demand and supply. So, the labour of the workers is just an object for which the workers may go against their own product. Hence, products acting against the interest of the workers lead to alienation of the workers.

2) It takes place as the workers have no control on the process of production. The workers do not own the means of production. The capitalists take all the decisions of the production process. In the capitalist production process, a particular worker does only one part of the commodity. So, a worker does a dull repetitive work in the production process and have no other options left for them.

10.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

Q 1: How Marx is influenced by Hegel in case of dialectical materialism?

Q 2: What are the governing principles of dictatorship of the proletariat and communism?

Q 3: According to Marx, why does alienation take place?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Point out the fundamental features of dialectical materialism.

Q 2: Mention the name of the classes in each stage of human history.

Q 3: Briefly explain any one type of alienation.

C) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Critically analyse the theory of dialectical materialism.

Q 2: Explain the theory of class conflict of Karl Marx.

Q 3: Evaluate the theory of alienation of Karl Marx.

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UNIT 11: V. I. LENIN, MAO-TSE-TUNG AND ANTONIO GRAMSCI

UNIT STRUCTURE

11.1 Learning Objectives
11.2 Introduction
11.3 V. I. Lenin
  9.3.1 Views on Imperialism
  9.3.2 Views on Revolution
  9.3.3 Views on the Role of the Communist Party
11.4 Mao-Tse-Tung
  9.4.1 Political Ideas of Mao-Tse-Tung
  9.4.2 Views on Revolution
11.5 Antonio Gramsci
  9.5.1 Views on Hegemony
  9.5.2 Views on State
11.6 Let Us Sum Up
11.7 Further Reading
11.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
11.9 Model Questions

11.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- describe the views of V. I. Lenin on imperialism, revolution and role of the communist party
- explain the political ideas of Mao- Tse- Tung and his views on revolution
- analyse Gramsci's views on hegemony and state

11.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, we have discussed about the various aspects of Marxism. In the present unit, we will discuss about the views of some eminent later Marxist philosophers namely- V. I. Lenin, Mao-Tse-Tung and Gramsci. Though they supported the ideas of Marx, they did not support it blindly. After modifying the ideas according to the needs of their society, they applied it in their own context. Thus, after reading this unit, you will be able to know and compare about the views of some later Marxists philosophers with the views of Marx which are explained below.

11.3 V. I. LENIN

Lenin was a later Marxist philosopher. He wanted to modify the ideas of Marx and apply those ideas in the context of Russia. But he did not want to apply the ideas of Marx blindly. The most important contribution of Lenin is 'Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism'.

11.3.1 Views on Imperialism

Lenin has tried to make a link between imperialism and capitalism. He has regarded imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism. According to him, there are five phases of this highest stage of capitalism:

- The concentration of production and capital develops to such a high stage that it creates monopolies which plays a decisive role in the economic sphere. This is known as monopoly capitalism.
- The merging of bank capital with industrial capital and the creation of finance capital on the basis of this merging.
- The third phase is marked by an export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities.
- The fourth phase is the formation of international monopolistic capitalist associations. International monopolies are agreements concluded between the biggest monopolies of various countries on the division of market, price policy etc. The creation of international monopolistic associations leads to the economic division of the world among the various big imperialist powers.
- In the fifth stage we find that economic division of the world leads to the territorial division of the world amongst the big imperialist powers. It is because the big imperialist powers think that if they could control those areas politically, they would be able to make easy capital export. Moreover, they would also be able to set up strategic military bases in those regions. That is why, we find that in the 19th century, many of the countries became colonies of the big imperialist powers.

Lenin says that due to these developments, there arises some crisis which leads to the downfall of imperialist phase of capitalism:

- Owing to these developments, monopoly capitalism becomes decadent. In the first stage, monopolies do not give importance to the development of technology as they can get higher profit without bringing any machines or technological progress. As a result there arises stagnation in industries in the monopoly stage of capitalism.
- Monopoly capitalism leads to uneven development of capitalism as monopoly phase does not develop equally all over the world. Lenin says that as there is an uneven development of capitalism, there is also an uneven proletarian revolution.
- Lenin also says that in the imperialist stage, capitalism creates some conditions which are necessary for the establishment of socialism. In this context, it can be mentioned that in monopolies there is concentration of production and decisions are taken centrally. This transition from imperialism to socialism happens through revolution.

Lenin says that in the imperialist stage of capitalism, the condition of the workers becomes worst and it is because the leaders of the proletariat take money from the capitalists to prevent the shout and revolution of the proletariat. According to Lenin, in the

imperialist stage there is no peace as this stage is marked by a number of evil incidents and practices. Against of these evil practices, there would be the emergence of a revolution and this revolution would lead to the decline of this stage will the eventual emergence of socialism.

11.3.2 Views on Revolution

At that time, Russia was ruled by czars. The Russian czars introduced capitalism but they did not give full freedom to capitalism. Capitalists were very few in numbers which were controlled by czars. Thus, in the late 19th century, Russia was suffering from two forms of oppression i.e. oppression of workers (capitalism) and oppression of peasants (feudalism). To come out from these oppressions, he formed the theory of revolution.

To lead revolution in the west, there was the proletariat. But in case of Russia, the entire environment was different from other western countries. In Russia, potential revolutionary classes were peasants, workers, Russian bourgeoisie and class of national minorities.

In the theory of revolution Lenin had stated that revolution will progress in two stages in Russia:

- Bourgeoisie democratic revolution would abolish czarism in Russia. In this revolution, the proletariat would try to acquire the support of the peasants and would fight against the czars for their abolition. In this stage, the bourgeoisie would lead these people to abolish the czars. But socialism would not be established in this stage thereby leading to the requirement of the second stage.
- In the second stage, leading role will be taken by the proletariat with the help of the peasantry. The proletariat would fight against the bourgeoisie and would establish socialism.

So, the second stage is the actual stage of revolution and it would lead to the end of czarism. Lenin says that czarism can only be abolished when revolution goes through certain stages and for this purpose, he had forwarded two stages of revolution in the context of Russia.

Marxism talks about simultaneous revolution. But Lenin was against the whole theory of simultaneous revolution as he felt that capitalism did not develop in all the countries equally. Therefore, he had forwarded the concept of 'socialism in one country' as socialism did not require simultaneous revolution. But, if socialism was established in one country, it would be an example for other countries and thus socialism would be established in most parts of the world.

11.3.3 Views on the Role of the Communist Party

In the second stage of revolution, Lenin talks about the party which is considered the most important contribution of Lenin to the theory of revolution. According to Lenin, in order to have revolution, it is very necessary to organise first and it is the party which gives organisation to the revolutionary forces. Revolution cannot take place in Russia

without the party.

Lenin calls this party as the Vanguard Party. It is comprises the intellectuals, educationists and the proletariat. These are the people who receive professional training of revolutionary tactics. These people are expected to be politically advanced and conscious. The party is based on the principle of democratic centralism. It is a principle where all decisions are taken on the basis of debate and discussion. Once, a policy is finalised on the basis of debate and discussion, it has to be implemented. But at the time of implementation, there is no discussion.

Lenin says that the vanguard party engages itself in propaganda activities. Apart from propaganda, the party has also some slogans and messages to express the grievances of the proletariat. Thus, the party tries to increase the awareness of the peasants and move towards the revolution in a minimum time.

5 LET US KNOW

Propaganda is a type of education given through lectures, meetings etc. by which the party tries to popularise its ideas. Such education or information is especially of biased or misleading nature as it is used to promote a particular political cause or point of view.

However, the party has been given so many responsibilities that in manipulating the people, it ends with the total control over the population. In most of the communist countries, we have seen that communist party became the dominated party. As for an example, we may refer to the Bolshevik Party in the context of Russia.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) According to Lenin which is the highest stage of capitalism?

.....

Q2) Who has given the concept of 'socialism in one country'?

.....

Q3) What is the name of the party put forwarded by Lenin?

.....

11.4 MAO-TSE-TUNG

Mao-Tse-Tung, the father of communist China, was the ray of hope of the oppressed people of all over the world and particularly to that of the people of China. Chinese communism developed under Mao. He led the revolution in China in the Marxist principles. He modified Marxism from the European form to the Asiatic form keeping in view the problems in China.

11.4.1 Political Ideas of Mao-Tse-Tung

During the course of the revolution that he led in China, he developed a series of political ideas that constitute the basic framework of his political philosophy. These are as

follows:

- **Philosophical Commitment to Marxism-Leninism:** In so far as political philosophy is concerned, Mao had full faith in the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism. But at the same time, he made certain basic changes in the operation of these principles in the context of the Chinese society. Thus, Marxism and Leninism have profound influence in the formulation of political philosophy of Mao.
- **Concept of People's War:** Mao combined the two revolutions going on in the country i.e. the nationalist revolution against imperialism and colonialism and the revolution to isolate the masses from the collaborators of imperialism and colonialism. The intellectuals must unite closely with the workers, peasants and soldiers. In fact, almost all the reforms in China under Mao's leadership saw the involvement of the masses. Thus, Mao wanted to secure people's participation in national regeneration plans.
- **Permanent Revolution:** Mao believed in revolution in the countryside and by the rural masses. This is the only way of giving a permanent character to revolution. Mao believed that the peasantry was quite capable of playing the revolutionary role.
- **Views on Cultural Revolution:** The great proletarian Cultural Revolution was an attempt by Mao to degrade the role of the party and upgrade the role of the masses. In fact, Mao never allowed the party to become supreme authority over the masses. The party was subjected to popular scrutiny. During the Cultural Revolution, Mao used the red-guards to paralyse the party organisation. The communist party which emerged in China after the Cultural Revolution, was no longer a party of the pre-revolution period. It became more responsible and ideologically committed to that of Marxism, Leninism and Maoism. At the same time, during the course of the Cultural Revolution, Mao tried to build up the scientific culture of the broad masses. It is through Cultural Revolution that Mao wanted to establish new democracy. In new democracy, there would be a new national culture and it is the culture of the people of China.

5 LET US KNOW

New democracy is a political system for China proposed by Mao to be established after the formation of Democratic Republic in China. New democracy emphasises on three important aspects. According to the political aspect, there will not be the monopoly use of power by the bourgeoisie. The economic aspect will follow two principles - regulation of capital will be controlled by the state and equalisation of land ownership. In the cultural aspect, Mao says that in the People's Democratic Republic, culture will be anti-imperialist and anti-feudal and there will be a reflection of communism in culture.

- **Views on War and Violent Revolution:** Mao was in favor of violence and war to establish communism. In fact, Mao believed that political power grows out of the barrel of a gun. It is the party that commands the gun but the gun would never be allowed to command the party. According to Mao, experiences in the class struggle of the era of imperialism taught us that the working class and the masses cannot defeat the land lords except through the power of a gun. Mao hoped that the future war would completely wipe out imperialism and there would be only socialism all over the world.
- **Hundred Flowers Policy:** This policy was followed by Mao during the period of Cultural Revolution. It indicates the collective expression of Mao's new ideology. There should be hundreds of ideas i.e. flowers that would help to enrich Marxism-Leninism. It is in this way that correct idea would ultimately prevail and the unhealthy ideas would gradually wipe out. In other words, it could be stated that physical force would not be used in ideological matters and it would be a natural flow of correct ideas.

On the basis of the above survey of the political ideas of Mao-Tse-Tung, it can be stated that he made innumerable contributions towards the development of theory and practice of his political philosophy. It may be noted that his theory and practices were expected to establish a new political order in China on the basis of Marxism-Leninism, and his teachings known as Maoism.

11.4.2 Views on Revolution

Marx has stood for revolution and according to him if need be, the revolution should be brought about with the use of arms as well. Mao also felt that armed revolution in his time was necessary as it was when Marx or Lenin pleaded for the same. According to him, since the revolutionaries are not well equipped, therefore, they should be well-trained in guerilla activities. The revolutionaries should always create an atmosphere in which civil wars are encouraged. It cannot be denied that it was due to his efforts and stress on guerilla activities that this method of war had become very popular.

Mao wants to give a permanent character to revolution. A permanent revolution can take place only when it is rooted in the masses. He feels that if revolution is to last long, it is essential that distinction between the leaders and masses should be brought to an end. He does not agree with Marx that permanent revolution can be brought only by the working classes. He feels that in Asia, such a revolution can be brought about by the peasantry. Since China had agricultural economy, therefore, he stressed the role of the peasants in revolution. Mao felt that the peasants should be accepted as the leaders of the revolution because majority of the total population of China comprised of peasants. The peasants can only be the real strength in overthrowing of feudal forces.

According to him, people are more important than weapons to succeed in a revolution. For him, weapons are not a decisive factor whereas people definitely are. He wanted the revolution to start from the rural areas before it spread out to the cities. For him, revolution should not aim at merely capturing power but rather use that for the transformation of

society.

Mao has no love for peaceful revolution. According to him, peace is nothing else but continuation of the present system of capitalism. It is war and violence which can end capitalism.

t ACTIVITY 11.1

Make a comparison between V. I. Lenin and Mao- Tse- Tung regarding their views on revolution.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q4) Who stated, "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun?"

.....

Q5) What according to Mao was necessary to succeed in the revoluation in China?

.....

11.5 ANTONIO GRAMSCI

He is an Italian Marxist thinker and his writings are basically concentrated in the early phase of 20th century. Two most important concepts of Gramsci are 'civil society' and 'hegemony'. He has been credited for bringing about certain new aspects of Marxism. He has redefined the relationship between base and superstructure and brought a new layer between the two which is known as the civil society. He has also analysed why there is no revolution in the highly industrialised countries of the west. Marx says that in the highly industrialised countries of the west, there will be the rise of revolution by the working class against the bourgeoisie in the highest stage of capitalism. However, Gramsci says that in the highly industrialised countries of the west, no revolution had occurred and it was only because of the civil society.

11.5.1 Views on Hegemony

Italian communist thinker, activist, and political leader Antonio Gramsci is perhaps the theorist most closely associated with the concept of hegemony. Gramsci has used hegemony to theorise not only the necessary condition for a successful overthrow of the bourgeoisie by the proletariat and its allies (e.g., the peasantry), but also the structures of bourgeoisie in the late 19th and early 20th century Western European states. Gramsci, particularly in his later work *Prison Notebooks* (written during the late 1920s and early 1930s) while he was in prison, develops a complex and variable usage of the term. Gramsci's hegemony refers to a process of moral and intellectual leadership through which dominated or subordinate classes of industrial European nations accept their own domination with consent of the ruling classes as opposed to being simply forced or coerced into accepting inferior positions. It is important to note that Gramsci defines hegemony as a form a control exercised by the dominant class. For Gramsci, the dominant class of the western European nations of his time was the bourgeoisie, owners of the means of social

production and employers of wage-labour; while the crucial subordinate class was the proletariat, having no means of production of their own.

According to Gramsci, hegemony not only happens in the arena of economic and political sphere but also very sharply happens in the arena of cultural sphere. Gramsci divides the superstructure into civil society and political society. Gramsci says that the capitalist class establishes its hegemony over all other classes in the society by capturing the superstructure, more specifically all the organisations of civil society. The civil society organisations make people believe that capitalist system is the best system and capitalist class is the best class. Due to these organisations, people forget about their own exploitation and accept the hegemony of the capitalist class with consent.

Gramsci says that in order to overthrow the capitalist class, a counter hegemony has to be established. In order to create counter hegemony, the proletariat class has to capture the organisations of the civil society and they have to make the people aware about their exploitation and thus they can have revolution against the capitalist class.

11.5.2 Views on State

Gramsci divides the superstructure into two major levels - civil society and political society. He says that all the coercive powers or repressive powers or purely political kind of functions remain in the political society. On the other hand, religious, educational, business and cultural organisations remain in the civil society. In other words, any organisation that does not use force upon the people to follow them remains in the civil society. So, political society is that part of superstructure which is based on force. On the other hand, civil society represents the remaining part of superstructure based on the consent of the people. Gramsci, in the narrow sense, regards the civil society as the ensemble of organisations commonly called private and that of political society as the state. According to Gramsci, civil society corresponds to hegemony while political society or state corresponds to direct domination or command. He further delineates these two relatively distinct forms of control as follows:

- Social hegemony names the spontaneous consent given by the great masses to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group.
- Political government names the apparatus of state coercive power which legally enforces discipline on those groups who do not give their consent either actively or passively. This is constituted for the whole of society in anticipation of moments of crisis of command and direction when spontaneous consent has failed.

Although they are useful for understanding different modes of social control, yet Gramsci does not retain social hegemony and political government as purely distinct categories, but rather brings them together under the 'integral state'. While Gramsci at times uses 'state' narrowly to refer to the 'governmental- coercive apparatus', he also deploys a broader 'general notion of state' or 'integral state', which includes both the functions of social hegemony and political government as described above.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q6) According to Gramsci, which class establishes its hegemony in the society?

.....

Q7) Gramsci entrusts all the coercive or repressive powers in the state. (True/ False)

.....

11.6 LET US SUM UP

- Lenin regarded imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism. According to him, there are five phases of this highest stage of capitalism. In these phases, there arises some crisis which leads to the downfall of imperialist phase of capitalism.
- To come out from the oppression of workers and peasants, he formed the theory of revolution. In Russia, potential revolutionary classes were peasants, workers, Russian bourgeoisie and class of national minorities. Lenin says that revolution will progress in two stages in Russia. He prefers socialism in one country to simultaneous revolution.
- In the revolution, the Vanguard party plays a massive role by organising the revolutionary forces and making aware the peasants through propaganda activities, slogans, messages etc.
- The political ideas of Mao- Tse- Tung can be analysed in reference to the concept of people's war, permanent revolution, cultural revolution, views on war and violent revolution and hundred flowers policy.
- Mao was in favor of a violent revolution and permanent revolution. He stresses the leading role of the peasants in the revolution in China.
- Gramsci defined hegemony as a form a control exercised by the dominant class by capturing the superstructure, more specifically all the organisations of civil society.
- While Gramsci at times uses 'state' narrowly to refer to the 'governmental- coercive apparatus', he also deploys a broader 'general notion of state' or 'integral state', which includes both the functions of social hegemony and political government.

11.7 FURTHER READING

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5) Singh, G. (Ed.). (2008). *Western political thinkers*. New Delhi: Omega Publications.

K 11.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Imperialism.

Ans to Q No 2: V. I. Lenin.

Ans to Q No 3: Vanguard party.

Ans to Q No 4: Mao-Tse-Tung.

Ans to Q No 5: The peasantry.

Ans to Q No 6: The capitalist class.

Ans to Q No 7: True.

M 11.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

Q 1: According to Lenin, what are the two stages of revolution?

Q 2: How has Mao given permanent character to revolution?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Briefly explain the role of the communist party in Russia.

Q 2: Write a note about Mao's views on revolution.

Q 3: Explain Gramsci's views on state.

C) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss Lenin's views on imperialism.

Q 2: Explain the political ideas of Mao-Tse-Tung.

Q 3: Analyse the concept of hegemony of Antonio Gramsci.

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UNIT 12: EVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM: EDUARD BERNSTEIN

UNIT STRUCTURE

12.1 Learning Objectives
12.2 Introduction
12.3 Evolutionary Socialism and Eduard Bernstein
  12.3.1 Eduard Bernstein and Revisionism
12.4 Bernstein's Views
  12.4.1 Bernstein on the 'Theory of Breakdown'
  12.4.2 Bernstein on Class Structure and Class War
  12.4.3 Bernstein on Dialectical and Historical Materialism
  12.4.4 Bernstein on Surplus Value
12.5 Assessment of Bernstein's Contribution
12.6 Let us sum up
12.7 Further Readings
12.8 Answer to check your progress
12.9 Model Questions

12.1 LEARNING OBEJCTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the basic concept of evolutionary socialism
- discuss the contribution of Eduard Bernstein and his revisionism
- discuss the views of Bernstein on different concepts
- present a critical assessment of Eduard Bernstein's contribution

12.2 INTRODUCTION

Evolutionary Socialism, propounded by Edward Bernstein, marked a major departure from orthodox Marxism by arguing that socialism would emerge gradually through democratic and peaceful reforms rather than through violent revolution. Bernstein believed that capitalist societies were becoming more democratic and economically stable, making revolutionary overthrow unnecessary. In this unit we shall discuss the various aspects relating to evolutionary socialism.

12.3 EVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM AND EDUARD BERSTEIN

The development of socialist thought has passed through multiple stages. Alongside revolutionary interpretations of Marxism, there emerged reformist and evolutionary strands that sought to adapt socialist theory to changing historical conditions. Initially capitalism was not considered ascompletely dehumanising; rather, early stages of socialist thought considered that capitalism could be humanised; hence evolutionary socialism becomes one of the core phases in the socialist thought. By definition, evolutionary socialism is a political and social theory that emphasizes gradual, peaceful, and democratic changes in

society to achieve socialist ideals. The main idea behind evolutionary socialism is that socialism can be achieved through gradual and peaceful reforms rather than through a violent revolution. Evolutionary socialism is based on the belief that the capitalist system is inherently flawed and that socialism provides a more equitable and just alternative. However, unlike revolutionary socialism, which advocates for the overthrow of the capitalist system through violent means, evolutionary socialism advocates for a peaceful transition to socialism through the democratic process.

One of the most influential figures associated with this evolutionary approach was Eduard Bernstein, a German Marxists theorist. Writing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Bernstein challenged the orthodox Marxist view and attempted to reassess Marxist theory in the context of the social, economic, and political developments taking place in advanced capitalist societies of Western Europe. His ideas gave rise to what came to be known as evolutionary socialism or revisionism. Eduard Bernstein formulated the idea of evolutionary socialism in his book *Evolutionary Socialism* (1899). In political science literature, this evolutionary and reformist approach to socialism is also associated with democratic socialist thinkers such as Jean Jaurès and the Fabian socialists, who similarly emphasized gradual change, ethical socialism, and parliamentary methods over revolutionary overthrow.

Bernstein's intervention was historically crucial because it questioned some of the core assumptions of orthodox Marxism, particularly the inevitability of capitalist collapse and the necessity of violent revolution. At the same time, he remained committed to the broader goals of socialism, such as social justice, equality, and the protection of workers' rights. This unit examines Bernstein's contribution to socialist theory by focusing on his revisionist approach and his views on capitalist breakdown, class structure and class conflict, dialectical and historical materialism, and the theory of surplus value.

12.3.1 Eduard Bernstein and the Rise of Revisionism

Eduard Bernstein emerged as an important socialist thinker during a period when the predictions of classical Marxism did not appear to be fully confirmed by empirical realities. Instead of witnessing the growing pauperisation of the working class and the imminent collapse of capitalism, Bernstein observed many sudden political economic things such as - rising wages, the expansion of trade unions, the growth of parliamentary democracy, and the introduction of social legislation. These developments led him to argue that socialist theory required revision in order to remain relevant with contemporary scenario.

Revisionism, as advanced by Bernstein, referred to a critical re-examination of Marxist doctrines rather than their complete rejection. Bernstein didn't reject Marxism; rather he challenged the orthodox Marxism. He maintained that Marxism should not be treated as a closed and infallible system but as a framework open to correction in the light of historical experience. In his seminal work *Evolutionary Socialism*, Bernstein argued that socialism was not an inevitable outcome of economic laws but a political and ethical project that required conscious human effort (Bernstein, 1899/1961). Thus, Bernstein

emphasized the relevancy of democracy, parliamentary institutions, and legal reforms in advancing socialist objectives. He believed that gradual reforms within capitalism could progressively transform society in a socialist direction. This position brought him into conflict with orthodox Marxists, who accused him of weakening the revolutionary essence of socialism. Nevertheless, revisionism became a foundational influence on social democratic movements across Europe. However, Bernstein's revisionism also reflected a broader shift within European socialism from revolutionary expectation to organisational consolidation. The increasing participation of socialist parties in electoral politics and legislative processes compelled a reconsideration of strategy and theory. Bernstein argued that political practice had already moved beyond revolutionary assumptions, and theory needed to acknowledge this transformation. In this context, revisionism functioned not merely as a theoretical correction but as an attempt to align socialist doctrine with the lived experience of mass democratic politics.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Explain Eduard Bernstein's contribution to socialist thought.

Q2) What is meant by revisionism in Bernstein's theory?

12.4 BERNSTEIN'S VIEWS

12.4.1 Bernstein on the "Theory of Breakdown"

One of the central points of disagreement between Bernstein and orthodox Marxism concerned the theory of capitalist breakdown. Classical Marxist theory argued that capitalism contained inherent contradictions that would inevitably lead to its collapse. These contradictions were expected to intensify through economic crises, concentration of capital, and increasing misery of the working class.

Bernstein challenged this deterministic interpretation by drawing attention to the adaptability of capitalism. He argued that capitalism had shown a remarkable capacity to adjust to internal tensions through mechanisms such as credit expansion, state intervention, joint-stock companies, and regulatory frameworks. Rather than intensifying crises, these developments often helped stabilize the economic system. Bernstein therefore rejected the view that capitalism was moving inexorably toward a catastrophic breakdown.

According to Bernstein, the persistence of capitalism meant that socialism could not rely on the expectation of an inevitable collapse. Instead, it required sustained political struggle, democratic participation, and institutional reform. He emphasized that economic crises did not automatically generate revolutionary consciousness and that improvements in workers' living standards often reduced the appeal of radical upheaval. In this sense, Bernstein replaced the theory of inevitable breakdown with a more open and contingent understanding of historical change.

12.4.2 Bernstein on Class Structure and Class War

Orthodox Marxism viewed capitalist society as increasingly polarised between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, leading to an inevitable class war. Bernstein questioned this binary conception of class structure by highlighting the growing complexity of modern industrial societies. He observed the expansion of middle classes in the existing society which includes professionals, clerical workers, and small entrepreneurs, whose existence did not fit neatly into the classical Marxist framework. Therefore, Berstein was seeking for a framework to analysis these new dimensions in the study of political science.

Bernstein also pointed out one of the significant dimensions that the working class itself was internally differentiated. Many variations have been observed here; such as- skills, income levels, and employment conditions created diverse interests within the proletariat. Therefore, according to him,these differences had weakened the assumption of a unified revolutionary class consciousness. As a result, class conflict did not necessarily take the form of an irreconcilable struggle culminating in revolution.

While Bernstein acknowledged the reality of class antagonisms, he shifted his ideas towards institutions and he argued that democratic institutions provided peaceful means for addressing social conflicts. Thus, trade unions, collective bargaining, and parliamentary representation enabled workers to secure gradual improvements in wages, working conditions, and social security. Bernstein thus reinterpreted class struggle as an ongoing process of negotiation and reform rather than a decisive revolutionary confrontation (Heywood, 2017).

12.4.3 Bernstein On Dialectical and Historical Materialism

Bernstein's revisionist intervention was not confined only to the economic aspects of Marxism; it extended significantly to its philosophical foundations, particularly dialectical and historical materialism. Orthodox Marxists regarded historical materialism as a scientific and objective law of social development, according to which economic structure ultimately determined political institutions, legal systems, and ideological forms. Bernstein questioned this rigid interpretation and argued that it imposed an excessive degree of determinism on historical processes, thereby reducing the complexity of social change to a single causal factor. According to Bernstein, social development could not be adequately explained by economic conditions alone. While he did not deny the significance of material factors in shaping society, he rejected the view that they operated in an automatic or mechanical manner. He basically emphasized that political institutions, legal arrangements, ethical norms, and conscious human action exercised a relative autonomy in historical development. In this sense, Bernstein argued that ideas and moral values were not simply passive reflections of economic relations but could themselves influence and modify social realities. That is why, this position marked a clear departure from orthodox Marxism, which tended to subordinate ideological and political factors to the economic base. Bernstein was particularly critical of dialectics as employed within Marxist theory. He regarded dialectical reasoning as abstract and speculative, arguing that it often relied on logical

constructions rather than empirical verification. In his view, dialectics encouraged a tendency to interpret social contradictions as necessarily leading to predetermined outcomes, such as revolution or systemic collapse. Hence, Bernstein considered this approach intellectually problematic, as it discouraged careful observation of actual historical developments and replaced analysis with theoretical certainty.

In place of dialectical materialism, Bernstein advocated a more empirical and inductive method of social analysis. He argued that socialist theory should be grounded in observable facts, historical experience, and statistical evidence rather than philosophical abstractions. Socialism, for Bernstein, was not the inevitable result of dialectical contradictions within capitalism but a practical and ethical goal that required conscious political effort. By emphasizing empirical investigation, he sought to transform socialism into a flexible and adaptive doctrine capable of responding to changing social conditions. This reinterpretation of historical materialism allowed Bernstein to incorporate democratic and ethical principles into socialist thought. By rejecting economic fatalism, he affirmed the importance of political reform, parliamentary institutions, and moral responsibility in achieving socialist objectives. However, critics have argued that this move weakened the critical and scientific character of Marxism by abandoning its structural analysis of capitalism. Nevertheless, Bernstein's critique of dialectical and historical materialism played a crucial role in reshaping socialism into a reform-oriented and democratic tradition.

12.4.4 Bernstein on the Theory of Surplus Value

The theory of surplus value occupies a central position in Marxist political economy, explaining capitalist exploitation as the extraction of unpaid labour from workers. Bernstein did not entirely reject this concept, but he questioned its explanatory adequacy in advanced capitalist societies. He argued that changes in the organisation of production and the role of the state had modified the nature of exploitation.Bernstein observed that workers increasingly benefited from trade union activity, labour legislation, and social welfare measures. These developments, he argued, mitigated the intensity of exploitation described in classical Marxist theory. Furthermore, the rise of joint-stock companies and managerial control blurred the traditional distinction between capitalists and workers.

Bernstein further questioned the analytical centrality of surplus value by arguing that it failed to capture the changing social relations within modern capitalism. He maintained that the growing role of the state, collective bargaining, and social legislation altered the distribution of income and limited the direct appropriation of surplus by individual capitalists. In this context, surplus value appeared less as an immediate source of visible exploitation and more as a mediated economic process, which, according to Bernstein, required political regulation rather than revolutionary abolition.

For Bernstein, the critique of capitalism should not rest exclusively on the theory of surplus value. He emphasized ethical arguments concerning justice, equality, and social welfare as essential foundations of socialism. By shifting attention from economic determinism to moral and political reform, Bernstein sought to make socialism more compatible with democratic society (Bernstein, 1899/1961).

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q3) How did Bernstein view class structure in capitalist society?

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Q4) Explain Bernstein's interpretation of class struggle.

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Q5) How did Bernstein interpret the theory of surplus value?

.....

Q6) Why did Bernstein emphasize democracy and ethics in socialism?

.....

12.5 ASSESSMENT OF BERNSTEIN'S CONTRIBUTION

Eduard Bernstein's evolutionary socialism represents a significant departure from orthodox Marxism. His emphasis on gradual reform, democracy, and ethical considerations challenged the revolutionary and deterministic elements of classical Marxist theory. Although his ideas were strongly criticised by orthodox Marxists, Bernstein's influence on the development of social democracy is undeniable.

Despite the historical significance of Eduard Bernstein's contribution to socialist thought, his theory of evolutionary socialism has been subjected to sustained criticism within Marxist and socialist traditions. One major criticism is that Bernstein underestimated the structural contradictions of capitalism by overemphasising its capacity for reform and adaptation. By highlighting welfare legislation, trade union gains, and parliamentary democracy, Bernstein tended to treat capitalism as a flexible system capable of continuous improvement, thereby downplaying its inherent tendencies towards inequality, exploitation, and crisis. Critics argue that such an assessment ignored the deeper economic dynamics of capitalism that operate beyond surface-level reforms. Bernstein's rejection of the theory of capitalist breakdown has also been viewed as theoretically problematic. Orthodox Marxists contend that while capitalism may temporarily stabilise itself through reforms and state intervention, these measures do not eliminate its fundamental contradictions. From this perspective, Bernstein's reliance on empirical trends of his time led to an overly optimistic reading of capitalism's long-term trajectory. Therefore, his approach is criticised for replacing historical analysis with immediate observation, weakening the scientific character of socialist theory.

Another important criticism relates to Bernstein's reinterpretation of class struggle. By stressing class cooperation and parliamentary negotiation, Bernstein is said to have diluted the centrality of class conflict in capitalist societies. Critics argue that democratic institutions often function within the framework of bourgeois power and may limit rather than enable transformative change. As a result, evolutionary socialism risks integrating the working class into the existing system instead of challenging its foundations. Furthermore, Bernstein's emphasis on ethical socialism has been criticised for shifting

socialism from a structural critique of capitalism to a moral appeal for reform. While ethical considerations are important, critics argue that moral arguments alone cannot address systemic exploitation. In this sense, Bernstein's revisionism is seen as contributing to the transformation of socialism into social democracy, thereby weakening its revolutionary and transformative potential.

Bernstein's thought contributed to the transformation of socialism from a revolutionary doctrine into a reformist political movement capable of operating within democratic institutions. His work remains relevant for understanding the theoretical foundations of modern democratic socialism and the continuing debate between reform and revolution within socialist thought.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q7) Evaluate the significance of Bernstein's evolutionary socialism.

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12.8 LET US SUM UP

- Eduard Bernstein occupies a crucial position in socialist thought as the chief theorist of evolutionary socialism and revisionism. His ideas emerged in response to the changing social and political realities of late nineteenth-century Europe, where capitalism appeared more stable than Marx had anticipated.
- Bernstein's revisionism was based on the belief that Marxism should not be treated as a closed and infallible doctrine. Instead, he argued that socialist theory must remain open to revision in light of empirical evidence and historical experience. He didn't reject the Marxist approach, but challenged the orthodox Marxism.
- A major contribution of Bernstein was his critique of the Marxist theory of capitalist breakdown. He rejected the idea that capitalism would inevitably collapse under its own contradictions and emphasized its capacity for reform and adaptation.
- Bernstein challenged the orthodox Marxist understanding of class structure by highlighting the growth of the middle classes and internal differentiation within the working class. This, according to him, weakened the assumption of increasing class polarisation.
- In place of revolutionary class war, Bernstein advocated democratic methods such as parliamentary politics, trade union activity, and social legislation. He viewed class struggle as a continuous and regulated process rather than a decisive revolutionary confrontation.
- Bernstein's revisionism extended to the philosophical foundations of Marxism, particularly historical materialism. He criticised its rigid economic determinism and argued that social change could not be explained solely by material factors.
- He emphasized the independent role of political institutions, legal systems, ethical values, and conscious human agency in shaping historical development. For

Bernstein, ideas were not merely reflections of economic structures but active forces in society.

- Bernstein was sceptical of dialectics as a method of social analysis and considered it speculative and abstract. He preferred an empirical and inductive approach grounded in observable social trends and historical data.
- In his treatment of surplus value, Bernstein questioned its centrality as the sole explanation of exploitation under modern capitalism. He argued that state intervention and social reforms had modified the operation of capitalist exploitation.
- Overall, Bernstein's evolutionary socialism transformed socialism into a reform-oriented and democratic tradition. While criticised for diluting Marxism, his ideas laid the intellectual foundation for modern social democracy and continue to influence contemporary socialist thought.

12.9 FURTHER READING

1) Gauba, O. P. (2013). *An introduction to political theory* (4th ed.). New Delhi: Macmillan.
2) Heywood, A. (2017). *Political ideologies: An introduction* (6th ed.). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
3) Kolakowski, L. (1978). *Main currents of Marxism* (Vol. 2). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
4) Vincent, A. (2010). *Modern political ideologies* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell

12.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Eduard Bernstein is regarded as the principal theorist of evolutionary socialism and revisionism. His contribution base on questioning orthodox Marxist assumptions in the light of changing social and political realities of late nineteenth-century Europe. Bernstein argued that socialism should not rely on revolutionary collapse but should develop gradually through democratic institutions. By emphasizing reform, parliamentary politics, and ethical considerations, he transformed socialism into a practical and adaptable doctrine. His ideas laid the intellectual foundation for modern social democracy.

Ans to Q No 2: Revisionism refers to Bernstein's attempt to critically reassess and modify classical Marxist theory. He argued that Marxism should not be treated as a fixed doctrine but should evolve with historical experience. Bernstein questioned deterministic assumptions such as inevitable capitalist collapse and revolutionary class struggle. Instead, he emphasized empirical observation and democratic reform. Revisionism thus represented an effort to align socialist theory with practical political developments rather than abandoning socialism altogether.

Ans to Q No 3: Bernstein questioned the Marxist view that society was increasingly polarised into two hostile classes. He highlighted the growth of the middle classes and internal differentiation within the working class. According to him, these

developments weakened the idea of a unified revolutionary proletariat. Bernstein argued that class identities were more complex and fluid than orthodox Marxism suggested. As a result, class conflict did not always take the form of violent confrontation.

Ans to Q No 4: Bernstein did not deny the existence of class conflict but rejected the idea of inevitable revolutionary class war. He believed that democratic institutions such as trade unions, parliaments, and legal systems provided peaceful means to address class interests. Class struggle, in his view, was a continuous process of negotiation and reform rather than a decisive revolutionary event. This interpretation reflected his broader commitment to democratic and evolutionary socialism.

Ans to Q No 5: Bernstein did not completely reject the theory of surplus value but questioned its centrality in explaining modern capitalism. He argued that state intervention, trade unions, and social legislation had modified the operation of capitalist exploitation. According to him, surplus value alone could not explain changing income distribution and labour conditions. Bernstein emphasized political regulation and reform rather than revolutionary abolition of capitalism.

Ans to Q No 6: Bernstein believed that socialism was not merely an economic outcome but a moral and political project. He emphasized democratic participation, ethical values, and legal reforms as essential means to achieve socialist goals. By rejecting economic determinism, he affirmed the importance of conscious human choice. This emphasis allowed socialism to operate within democratic institutions and broadened its appeal beyond the working class.

Ans to Q No 7: Bernstein's evolutionary socialism marked a significant shift from revolutionary Marxism to reformist social democracy. By advocating gradual change, parliamentary politics, and ethical reform, he reshaped socialist strategy and theory. Although criticised for diluting Marxism, his ideas influenced the development of welfare states and democratic socialism in Europe. Bernstein remains important for understanding the debate between reform and revolution in socialist thought.

12.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Discuss Bernstein's critique of the theory of capitalist breakdown.

Q 2: Examine Bernstein's views on class structure in capitalist society.

Q 3: Analyse Bernstein's criticism of dialectical materialism.

B. Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Critically examine Eduard Bernstein's theory of evolutionary socialism.

Q 2: Discuss Bernstein's revisionist critique of orthodox Marxism.

Q 3: Evaluate the significance of Bernstein's ideas for democratic socialism.

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UNIT 13: FABIANISM

UNIT STRUCTURE

13.1 Learning Objectives
13.2 Introduction
13.3 Meaning and Definition
13.3.1 Important Features of Fabianism
13.4 Henry George: A prominent Source of influence on Fabianism
13.4.1 Theory of Distribution
13.4.2 Single Taxation
13.4.3 Law of Human Progress
13.5 An Estimate of Henry George's Views
13.6 Check Your Progress
13.7 Let us Sum Up
13.8 Further Reading
13.9 Model Questions

13.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- describe the meaning of Fabianism and its features
- discuss the economic and political theories given by Henry George
- explain the influence of Henry George on Fabian thought process
- discuss the various concepts put forward by Henry George like single taxation,etc.

13.2 INTRODUCTION

Fabianism refers to the gradualist, reform-oriented socialist movement that emerged in late19th-century Britain. Instead of advocating revolutionary change, the Fabians believed that social transformation should come through slow, steady, and democratic reform. In this unit, we shall learn about different aspects of Fabianism. The contribution of Henry George towards the evolution of Fabian thought shall also be discussed in this unit.

13.3 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF FABIANISM

Back in history, a prominent socialist movement emerged in the United Kingdom during the 1880s which came to be known as Fabianism. Fabianism is a political ideology that draws its inspiration from socialism and believes in the use of peaceful means to bring about gradual reforms in the society. The advent of Industrialization brought social and economic changes. The Fabians emphasized the role of the State in rational planning and social welfare through which social progress and equality can be achieved. Fabianism stands for slow and deliberate changes in the society rather than violent revolution unlike Marxism.

The term "Fabianism" is named after Quintus Fabius Maximus, who was a Roman General and defeated enemies through gradual and persistent efforts rather than direct

confrontation. His tactics inspired the formation of the Fabian Society in London in 1884 by a group of intellectuals who believed in socialist ideals through gradual reforms rather than revolutionary tactics. The main motto of the Fabian Societyis "To promote greater equality of power, wealth and opportunity; the value of collective action and public service; an accountable, tolerant and active democracy; citizenship, liberty and human rights; sustainable development; and multilateral international cooperation".

Some of the prominent members of the Fabian society who helped in the conceptualization of the of Fabianism as a political ideology are Sidney Webb, Beatrice Webb, George Bernard Shaw, Graham Wallas, Charles Marson, Sydney Oliver, Oliver Lodge, Ramsay Macdonald. The Fabian Society played a direct role in shaping the British Labour party. Powerful leaders like Ramsay Macdonald, Clement Atlee were motivated by the Fabian ideology. Jawaharlal Nehru, Obafemi Awalowa, Lee Kuan Yew are famous world leaders who adopted principles of the Fabian Society in their political ideologies.

13.3.1 Important Features of Fabianism:

- **Gradualism**: This is the most important feature of fabianism as it believes that changes in the society should be brought aboutgradually. Evolution is the core defining trait. Socialism could be achieved through small, incremental steps. Rather than overthrowing the government, it is beneficial to introduce reforms in order to bring change.
- **State intervention**: The growing economic inequality required state intervention which would ensure fairness in economic life. The rise of capitalism left many in poverty which raised inequality and injustice in the society. State action was required to ensure freedom and protect citizens from exploitation. This can be achieved by implementing welfare provisions and gradual reforms.
- **Pursuit of social justice**: Fabianism advocates for social justice focusing on protecting the marginalized sections of society. Basic facilities such as healthcare, education, labour rights, better working conditions were emphasized to uphold social justice and fairness among every members of the society.
- **Allegiance to democratic process:** Fabians supported for the democratic means of government, welfare state and reforms through elected representative. Accountability of the government towards citizen was a defining condition for the Fabians.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) In which year was the Fabian Society established ?

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Q2) Write the names of two prominent proponents of Fabianism

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Q3) Explain Fabianism as a political ideology.

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Q4) Write the important features of Fabianism.

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13.4 HENRY GEORGE: A PROMINENT SOURCE OF INFLUENCE ON FABIANISM

Henry George, an American political economist and social philosopher born in Philadelphia on September 2, 1839 famous for his book *Progress and Poverty* and was immensely popular during the 19th century. There are two most important incidents that made him question the existence of poverty and provide remedy for it. Henry George in his Poverty and Progress revealed one incident about horseback ride, it quotes:

"I asked a passing teamster, for want of something better to say, what land was worth there. He pointed to some cows grazing so far off that they looked like mice, and said, "I don't know exactly, but there is a man over there who will sell some land for a thousand dollars an acre." Like a flash it came over me that there was the reason of advancing poverty with advancing wealth. With the growth of population, land grows in value, and the men who work it must pay more for the privilege".

In his later years, he was constantly struck by the fact that in 1868 he travelled to New York city and witnessed poverty in such a great city with great wealth. Soon he questioned this ongoing phenomenon of rising poverty.

He proposed the idea of single tax which was highly appreciated. His ideas came to be known as *Georgism.* The book is a fundamental text that is influenced in important but limited ways. This book was highly debated and discussed by the Fabians and considered a catalyst for socialist revival in Britain. Henry George's ideas on land reform, tax, theory of distribution helped to refine and sharpen Fabian socialism. He is best known for his idea that to resolve poverty, tax should be introduced on the value of land and not what is built on that. The core idea adopted by Fabians was George's proposition that the value of land increases due to community growth, public infrastructure and not due to owners' effort. This concept aligned with the fabian thought and thus they believe that socially created wealth should be socially owned. Although Fabian thought heavily aligns with George's proposition but in a limited way. The early proponents of Fabianism such as George Bernard Shaw, Sidney Webb admired George's analysis of land reform and taxation but also critiqued the concept of Single Tax. In the following part, a detailed understanding of the Henry George theory on Single tax and distribution theory would further help in explaining fabianism.

13.4.1 Theory of Distribution

This theory is primarily detailed in Henry George's book *Progress* and *Poverty*. He tried to explain the ongoing poverty amidst the technological and industrial progress of his times. George redefined the relationship between factors of production-

Land, Labour, and Capital are the three factors of production. Land is vital to the production and comes prior to labour and capital. According to George, those who own land earn money by allowing others to use it and have no direct involvement in production of goods. The total product includes rent, wages and interest which are mutually dependent.

George applied Ricardo's law of Rent, especially the concept of 'diminishing return' and 'margin of productivity' to land and explained the existence of poverty amidst progress. In ancient times, land was commonly accessed by everyone but due to technological progress and population growth, societal change led to the concept of private property. As the best land was already taken, workers were pushed to cultivate or work on less productive land. This increased the value and rent of superior land, while wages and interest declined.

Thus, poverty increases even if there is technological progress due to two main reasons, new innovations do not increase the wages of the laborers even though it is productive rather makes land more valuable and the owner of land receives high rent. Since land becomes more valuable, people hold land and expect value to increase for sale which artificially pushes the land rent.

13.4.2 Single Taxation

Henry George came up with the solution to the above-mentioned problem of increasing rent of the land and capital gain by the owners of land without contributing to the production. Land labour and capital are means of producing wealth. Taxation is a way by which the government collects a percentage of accumulated wealth. How much the government collects and spends constitutes the economic system. The smooth working of the economic system requires taxation of wealth.

In the book Poverty and Progress, George stated a few moral questions and argued that the consequences of economic policies without moral questions would have terrible outcomes. He deconstructed the current system of taxation and offered a new strategy. Monopolistic control over natural resources continued the existence of poverty. Since poverty is due to low wages and unemployment, therefore if wages are raised and employment provided, poverty can be reduced. In order to deal with this situation, Henry George provided the solution in terms of Single Taxation.

In economics, the concept of Single taxation was popularized by Henry George. In simple terms it means collecting revenue primarily from a single tax on the value of land. This single taxation would not include any improvements on land such as infrastructures, production of any goods. He advocated for land as common property and eliminating taxes from labour and capital. This would ultimately help in alleviating poverty, make land a communal resource and restore equality in society.

13.4.3 Law of Human Progress

The law of Human progress is one of the core ideas of Henry George from his book *Poverty and Progress.* George explained Human progress as 'Association in Equality'. According to George, human society progresses due to mental power and this power is available when two conditions are fulfilled. The two conditions are

1) Association (Physical Condition)
2) Equality (Moral Condition)

Cooperation and division of labour are fundamental in human progress, humanity advances due to fulfillment of these two essential conditions. Mental power is the basic condition for human progress. When people come together and cooperate, mental power is used to develop technology which further helps the progress of society. The mental power is devoted to expansion of knowledge, societal progress and better social conditions. Cooperation increases mental power and thus association of people helps in technological advancement and human progress.

Another condition is Equality. Conflict is part of every society and this condition makes society unequal leading to wastage of mental power in two ways. The oppressed group simply use their energy in surviving, while the oppressors spend their energy in maintaining their power and keeping control over the oppressed. Henry George quoted "Association frees mental power... and equality, or justice... prevents the dissipation of this power in fruitless struggles."

Human progress is a dynamic phenomenon in which societies advances, develops due to technological, scientific interventions, and productivity increases. He explained why societies become richer at the same time many people remain poor. This social and economic principle was much celebrated in his time. The industrial revolution brought immense changes in first world countries especially the United Kingdom and United States of America. Manufacturing increased rapidly, income increased and the lives of the people were also upgraded. However, wealth was not equally distributed and thus few people got richer while others survived on minimum wages. The gap between rich and poor increased, cities were grappled with poverty amidst progress. Henry George used this law to explain why civilization failed. As the civilization expanded, it inherited inequality. Land became private property, technological advancement led to power accumulation in the hands of owners of land. This gave rise to inequality in society. This inequality limited the mental power and the formation of association which ultimately led to stagnation and poverty. Thus, George stated that land should be owned by the community and accessed by all rather than owned by any individual. This can be ensured through land tax or single taxation as mentioned earlier. It is necessary to ensure association and equality for civilizational growth.

13.4.4 An Estimate of Henry George's Views

Henry George, a prominent political economist whose writings were critically acclaimed throughout history. His book 'Poverty and Progress' fundamentally questioned

the problem of poverty even when the nation grows and becomes technologically advanced. This curiosity led him to find possible answers and solutions to it. His ideas were immensely popular and influenced various ideologies and thought processes. He identified land ownership and monopoly over it as a defining factor that caused poverty. The owners of land, without any direct contribution, acquired a large share of rent which raised income inequality giving rise to poverty. His remedy to it was land tax which will be equally shared by the members of the society.

The followers of Fabianism were highly influenced by George's land reform and expanded on his ideas. Fabians believed that not only land rent belonged to the community but also capital should eventually be brought under state control and not individual ownership. The single taxation theory was expanded by Fabians to include progressive income taxes and social ownership. The Role of State was extended societal welfare and industrial norms and not just limited to collection of land tax. The supporters of Fabianism also advocated for education and research to add scientific rigour to their reformist ideas.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q5) What are the conditions of human progress according to George Henry.

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Q6) How did Henry George influence the Fabian thought process?

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……

Q7) Explain the concept of Single taxation.

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2 13.5 LET US SUM UP

- The term "Fabianism" is named after Quintus Fabius Maximus, who was a Roman General and defeated enemies through gradual and persistent efforts rather than direct confrontation. His tactics inspired the formation of the Fabian Society in London in 1884 by a group of intellectuals who believed in socialist ideals through gradual reforms rather than revolutionary tactics.
- Fabianism is a political ideology that is inspired from socialism and use of peaceful means to bring gradual reforms in the society. The Fabians emphasized the role of the State in rational planning and social organization through which social progress and equality can be achieved.
- Some of the important proponents of Fabianism who helped in conceptualization of the idea as a political theory are Sidney Webb, Beatrice Webb, George Bernard Shaw, Graham Wallas, Charles Marson, Sydney Oliver, Oliver Lodge, Ramsay Macdonald. They were also active members of Fabian Society.

- The core features of Fabianism are gradualism instead of revolutionary changes, state intervention for overall welfare, advocacy of social justice and fairness, commitment towards democratic process.
- Henry George's ideas had a huge influence on the principles of Fabianism. The book 'Poverty and Progress' is a fundamental text that is influenced in important but limited ways. This book was highly debated and discussed by the Fabians and considered a catalyst for socialist revival in Britain. He is best known for his idea that to resolve poverty, tax should be introduced on the value of land and not what is built on that.
- The core idea adopted by Fabians was George's proposition that the value of land increases due to community growth, public infrastructure and not due to owners' effort. This concept aligned with the fabian thought and thus they believe that socially created wealth should be socially owned.
- The early proponents of Fabianism such as George Bernard Shaw, Sidney Webb admired George's analysis of land reform and taxation but also critiqued the concept of Single Tax. Fabians believed that not only land rent belonged to the community but also capital should eventually be brought under state control and not individual ownership.
- The single taxation theory was expanded by Fabians to include progressive income taxes and social ownership. The Role of State was extended societal welfare and industrial norms and not just limited to collection of land tax.

13.6 FURTHER READING

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13.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: The advent of Industrialization brought social and economic changes. The standards of living had increased at the same time widespread poverty and inequality was witnessed. This widespread poverty and inequality in the society, workers were exploited and had poor living conditions. This created dissatisfaction towards the laissez faire government which ultimately led to the emergence of Fabian society. This is an important political theory that is associated with Fabian Society established by a group of intellectuals who believed in socialist ideals through gradual reforms rather than revolutionary tactics.

Ans to Q No 2: The prominent proponents of Fabianism are Sidney Webb, Beatrice Webb, George Bernard Shaw, Graham Wallas, Charles Marson, Sydney Oliver, Oliver Lodge, Ramsay Macdonald.

Ans to Q No 3: Fabianism is a political ideology that is inspired from socialism and use of peaceful means to bring gradual reforms in the society. The Fabians emphasized the role of the State in rational planning and social organization through which social progress and equality can be achieved. It is a form of socialism which seeks to form a fairer, justiciable and equal society.

Ans to Q No 4: Henry George found out that poverty increases even if there is technological progress due to two main reasons, new innovations do not increase the wages of the laborers even though it is productive rather makes land more valuable and the owner of land receives high rent. Since land becomes more valuable, people hold land and expect value to increase for sale which artificially pushes the land rent. Henry George came up with the solution to the above-mentioned problem of increasing rent of the land and capital gain by the owners of land without contributing to the production. Land labour and capital are means of producing wealth. Taxation is a way by which the government collects a percentage of accumulated wealth.

Ans to Q No 5: There are two conditions in human progress-

a) Association (Physical Condition)

b) Equality (Moral Condition)

Ans to Q No 6: Henry George was a prominent political economist whose writings were critically acclaimed throughout history. His book 'Poverty and Progress' fundamentally questioned the problem of poverty even when the nation grows and becomes technologically advanced. This curiosity led him to find possible answers and solutions to it. His ideas were immensely popular and influenced various ideologies and thought processes. The followers of Fabianism were highly influenced by George's land reform and expanded on his ideas. Fabians believed that not only land rent belonged to the community but also capital should eventually be brought under state control and not individual ownership. The single taxation theory was expanded by Fabians to include progressive income taxes and social ownership. The Role of State was extended societal welfare and industrial norms and not just limited to collection of land tax. The supporters of Fabianism also advocated for education and research to add scientific rigour to their reformist ideas.

Ans to Q No 7: In economics, the concept of Single taxation was popularized by Henry George. In simple terms it means collecting revenue primarily from a single tax on the value of land. This single taxation would not include any improvements on land such as infrastructures, production of any goods. He advocated for land as common property and eliminating taxes from labour and capital. This would ultimately help in alleviating poverty, make land a communal resource and restore equality in society. In the book Poverty and Progress, George stated few moral questions and argued that the consequences of economic policies without moral questions would have

terrible outcomes. He deconstructed the current system of taxation and offered a new strategy. Monopolistic control over natural resources continued the existence of poverty. Since poverty is due to low wages and unemployment, so if wages are raised and employment provided, poverty can be reduced. In order to deal with this situation, Henry George provided the solution in terms of Single Taxation.

M 13.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Write a short note on the features of Fabianism.

Q 2: Write about the concept of Single Taxation as given by Henry George?

B. Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words

Q 1: Explain the meaning of Fabianism. Discuss the features of Fabianism.

Q 2: Write about Henry George as a prominent source of influence on Fabianism.

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UNIT 14: ANARCHISM

UNIT STRUCTURE

14.1 Learning Objectives
14.2 Meaning and Definition of Anarchism
  14.2.1 Core Characteristics of Anarchism
  14.2.2 Features of Anarchist Society
14.3 Peter Kropotkin and Joseph Proudhon
  14.4.1 Peter Kropotkin: Early Life and Contributions
  14.4.2 Joseph Proudhon : Early Life and Contributions (Property as Theft)
14.6 Let Us Sum Up
14.7 Further Reading
14.8 Answers to Check Your Progress
14.9 Model Questions

14.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- describe the meaning of anarchism
- explain the features of anarchism
- discuss the characteristics of an anarchist society
- explainthe contributions of Peter Kropotkin and Joseph Proudhon

14.2 MEANING AND DEFINITION OF AN ANARCHISM

Anarchism is a philosophy and political ideology that believes that all forms of government authority are unnecessary and undesirable for any society. Anarchists seek to abolish any form of authority and replace of state with stateless societies. Emma Goldman, in her book *Anarchism: What it Really Stands for* defines the term anarchism as “The philosophy of a new social order based on liberty unrestricted by man-madelaw ; the theory that all forms of government rest on violence and are therefore wrong and harmful as well as unnecessary”.

Most celebrated meaning of Anarchism is provided by Peter Kropotkin, it says, “A principle or theory of life and conduct under which society is conceived without government-harmony in such a society being obtained, not by submission to law, or by obedience to any authority, but by free agreements between the various groups, territorial and professional, freely constituted for the sake of production and consumption as also for the satisfaction of the infinite variety of needs and aspirations of a civilised being”. For much of history, the term ‘Anarchism’ was derogatory rather than the name of any movement or ideology, but towards the end of the 18th century, William Godwin began to define anarchism as an ideology for the first time. In 1793, Godwin published ‘An Inquiry Concerning Political Justice’ , considered the first modern anarchist text. He is known as the Father of Philosophical Anarchism. He provided the theoretical and philosophical basis of the anti-authoritarian principle. In his book, he argued that the government is the corrupting force

and thus it is unnecessary. As the public understanding grows, so does the rise in public morality and their way of cooperation that will ultimately play a central role in personal freedom. His idea of anarchism is both individual and socially oriented.

Anarchists conceive a society that is based on mutual relations among its members and is regulated by mutual agreements and not by any law or authority. Anarchists believe in mutual assistance and voluntary association among the members of society rather than laws, regulations, or any kind of authority. In simple terms, anarchism means 'absence of government'. There have been prominent proponents of anarchism, such as William Godwin, Mikhail Bakunin, Pierre Joseph Proudhon, Max Stirner, Peter Kropotkin. Related to Anarchism, there are a few misconceptions, some of which are, it is considered that anarchism means chaos, as they are anti-statist and anti-hierarchical, but anarchists argue that it is the hierarchy that causes chaos, and cooperation creates order. Anarchist society is about cooperation and not chaos.

The word Anarchy originates in ancient Greece, *'anarkhia'* meaning 'without a ruler'. Various anarchist schools of thought emerged, of which two are more important: Individualist anarchism and social anarchism. Under these two schools, various types of anarchism can be found, such as

1) Social Anarchism: Anarcho-syndicalism, Anarcho-communism, Collectivist anarchism.

2) Individualist Anarchism: Anarcho-Capitalism, Egoism.

14.2.1 Core Characteristics of Anarchism

a) **Opposition to the State:** This is the fundamental feature of Anarchism across different varieties or schools of thought. Rejection of the State is the most important characteristic of anarchism. Anarchists believe that the State is inherently oppressive and propagates inequality in society, leading to unfreedom of its members. Anarchists believe that power inherently corrupts and that anyone who exercises power will be an oppressor. Any form of rule is morally illegitimate, be it government or any law, because nobody has a natural right to rule over others.

b) **Anti-hierarchical:** Anarchism advocates not just the replacement of the State but also any form of authority or system that has power over others. It seeks to dismantle economic, social, and political hierarchies. Classical anarchists were ardent critics of capitalism because they viewed capitalism as a system that creates wage slavery, where the owners of the means of production hold coercive power.

c) **Individual liberty:** Anarchism deeply emphasizes individual freedom and autonomy. It supports both individual liberty and societal responsibility as well as collective decision-making. According to anarchists, the individual is the sole determinant of everything, and no intervention by the outside is desired in their affairs.

d) **Voluntary Association:** Cooperation should be among the members of society based on shared goals and needs. Mutual agreement among its members voluntarily helps in the smooth functioning of the societies without coercive rule.

e) **Direct decision-making:** Anarchism advocates for people to take part in decision-making directly instead of a representative form of government. Decisions are made by people through consensus, debate, and discussion, in assemblies for better accountability.

14.2.2 Features of Anarchist Society

Anarchism deeply emphasizes the formation of a society based on equality, freedom, mutual aid, and cooperation. The order in society is confirmed, not based on coercion, but cooperation of every individual in the society. Since anarchism includes core features such as anti-statism, anti-hierarchy, voluntary association, direct action, and self-management, an anarchist society mirrors such features in its formation of society. Some of the features are:

1) **Absence of hierarchy:** The core determining trait of an anarchist society is the rejection of all forms of authority. Rather, individual citizens take part in decision-making.

2) **Voluntary Association:** All economic and social decisions are taken through cooperation and consent. Mutual needs and desires are the basis of the formation of an association rather than force or coercion.

3) **Direct Action and Self-Management:** Communities based on mutual needs manage their own affairs, including social, economic, and political spheres. These associations were self-sufficient and can manage without outside interference.

4) **Mutual aid:** Communities support each other through shared resources, be it labour, resources, or knowledge; everything is carried out in cooperation. However, resources need to be utilized and maintained by everyone. Social responsibility lies with every member of society.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1) Define Anarchism.

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Q2) What are the important features of Anarchism?

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Q3) Mention the names of two important proponents of Anarchism?

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Q4) What are the two main schools of thought in Anarchism?

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14.3 PETER KROPOTKIN AND JOSEPH PROUDHON

14.3.1 Peter Kropotkin

- **Early Life and Works**

  One of the most famous anarchists of all time, Peter Kropotkin, was born in Russia in 1842. He was a Russian revolutionary and geographer who started his career in geographic exploration. Born into an aristocratic family, Kropotkin renounced his noble status and dedicated his life to social justice. He published various books out of which the most influential works include*The Conquest of Bread (1892), Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution (1902).*Through his geographical expeditions and his observations of animal life, he developed the idea that cooperation rather than competition plays a crucial role in evolution. He spent around 40 years in exile after escaping a Russian prison in 1876. He returned to Russia in 1917 after the Bolshevik Revolution. His famous writings include *In Russian and French Prisons* (1887), *The Conquest of Bread* (1892), *Fields, Factories and Workshops* (1899), *Memoirs of a Revolutionist* (1899), *Mutual Aid* (1902), *Russian Literature* (1905), and *The Great French Revolution 1789–1793* (1909).

- **Important contributions**

  Kropotkin provided scientific evidence for anarchism. In the book *Mutual Aid*, he challenged Darwin's concept of the Survival of the Fittest and argued that cooperation is the defining determinant trait in the evolution of species. Sociability is a dominant feature of human society, just like the animal world. Voluntary cooperation had been part of primitive societies as well as modern too, such as trade unions, non-governmental organizations, and learned associations. His vision was a decentralized society organized into voluntary communes. In his book 'The Conquest of the Bread,' Kropotkin argues that society must guarantee the right to life for everyone, regardless of their status, ability, or societal role. He highlights the necessity of individual freedom as well as cooperation among the members of society. The book criticizes feudalism and capitalism because, as economic systems, they perpetuated poverty, inequality, and injustice.

  Kropotkin had a communist ideal and thus advocated for the means of production to be owned cooperatively. Kropotkin insisted on abolishing both State and private property. He also criticized the Bolshevik Revolution, as he was against centralized authority. Voluntary association and mutual aid incentivize humans more; thus, he was against any outside rule over humans.

14.3.2 Joseph Proudhon: Early Life and Contributions (Property as Theft)

- **Early Life and Works**

  Proudhon was a French political thinker and one of the most influential anarchists. He was born in Besancon, France, on 15 January 1809. He was the first person to

declare himself as 'Anarchist'. Some of the most widely read books by Proudhon are *General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century (1851), On Justice in the Revolution and in the Church (1858), The Principle of Federation (1863).* He is best known for the idea 'Property as theft' which was expressed in his book *What is Property? An inquiry into the Principle of Right and of Government* published in 1840.

- **Important Contributions: Property as Theft**

  Like other anarchists, Proudhon also criticised the state. The famous excerpt from Proudhon's book *General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century (1851)* - *"*To be GOVERNED is to be watched, inspected, spied upon, directed, law-driven, numbered, regulated, enrolled, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, checked, estimated, valued, censured, commanded, by creatures who have neither the right nor the wisdom nor the virtue to do so……..*"*

  This excerpt aptly described the idea of the State as being a parasite that destroys individual freedom. Violence, exploitation, and surveillance are the traits of any authority, and they are all done in the name of justice and morality. Instead of being governed from the top, the society should function through mutual agreement and voluntary association among the individuals of society. His core philosophy was Mutualism which was designed as a middle path between the capitalist economic system and state-owned communism.

  To understand the famous statement 'Property is theft', it is necessary to understand what Proudhan meant by property. To understand his theory of property, it is important to start with his ideas on justice. According to Proudhan, justice is the defining character that governs society.

  Every individual exists within a social world where life functions through certain rules and norms. These rules guide everyday activities such as movement, exchange, and interaction.

  One such rule concerns property—the idea that individuals can own things that exclusively belong to them. Here, Proudhon raises the question of what property actually consists of. According to him, property and individual possession are two different things.

  Property, in Proudhon's sense, refers to unearned income or ownership of productive assets such as land, factories, and infrastructure. Owners of capital often do not directly contribute to the production of goods and services but charge others—such as workers—who actually use the land and labour to produce. Because of this, Proudhon famously described property as theft.

  However, he also stated that property could represent freedom. Property is theft when an individual owns productive assets merely because he holds the legal title to them—for example, land and the infrastructure built on it. Even if the owner does not contribute to production, he still receives rent or profit. This form of property ownership, according to Proudhon, leads to the exploitation and enslavement of the propertyless majority.Through the statement "Property is theft," Proudhon sought to challenge this

system of ownership. Nevertheless, he did not advocate collective ownership of all property. Rather, he supported the right of individuals to own their own houses and the tools they use for their work.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q5) Mention important works of Peter Kropotkin and Joseph Proudhon.

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Q6) Explain the concept of 'Property as theft'.

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Q7) Explain the ideas of Peter Kropotkin regarding the State in detail.

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14.4 LET US SUM UP

- Anarchism is a philosophy and political ideology that believes that all forms of government authority are unnecessary and undesirable for any society. Anarchists seek to abolish any form of authority and replace of state with stateless societies.
- In 1793, Godwin published 'An Inquiry Concerning Political Justice', considered the first modern anarchist text. He is known as the Father of Philosophical Anarchism. He provided the theoretical and philosophical basis of the anti-authoritarian principle. There have been prominent proponents of anarchism, such as William Godwin, Mikhail Bakunin, Pierre Joseph Proudhon, Max Stirner, and Peter Kropotkin.
- The core characteristics of anarchism are anti-statism, anti-hierarchy, advocacy of individual liberty, autonomy, and voluntary association. Anarchism deeply emphasizes the formation of a society based on equality, freedom, mutual aid, and cooperation. The order in society is confirmed, not based on coercion, but cooperation of every individual in the society.
- One of the most influential anarchists was Peter Kropotkin, who was born in Russia in 1842. He was a Russian revolutionary and geographer who started his career in geographic exploration. Born into an aristocratic family, renounced his heritage and dedicated his life to social justice. He published various books out of which the most influential works include *'The Conquest of Bread', 'Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution' (1902).*
- Kropotkin had a communist ideal and thus advocated for the means of production to be owned cooperatively. Kropotkin insisted on abolishing both State and private property. Hehighlights the necessity of individual freedom as well as cooperation among the members of society.
- Proudhon was a French political thinker and one of the most influential anarchists. was born in Besancon, France, on 15 January 1809. He was the first person to declare

himself an anarchist. His core philosophy was Mutualism which was designed as a middle path between the capitalist economic system and state-owned communism.

14.5 FURTHER READING

1) Sabine, G. H., & Thorson, T. L. (1973). *A History of Political Theory* (4th ed.). Oxford & IBH.

2) Sharma, U., & Sharma, S. K. (2018). *Western Political Thought*. Atlantic Publishers.

3) Singh, J. P. (2015). *History of Political Thought*. Pearson India.

4) Gauba, O. P. (2017). *An Introduction to Political Theory* (6th ed.).5) Macmillan India.

5) Western Political Thought : OP Gauba, Mayur Paperback, 2017

14.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Anarchism is a philosophy and political ideology that believes that all forms of government authority are unnecessary and undesirable for any society. Anarchists seek to abolish any form of authority and replace of state with stateless societies. Anarchism deeply emphasizes the formation of a society based on equality, freedom, mutual aid, and cooperation. The order in society is confirmed, not based on coercion, but cooperation of every individual in the society.

Ans to Q No 2: The important features of anarchism are anti-statism, anti-hierarchy, advocacy of individual liberty, autonomy, and voluntary association. Anarchism deeply emphasizes the formation of a society based on equality, freedom, mutual aid, and cooperation.

Ans to Q No 3: The important proponents of anarchism are William Godwin, Mikhail Bakunin, Pierre Joseph Proudhon, Max Stirner, Peter Kropotkin.

Ans to Q No 4: Various anarchist schools of thought emerged, of which two are more important: Individualist anarchism and social anarchism

Ans to Q No 5: Important books written by Peter Kropotkin are *In Russian and French Prisons* (1887), *The Conquest of Bread* (1892), *Fields, Factories and Workshops* (1899), *Memoirs of a Revolutionist* (1899), *Mutual Aid* (1902), *Russian Literature* (1905), and *The Great French Revolution 1789–1793* (1909)

Important books by Joseph Proudhon are *General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century (1851), On Justice in the Revolution and in the Church (1858), The Principle of Federation (1863).*

Ans to Q No 6: According to Prodhoun, property refers to unearned stuff or income, such as land, factories, infrastructure, or, let's say, any improvements over the land. Capital owners or capital actually don't contribute to the production of goods and services but charge others, like workers, who use the land and work. He considers property as theft and property as freedom as well. It is theft when one person owns the things just because they hold the legal title of owner of property, for example, land and the infrastructure built on it. The owner may not contribute to building the infrastructure

or any production on that land, but still gets the rent. This form of property owning creates enslavement of the majority propertyless class. Proudhon seeks to challenge through his statement, 'Property is theft.'

Ans to Q No 7: Kropotkin provided scientific evidence for anarchism. In the book *Mutual Aid*, he challenged Darwin's concept of the Survival of the Fittest and argued that cooperation is the defining determinant trait in the evolution of species. Sociability is a dominant feature of human society, just like the animal world. Voluntary cooperation had been part of primitive societies as well as modern too, such as trade unions, non-governmental organizations, and learned associations. He highlights the necessity of individual freedom as well as cooperation among the members of society. Kropotkin had a communist ideal and thus advocated for the means of production to be owned cooperatively. Kropotkin insisted on abolishing both State and private property.

14.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Write a short note on Anarchism and its features

Q 2: Explain the concept of property as theft propounded by Joseph Proudhon.

B) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Describe in detail the important contributions of Peter Kropotkin towards development of anarchist thought.

Q 2: How did Joseph Proudhon conceptualize the meaning of Property.

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2) Asirvatham, E. & Mishra, K. K. (1990): *Political Theory*. New Delhi: S. Chand & Company Ltd.
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1) Approximately how many hours did you spend for studying the units in the course? ☐☐☐

2) Please give your opinions (by ✓ mark) to the following items based on your reading of the block:

Sl. No.	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I)	The SLMs of the course fulfil the learning objectives set out in the beginning of each unit					
II)	The units of the SLM could satisfy my academic needs and expectations					
III)	The Unit writers have excellent knowledge about the course contents					
IV)	Language and contents of the units were presented at a level which I could readily understand					
V)	Ample opportunity for participation in the activities provided in the units					
VI)	Used enough Illustrations (Diagrams, tables etc.) for conceptual clarity					
VII)	Quality of content is engaging, relevant, and up-to-date					
VIII)	The self check questions are very helpful					
IX)	The Possible/model questions and the answers to check my progress have benefited me a lot					

Additional Comments: *(Please feel free to provide your open comments)*

1) Which aspects of the SLM, according to you, worked well?

.....

.....

2) What sort of changes/improvements do you feel KKHSOU could implement to improve the overall quality of the SLM?

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.