PGPS S1 02

Western Political Thought

SEMESTER - I

POLITICAL SCIENCE

BLOCK - 1

KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY

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MASTER OF ARTS
POLITICAL SCIENCE
CONTENTS

Pages

Unit 1: Plato's Theory of Justice and Ideal State — **7 - 23**

Plato's Theory of Justice: Influences on Plato's philosophy, Plato's concept of justice, Plato's Justice- A critical Analysis; Ideal State of Plato, Criticisms of Plato's Ideal State

Unit 2 : Aristotle- Citizenship and Revolution — **24 - 38**

Aristotle's views on Citizenship: Non-Essential Qualifications of Citizenship, Essential Qualifications of Citizenship, Virtues of a Citizen, Classes excluded from Citizenship , Criticisms of Aristotle's views on Citizenship; Aristotle's views on Revolution, Causes of Revolution

Unit 3 : Church and the State- St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine — **39 - 52**

Views of St. Augustine (354-430 A.D.), St. Augustine's conception of Two Cities, St. Augustine's views on State and Church, St. Augustine's views on Peace and Justice; Views of St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274): St. Thomas Aquinas views on State, St. Thomas Aquinas' Classification of Government and views on Monarchy, St. Thomas Aquinas' views on Sovereignty and Law, St. Thomas Aquinas' views on the Church and the State

Unit 4 : Political Theory of Niccolo Machiavelli — **53 - 66**

Machiavelli: A Child of his time and A Child of Renaissance; Methodology; Machiavelli on Reason of State and Power Politics; On Human Nature; On Dual Standards of Morality; Advice to the Prince; On Republicanism; Critical Appreciation

Unit 5 : Individualism and Liberalism- Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau — **67 - 80**

Thomas Hobbes; John Locke; Jean Jacques Rousseau; Individualism and Liberalism

Unit 6 : Utilitarianism- Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill — **81 - 93**

Jeremy Bentham; Bentham's Utilitarianism; J.S. Mill; Mills' Utilitarianism

Unit 7 : English Idealism- T.H. Green — **94 - 113**

T .H. Green and English Idealism; Green on State; Green on Freedom and Rights: Green's views on Freedom, Green's views on Rights; Green on War ; Other key concepts of Green: Punishment, Property, Natural Law, Society; An Estimate of Green's views

COURSE INTRODUCTION

This is the second course of the MA First Semester Programme of KKHSOU in Political Science. The course is titled “Western Political Thought”. It is designed to help the learners to have an understanding of the philosophy and thought of some of the most prominant political thinkers from the western hemisphere , starting from the calssical age to the modern period. The thought and philosophy of these eminent thinkers and writers have contributed immensely to the development of the enitre range of western political thought at various stages of history. Accordingly, the course begins by discussing the views and ideas of Plato, one of the most prominent philosophers belonging to ancient Greece. Plato’s literary works like “The Republic”, where he explores the nature and ingredients of an Ideal State have had an unparalled influence on the course of development of political thought. The course also explores the views of Aristotle, the most prominent disciple of Plato, in terms of Aristotle’s views on Citizenship and Revolution. The views of Plato and Aristotle constitute the very bedrock of western philosophical tradition. The course then goes on to discuss medieval political thought. During the medieval period, political thought was greatly influenced by theological traditions. Accordingly, the course discusses the views of two prominent Christian thinkers namely St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine. The course then discusses the views of Niccolo Machiavelli, who is heralded for his ideas on statecraft. The course discusses Machieavelli’s views on Human Nature and his advice to the Prince. Significantly, the course delves into the ideas and practices governing collective life in any society in the form of the concepts of individualism and liberalism and discusses the views of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. A fundamental principle of western political thought is that of utilitarianism whereby the aim is to secure the greatest good of the greatest number. The course therefore deals with the principle of Utilitarianism as expressed in the political philosophy of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. The course also discusses the views of the idealist thinker, T.H.Green who laid stress on a humanistic approach and talked about such issues as rights and freedoms. The post industrialization period in Eastern Europe and Great Britain marked the beginning of a new set of ideas calling for moral reformation in the form of Utopian Socialism. The Course therefore discusses the concept of Utopian Socialism and the views of Robert Owen with regard to the same. The course then goes on to discuss the views of one of the most influential thinkers of the modern age , namely, Karl Marx in terms of his theory of historical materialism and class struggle.Another important theory in the realm of western political thought is that of Anarchism. Accordingly, the course discusses the theory of Anarchism and the views of two prominent exponents

of anarchism, namely, Joseph Proudhon and Peter Kropotkin. The Course also discusses some other important ideologies and concepts in the realm of western politcal thought , namely, Fascism, New Leftism, Evolutionary Socialism with reference to Eduard Bernstein and Fabianism with reference to Henry Goeoge. The course finally ends with a discussion on the views of two leading thinkers of the contemporary period, namely, Michel Foucault and Noam Chomsky.

The course “Western Political Thought ” is divided into two blocks, (Block 1) and (Block 2). While Block 1 consists of seven units (units 1-7), Block 2 consists of eight units (units 8-15).

The course “ Western Political Thought ” is divided into two blocks, (Block 1) and (Block 2). While Block 1 consists of seven units (units 1-7), Block 2 consists of eight units (units 8-15).

INTRODUCTION TO BLOCK 1

This is the first block of the second course titled “Western Political Thought” of the MA First Semester Programme in Political Science of KKHSOU. The block contains seven units (units 1-7).

The first unit discusses Plato’s Theory of Justice and Ideal State. The second unit discusses Aristotle- Citizenship and Revolution. The third unit discusses the views of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine. The fourth unit discusses the political theory of Niccolo Machiavelli. The fifth unit discusses Individualism and Liberalism with reference to Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. The sixth unit discusses utilitarianism with reference to Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. The seventh unit discusses English Idealism with reference to T.H. Green.

While going through the units of the course, you will find that each unit is further divided into certain sections and sub-sections, wherever necessary, for your better understanding. You will notice some alongside boxes while going through a unit , which have been included to help you know some of the difficult, unseen terms. Besides, in order to give you additional information on certain relevant topics, you will find a category called “LET US KNOW” after the sections in each unit. Another category that has been included at the end of each section of a particular unit is “CHECK YOUR PROGRESS”. The purpose of this category is to help you to asses for yourself as to how thoroughly you have understood a particular section. It will be better if you answer the questions put in these boxes immediately after you go through the sections of the units and then match your answers with “ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS” given at the end of each unit. Furthermore, a set of sample questions has been included under the category called “POSSIBLE QUESTIONS” to give you a hint of the pattern of questions you are likely to get in the examination.

UNIT 1 : PLATO'S THEORY OF JUSTICE AND IDEAL STATE

UNIT STRUCTURE

1.1. Learning objectives

1.2. Introduction

1.3. Plato's theory of Justice

- 1.3.1 Influences on Plato's philosophy
- 1.3.2 Plato's Theory of justice
- 1.3.3 Basic Principles of Plato's Justice
- 1.3.4 Plato's justice - A critical Analysis

1.4. Ideal state of Plato

- 1.4.1 Criticisms of Plato's Ideal state

1.5. Let Us Sum Up.

1.6. Further Reading

1.7. Answers to Check Your Progress

1.8 Possible Questions.

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- discuss the philosophy of Plato
- explain political system that prevailed in Athens
- explain the dynamism in Plato's thinking
- discuss the utopian element of Plato's philosophy
- explain the impact of Plato on political thought and political ideologies in the subsequent centuries

1.2. INTRODUCTION

Plato, one of the greatest philosophers produced by ancient Greece was born in a noble Athenian family in Athens in 427 B.C. He was the disciple

of Socrates and the teacher of Aristotle. Being a disciple of Socrates he always carried with him the basic tenet of Socratic thought- "Virtue is knowledge". The whole political philosophy of Plato was built upon this basic tenet "Virtue is knowledge." Socrates, the teacher of Plato, probably had the greatest influence upon him, so much so that, Plato not only carried with him the proposition 'Virtue is knowledge,' but also the other two tenets of Socrates viz., the theory of reality and the theory of knowledge. However, Plato did not blindly follow what Socrates propagated. Rather he unfolded the ideas of Socrates and gave his own interpretations.

1.3 PLATO'S THEORY OF JUSTICE

The political ideas of Plato could be found in his famous works, namely, "The Republic" (386 B.C.), "The Statesman" (360) and "The Laws" (347 B.C.). Besides these three land mark works, Plato also has to his credit books like the "Dialogues" containing the Apology of Socrates, Crito, Protagoras and Phaedo.. This great Greek philosopher died in 348BC.

1.3.1 Influences on Plato's philosophy

As mentioned above, Plato was greatly influenced by his teacher and mentor Socrates. Besides Socrates the writing of Pythagoras, Parmenides, and Heraclitus also had an influence in Plato's philosophy and thought. From Pythagoras he picked up the idea of wisdom and transmigration of soul, from Heraclitus 'Plato built up the notion' that nothing is permanent in this world, from Parmenides he leasnt that reality is eternal. What also influenced Plato's thoughts were the wars to which he was a witness. The defeat of Athens in wars against Spartans, the Macedonian militarism , the execution of his mentor 'Socrates'- all these events greatly disturbed, so much so that he set out to in search for an ideal form of government. The outcome was 'rule of philosopher king'. Again the execution of Socrates' had made him a rebel of democracy.

The perspective of 'Justice' occupies a very significant place in Plato's political thought so important for Plato subtitled his masterpiece 'Republic' as concerning 'Justice'. Plato used the term justice in a very wide sense. To him justice has both individual as social implications. It is both in the individual and in the society that justice resides. Justice to Plato is internal. While explaining Plato's theory of justice, Plato's starts by discussing the various prevailing theories of justice and after rejecting them puts forward his own views. To develop his own theory of justice, Plato discusses the prevailing theories of justice.

The theories of justice that Plato referred to are:-

- **Traditional theory of justice**:

This theory of justice was propounded by Cephalus and his son Polemarchus. According to them "justice is speaking the truth and paying what was due to gods and men". For both Cephalous and Polymarchus justice is an art which requires the ability to do good to friends and evil to enemies. This idea was a common concept of Greek morality. Plato rejected the traditional view of justice on the ground that this concept of justice is very much individualist, lacking social concern. This idea of justice does not have an universal application. Further to Plato, true justice is only when none are harmed. To do evil to anybody is not consistent with elementary principles of morality. Furthermore, the distinction between enemies and friends are often deceptive. Justice to Plato should have an universal appeal and not be an individual concept.

- **Radicalist theory of justice:**

The radicalist theory of justice is associated with the sophists and is propounded by Thrasymachus. According to Thrasymachus, justice is the interest of the stronger; justice is whatever that is advantageous to the stronger or the superior. The underlying proposition behind such a conception of justice is based upon the principle of 'might is right.' As such the government is the

strongest which makes laws not according to the interest and convenience of the people rather according to its own convenience. Justice therefore is defined in words of radicalists as—— if the doer of unjust thing is strong enough, then what he does is called justice. At the same time the sophists also expresses the view that injustice is better than justice. Therefore it is proper to be unjust to satisfy all latter than become just to satisfy the ruler alone.

Plato rejects this concept of justice and upholds the view that justice is always better than injustice. To him a just man is much wiser and happier than and an unjust man. Plato also disagrees with the radical view of justice stating that a ruler should think of the welfare of his subjects and not of his own well being. To him a ruler should be unselfish and must work for the betterment of the governed. Thus for Plato, justice cannot be an individualistic concept, rather it should have universal application.

- **Pragmatic Theory of Justice:-**

The pragmatic theory of justice has been put forwarded by Glaucon. To him justice is a product of social convention- as such not natural. He treats justice as an artificial thing. Glaucon states that justice is the child of fear and is based on necessity of the weak. His views of justice are the precursor of the social contract theory. In the state of nature there was no justice or state. Many weaknesses combined together and founded the state. Therefore justice is not the interest of the strong but the necessity of the weak. Glaucon further adds that justice is always observed unwillingly and that morality is maintained by force. Plato disagrees with Glaucon's views on justice as an artificial concept and states that justice is very much internally deeply rooted in the human mind. It does not depend for its origin upon a chance convention. So, to Plato justice can never be external.

1.3.2 Plato's Theory of Justice

After analyzing and criticizing the prevailing concepts of justice Plato put forward his own views of justice.

Plato attached great importance to justice. To Plato, justice is internal and it exists mostly in the individual and the state. Plato proposes to consider justice as it exists in the state. According to Plato a society is just when each one perfume the functions duly without interfering in each other domain. Justice in Plato's interpretation implies a sort of specialization. According to Plato the state has three ingredients, namely, reason, spirit and appetite. Corresponding to these three ingredients there are three classes represented by rulers, soldiers and farmers respectively. Plato upholds that each three class has a specific role to perform. The rulers have wisdom and reason. Therefore they are fit to rule the state. The second ingredient is spirit or courage. Therefore there should be a class of persons who are courageous, so that they may be able to meet any situation that threatens the safety and security of the state. The third ingredient is appetite and this is represented by the producing class namely, farmers. To Plato each of these classes is an integral part of the state and have significant contributions towards the society. Plato's views on justice is well defined by Professor Barker who states '"social justice may be defined as the principle of a society, consisting of different types of men- the ruling type, the military type , the producing type). Justice for the individual meant harmonious operation of each part of the individual, namely reason, spirit and appetite. The individual will then be virtuous. Similarly, justice in the society will prevail when each class fully discharges its specific functions and duties and confine itself to its own sphere of duties without meddling with the sphere of others.

1.3.3 Basic principles of Plato's justice

Platonic conception of justice is based on four basic principles :

- Functional specification: by functional specification is meant allotting specific functions to each according to merit and capacity.
- Non interference- it implies doing one's own duties without interfering in other's domain.
- Harmony- According to Plato there should be a harmonious relationship between the three classes, namely,- the ruling class, the military class and the producing class.
- Righteousness- Justice is another name for righteousness. It is more the performance of duties than the enjoyment of rights.

Thus, justice to Plato is doing what a person is called upon to do as per the duty of his station of life while not overstepping it by doing what is contrary to one's nature. At a societal level justice involves each class of people, namely, the ruling class, the military class and the producer class, discharging its specialized duties fully and effectively without interfering in the sphere of others.

1.3.4 Plato's Justice - A Critical Analysis

Platonic conception of justice is criticized by many on the following grounds:

According to critics Plato's conception of justice lacks legal sanction. The whole concept of justice rests on moral principles. It is based on self control and self rejection for the sake of the society. Our experience shows that at no stage of history only moral principles has been able to protect social good.

Secondly, according to critics, Plato's views that each class should focus on development of their distinctive qualities , namely, the ruling class- the spirit of wisdom, the military class the spirit of

courage, and the producing class the spirit of appetitive cannot be wholly accepted. This is because such an attitude would not allow the individual to develop his personality wholly. Rather, the individual would only develop one-third of his personality.

Thirdly Plato's justice would pave the way for inequality in society. According to critics such a conception of justice would increase the probability of inequality of power and privilege in society.

Fourthly according to Professor Karl Popper, Plato's concept of justice ignores the humanitarian principles like equality, freedom and individualism. Ignorance towards these principles would make the system totalitarian.

Fifthly, the individualist thinkers refuse to accept Plato's concept of justice on the ground that it reduces the individual to a mere means for the promotion of the interest of the society.

Sixthly, according to the critics, Plato's theory of justice is motionless as it does not allow a person to change his profession.

Seventhly, Plato's justice does not give recognition to the conception of rights but of duties. The whole notion of justice is too passive in character. That everybody should mind his business is an admirable perception but it cannot be accepted as justice in the true sense of the term.

However despite criticisms, Plato's conception of justice holds relevance as it is regarded as the basis of a well ordered society and social relationships. It is expected that if all the inhabitants of a state could be imbued with this sense of justice and fair play, universal happiness could be achieved.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : 1

Q 1 : Plato's political ideas are contained in which books..... (Fill in the Blank)

Q 2 : The Platonic conception of justice is based on which four principles ?

.....

Q 3 : Write a note on Plato's theory of justice. (within 200 words).

.....

.....

1.4 IDEAL STATE OF PLATO

Plato states that the state does not come out of a rock or oak but from the mind of men that dwell in it. The ideal state of Plato finds expression in his work, "The Republic". Plato is of the view that the state exists to promote good life to its dwellers and to ensure justice to all. To Plato the aim of the society is not merely to grant freedom or promote economic well being but something more than these and that element is justice. A true state, therefore must conform to justice. To Plato justice prevails only when the specific classes, namely, the ruling class, the soldiers and the producing class perform their distinctive functions. Besides justice, Plato's ideal state is marked by the presence of certain distinctive features.

These are discussed below-

- **Existence of justice :** As we have already discussed, justice occupies centre stage in the ideal state of Plato. According to Plato a society realizes justice if it is a united whole of different groups each of whom is set to do the task it can do best, without interfering with the works of others. Justice is based on the principle of specialization and individual concentration of duty. To Plato justice is a bond which holds society together, a harmonious union of individuals. For Plato justice is both public and private because the highest good both of the state and its members is conserved.

- **Presence of three classes :** A corollary to Plato's concept of justice is the presence of three classes in the ideal state of Plato. According to Plato, human soul consists of three elements, namely, -wisdom, courage and appetite. Corresponding to these three elements are the three classes, namely,- rulers, soldiers and the producing class. The ideal state of Plato therefore demands division of society into three classes representing the elements of reason, spirit and appetite. Plato is of the view that in the just state each class and each individual has specific duties and a set of obligations to the community which, if everyone fulfills, will result in a harmonious whole.

- **Principle of functional specialization :**

  In the ideal state of Plato, the principle of functional specialization holds ground in the sense that Plato wanted the individuals to perform their roles and functions in which they are best suited for. Plato believed that division of labour and functional specialization would lead to harmony and unification of the state by removing the cause of struggle between individuals and between classes. The basis of Plato's functional specialization was his understanding of the reciprocal needs of human beings and the necessary of division of labour. Plato believed that division of labour, specialization of functions and reciprocity of services lead to harmony and unification of the state.

- **Education in the ideal state :**

  Education occupies a vital position in the ideal state of Plato. Plato believed that virtue is knowledge and it was the duty of the state to impart knowledge. Plato held the view that if the three classes are to deliver their duty effectively then they must be properly trained and educated. The importance which Plato attached to education in his ideal state is evident from the fact that he devoted a good portion of the second book of "The Republic" to this topic. In his ideal state, Plato wanted education to be compulsory and state controlled. For

Plato education was meant for all men, women and children alike. However Plato was in favour of strict censorship of all literary and artistic works to ensure that the youth did not come under bad moral influence. The chief objective of Plato's scheme of education was to produce the philosopher kings.

- **Rule of philosopher king :**

Plato's ideal state is to be governed by the philosopher king, who according to Plato should be an absolute ruler. The philosopher kings are absolute in the sense that they are not limited by any written law. The philosopher king of Plato is not responsible even to public opinion. Plato wanted to give unlimited powers to the philosopher king in his ideal state. To him the philosopher king should be virtuous, lover of wisdom, a passionate seeker of truth and most importantly should think of the society first and then of himself. Plato further stated that all persons residing in a state do not possess equal capacity to acquire virtue. Hence only the virtuous should participate in governance. The rest should, according to their merit , be absorbed in other functions. Plato's philosopher rulers are the product of comprehensive and rigorous training and education spread over a period of over 35 years, thus the philosopher king of Plato would be a virtuous person and as such the citizens should submit themselves to the guidance of the philosopher king. It is noteworthy to mention here that Plato advocates the rule of the elite i.e. government by a few highly trained experts rather than a democratic system of government in which every citizen had the right to participate in the affairs of the state. In fact, Plato denounced it as a government of the ignorant. Plato's views of the philosopher king is well reflected in his famous statements-"Until philosophers are kings, or the kings and princess of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy, cities will never have rest from their evils."

- **Communism in the ideal state :**

  Plato's ideal polity is characterized as communism- of wives and property. Plato's communism is based on the premise that property, family instincts and private interest would distract man's attention from his obligations towards the community. Plato strongly believed that family and property are obstacles in the path of the three classes in discharging their obligations. In fact, Plato considered property and family relations as the main source of dissensions in society. So in the ideal state of Plato, he proposed what is called communism of family and property. Plato wanted that the guardian class should be free from mental worries. He felt that acquisition of property and family would certainty stand in the way of philosopher rulers to devote themselves fully to the service of the community. So Plato suggested for communism of property and family. Plato held that the combination of political and economic power was bound to lead to corruption and degradation in the state and an efficient system of administration could operate only it the economic power was absolutely divorced from political power. So, Plato expressed the view that the philosopher king should be free from economic motives. Accordingly, in the ideal state Plato suggested that there should be communism of property.

Plato also talked about the communism of wives in his ideal state. Plato realized that mere abolition of the institution of private property is not enough as property and family are interdependent on each other. Plato felt that family life would distract the guardian class from discharging their functions selflessly. Communism of wives would curb the sentiments of selfishness and emancipate women from the drudgery of home and thus enable them to devote to the service of the state. Plato also focused on communism because he was convinced that the family was the greatest stumbling block in the way of attainment of unity in the state. Again Plato was quite disturbed and dissatisfied by the deplorable plight of the women in Athens and wanted that the talents of the women should be utilized for

the benefit of the society. What he wanted was a rightful position of women in the society, as he believed in equal capacity of men and women. He felt that the talent of women could be properly utilized if they are imparted necessary training. He therefore insisted that women in his ideal state should be accorded due and legitimate position. Again Plato's communism of wives was also based on eugenic grounds. Plato was convinced that by introducing a system of temporary marriages between the best among men and the best among women a new and more intelligent race could be raised. According to Plato, within a certain age limit should be limited. Such temporary marriages would be regulated by the state. Plato believed that the scheme would ensure the best off-springs.

1.4.1 Criticisms of Plato's Ideal State

- Plato's Ideal state is not free from criticisms; Plato's ideal state is criticized on many grounds :
- According to critics of the ideal state of Plato, the philosopher king has been entrusted with absolute powers. By giving absolute powers to the philosopher king, it would lead to a tyrannical form of government.
- Plato's ideal state talks of a rigorous system of education which the ruling class should undergo. This principle of Plato is subjected to criticisms as it goes against the notion of equality. His scheme of education covers only a handful of people particularly the elites and neglects the common masses.
- Plato's assertion that there is no contradiction between the interest of the philosopher king and public interest is also dangerous. It is because such a principle encourages the philosopher king to assume unlimited powers and promote his self interest at the cost of the interests of other citizens. This leaves sufficient scope for the establishment of totalitarian rule.
- Plato's views on communism of wives and property are also not wholly acceptable. According to the critics, the concept of

communism goes against the natural instinct of man, which can prove harmful for the development of the society. Plato's communism of property prevents the development of diverse interests of men, which is essential for a healthy society.

- Plato views on communism of wives is also not acceptable as such a concept is bound to create disharmony in the society. Again it seems absurd on the part of Plato to apply the analogy of animals to the human beings and plead for state controlled mating.
- The critics also opine that Plato has mishandled the institution of marriage treating it merely as a mating agency. Marriage is a social institution and its successful working depends on proper understanding between husband and wife.
- According to Professor Barker, Plato makes the individual a mere means. The critics also express the view that Plato's scheme of education, rule of philosopher king, communism and functional specialization are utopian in nature.

Despite the criticisms that we have discussed above, it is undeniable the fact that political ideas of Plato has left a deep impact in the political thoughts of his successors in the subsequent centuries. No doubt Plato is criticised for expressing some ideas which are utopian in nature. But the utopian element does not completely devalue his contributions to political thought. Plato wanted to create an ideal state where the state would be governed by a philosopher king- who according to Plato was an epitome of justice, virtue and sacrifice. His emphasis on justice, functional specialization, his feminism and his eugenics are features of his political philosophy. Humanist movement owes much to Plato. Writers like Rousseau, was so much influenced by Plato's thought that Rousseau discarded the collectivism of social contract. Plato also profoundly influenced the German and the English schools of Idealists. Plato's political philosophy is best reflected in the statement made by Professor Janet who stated- "There is in the politics of

Plato a utopian part and an ideal part. The first is dead and will not revive, the second is eternal." His views of justice, functional specialization, rule of the wise and the virtuous, emancipation of women, importance on education, etc. reflect the eternal element in Plato's thought.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : 2

Q 4: Mention any two features of Plato's Ideal State.

.....

.....

Q 5: Write briefly about rule of philosopher king as a feature of Plato's Ideal State.

.....

.....



1.5 LET US SUM UP

- The perspective of 'Justice' occupies a very significant place in Plato's political thought so important for Plato subtitled his masterpiece 'Republic' as concerning 'Justice'. Plato used the term justice in a very wide sense. To him justice has both individual as social implications. It is both in the individual and in the society that justice resides.
- Justice to Plato is internal. While explaining Plato's theory of justice, Plato's starts by discussing the various prevailing theories of justice and after rejecting them puts forward his own views. To develop his own theory of justice, Plato discusses the prevailing theories of justice.
- Justice in Plato's interpretation implies a sort of specialization. According to Plato the state has three ingredients, namely, reason, spirit and appetite. Corresponding to these three ingredients there

are three classes represented by rulers, soldiers and farmers respectively.

- Plato upholds that each three class has a specific role to perform. The rulers have wisdom and reason. Therefore they are fit to rule the state.
- The second ingredient is spirit or courage. Therefore there should be a class of persons who are courageous, so that they may be able to meet any situation that threatens the safety and security of the state.
- The third ingredient is appetite and this is represented by the producing class namely, farmers. To Plato each of these classes is an integral part of the state and have significant contributions towards the society.
- Plato's Ideal State is characterized by existence of justice, functional specialization, division of the society into three classes, rule of philosopher king, definite scheme of education and communism of wives and property.





1.6 FURTHER READING

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4) Sharma, S.K. and Sharma, Urmila. (2003). *Western Political Thought-From Plato to Burke*. Atlantic.

1.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 : "The Republic" (386 B.C.), "The Statesman" (360) and "The Laws" (347 B.C.).

Ans to Q. No. 2 : Platonic conception of justice is based on four basic principles: Functional specification, Non interference, Harmony and Righteousness.

Ans to Q. No. 3 : After analyzing and criticizing the prevailing concepts of justice Plato put forward his own views of justice. According to Plato a society is just when each one perfume the functions duly without interfering in each other domain. Justice in Plato's interpretation implies a sort of specialization. According to Plato the state has three ingredients, namely, reason, spirit and appetite. Corresponding to these three ingredients there are three classes represented by rulers, soldiers and farmers respectively. Plato upholds that each three class has a specific role to perform. The rulers have wisdom and reason. Therefore they are fit to rule the state. The second ingredient is spirit or courage. Therefore there should be a class of persons who are courageous, so that they may be able to meet any situation that threatens the safety and security of the state. The third ingredient is appetite and this is represented by the producing class namely, farmers. To Plato each of these classes is an integral part of the state and have significant contributions towards the society.

Platonic conception of justice is based on three basic principles: Functional specification, Non interference, Harmony and Righteousness. Thus, justice to Plato is doing what a person is called upon to do as per the duty of his station of life while not overstepping it by doing what is contrary to one's nature. At a societal level justice involves each class of people, namely, the ruling class, the military class and the producer class, discharging its specialized duties fully and effectively without interfering in the sphere of others.

Ans to Q. No. 4 : (a) Existence of Justice

(b) Functional Specialisation

Ans to Q. No. 5 : Plato's ideal state is to be governed by the philosopher king, who according to Plato should be an absolute ruler. The

philosopher kings are absolute in the sense that they are not limited by any written law. The philosopher king of Plato is not responsible even to public opinion. Plato wanted to give unlimited powers to the philosopher king in his ideal state. To him the philosopher king should be virtuous, lover of wisdom, a passionate seeker of truth and most importantly should think of the society first and then of himself. Plato further stated that all persons residing in a state do not possess equal capacity to acquire virtue. Hence only the virtuous should participate in governance. The rest should, according to their merit, be absorbed in other functions. Plato's philosopher rulers are the product of comprehensive and rigorous training and education spread over a period of over 35 years, thus the philosopher king of Plato would be a virtuous person and as such the citizens should submit themselves to the guidance of the philosopher king. It is noteworthy to mention here that Plato advocates the rule of the elite i.e. government by a few highly trained experts rather than a democratic system of government in which every citizen had the right to participate in the affairs of the state. In fact, Plato denounced it as a government of the ignorant.



1.8 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1 : Write a note on early influences on Plato's thought.

Q 2 : Write a note on functional specialization of Plato.

Q 3 : Discuss Plato's view on communism ?

Q 4 : Critically discuss Plato's views on justice.

Q 5 : Write a note on the Ideal state of Plato ?

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UNIT 2 : ARISTOTLE- CITIZENSHIP AND REVOLUTION

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 Learning Objectives

2.2 Introduction

2.3 Aristotle's views on citizenship

- 2.3.1 Non-Essential Qualifications of Citizenship
- 2.3.2 Essential Qualifications of Citizenship
- 2.3.3 Virtues of a Citizen
- 2.3.4 Classes excluded form Citizenship
- 2.3.5 Criticisms of Aristotle's views on citizenship

2.4 Aristotle's views on Revolution

- 2.4.1 Causes of Revolution

2.5 Let Us Sum Up

2.6 Further Reading

2.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

2.8 Possible Questions

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to :

- Explain Aristotle's views on citizenship.
- Explain the virtues of a good citizen as put forward by Aristotle.
- Discuss the particular causes of revolution as identified by Aristotle.
- Discuss the general causes of revolution as identified by Aristotle.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

Aristotle, the disciple of Plato was born in the ancient Greek city of Stagira in Thrace, in 384 BC. Aristotle is considered as one of the greatest

intellectual figure in western history. His intellectual range encompassed most of the sciences and many of the arts including biology, botany, chemistry, ethics, history, logic, political theory, psychology, sociology to rare a few. However he outshined most as a philosopher. His book "Politics" is considered as the most valuable masterpiece representing the Greek political thought. 'Politics' consists of eight books (Books I-VIII). Aristotle's thinking was largely influenced by his pre-conceived notion about the superiority of Greek philosophy. He also believed that the whole was prior to the past or society was superior to the individuals. Aristotle also pleaded for conferment of citizenship rights only on few. All these pre-conceived notions greatly influenced the political thought of Aristotle. Again it is noteworthy to mention that most of Aristotle's writing showed much regard for popular opinion and current practices, and also the element of realism.

While the writings of Plato reflected his idealism, Aristotle was a realist thinker. His work 'Politics' speaks itself the realism in him thought. In this book Aristotle seemed to use empirical details about different political arrangements. However like Plato, Aristotle considered reason to be the hallmark of a human being and like his teacher, he thought that not all human beings had the same amount of reason.

2.3 ARISTOTLE'S VIEWS ON CITIZENSHIP

In Book (III) of his famous masterpiece 'Politics', Aristotle deals with the conception of citizenship in a more comprehensive way. At first he tries to find out as to who is an ideal citizen. Aristotle was essentially a conservative thinker who very much was in favour of conserving the existing institution of citizenship. Aristotle was not in favour of conferring citizenship to all. Aristotle analyses the conception of citizenship by putting forward two criteria for granting citizenship, namely, essential qualifications and non-essential qualifications.

2.3.1 Non-Essential Qualifications of citizenship

According to him *residential qualification* cannot be considered as a valid ground for conferring citizenship rights. This is because

Aristotle believed that if residential qualification insisted upon, aliens and slaves would also be entitled to citizenship rights and which to him was not acceptable. Again, Aristotle goes further by stating that *enjoyment of legal rights* is also not enough for enjoying the status of a citizen. It is because, to him even a foreigner must possess legal rights. Likewise *descent from a citizen* also does not necessarily entitle a person to become a citizen. Aristotle specifically stated that those born of citizen father and not of citizen mother and vice-versa cannot be considered as citizens. Again, Aristotle was also opposed to conferring citizenship rights to children who were young and underdeveloped.

Accordingly, the above three qualifications, namely, *residence*, *enjoyment of legal rights* and *descent from a citizen* are at best only non-essential qualifications which are desirable in nature.

2.3.2 Essential Qualifications of citizenship

The essential attributes of citizenship which a citizen must possess are neither residence, descent nor legal privilege but performance of civic functions, not for a limited but for an indefinite period. According to Aristotle, a citizen is one who has the ability to participate in the judicial and deliberative functions of the state. Therefore, Aristotle held the view that a citizen was one who took part in the activities of the sovereign state by way of participating in the deliberations of the state assemblies and in the juries of the state for administration of justice.

2.3.3 Virtues of a Citizen

Aristotle outlines the following virtues which are essential in becoming a citizen.

The first virtue essential for acquiring citizenship is that person should be engaged in the protection of community. Aristotle defines a citizen as a person who participates in the administration

of justice and legislation as a member of the deliberative assembly. In other words, a person holding office as a judge or enjoying membership of the popular assembly is a citizen.

The second virtue is that, the citizen should have the capacity to rule and be ruled in turn. A good citizen according to the Aristotle is one is capable of both. A person who does not know how to govern and be governed is not a citizen.

Possession of leisure also constitute an essential condition of citizenship. According to Aristotle only those persons who can enjoy leisure and do not have to take care of the worries of daily life can actively participate in the affairs of the state as a judge or a legislator. Aristotle therefore excludes slaves, the resident aliens (engaged in trade and business), foreigners, mechanics and labourers, etc. from the category of citizens.

Again in order to ensure that the citizens can enjoy leisure and discharge their duties effectively, Aristotle holds the view that the citizen should be free from economic worries. In this regard, to Aristotle, the essential qualification for citizenship therefore is to have property which alone could ensure leisure necessary for participation in civic duties.

Herein it may be mentioned that Aristotle's conception of leisure is fundamentally different from that of ours. According to him leisure does not mean recreation. Leisure is a kind of activity, which are not economic in nature. Leisure activities are identical with the activities of good life for the promotion of which the state exists. In order to enable the citizen to undertake leisure activities, Aristotle advocates the institution of slavery.

2.3.4 Classes excluded from Citizenship

Again Aristotle also excludes women, old aged people as well as children from the category of citizens. According to Aristotle, the labour class, the slaves, the women, the aged and children

are not fit to participate in the affairs of the state either due to insufficient time for leisure or due to lack of mature judgment. As such they are not fit to acquire citizenship rights. Again Aristotle excludes even the producing class from citizenship rights. To Aristotle the essence of citizenship is that a citizen must be a functioning member of a city state and not a more adherent to its existence. Thus, Aristotle is not liberal in conferring citizenship to all as he excludes the above discussed categories from this privilege. To Aristotle enjoying citizenship rights is a privilege enjoying by the selected aristocratic class

2.3.5 Criticisms of Aristotle's views on citizenship

Aristotle's view on citizenship has been subjected to criticisms on the following grounds.

According to the critics Aristotle's conception of citizenship is goes against the liberal philosophy as he confers citizenship only on a selected group of people

(aristocratic class), and excludes the women, children, old men, manual workers etc., from this category. To the critics, by denying the majority section of the population from citizenship rights, would cultivate a feeling of disinterestedness amongst them, which is detrimental to the interest of the state.

Critics believe that such an exclusionist conception of citizenship would divide the state in classes, which goes against the solidarity of the state. It would also lead to discontentment amongst the people. If citizenship is to be reserved only for a class of people who are rich enough not to hour to work for their living, there is every chance that this class would use their power and privilege to promote their own interest. This group of people would first and last think of passing legislation to ensure the stability of the rule of its own.

Aristotle's conception of citizenship is contrary to the modern notions of citizenship and is also unfit to the modern notion state. In today's time, all persons who reside in a state (based on the principle of jus soli and jus sanguine) are citizen barring some persons, whether they work with hands or brain. To the critics, mere speculation and contemplation by the intellectual class cannot provide basic needs of people like food, clothing etc. Hence to condemn the manual workers and thereby depriving them of citizenship rights is not justified. Again the critics refuse to accept Aristotle perception of direct participation of the citizens in the legislature and judicial business of the state. To him this is only possible in the city states of his times when the numbers of the citizens were very small. But in a modern nation state such a concept of citizenship is not acceptable as the state consists of millions of people. It is almost impossible to think that every citizen should have a direct share in the legislature and judicial business. Moreover in today's representative democracies Aristotle's conception of citizenship does not fit in. It is because in representative democracies citizens participate in the activities of the state through their representatives elected at fixed intervals.

Again his advocacy for slavery for ensuring leisure to the citizens goes against the very philosophy of human rights which looks upon all human beings as one and equal. Moreover his theory encourages class rule and neglects the welfare of the majority. It is very wrong to split the population into two parts in which one part is merely treated as an instrument for the welfare of the other.

Aristotle's concept of citizenship reflects his conservative outlook and as such his theory is severely criticized. However it shall be unjustified to completely discard his views by locating the theory of citizenship in the context of modern nation state. Aristotle offered a theory of citizenship which was primarily intended for the city states as prevailed during his time. It must however be admitted in defence of Aristotle's concept of limited citizenship that citizenship

in his days connoted something much more than citizenship nowadays and did require leisure which the working class people did not enjoy.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1 : Mention any three non-essential qualifications of a citizen according to Aristotle.

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.....

Q 2 : Write two virtues which are essential for becoming a citizen according to Aristotle.

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2.4 ARISTOTLE'S VIEWS ON REVOLUTION

Book (V) of "Politics" contains Aristotle's views on revolution. Aristotle's views on revolution is the product of his extensive and elaborate study of the working of 158 constitutions and the attempt to understand that frequent changes in the government of the city states during his times. The determination and decadence in political life during his days in the city states provided food for serious thought to Aristotle to identify the causes behind such phenomena and thereby came up with his elaborate views on Revolution.

At the outset Aristotle tries to define what revolution is. In this context, Aristotle offers a two-fold definition of revolution. First, by revolution, he implied any major or minor changes in the constitution such as charge from monarchy to oligarchy and so on.

Secondly, revolution also meant, a change in the ruling power, even though it did not lead to a change in the government or constitution. Viewed in this context a change from monarchy to tyranny and vice versa is a

revolution. In other words a revolution can be said to have occurred if ruling power has been transferred, even if the constitution remains the same.

From the above analysis of what revolution is, as explained by Aristotle, it is clear that Aristotle used the term revolution in a very broad sense by not restricting the concept only to political changes.

2.4.1 Causes of Revolution

Revolution according to Aristotle can be caused by numerous factors or causes, which can broadly be discussed under the following-

- **General causes of Revolution**

According to Aristotle every human being has the desire to be treated equally. This desire to him is natural. It is only when the people are not treated as equal, while some amongst them are accorded more privilege and a superior position then the rest, then that deprived section wants to do away with the existing system, thereby causing revolution. To Aristotle, injustice and ill will are the most potent causes of discontent and instability. The absence of proportionate equality, of a fair deal leads to lack of justice and splits the city into factions. In other words, when a section of the society feels that they are denied or deprived of justice, there is every possibility of revolution. Thus, the most general cause of revolution is men's desire for equality. However, equality carries different interpretations for different people in the sense that the supporters of democracy wants absolute equality of all, while the supporters of oligarchcy favour proportional equality based on consideration of wealth, ability and worth.

Aristotle opines that all revolutions are rooted in the desire of citizens to have equality of opportunity and rights. To him a mixed form of government containing both oligarchic and democratic elements, is desirable and the best if revolutions are to be avoided. According to Aristotle, there are varying degrees of revolutions such

as- a revolution may take the form of a change of constitution of state, or revolution may try to grasp political power, but the constitution may remain the same. Again a revolution may make a democracy more or less democratic or oligarchy more or less oligarchic, or it may be directed against a particular person or a set of persons of the state. Thus, Aristotle rightly asserts that more the equality, more stable is the state. The best system is one wherein the state is dominated by the middle class, where there shall be less inequality and hence will have a very less chance of a revolution.

- **Particular causes of Revolution:**

Aristotle also identified certain particular causes of revolution which are enumerated below:

- **Misuse of power and authority**: One particular cause of revolution as identified by Aristotle is the misuse of power and authority by the rulers or the people in power. It leads to the development of an attitude of disgrace towards and resentment against the ruled. Such attitude may trigger the spirit of revolution. Revolts in monarchy and tyranny are mainly caused by the insolent and oppressive behaviour of the rulers.
- **Profit and Gain**: When the officers of the state indulge in illicit gains at the expense of the people of the state. The people feel deprived and triggers a mood for change.
- **Favouritism and discrimination**: Revolts may also occur when undeserving people are obtaining honours which they do not actually deserve. When grievances in this regard are not addressed by the government, people rise in rebellion.
- **Corruption and disloyalty**: Aristotle also identified corruption and disloyalty as one of the particular causes of revolution. The use of unscrupulous methods in election for coming to

power and incorporating corrupt and disloyal officers in the administrative system create dissatisfaction and discontentment in the minds of the general masses and instills in them a desire to overthrow the system through revolution.

- **Excessive and irrational use of force**: Excessive and irrational use of force is also bound to lead to revolution, as opined by Aristotle. It is because Aristotle believes that such a situation will compel the people to revolt against the authority as people will not tolerate it for a long time. Again frequent quarrels also between the diverse claimants of power.
- **Disproportionate increase in the power of the state**: Revolutions may also occur due to the disproportionate increase in the power of the state. Such an increase creates a gap between the ruler and the ruled, between the constitution and the society paveing the way for revolution.

➢ **Role played by demagogues**: Another particular cause of revolution according to Aristotle is the role played by demagogues, especially in democracies. The demagogues bring bitter accusations against the rich people, both individually and as a class. As a result of these accusations, the rich people come together and overthrow the democratic government.

Again certain factors like neglect of minor change in government, free flow of immigrants, conquest of one nation by another, love for power, arrogance of the rulers, etc. may also culminate in a revolution.

2.4.2 Prevention of Revolution

Aristotle not only identifies the causes of revolution, but also suggested a number of measures to prevent the same. Here also

Aristotle categorises the preventive measures into general as well as particulars measures.

- **General Measures**

Aristotle has identified the following general measures to prevent revolution :

a) A spirit of fairness is to be ensured.

a) Officers of the state should be elected for a fixed tenure with no right to re-election.

b) Endeavour should be made to promote the spirit of harmony.

c) A feeling of urgency should be cultivated in the people so that in times of crisis they may have a firm grasp over the constitution.

d) Granting of awards and promotions should be alone meticulously.

e) Private extravagance and the sudden rise of a social class to a new degree of prosperity.

f) No reliance should be placed on devices intended to hoodwink the public.

g) Educating the masses and treating them with affection will ensure loyalty of the masses towards the systems.

- **Particular methods**

Aristotle also suggests particular methods of prevention of revolution. However he tries to locate these measures in the context of different forces of government. These are-

In democracy, Aristotle suggests that the rich should be made to feel that their property and estates shall not be redistributed. In aristocracy and oligarchy the fairness principle should be followed. According to Aristotle under such systems no single person or groups of person should be allowed to become too powerful. Again the poor people should also be included within the functioning of the administrative system. In a polity, if revolution is to be prevented

then what is desirable is through proper espionage systems which includes both men and women, developing the intellectual life of the citizen, keeping the people poor so that they are constantly confronted with economic problems, creating a sense of hostility and distrust among different sections of people that they are so engaged in quarrels that they have very little or no time to think of revolution. In this way the tyrant can prolong his days and attain a state of goodness.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3 : Mention any two particular causes of Revolution.

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.....

Q 4 : Mention any two general measures to prevent Revolution.

.....

.....



2.5 LET US SUM UP

- In Book (III) of his famous masterpiece 'Politics', Aristotle deals with the conception of citizenship in a more comprehensive way.
- At first Aristotle tries to find out as to who is an ideal citizen. Aristotle was not in favour of conferring citizenship to all. Aristotle analyses the conception of citizenship by putting forward two criteria for granting citizenship, namely, essential qualifications and non-essential qualifications.
- According to Aristotle the three qualifications, namely, *residence*, *enjoyment of legal rights* and *descent from a citizen* are at best only non-essential qualifications which are desirable in nature.

- The essential attributes of citizenship which a citizen must possess are neither residence, descent nor legal privilege but performance of civic functions, not for a limited but for an indefinite period.
- According to Aristotle, a citizen is one who has the ability to participate in the judicial and deliberative functions of the state. Therefore, Aristotle held the view that a citizen was one who took part in the activities of the sovereign state by way of participating in the deliberations of the state assemblies and in the juries of the state for administration of justice.
- Aristotle outlines the following virtues which are essential in becoming a citizen.
- Again Aristotle also excludes women, old aged people as well as children from the category of citizens.
- Book (V) of "Politics" contains Aristotle's views on revolution. Aristotle offers a two-fold definition of revolution. First, by revolution, he implied any major or minor changes in the constitution such as charge from monarchy to oligarchy and so on.
- Secondly, revolution also meant, a change in the ruling power, even though it did not lead to a change in the government or constitution. From the above analysis of what revolution is, as explained by Aristotle, it is clear that Aristotle used the term revolution in a very broad sense by not restricting the concept only to political changes.
- Revolution according to Aristotle can be caused by numerous factors or causes, which can broadly be divided into general and particular causes.
- Aristotle not only identifies the causes of revolution, but also suggested a number of measures to prevent the same. Here also Aristotle categorises the preventive measures into general as well as particulars measures.



2.6 FURTHER READING

1) Jayapalan, N.: *Aristotle* , Atlantic Publishers Distributors, New Delhi, 1999

2) Nelson, Brian R. (2006). *Western Political Thought* (Second Edition). New Delhi: Pearson Education.

3) Sabine G.H. (1973). History of Political Thought. New Delhi: Oxford and IBH.

4) Sharma, S.K. and Sharma, Urmila. (2003). *Western Political Thought-From Plato to Burke*. Atlantic.

2.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 : Residence, non-enjoyment of legal rights and decsect from a citizen

Ans to Q. No. 2 : (a) The first virtue essential for acquiring citizenship is that person should be engaged in the protection of community. Aristotle defines a citizen as a person who participates in the administration of justice and legislation as a member of the deliberative assembly. In other words, a person holding office as a judge or enjoying membership of the popular assembly is a citizen.

(b)The second virtue is that, the citizen should have the capacity to rule and be ruled in turn. A good citizen according to the Aristotle is one is capable of both. A person who does not know how to govern and be governed is not a citizen.

Ans to Q. No. 3 : (a) Misuse of power and authority,

(b) Profit and gain

Ans to Q. No. 4 : a) A spirit of fairness is to be ensured.

(b) Officers of the state should be elected for a fixed tenure with no right to re-election.



2.8 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1 : Mention the qualifications required to attain citizenship according to Aristotle?

Q 2 : What are the essential and non-essential attributes of citizenship?

Q 3 : Write a note in Aristotle's views on revolution in a particular kind of state?

Q 4 : Write a note in Aristotle's views on the measures to prevent revolution in a particular kind of state?

Q 5 : Discuss Aristotle's views on revolution.

Q 6 : Examine Aristotle's views on citizenship.

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UNIT 3 : CHURCH AND THE STATE : ST. AUGUSTINE AND ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Learning Objectives

3.2 Introduction

3.3 Views of St. Augustine (354-430 A.D.)

- 3.3.1 St. Augustine's conception of two cities
- 3.3.2 St. Augustine's views on State and Church
- 3.3.3 St. Augustine's views on Peace and Justice
- 3.3.4 Contributions of St. Augustine

3.4 Views of St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

- 3.4.1 St. Thomas Aquinas views on State
- 3.4.2 St. Thomas Aquinas' Classification of Government and views on Monarchy
- 3.4.3 St. Thomas Aquinas' views on Sovereignty and Law
- 3.4.4 St. Thomas Aquinas' views on the Church and the State
- 3.4.5 Contributions of Thomas Aquinas to Policical Thought

3.5 Let Us Sum Up

3.6 Further Reading

3.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

3.8 Possible Questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to :

- discuss St. Augustine's conception of two cities
- discuss St. Augustine's views on State and Church
- explain St. Augustine's views on Peace and Justice
- discuss St. Thomas Aquinas' views on State

- St. Thomas Aquinas' classification of Government and views on Monarchy
- explain St. Thomas Aquinas' views on Sovereignty and Law
- explain St. Thomas Aquinas' views on the Church and the State

3.2 INTRODUCTION

The medieval period in Europe was the period between the end of classical antiquity and the Renaissance viz. from about 500 A.D. to 1450 A.D. It is difficult to demarcate between ancient and medieval periods. It lasted for 1000 years. The main sources of medieval ideas of politics are the Bible, the Church fathers, especially St. Augustine, the text books of canon and civil law and works of Aristotle especially the "Politics". During the Early Middle Ages, the non-political activities predominated and political thought did not make any progress. This period was often called the dark period of history as there was no political speculation i.e. no orientation of new ideas in political field. It was also believed that there was lack of intelligence among the rulers and education was neglected. However, the contributions of some eminent Christian thinkers such as St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas in the realm of political thought during this period are noteworthy.

This unit will deal with two very important thinkers of the medieval period, namely, St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas.

3.3 VIEWS OF ST. AUGUSTINE (354-430 A.D.)

St. Augustine is one of the greatest church fathers who influenced subsequent development of political and religious thought. He lived in the early part of the 5th century, often characterized as the formative period of Christian thought. Augustine belongs to a period of transition from ancient to medieval age. It can be said that Medievalism begins with St. Augustine. He is the most important figure in the history of Christian church. Son of a Pagan father and a Christian mother, he was converted to Christianity by

St. Ambrose of Milan. He was appointed as the Bishop of Hippo in North Africa, where he remained till death. St. Augustine was deeply influenced by his predecessors like Plato and Cicero. Christianity and Stoic Political Philosophy also influenced him greatly.

The political philosophy of St. Augustine is contained in his book "De Civitate Dei" popularly known as "The City of God" which was completed during the period of 414-426 A.D. It has been divided into 22 books out of which the first 10 books are regarded as defense of Christianity from Pagan attack. The remaining 12 books deal with the construction of City of God. This work contains two of Augustine's most important ideas namely the conception of Christian Commonwealth and a Philosophy of History.

3.3.1 St. Augustine's conception of Two Cities

Augustine has developed his conception of two cities- the City of God and the City of Man in the book "De Civitate Dei" ("The City of God"). The City of God represents the eternal city or the heavenly city while the City of Man represents the earthly city. With the help of this conception he tries to explain the downfall of Roman Empire. According to him, all earthly states are liable to destruction. But there is a city that endures destruction and that eternal city is the City of God. The City of God is popularly known as Civitas Dei and his worldly state is known as Civitas Terrana. The City of God or the Civitas Dei is universal in time and space. It is founded on the love of God and aims the promotion of good and justice. Civitas Terrana or the worldly state on the other hand, is based on self-love. It aims for acquiring power. According to Augustine, the church is the concrete embodiment of Civitas Dei because it is in the church alone that virtue and goodness prevail. The state is a weapon of the church for the promotion of good and hence both are interdependent. Augustine's conception of a true Civitas Dei depicts a Christianised state from which non-believers are excluded. The church leaders enjoy the supreme power. It is a divine kingdom on earth based on Christian virtues and with the saved people as its citizens.

His City of God is meant for everybody but does not include everybody. Men can become the member of the City of God by Grace. Since all men do not deserve grace, all men are not members of the City of God. The real qualification for membership of the City of God is grace and not race, state or class. The City of God has its origin in the creation of angels whereas the Civitas Terrana commences with the fall of Satan. One is founded on the hope of heavenly peace and spiritual salvation, the other is founded on earthly, appetitive and possessive impulses of lower human nature. According to Augustine, all human history is a dramatic story of the struggle between these two cities and according to him, the ultimate victory is achieved by the City of God. The ecclesiastical authority (Church clergy) is superior to the temporal authority (state). According to this interpretation, all earthly empires must pass away because they are mortal.

3.3.2 St. Augustine's views on State and Church

According to St. Augustine, State is the result of sin and provides divine remedy for all the sins. According to him, though the state originated in sin yet it did not represent sin. St. Augustine believed that the state is of divine origin and inferior only to the City of God . He does not agree with the Greeks that state is based on justice because justice cannot prevail in non-Christian states and hence justice is the attribute of the church and not of the state. The church is derived from the God itself. State is the kingdom of devil. It is necessary for the existence of the church because it sanctions man, money and material necessary for church. If the laws of the state do not violate morality, the laws must be obeyed because the state has divine sanction. It is the remedy for the sins of the people.

According to Augustine, a state which has adopted Christian rules replicates God's rule and rest of the states replicates Satan's rule. In Christian states, behind every action of the state authorities

there is perfect justice, divine plan and purpose. Man should obey such a state because its authorities are serving the purpose of God. Unlike Plato and Aristotle, Augustine has subordinated the state to the higher authority of God. Only the laws which are viewed as moral from the point of view of the church should be obeyed and thus obedience to the authority of state laws is not absolute but relative. A Christian obeys a secular authority because behind state laws, the ultimate higher will of God remains hidden. In this way Augustine has subordinated state to the church. He has tried to maintain two separate authorities- temporal as well as spiritual but has given priority to spiritual laws over temporal laws. According to him, a Christian should seek guidance from the church and that both should help each other mutually.

3.3.3 St. Augustine views on Peace and Justice

The City of God realizes two important virtues- justice and peace. Peace, according to Augustine, is not mere absence of conflict. It means a positive relationship. According to him, peace is one of the good qualities of a good state which can be attained only in the Kingdom of God. It does not mean end of war but all embracing love for human beings. In order to maintain peace, it is essential that men should obey only universal laws and all should be taught to love each other. It can be temporal as well as spiritual peace. Peace is the aim of the earthly state as well as that of the City of God.

According to Augustine, justice is conformity to order and respect for duties arising from the order. An individual is just if he fulfils his duties. Absolute or universal justice is to be found outside the state, in universal order. Justice is not bound by time and space. Justice, according to him, is conformity to order and as such can prevail only in the City of God. Absolute justice is possible only in a universal City of God in which universal laws are obeyed. These laws also conform to the universal order. In cases of conflict, the

individuals are justified in obeying universal order if there is a conflict between the secular order and the universal order. Justice thus, symbolizes the city of God as it is difficult to achieve the same in a pagan state.

3.3.4 Contributions of St. Augustine

St. Augustine is the most influential thinker of the Middle Ages and his philosophy practically remains the foundation of the Medieval philosophy. Augustine also challenges the idea that the state should be obeyed under any circumstances. The concept of universal society, as expounded by him appears alive in the Middle Ages. Augustine created a theology of the self in his books , "The Confessions" and "The City of God", where he initiates a theology of history. He offers a wide-ranging explanation of history that begins with creation of mankind itself, dwells on the upheaval of man-made states (the City of God), and continues to the realization of the Kingdom of God (the City of God). According to him, human society finds completion in the realm of God. Augustine, through his work delves into various areas of philosophical enquiry encompassing ethics and politics. Augustine presents four essential elements of his philosophy in his book "The City of God", namely the church, the state, the City of God (the divine world) and the City of Man (the earthly world). The church is divinely established and leads humankind to eternal goodness, which is God. The state adheres to the virtues of politics and of the mind, formulating a political community. Mirroring these, there are two societies namely the eternal City of God, for those predestined for salvation and the earthly City of Man implying the material world with all its imperfections. Humankind must therefore pursue the City of Heaven to maintain a proper sense of order, which in turn leads to true peace. Augustine in his "The City of God" offers the option to the human society to choose which city it wishes to be a part of, and he also clearly marking out the parameters of each choice. According to him, the purpose of

history is to show the unfolding of God's plan, which involves fostering the City of Heaven and filling it with worthy citizens.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Name the book of St. Augustine where he developed the conception of two cities.

.....

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Q 2: According to Augustine which is the eternal city ?

.....

.....

3.4 VIEWS OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS (1225-1274)

St. Thomas Aquinas was one of the most scholarly and logical thinkers of the medieval ages. He was born in Sicily in a noble family with a strong imperial tradition. He fell under the influence of Dominican order while he was only nineteen. After a few years he moved to Paris and continued his philosophical studies under Albert Magnus. In 1261 he wrote his treatise "Against the Errors of Greeks" with the aim of bringing about a reconciliation between the Greek Church and the Church of Rome. In 1265 he wrote "Summa Theologica" in which he highlighted all the important aspects of Christianity. In this work he also propounded his doctrine of law. Another important work of Aquinas was "Rule of Prince" a purely political treatise.

3.4.1 St. Aquinas' views on State

Aquinas offered a theory of origin of state which is fundamentally differed from the theory of state offered by the church fathers. According to him, the state has emerged as a natural institution out of the social instinct of men. He rejected the contention

of the Church fathers that state was introduced for the punishment of sin and asserted that the restraint which the political society imposed upon its members was not a hindrance but an indispensable means to their moral development. While asserting the natural character of the state, he argued that state was the creation of God in so far as political society results from the social instinct that God has instilled in man.

Aquinas assigned a positive role to the state and assigned it the duty of making the citizens virtuous and moral. He wanted the state to provide order and peace without which virtue was not possible. He wanted the rulers to frame and enforce such laws which were conducive to promote virtue. It is the duty of the state to keep people safe from the enemies and take necessary steps for their defence. Aquinas insisted that the state should make people free from poverty and illiteracy which stand as impediments in attaining a good life. Aquinas directs the rulers to correct whatever is wrong, too supply whatever is lacking and to strive to perfect whatever can be improved.

3.4.2 St. Aquinas' Classification of Government and views on Monarchy

Aquinas followed the Aristotelian principle of classification of governments and divided the governments into normal and perverted. He placed monarchy, aristocracy and polity in the category of normal government and tyranny, oligarchy and democracy in the perverted category of governments. However he considered Monarchy as the best form of government. He considered Monarchy as the best government because it can establish unity which no other form of government can achieve. He justifies Monarchy as the best form of government because it ensures continuity of experience. In his opinion, cities and provinces under democratic rule have been filled with dissension, while monarchies have rejoined in peace and prosperity.

Aquinas realized that Monarchy ran the risk of converting itself into a tyranny, which he considered as the worst form of government. Therefore Aquinas does not vest the king with absolute authority and makes him responsible to God. Aquinas said that the responsibility of the King to God is demonstrated by the fact that he is made subordinate to the Pope- the representative of God on earth. However, Aquinas grants absolute powers to the Monarch in matters of administration. This absoluteness of the Monarch should not be taken to mean that he could act in an arbitrary manner. Therefore, he limits the authority of the Monarch by asserting that the Monarch should exercise his authority in accordance with law. Further he treats kingship as an office of trust for the whole community. He therefore, insists on the ruler to perform certain functions and duties to justify his office. He directs the ruler to promote common good instead of personal good; to establish maintain and promote right living among his subjects; promote peace; protection of property, etc. The imposition of various restrictions on the authority of the king and assignment of positive duties on the Monarch clearly indicates that Aquinas favoured a constitutional monarchy.

3.4.3 St. Aquinas' views on Sovereignty and Law

According to Aquinas law "is a certain rule and measure of acts whereby man is induced to act or is restrained from acting."

According to Aquinas, there are four kinds of law: Eternal Law, Divine Law, Natural Law and Human Law.

Eternal law is identical to the mind of God and God, as the creator of the universe, makes these laws to govern the universe. These laws are eternal in nature.

Divine law flows from eternal law as. These laws are communicated to humans in the form of divine revelations. For instance, the Ten Commandments found in the Bible.

Natural law implies that as human beings have the faculty of reason, they tend to conform to some rules in order to do lead a proper life. The basic principle of natural law is "good is to be done and pursued and evil avoided." Thus natural laws are a set of general moral principles for human survival.

Human law is derived from natural law and is based on the reason of the ruler. Human laws are specific laws aimed at promoting virtues and preventing vice such as murder, theft, etc. Human laws are to be obeyed by all human beings as they aim at the common good.

Aquinas views on law are a lasting contribution to the political thought. He emphasizes two features of law- i) Law is an ordinance of reason ii) Human Laws can be promulgated by the authority empowered to do so. Thus, a law promulgated by the ruler which is against the precepts of reason is not a true law to Aquinas. Similarly the precepts of reason do not become law unless they are promulgated by the ruler. Accordingly, even the ruler is subject to certain limitations in the matter of promulgation of laws. The law should not be contrary to reason; it must not be inconsistent with natural law.

Aquinas conceived law in much broader terms and did not consider it merely as a means of regulating human relationships. He argued that the whole universe which represents one rational unity is governed by a hierarchy of closely inter-related laws as mentioned above. He took a cosmic view of law and asserted that it covered not only the human beings but all the animate and in-animate things of the universe.

3.4.4 St. Aquinas' views on Church and the State

As a papalist, St. Thomas Aquinas subordinated the state to church. However, he imposed limitations on the papal jurisdiction over the state. He permitted it to interfere only in the matters involving sin. He was opposed to the idea of Pope's power to interfere in all temporal matters. He asserted that the temporal end of all human

beings is earthly happiness and this could be achieved through the temporal ruler. But the superior end of spiritual salvation could be achieved only through the church.

According to Aquinas the main cause of conflict between the Church and the State was that both of them aim at moral uplift of the individual. He asserted that if the task of moral well being had been assigned to one and the temporal happiness to the other there would not have been any conflict between the two. He expressed the view that state was subordinate to the church in so far as their spheres overlap.

3.4.5 Contributions of St. Aquinas to Political Thought

Thomas Aquinas was one of the most outstanding political thinkers of medieval times and made phenomenal contributions to the development of political thought. He was the synthesizer of theology and philosophy. It goes to his credit that he asserted that the state was not the result of sins of man but a moral institution which aimed at welfare of its subjects. He assigned to the state not only negative functions of punishing the guilty but also the positive function of promoting virtue. Thus he emphasized the natural and moral basis of the state.

Another contribution of Aquinas to the medieval thought was his bid to reconcile church and state authorities. He asserted that if the church concerned itself with moral uplift and the state concerned itself with the political functions, there would be no conflicts between the two. He did not favour interference by the church in the state affairs without solid reasons.

He made notable contributions to the development of concepts of constitutional government and welfare state. Though Aquinas considered the monarchical system as ideal, he did not favour grant of absolute powers to the King. He restricted the authority of the King by the laws of the state. On the other hand, he attached great importance to the interests of the masses and welfare of the common people. He permitted the masses to see that the

laws of the state were not violated by the ruler and he did not turn into a tyrant. Thus, he stood for restricting the authority of the monarch, though he did not specify any concrete measures for this purpose. This clearly shows his faith in the constitutional government which is at present is considered as an ideal form of government. He also emphasized the ideal of a welfare state and pleaded that the state should take care of the population, look after the poor, promote justice and make living peaceful.

The most important contribution of Thomas Aquinas to the political theory is his concept of natural law. The concept of natural law, which he borrowed from the Roman Law and passed on to the future generations of political thinkers came to occupy a prominent position in the later years. He also emphasizes that the Human law is derived from Natural law and was subordinate to the same. This idea left a deep impact on Locke and other philosophers of the Glorious Revolution of 1688.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3 : St. Aquinas considered monarchy as the best form of government. (True/False).

.....

Q 4 : What are the two features of law that St. Aquinas emphasised on ?

.....

.....



3.5 LET US SUM UP

- St. Augustine is one of the greatest church fathers who influenced subsequent development of political and religious thought.

- The political philosophy of St. Augustine is contained in his book "De Civitate Dei" popularly known as "The City of God" which was completed during the period of 414-426 A.D.
- The City of God represents the eternal city or the heavenly city while the City of Man represents the earthly city. With the help of this conception he tries to explain the downfall of Roman Empire. According to him, all earthly states are liable to destruction. But there is a city that endures destruction and that eternal city is the City of God.
- The City of God is popularly known as Civitas Dei and his worldly state is known as Civitas Terrana. The City of God or the Civitas Dei is universal in time and space. It is founded on the love of God and aims the promotion of good and justice.
- Civitas Terrana or the worldly state on the other hand, is based on self-love. It aims for acquiring power.
- According to St. Augustine, State is the result of sin and provides divine remedy for all the sins. According to him, though the state originated in sin yet it did not represent sin. St. Augustine believed that the state is of divine origin and inferior only to the City of God .
- In this way Augustine has subordinated state to the church. He has tried to maintain two separate authorities- temporal as well as spiritual but has given priority to spiritual laws over temporal laws. According to him, a Christian should seek guidance from the church and that both should help each other mutually.
- St. Thomas Aquinas was one of the most scholarly and logical thinkers of the medieval ages.
- Aquinas offered a theory of origin of state which is fundamentally differed from the theory of state offered by the church fathers. According to him, the state has emerged as a natural institution out of the social instinct of men.
- Aquinas assigned a positive role to the state and assigned it the duty of making the citizens virtuous and moral. He wanted the state to provide order and peace without which virtue was not possible.

- He wanted the rulers to frame and enforce such laws which were conducive to promote virtue. It is the duty of the state to keep people safe from the enemies and take necessary steps for their defence.
- Aquinas followed the Aristotelian principle of classification of governments and divided the governments into normal and perverted. He placed monarchy, aristocracy and polity in the category of normal government and tyranny, oligarchy and democracy in the perverted category of governments. However he considered Monarchy as the best form of government.



3.6 FURTHER READING

1) Subrata Mukherjee, and Sushila Ramaswamy: *A History of Political Thought, Plato to Marx.* Prentice Hall, New Delhi, 2003
2) Prem Arora: *Political Science (Theory).* Cosmos Bookhive (P) Ltd. 2005



3.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 : "De Civitate Dei" popularly known as "The City of God"
Ans to Q. No. 2 : City of God
Ans to Q. No. 3 : True
Ans to Q. No. 4 : i) Law is an ordinance of reason
ii) Human Laws can be promulgated by the authority empowered to do so.



3.8 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1. Describe St. Augustine concept of two cities.
Q 2. Explain the major contribution of St. Augustine to the medieval political thought.
Q 3. Explain St. Thomas Aquinas' classification of Government.
Q 4. Explain St. Thomas Aquinas contribution to the realm of political theory.

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UNIT 4 : NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning Objectives

4.2 Introduction

4.3 Machiavelli: A Child of his time and A Child of Renaissance

4.4 Methodology

4.5 Machiavelli on Reason of state and Power Politics

4.6 On Human Nature

4.7 On Dual Standards of Morality

4.8 Advice to the Prince

4.9 On Republicanism

4.10 Critical Appreciation

4.11 Let Us Sum Up

4.12 Further Reading

4.13 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.14 Possible Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- explain why Machiavelli is known as the child of his time.
- explain the methodology behind his work
- discuss his political philosophy
- evaluate his thoughts and ideas

4.2 INTRODUCTION

Even after more than 500 years of his death, Machiavelli's name holds relevance as he continues to signify intrigue and political expediency. In short, the term 'Machiavellism' was associated with the crafty and wily

qualities of human being. As a matter of fact, the term “Machiavellianism” was coined after his name, which came to signify the employment of crafty and wily means in statecraft and even otherwise. Now the question that arises is why has Machiavelli earned such a reputation? What exactly are his views and thoughts which continue to hold relevance even in contemporary times? What background or history had inspired him to propound his thoughts? These are the questions which we would deal with and answer in this unit.

4.3 MACHIAVELLI : A CHILD OF HIS TIME AND A CHILD OF RENAISSANCE

Born on May 3, 1469 in Florence, Italy in a decent family, Machiavelli was the third child of Bernado, a civil lawyer. At the year of his birth, Lorenzo de Medici ruled Florence. Bernado made enough money to keep his family financially well off. He also took care of the educational needs of his son. Machiavelli was thus educated enough for a career in public services. He joined the Government of Florence as a Secretary of Chancery at the young age of 29 and entered the core of Florentine politics. He gathered first-hand experience of the politics and thus was involved in foreign affairs. Since Florentine was a republic at that time, she maintained relations with other republics and thus Machiavelli was sent to several foreign countries on diplomatic missions. But in 1512 the fall of the republican government led to Machiavelli’s ouster from his job. He was in fact charged with many crimes and imprisoned by the authoritarian regime of Medici; but was later on released due to want of evidence. He was then forced to lead a solitary life during which he had written his celebrated work *The Prince (1513)* and *The Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius (1521).*He dedicated *The Prince* to Lorenzo di Medici and showered high praises on his rule and dynasty. Both these books outline Machiavelli’s political thought but are quite different in their dealings: while *The Prince* supported absolute monarchy, *The Discourses* focused on contemporary politics of Italy of Machiavelli’s time and reflected a republican inclination.

These books were basically a reflection of the prevailing situation in Florence. At that time, Italy was divided in several small city-states which were in constant struggle with each other. What was desired by everyone and Machiavelli was unification of Italy in line with other European states. But these dream looked unreal as there was no one who could unite Italy with strong hands. Severe jealousies among the states and a bitter struggle for power led to decay of Italy. Even the Popes disfavoured unification so as to preserve their control of spirituality over entire Italy. Even though Florence was the seat of Renaissance, Italy could not enjoy the fruits of it as it was marked by every kind of degradation- worst kind of tyrannical rule, corruption, cruelty and killings, moral degradation, selfishness, dishonesty and debauchery. Influenced by all these, Machiavelli strongly felt the need of a strong Prince who could realize his dream of a united and prosperous Italy and who could keep all negativities in check with an iron fist. It was thus the prevailing situation in Italy which led him to suggest crafty ways to achieve a prosperous unified Italy even if the means adopted for the purpose were not always ethically justifiable. For him the ideal state was a powerful state and the state should aim at maximizing its power at every cost.

Apart from the turmoil which influenced Machiavelli's thought, the Renaissance also left a deep impact in him. Machiavelli is often known as the child of Renaissance. Renaissance literally means 'reawakening' or 'rebirth'. A period between 14th- 17th Century in Europe, it sought to rediscover man. Prior to this period, during the Middle Ages, man was merely treated a creation of God and was portrayed as worthless. Salvation of the soul is the only objective of man and this is possible through service to God. The Church dominated every sphere of life and people obeyed the Church as a direct representative of God. In contrast to this, the Renaissance focussed on the goodness of man, celebrated knowledge and optimism and questioned the Church. Encouraged by Renaissance, he was against accepting any belief without examining it. He therefore wanted man to question existing beliefs. Man was brought to the centre of the secular world while relegating Church and religion to the background. Similarly, Machiavelli also suggested that

the prince has to be at the helm of the political affairs and the Church is to look after only the spiritual world.

Renaissance gave birth to the modern nation state which was all powerful and which was supposed to overlook every aspect of our spatial life- maintenance of roads, ensuring heath and education of masses, levying taxes, providing for food, as well as ensuring safety and defence of the nation. Machiavelli realised the importance of all these and thus attributed all these functions to the prince. Religion, for Machiavelli had no role in state politics; and therefore he wanted the prince and not the Church to handle the realm of politics and power.

4.4 METHODOLOGY

The method of study used by Machiavelli is very much inspired by Aristotle, although they were not exactly similar. Machiavelli, like Aristotle used the historical method to understand and analyse the present. He observed the current situations very keenly and then sought to analyse them. However, according to Dunning, Machiavelli's method could not be called historical because he uses historical evidence merely to substantiate his findings to which he had already arrived at. In other words, he did not study past to understand the present, rather he began with the present and arrived at conclusions on the basis of his observations; and then used past history to strengthen his findings.

Machiavelli was a thorough realist in the sense that he was more concerned with the actual happenings which impacted the state and the government. As noted by renowned political thinker Dunning, Machiavelli's study is more of a study on the art of the government rather than a theory of State. (Dunning, 2015)

4.5 MACHIAVELLI ON REASON OF STATE AND POWER POLITICS

Machiavelli's main concern was 'power'. While 'The Prince' dealt with wielding power by an individual, 'Discourses' dealt with power of free

citizens. As noted by Ebenstein, before Machiavelli, all the political philosophers focused on one central theme, namely, the end or the goal of the state. For them, power was the means to reach higher ends -such as justice, morality, good life- all of which would be ensured in a state, which in reality was more of a utopia. Machiavelli, being a realist, ignored such higher ends while believing that political power itself was the end. His study therefore was concerned with how political power could be gained and retained. Being a witness to Italy's maddening crisis, he understood that only a powerful state could resolve all the problems and unite Italy. He therefore suggests ways, through which the ruler could wield power, establish a self-sufficient state, keep the state united and dispel the enemies. In short, his political theory concerns the position and power of the ruler and not the ruled.

This particular thought is based on his understanding of the reason of the state: Machiavelli believed that the state is the most important association in human life and that it is far superior to the individual. Individuals, he believed are incompetent of protecting themselves. Therefore, the state and the government are needed to take care of individuals' life. Also, in this regard the state has to acquire power so as to deal with the problems in the society. Human nature is essentially corrupt and selfish and therefore to control such beings, a strong and a powerful state is a must. Thus, the state's most important goal is to acquire power, since without power the state's existence would become questionable. The administration in a weak state with ineffective laws would be hijacked in a society characterized by self-interested and egotist individuals. The ruler, therefore, should seek to increase the power of the state through any means, moral or immoral. This shows that Machiavelli's suggestion for a strong state is based on practical consideration and not on any divine consideration.

4.6 MACHIAVELLI ON HUMAN NATURE

Following Renaissance, men became more rational and discarded the supernatural thoughts from the mind. Thus Machiavelli also follows the

trend and makes a rational and realistic analysis of human nature. Machiavelli painted a very dark picture of human beings. According to him, men are essentially 'ungrateful, fickle, feigners and dissemblers, avoiders of danger, eager for gain'. Man is guided by the desire for change in order to break the monotony in their life. This propels them into action. But they are irrational and can be easily deceived. Their conduct is usually guided by certain motives- motive for love and fear; every man wants to be either loved or feared. Another very powerful motive is the motive of wealth. Machiavelli believed that people are so attached to their wealth that they might forget their father's death but not the loss of wealth. Human wants are insatiable and this causes dissatisfaction as it is impossible to achieve everything within nature's limited resources. Unlimited desires also lead to disparity and hence envy as some people achieve more than others. People are therefore constantly at war with others to achieve more, and this also gets manifested in the strife between states. Man is deceitful and their selfish interests make them break the bonds of love. Fear, on the other hand, binds them together for the very same reason, viz., self-interest. Thus, fear and not love is a stronger reason behind bonding of man. In such a scenario, security would follow a strong ruler who instills a sense of fear amongst the masses.

4.7 MACHIAVELLI ON DUAL STANDARDS OF MORALITY

Following his assertion about a selfish human nature and the need for a strong state to control them, Machiavelli believed that the most important goal of the ruler is therefore acquisition of power and maintenance of state. Towards this end, all means would be justified. Thus, even use of immoral act by the ruler is completely justified, provided it is for gaining power. For Machiavelli, end justified the means. And morality of the state or public morality is separate from individual morality or private morality. Individual ethics of right and wrong, justice and injustice are not applicable to state actions. While the individual has to act according to the highest moral

standards, the ruler has to adopt measures which could be foul or fair depending on the situation. While during normal times, the ruler has to be honest, fair, and considerate, during chaos and disorder, he has to be harsh, treacherous and willing to use force and fraud. He preferred an efficient government over ethics and morality. Adherence to Christian virtues, morality and ethics might lead to inefficiency of the state. In his own words, Machiavelli says that the ruler, 'should not depart from what is morally right……but should know how to adopt what is bad, when he is obliged to'.

4.8 MACHIAVELLI'S ADVICE TO THE PRINCE

One of the best known literary contributions of Machiavelli is the political treatise written by him called the 'The Prince'. Although, 'The Prince'cannot be considered an academic work by Machiavelli to be read by political theorists or philosophers yet It was a pragmatic work on how to conduct a government. It was rather the guiding principles to be followed by rulers. 'The Prince' was the outcome of Machiavelli's analysis of the prevailing situation in Florence. Through this work he sought to offer solution to rectify the problems faced by Italy as a whole. The influence of Aristotle in this work of Machiavelli is evident as both consider the state to be the highest form of human association. The individual is subjected to the state for his own good, as it is in the state that the individual develops his potential to the best. Thus, the state is more important than the individual and the Prince has to protect and preserve the state by all means. He suggests an efficient and well organized central administration for the smooth conduct of the state.

He has to, with the help of force, ruthlessly suppress all who seeks to overthrow him. Thus, the Prince should have the qualities of both the lion and the fox. The courage and strength of a lion would help him ward off enemies while the cunningness and shrewdness of the fox would help identify traps. Only one of these qualities of being a lion or a fox would not help a prince as the lion would not identify a trap and a fox would not fight the enemy. The prince ought to combine both these qualities in order to be

successful and powerful. He has to balance the use of physical force as well as generosity. Machiavelli urged the Prince against any kind of extreme behaviour. Rather, depending on the circumstances, he had to be harsh or soft. However, he must be able to instill a fear of punishment amongst the people. But he must not be hated by his people. Thus, he must keep his subjects materially content so that he wins their support. He should not burden his subjects with heavy taxation. He must be able to inculcate the spirit of patriotism amongst the citizens through religion, education and propaganda. He must encourage his citizens to peaceably carry on with their livelihood activities both in commerce and in agriculture. He must never eye others wealth and keep away from the property and wives of his subjects as this would incite resistance against his rule. The Prince must also keep his subjects busy in varied activities. He must portray himself to be a patron of art and culture. He has to conduct himself with such grandeur that people hold him in awe. He should participate in the popular festivals to maintain his popularity.

The prince must carefully choose his advisors. He should not be surrounded by flatterers, who would shroud him in false praise. The prince ought to know the truth and reality, so that he can rectify his mistakes and establish a strong state rather than assume that all is perfect. He should also get rid of those officers and advisors who were disloyal to him.

The Prince has to be emotionally content so that he can diligently focus on the affairs of the state. The only emotional attachment the prince should have is with the state. His love for the state should come before everything else. He must not be scared to commit sin if the situation demands so. As already mentioned above, he must not be guided by individual morality. He should be able to govern with secrecy as information leaks could prove harmful for the state.

One of the most important duties of the prince is to defend his country. For him, politics is a constant struggle for power. He must therefore be proficient in conducting war as this is the only way through which the prince can acquire power and position. The prince must keep a constant vigil on his neighbours and view them as enemies. He should gather all the information

about the enemy and calculate his strength. And he must be able to attack the enemy when the latter is least prepared. The prince has to exterminate the enemy before the latter becomes too powerful to pose a challenge to the former's authority.

The prince has to extend his territory through a policy of expansion so as to retain power. If the prince hesitates to extend his territory by attacking his enemies, the latter would attack and perish him in the process. The Prince should learn the game of balance of power, so that no state becomes too powerful to become a threat. He should form coalitions and defend the weaker states if necessary. He suggested that forming alliances is better than neutrality in international relations. Also the prince should eliminate the families of those rulers whose territory he plans to attack and possess. Left scot-free, opponents might plan a counter attack in order to reclaim their lost territory.

The Prince should be always ready with well-trained efficient citizen soldiers. Machiavelli did not support the notion of recruiting mercenaries as they could be bought even by the enemies with a higher pay. Mercenaries could not be trusted since their loyalties are tied to their pay. They have no love and attachment with the states they fight for. For Machiavelli, extending the territory was so important, that in both 'Prince' and 'Discourses' he suggests this as a necessary measure in maintaining a strong and powerful state.

4.9 MACHIAVELLI ON REPUBLICANISM

Machiavelli has been wrongly criticized by many as an advocate of despotism. His preference for republican and popular government is clear in 'Discourses'. While it is true that in "Prince' he suggests a monarchical form of government in order to consolidate and create a strong state, he discusses republican government in 'Discourses'. A serious study of both these works shows that Machiavelli suggested monarchy only for those states where popular government would not be able to unite and form a strong state. For example, a state which faces corruption, strife and division,

like Italy, the only solution is a monarchy with a strong ruler. On the other hand, peaceful states can establish republican government. He appreciated Rome and other republics which uphold the value of general good over individual prosperity. He believed that in republics, individuals are not selfish and corrupt, and they work towards achieving the common good. This is the reason behind the greatness and success of republics.

Machiavelli repudiates the belief that democratic states degenerate with time. He rather argues that if people and their representatives in legislatures are regulated by law, then self-governing societies tend to be most stable. It is only when individuals act superior to law that anarchy follows. His preference for republican states over monarchy is evident when he argues that people in general are more prudent and is a better judge of situations than a prince.

4.10 CRITICAL APPRECIATION

An evaluation of Machiavelli's thought is considered to be extremely difficult as his theory does not occur in a systematic manner. This may be so because his intention might not have been to develop a political theory. He was rather trying to offer suggestions in the art of government and through which Italy's problems could be solved. Thus, what we call his political theory is akin to comments on specific situations. Another contradiction observed in his theory is his recommendation of a monarchical form of government with a strong prince while also appreciating a republican government.

Machiavelli's view on human nature seems one-sided. While painting human nature as essentially dark and selfish and bad, he overlooks qualities such as cooperation and empathy which have made civilizations possible.

However, Machiavelli's contributions to political thought cannot be disregarded. He was one of the very few who could actually sense the social and political degradation of European society. He scanned politics from a pragmatic point of view and offered realistic solutions to problems. Thus, Sabine comments that 'he was perhaps too practical to be philosophically profound, but in politics pure and simple he had of all his

contemporaries the greatest breadth of view and the clearest insight into the general tendency of European evolution '(Sabine, 1973, p. 328). Also as political thinker Chester C. Maxey pointed out, Machiavelli's 'passion for the practical against the theoretical undoubtedly did much to rescue political thought from the scholastic obscurantism of the Middle Ages and entitles him to recognition as the first, if not the noblest, of the great pragmatists'.(Chester C. Maxey, 'Strange Interlude' in *Political Philosophies* (Revised edition), , New York: Macmillan, First edition 1938, pp.125-53)

Influenced by renaissance, he had separated religion and politics and given us the idea of secularism. This is not to say that he abandoned religion completely. He accorded religion an important place in society but did not allow religion to dominate politics. He also kept ethics and morality separate from politics due to which his critics brand him immoral. However, one must acknowledge that Machiavelli's attempt was merely to offer solution to the degenerated politics of medieval Europe, which he thought lied in separation of religion, ethics and morality from politics.

Machiavelli also contributed to the idea of a sovereign state. Discarding the notion of feudal hierarchies and domination of Church, he envisaged modern state which held control over all institutions of society. By emphasizing on national security, territorial consolidation, and forging of alliances with other states, he anticipated the modern state as well as international relations.

He was the first who showed us the reason of state and championed the power view of politics. He reckoned politics to be a struggle for the maintenance of power, a view which would be later on taken up by theorists like Hobbes, Mosca, Pareto, Robert Dahl, Morgenthau and many others.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1 : Explain Machiavelli's views on dual standards of morality.

.....

.....

Q 2 : Explain Machiavelli's views on Republicanism.

.....

.....

Q 3 : Machiavelli's main concern was "power". (True/False)

.....

Q 4 : In which literary work of Machiavelli can we find the guiding principles to be followed by rulers ?

.....



4.11 LET US SUM UP

- Machiavelli was, as Dunning notes, 'the first modern political philosopher. It is quite accurate to say that he ends the medieval era as that he begins the modern'. He is definitely a product of vicissitude of times when the Europe was ushering towards a secular world by challenging the authority of the Pope and the Church.
- Machiavelli attempted to free politics from the clutches of spirituality and lay the foundation of secularism. Adopting a historical method which supported his close observations of real life incidences, he concluded that power is the basis of state. His first hand experience of chaotic and divided Florence and Italy led him to suggest a strong monarchical government.
- Since Machiavelli believed that human beings are by nature wicked and selfish, they had to be controlled through the iron rule of the prince. Thus, he suggests that the Prince has to judiciously mix every kind of quality to effectively rule his state. He must be compassionate and strict, be shrewd and strong, and be moral as well as immoral- all depending upon circumstances.
- Appreciating Machiavelli's acumen, Prof Jones pointed out, that his perception on understanding the state through human lust and that a ruler must learn to control these human tendencies to be successful forms the basis of modern political life. However, in the

process of offering such suggestions, Machiavelli tends to downplay politics as merely an instrument to achieve certain ends, while undermining the values.

- Critics have also noted his advocacy of absolutism and authoritarian rule in order to unite Italy. It is believed that following Machiavelli's suggestions, several rulers in Europe adopted authoritarian role, some even turning fascist.
- However, none can deny Machiavelli's contribution to politics both in terms of theory and practice. He can be truly considered as a harbinger of modern day state and politics.



4.12 FURTHER READING

1) Quentin Skinner, *Machiavelli: A Very Short Introduction*

2) George W Sabine and T L Thorson, *A History of Political Theory*

3) Subrata Mukherjee, and Sushila Ramaswamy: *A History of Political Thought, Plato to Marx,* Prentice Hall, New Delhi, 2003

4.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 : Machiavelli believed that the most important goal of the ruler is therefore acquisition of power and maintenance of state. Towards this end, all means would be justified. Thus, even use of immoral act by the ruler is completely justified, provided it is for gaining power. For Machiavelli, end justified the means. And morality of the state or public morality is separate from individual morality or private morality. Individual ethics of right and wrong, justice and injustice are not applicable to state actions. While the individual has to act according to the highest moral standards, the ruler has to adopt measures which could be foul or fair depending on the situation. While during normal times, the ruler has to be honest, fair, and considerate, during chaos and disorder,

he has to be harsh, treacherous and willing to use force and fraud. He preferred an efficient government over ethics and morality. Adherence to Christian virtues, morality and ethics might lead to inefficiency of the state. In his own words, Machiavelli says that the ruler, 'should not depart from what is morally right……but should know how to adopt what is bad, when he is obliged to'.

Ans to Q. No. 2 : Machiavelli has been wrongly criticized by many as an advocate of despotism. His preference for republican and popular government is clear in 'Discourses'. While it is true that in "Prince' he suggests a monarchical form of government in order to consolidate and create a strong state, he discusses republican government in 'Discourses'. A serious study of both these works shows that Machiavelli suggested monarchy only for those states where popular government would not be able to unite and form a strong state. For example, a state which faces corruption, strife and division, like Italy, the only solution is a monarchy with a strong ruler. On the other hand, peaceful states can establish republican government. He appreciated Rome and other republics which uphold the value of general good over individual prosperity. He believed that in republics, individuals are not selfish and corrupt, and they work towards achieving the common good. This is the reason behind the greatness and success of republics.

Ans to Q. No. 3 : True

Ans to Q. No. 4 : The Prince



4.14 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1 : Explain why Machiavelli is considered a Child of his Time?

Q 2 : Discuss Machiavelli's ideas as enumerated in The Prince.

Q 3 : Examine Machiavelli's views on reason of state and power politics.

Q 4 : Critically evaluate Machiavelli's political philosophy.

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UNIT 5 : INDIVIDUALISM AND LIBERALISM-THOMAS HOBBES, JOHN LOCKE AND JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives

5.2 Introduction

5.3 Thomas Hobbes

5.4 John Locke

5.5 Jean Jacques Rousseau

5.5 Individualism and Liberalism

5.6 Let Us Sum Up

5.7 Further Reading

5.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

5.9 Possible Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able :

- explain the individualism and absolutism of Thomas Hobbes
- discuss the individualism of John Locke
- explain Rousseau's theory of General Will
- discuss individualism and liberalism in the light of the views of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau

5.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit introduces you to liberalism and individualism in the light of writings of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. Liberalism is basically a set of ideas and practices governing collective life in any society. It emerged out

of various revolutions like the Glorious Revolution and the French Revolution. It is closely linked to individualism.

5.3 THOMAS HOBBES

Thomas Hobbes (1581-1679) was an English philosopher. Hobbes is known today for his work on political philosophy. His 1651 book "Leviathan" established social contract theory, which is regarded as the foundation of Western political philosophy. Hobbes also contributed to a diverse array of other fields, including history, geometry, theology, the physics of gases, ethics, and general philosophy. The main works of Hobbes include "De Cive" (1642), "Leviathan" (1651), "De Corpore" (1655), and "De Homine" (1658).

- **Hobbes on Human Nature and Social Contract**

According to Hobbes, what a man desires, he calls good and what he dislikes he calls evil. He asserts that the conception of good or bad is ever undergoing change. According to him there is no final end or goal of life. Therefore, every man tries to obtain those things which he desires. In other words, the man according to Hobbes is highly self-centered. This point has been beautifully brought out by Professor Sabine thus: "the rule behind all behavior is that the living body is set instinctively to preserve or heighten its vitality. In a word, the physiological principle behind all behavior is self-preservation and self-preservation means just the continuance of individual biological existence. Good is what conduces to this end and evil what has the opposite effect."

Hobbes states that human beings are full of desires or appetite and there is no end to these desires till one's death. The state of nature is a condition. People in the state of nature are free, rational, self interested and egoistic. They continuously try to fulfill their desires one after another and there is no end to it except death. Another factor is that there is struggle for power and the state of nature is continuously at war. The survival of the fittest is the core of this state. People in this state of nature are seekers of power.

People saw that life in the state of nature is nasty, brutish and short. To overcome this situation the people came to an argument of a social contract based on voluntary agreement. The outcome of the contract was that the sovereign power or the political authority was to be given to a ruler which is not a part of the contract. People were fed up with the state of uncertainty prevailing in the state of nature and motivated by the instinct of self-preservation were keen to have a state. Thus, Hobbes believes that the state had its origin in the foresight of men in their own preservation and the rational desire to escape from the natural condition of war.

- **Individualism and Absolution in Hobbes**

Hobbes has been carried up and down for his political theory which has been described as pure and naked despotism by some, while the others consider him as the greatest individualist. The first view seems to be based on superfluous reading of the philosophy of Hobbes. In reality he was a great individualist and the theory of absolute sovereignty with which the name of Hobbes is so generally associated as really the necessary complement of his individualism.

Hobbes built a theory of most thorough going absolutism, but the rational of such absolutism was the peace and the security of the person and property of the individual, which gives the theory of Hobbes the tinge of individualism. The prominent position accorded to the individual by Hobbes is evident from the fact that he allows his individual the right to resist the sovereign if the latter attacks his life, for whose preservation the contract was finalized. Hobbes also allows the individual to withdraw allegiance from the sovereign who is incapable of securing his life. The right of resistance granted to the individual carries with it the right of the individual to judge for himself when his life is endangered. Even the contract which creates the sovereign is concluded by the individuals who are willing to transfer all their power to a single representative, who is henceforth authorized to will and to act in place of each individual. Hobbes does not think in terms of collective wills or common will.

Hobbes does not stop with the grant of absolute powers to the sovereign but also ensures that he is not able to use it for his selfish ends.

He gives him the power to make laws or rules by which it may be possible to determine what is just and what is unjust ; or what is good and what is evil.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1 : When was Hobbes born?

……

……

Q 2 : Hobbes' 1651 book "Leviathan" established the social contract theory. (True/False)

……

……

Q 3: Hobbes authored the book "De Homine" in the year ……(Fill in the blanks)

Q 4 : Name four important works of Hobbes.(within 50 words).

……

……

……

5.4 JOHN LOCKE

John Locke (29 August 1632 – 28 October 1704) was an English philosopher and physician. Commonly known as the "Father of Liberalism", Locke is widely regarded as one of the most influential of Enlightenment thinkers and commonly known as the "Father of Liberalism".

Locke wrote as many as 35 books dealing with different walks of life. The main books which provide us an insight to his philosophy and political thought include "Essay Concerning Human Understanding" (1690), "His Letters on Toleration" (1689, 1690, 1692 and 1706), "Two Treaties of Government" (1690) and "Fundamental Constitution Concerning Carolina" (1706).

- **Locke on Human Nature**

Locke does not express his views about human nature in a systematic manner and one had to collect his views from the ideas in the Essays Concerning Human Understanding and the Second Treatise. Locke is of the view that human beings are basically decent and have been endowed with a natural social instinct. They are essentially peace-loving and not quarrel-some. They are not always selfish. Sometimes they are altruistic also. Locke considers all human beings are equal, in the moral sense and asserts that every individual enjoys certain natural rights viz. the right to life, liberty and property. He enjoys these rights not because of any position, wealth, etc., but because he is a human.

- **Locke's views on State of Nature**

Locke does not consider the state of nature as the state of war of each against all. On the other hand he consider it as an era of "peace, good-will, mutual assistance and preservation." He conceives the state of nature as a pre-political rather than a pre-social condition. The state of nature was not a period of eternal warfare but an era of peace in which reason prevailed. This reason manifested itself in the law of nature, which are based on the principle of equality. To Locke law of nature means a set of rules for human behavior which does not describe as to how men behave, but as to how they ought to behave.

- **Locke on Law of Nature**

The concept of the law of nature occupies a vital place in the thought of Locke. Locke believed that it governed the lives of men not only in the state of nature but also continued to govern them in the civil society.

- **Locke on Social Contract**

Unlike the social contract of Hobbes which accorded absolute and unlimited powers to the sovereign ruler, the contract of Locke gives only limited powers to the community. In Locke's contract the sovereign is a party to the contract and is as much bound by the interpretation of the natural laws as other members.

Another noteworthy feature of Locke's contract is that it was unanimous. Since men are free and independent in the state of nature, no one can be compelled to join the politic against his will. In other words, his contract is based on the consent of the people.

The contract of Locke is also irrevocable in the sense that once the people have entered into contract they cannot revert back to the state of nature unless the government, under whom they are placed, is dissolved.

- **Locke as an Individualist**

According to British political philosopher Professor Vaughan, "Everything in Locke's system revolves round the individual; everything is disposed so as to ensure the sovereignty of the individual." Locke is considered as a through-going individualist.

The main features of the individualist philosophy of Locke can be summed up as follows:

Firstly, he accords a fundamental position to the natural rights in his scheme and asserts that the natural rights of life, liberty and property belong to the individual due to the fact of his very personality. In other words, he is of the view that the natural rights are prior to the state.

Secondly, Locke sought rights and freedom for all men without distinction. The state was created for the protection of the natural rights and the happiness of the individual.

Thirdly, Locke assigns to the state purely negative functions. It interferes only when the rights of the individual are endangered. Otherwise the individual is left completely free to pursue his moral, material and intellectual pursuits.

Fourthly, Locke's view on property further confirms him as an individualist. He says that property which was initially owned in common becomes private property of an individual after he used his labour with it or imparts a bit of his individuality to the common object. This is probably the best way to emphasize the importance and worth of the individual.

Fifthly, Locke displays his strong individualist bias in his views on revolution. He authorizes the individual to rise in and revolt against the state if it fails to carry out its part of obligations.

Sixthly, his faith in the pleasure and pain theory, which forms the starting point of his philosophy, further points to his individualism.

Seventhly, Locke also advocates division of power, because he was convinced that it was an essential pre-condition for the preservation of individual freedom which adds to his list of individualistic philosophy.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q. 5 : John Locke was an English philosopher (True/False)

……

Q. 6: When was Locke born?

……

Q. 7: Locke wrote as many as ..... books dealing with different walks of life. (Fill in the Blank)

Q. 8: Who is known as the 'Father of Liberalism' and why? (within 50 words).

.....

.....

.....

5.5 JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

Jean Jacques Rousseau was born at Geneva in the year 1712. He was a philosopher, writer, and composer of the 18th century. His political philosophy influenced the Enlightenment in France and across Europe, as well as aspects of the French Revolution and also the overall development of modern political and educational thought.

Some of the important works of Rousseau are – "The Social Contract" or "Principles of Political Rights", "La Nouvelle Heloise", "Constitutional Project for Corsica", "The Confessions", and "Considerations on the Government of Poland".

- **Rousseau on General Will** :

The theory of General will advocated by Rousseau has been described as the most revolutionary doctrine of Rousseau. According to Professor Jones "The notion of the General Will is not only the central concept of Rousseau's theory, it is also the most original, the most interesting and historically the most important contribution which he has made to Political Theory." In the words of Rousseau "the public person, so formed by the union of all other persons is called by its member state when passive, sovereign when active." To understand Rousseau's concept of General Will, we need to understand the difference between the term actual will and real will. According to Rousseau, the actual will was the will which was selfish, irrational and thought of the good of the individual alone without bothering about the welfare of the society. On the other hand the real will as higher, nobler and supreme, which led the person to think of the well being of the individual as well as the society. As the real will was based on the reason it was not momentary but permanent. The General Will of Rousseau is nothing but the sum total of all the 'real wills' of the individual which were based on reason and farsightedness of the individuals. Rousseau distinguished his General Will from the will of all. He says that whereas the will of all was merely a majority will which considered the welfare of a few only, the General Will thought in terms of the good of the community as a whole. The differences between these two wills can be best explained in the following words of Rousseau: "there is often considerable difference between General Will and the will of all, the former aims at the common interest, the latter aims at private interest and is only a sum of particular wills. But if we take away from these wills the various particular interests which conflict with each other, what remains as the sum if difference is General Will."

- **Attributes of General Will** :

The General Will of Rousseau has the following attributes:

Firstly, it is indivisible. Just like the personality of an individual, General Will cannot be divided. Once it is divided it shall cease to be 'General Will' and become merely sectional will.

Secondly, like the human will, the General Will cannot be represented by anybody else.

Thirdly, the General Will is supreme and nobody can disobey it. According to Rousseau "whosoever is refused to obey the General Will shall be compelled to do so by the whole body….he will be forced to be free."

Fourthly, the General Will is a single unity and cannot be alienated.

Fifthly, the General Will was unrepresentable. Therefore, Rousseau believed in direct democracy through General Will.

Sixthly, the General Will is always correct. It is based on mainly wisdom and experience and could not be swayed by currents of time.

- **Criticism of Rousseau's Theory of General Will :**

Rousseau's theory of General Will has been criticized on the following grounds.

Firstly, the concept of General Will is quite vague and confusing. Even Rousseau uses the term 'general will' in different senses at different places in his writings.

Secondly, Rousseau talks of General Will as distinct from the will of All, but in practice it is almost impossible to draw a line of distinction between the two.

Thirdly, Rousseau tries to divide the individual will into two parts – the essential and non-essential. The essential part is rational while the non-essential part is selfish. But as the individual's will is a corporate will it is impossible to divide in two parts.

Fourthly, Rousseau asserts that the General Will coincides with justice. In this way he makes the things still more complicated.

Fifthly, Rousseau by assigning absolute powers to the General Will paves the way for the rise of dictatorship. It leaves sufficient scope for the person or group in power to promote his own interests or interests of a particular group under the cloak of popular good.

Sixthly, Rousseau's theory of General Will implies that the state is a super-entity distinct from its organic elements, the individuals. Infact, the interest of the individual and the state are identical and it is not possible to separate the two.

Seventhly, Rousseau says that liberty for the individual is possible only if he obeys the General Will.

Eightly, the theory expects too much from human nature. It is well known that men are essentially selfish. It would be too much to expect from them they shall forego their selfish ends for the collective good.

Finally, his theory of General Will has been considered as contrary to his theory of social contract. It is true that Rousseau's theory of General Will suffers from numerous paradoxes and shortcomings, but still it has been regarded as Rousseau's most profound contribution to political theory.

According to Prof. Maxey, the concept of General Will is the crux of Rousseau's system and probably his most distinctive contribution to political thought." The value of the theory lies in the fact that it asserted the importance of human beings and the need of their cooperation for the smooth working of the state." The propagation of these principles proved helpful for the growth of democracy. It also emphasized the principle that the social good must get precedence over individual interests and thus contributed to the growth of the idealist theory of state.

5.6 INDIVIDUALISM AND LIBERALISM

Thomas Hobbes generally is identified as the most important antecedent of modern individualist philosophy. In his *Leviathan* (1651), Hobbes ascribed to all individuals natural liberty (as well as equality) on the basis of which they are licensed to undertake whatever actions are

necessary in order to preserve themselves from their fellow creatures. Hobbes also believed that the exercise of such natural liberty will logically lead to unceasing conflict and unremitting fear so long as no single sovereign ruler exists to maintain peace. The exchange of the chaotic natural freedom for government imposed order requires renunciation of all the freedoms that humans possess by nature and voluntary submission to any dictate imposed by the sovereign. Yet, even under the terms of Hobbes's absolute sovereignty, individuals are deemed to remain at liberty to choose for themselves concerning any and all matters about which the ruler has not explicitly legislated.

Locke begins his political theory in the "Second Treatise of Government" (1689) with the postulation of the divinely granted liberty of all individuals, understood in terms of the absolute right to preserve one's life and to lay claim to the goods one requires for survival. Again arguing against the patriarchal doctrine of Sir Robert Filmer, Locke insists that no natural basis, neither paternity nor descent, justifies the submission of one person to another. Rather, each individual is the proprietor of his or her physical and mental talents, abilities, and energies. The individual thus constitutes the basic unit of social and political analysis for Locke, who is sometimes considered the proponent of the doctrine of "possessive individualism" par excellence.

Rousseau aimed at promoting the morel life and liberty of the individual starts with the individual. The state is created by the individuals and exists for them. Prof. Vaughan says that Rousseau's ideas lead straight-away to collectivism and he was "the determined foe of individualism-sworn foe not only of individualism, but of individuality." He admits that in his 'Discourses' Rousseau projects himself as an individualist but in his later work 'Social Contract' he is seen as an outright collectivist. He believes in the supremacy of the state over the individual. Hobbes who is considered to be an absolutist, authorised the individual to disobey the state if his life is endangered. On the other hand, Rousseau in no circumstances allows the individual to act in contrary to the dictates of the General will.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 9 : Jean Jacques Rousseau was born at Geneva in the year 1752. (True/False)

.....

Q 10 : Mention any two works of Rousseau.

.....

.....

Q 11 : Jean Jacques Rousseau was born at Geneva in the year……. (Fill in the Blank)

Q 12 : What is General Will? (within 50 words).

.....

.....

.....



5.7 LET US SUM UP

- Thomas Hobbes (1581-1679) was an English philosopher. Hobbes is known today for his work on political philosophy.
- Hobbes 1651 book “Leviathan” established social contract theory, which is regarded as the foundation of Western political philosophy.
- Hobbes contributed to a diverse array of other fields, including history, geometry, theology, the physics of gases, ethics, and general philosophy.
- The main works of Hobbes include “De Cive” (1642), “Leviathan” (1651), “De Corpore” (1655), and “De Homine” (1658).
- John Locke (29 August 1632 – 28 October 1704) was an English philosopher and physician, widely regarded as one of the most influential of Enlightenment thinkers and commonly known as the “Father of Liberalism”.

- Locke wrote as many as 35 books dealing with different walks of life.
- The concept of the law of nature occupies a vital place in the thought of Locke. Locke believed that it governed the lives of men not only in the state of nature but also continued to govern them in the civil society.
- Unlike the social contract of Hobbes which accorded absolute and unlimited powers to the sovereign ruler, the contract of Locke gives only limited powers to the community.
- In Locke's contract the sovereign is a party to the contract and is as much bound by the interpretation of the natural laws as other members.
- The contract of Locke is also irrevocable.
- Jean Jacques Rousseau was born at Geneva in the year 1712. He was a philosopher, writer, and composer of the 18th century.
- Some of the important works of Rousseau are – "The Social Contract" or the "Principles of Political Rights", "La Nouvelle Heloise", "Project for a Constitution for Corsica", "The Confessions", and "Considerations on the Government".
- The theory of General will advocated by Rousseau has been described as the most revolutionary doctrine of Rousseau.
- The General Will of Rousseau is nothing but the sum total of all the 'real wills' of the individual which were based on reason and farsightedness of the individuals.
- The General Will cannot be represented by anybody else.
- The General Will is supreme and nobody can disobey it.



5.8 FURTHER READING

- Gupta, R.C., Great Political Thinkers, Lakshmi Narain Agarwal Educational Publishers, Agra, 2009-10.

- Jha, Shefali, Western Political Thought – From Plato to Marx, Pearson, 2010.
- Macpherson, C.B. The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke, Oxford, 1977.



5.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 : 1581

Ans to Q. No. 2 : True

Ans to Q. No. 3 : De Homine (1658).

Ans to Q. No. 4 : De Cive (1642), the Leviathan (1651), the De Corpore (1655), and De Homine (1658).

Ans to Q. No. 5 : True

Ans to Q. No. 6 : 29 August 1632

Ans to Q. No. 7 : 35 books

Ans to Q. No. 9 : False

Ans to Q. No. 10 : *The Confessions*, and *Considerations on the Government.*

Ans to Q. No. 11 : Jean Jacques Rousseau was born at Geneva in the year 1712.

5.10 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1 : When was Hobbes and Locke born respectively?

Q 2 : Mention one important work of Rousseau.

Q 3 : Write a brief note on Locke's Social Contract theory.

Q 4 : Analyse Hobbes view on Human Nature.

Q 5 : Evaluate the concept of General Will of Rousseau.

Q 6 : Discuss the views of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau on liberalism and individualism.

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UNIT 6 : UTILITARIANISM- JEREMY BENTHAM AND JOHN STUART MILL

UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Learning Objectives

6.2 Introduction

6.3 Jeremy Bentham

6.4 Bentham's Utilitarianism

6.5 J.S. Mill

6.6 Mills' Utilitarianism

6.7 Utilitarianism

6.8 Let Us Sum Up

6.9 Further Reading

6.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

6.11 Possible Questions

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- dscuss Jeremy Betham's views on utilitarianism.
- Discuss about J.S.Mill's views on utilitarianism.

6.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall learn about the philosophy of utilitarianism as propounded by two great political thinkers Jenermy Bentham and J.S.Mill. Utilitarianism, generally speaking, is the philosophy of "greatest happiness of the greatest number." Apart from quantity, the question of the quality of pleasure involved is also associated with the philosophy of utilitarianism.

6.3 JEREMY BENTHAM

Jeremy Bentham was born in 1748, in London. He was a pioneer of English Political philosophy. The writings of Bentham published in English are A Fragment on Government (1776), Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation (1789), Plan of Parliamentary Reform (1817), Bentham's Radical Reform Bill (1819) and the Constitutional Code (1830). He had planned a three-volume work for The Constitutional Code. However, he was able to publish only the first volume it in his lifetime.

Bentham was never a practicing lawyer. He saw himself as more of a legal reformer. Most of his works were written with the purpose of bringing about legal and political change in Britain. In the 1820s, when he was in his 70s, his motivation to write such an ambitious work like Constitutional Code came from the hope that its proposals would be adopted by the new liberal new governments of Spain and Portugal. Much of Bentham's work was done in association with James Mill, whom he first met in 1808 and who was to become his lifelong associate. With him, Bentham set up the Westminster review in 1824, a journal devoted to the philosophy of utilitarianism. Bentham died in 1832 when the struggle for Parliamentary reform in England was on.

Jeremy Bentham was the main inspiration behind a group of intellectuals in England known as the Philosophical Radicals. This group along with Bentham believed that societies could be reformed and improved with the help of philosophical knowledge. According to Bentham, this was based on the principle of utility. Bentham acknowledged his debt to Helvetius, Hume and Priestley in developing his philosophy of utilitarianism. From Hume and Helvetius he said he got the idea of utility, and from Priestley the idea of the good and happiness of the majority of the members of any society.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : 1

Q 1 : When was Bentham born?

……

……

Q 2 : When was "Plan of Parliamentary Reform" published?

……

Q 3 : Bentham was born in London. (True /False)

……

6.4 BENTHAMS' UTILITARIANISM

Bentham added the concept of utility as a mathematical computation of satisfaction by balancing pain against pleasures. According to him, all actions of man were mainly motivated by the considerations of pleasure and pain. Every man tried to increase pleasure and minimize or avoid pain.

Bentham began the first chapter of The Morals and Legislation thus:

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 as to determine what we shall do. On the one hand the standard of right and wrong, on the other the chain of causes and effects, are fastened to their throne. They govern us in all we do, in all we say, in all we think….a man may pretend to abjure their empire: but in reality he will remain subject to it all the while. The principle of utility recognizes this subjection, and assumes it for the foundation of that system, the object of which is to rear the fabric of felicity by the hands of reason and of law.

For Bentham, utilitarianism was both a normative and descriptive theory. It has not only described how human beings act so as to maximize their pleasure and minimize pain, but it also advocated such actions. According to the principle of utility, the cause of all human action which motivates human beings to act is a desire for pleasure. Utility or happiness

is defined is defined in terms of pleasure. A thing or action is useful if it brings about happiness, that is, pleasure. By utility is meant that property in any object, wherever it tends to produce benefit, advantage, pleasure, good, or happiness.

For Bentham, pleasure and pain are the primary sensations experienced by human beings. 'Pleasures and pains are basic to our phenomenal experience and are commonly experienced by everyone.'

In his book "An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation", Bentham listed 14 simple pleasures that includes the pleasures of sense, wealth, skill, amity, a good name, power, piety, benevolence, malevolence, expectation, memory, imagination, association and relief. Diminishing pain also means more pleasure. There are twelve kinds of pain which individual seek to avoid includes, the pains of awkwardness, of privation (hardship), of the senses, of enmity, of an ill name, of benevolence, of piety, of malevolence, of memory, of imagination, of expectation and of association. These simple pleasures and pains can combine to form compound ones.

Eudemonics: It is the art or means of attaining happiness.

It is these pleasures and pains that determine all our actions. 'Directly or indirectly, well-being, in some shape or other, is the subject of every thought, and object of every action, on the part of every known Being, who is, at the same time a sensitive and thinking Being…This being admitted, ***Eudaemonics***,… may be said to the object of every branch of art, and the subject of every branch of science. Eudaemonics, is the art, which has for the object of its endeavours, to contribute in some way or other to the attainment of well-being.'

The science of utility maximization, Eudaemonics, is a kind of master science. For Bentham, all our efforts to gain knowledge are to be directed to the knowledge, however consummate it maybe, lies in its use for the argumentation of happiness. All branches of knowledge are part of Eudaemonics and knowledge is of no value if it cannot be used to promote happiness. 'But except in so far as in some shape or other it leads to and is

productive of well-being-a balance on the side of happiness-what is the value of all the knowledge in the world? Just nothing.'

Just as Bentham links knowledge with well-being, similarly, he couples morality with the idea of happiness. Not only do individuals seek to maximize their pleasure and minimize their pain, but they also use the evaluative terms of good and bad to name those activities which bring them pleasure or pain.

In fact, it is essential that not one give more to weight to one's own pleasure than to the pleasure of others. What is new with Bentham and his claim of utilitarianism being a moral theory, is the advocacy of such action. As early as 1776, in the preface to "A Fragment on Government", Bentham writes, 'it is the greatest happiness of the greatest number that is the measure of right and wrong.'

This is how Bentham answers the question of what is so moral about an individual seeking his pleasure. His defence against the charge of utilitarianism being, instead of a theory of morality, a theory actually of selfish physiological hedonism, is that utilitarianism does not propose that one seek only one's pleasure. In deciding in what manner to act, one has to be impartial between one's own pleasure and that of all those affected by that act. If all happiness is either that happiness of the agent himself or the happiness of others, then we can clearly show that utilitarianism is also concerned with happiness of others. Let us take the example of punishment. If punishment is to have some utility, and to have utility is to generate happiness then punishment is obviously not going to make the person who is punished, happy. It will instead, make others happy by making it less probable that the crime is committed again. It is true, that for Bentham, the community is a fictitious entity; nothing more than the individual members constituting it. The community is a fictitious body, composed of the individual persons who are considered as constituting as it were its members. The interest of the community then is…..sum of the interests of the several members who compose it.' It remains true, how-ever that the interests (happiness) of others are to count as much as the interest of oneself.

The context of one's action determines the number of individuals affected by it. For government officials, all the members of the political community are affected by their action, so the government has to calculate the balance of pleasure and pain on a countrywide scale. In case of a private individual, he has to consider only the pleasures and pains of those few directly affected by his action. The government is concerned about the happiness or welfare of all its citizens, and the individual is to think the happiness of others as well, apart from himself. This is how utilitarianism becomes a moral theory.

Bentham provided a calculus for determining the balance between pleasure and pain gained from any action known as **Felicific Calculus**. According to this felicific calculus, one must give a numerical value to the intensity, duration, certainty or uncertainty, and propinquity (nearness) or remoteness of the pleasures and pains of the persons affected by one's action, and one must undertake the action only if the value of the pleasure is higher than the value of the pain. One should also factor in the fruitfulness of the pleasure producing act, as well as purity (the chance it has of not being followed by sensations of the opposite kind) and extent (the number of persons to whom it extends) of the pleasure being produced. Thus suggesting a procedure for the empirical measurement of the sum total of pleasure, Bentham felt that he had provided an objective basis for moral claims.

In calculating pleasure and pain, one must be careful to abstract from the object which is the source of the pleasure or pain and from the person whose pleasure or pain is being calculated. This means that the pleasures of a philosopher are not to count for more than the pleasures of an illiterate person.

Human beings generally seek their own happiness and to harmonize the happiness of a large group of individuals become a matter of political design. Bentham in his theory of human motivation identified four general motives for human action. The purely social motive of benevolence motivates a few individuals. Such benevolent individuals pursue the happiness of others

even at the cost of their own happiness. The majority of the human kind act out of the asocial motive of self-interest, and pursue their own happiness taking care not to cause others pain, but do not go the extent of pursuing others' happiness. An individual, who acts out of the semi-social motive of love of praise, pursue others' happiness only when it promotes his own as well. Finally there are some individuals moved by the dissocial motives, who actually experience pleasure by harming others.

Human beings are then generally seeking their own pleasure. It is a truism to say that every man, on every occasion, pursues his own interest. When the interest of some group of men are opposed to the general interest, there is not much point, therefore, in exhorting these men not to act in such a way that gives them pleasure but gives many more pain. For Bentham, it was the proper end or object of every political arrangement (not of every private individual's actions) that the greatest happiness of greatest number be realized.

What is required in general for human beings to reach the happiness they are searching for? Human happiness, for Bentham depended on individuals not being motivated to follow their sinister interests, rendering instead, services to each other. The government can ensure these services by creating a system of rights and obligations. Political society exists because government is necessary to compel individuals to render services to each other, in order to increase their happiness. This, then, is how Bentham made the transition from his utilitarianism to his political philosophy.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : 2

Q 4 : Mention any two simple pleasures identified by Bentham.

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Q 5 : What is meant by Eudaemonics ?

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6.5 JOHN STUART MILL

John Stuart Mill was born in 1806, in London, as the oldest son of the Scottish historian and philosopher, James Mill. All of Mill's education was supervised by his father's philosopher friend, Jeremy Bentham. Mill neither went to a regular school nor to a university like Oxford or Cambridge, but he read so much at home that, while still in his teens, he began contributing articles to the Westminster Review, the journal of Philosophical radicals. Later, as one of the Philosophical Radicals himself, well versed in their utilitarian principles, he became the editor of the new journal, the London and Westminster Review.

Mill was a prolific writer, producing work in variousl disciplines. His "A System of Logic" which he wrote in 1843, was followed by Principles of Political Economy in 1848. In 1859, he wrote On Liberty. In 1861, he wrote Considerations on Representative Government followed by Utilitarianism in 1863. The Subjection of Women was published in 1869, while Autobiography and Three Essays on Religion, were published posthumously in 1873 and in 1874, respectively. Mill's The Subjection of Women, was a work which was far ahead of its time in its application of the principle of liberty to the position of women.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 6 : "Principles of Political Economy" was published in the year 1849. (True/False)

……

Q 7 : When was J.S. Mill born?

……

Q 8 : Mention any two works of Mill?

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6.6 MILL'S UTILITARIANISM

We all know, Mill's father, Jaes Mill, was the closest associate of Jeremy Bentham, the founder of utilitarianism. Mill grew up in the shadow of utilitarianism, and even after the emotional crisis of his early twenties, he managed to write a defence of utilitarianism. Throughout his work, we have seen him applying the standard of utility. One consideration for giving equality to women was that it would increase their happiness, and the principle of liberty was defended on the grounds of its social utility. Social progress depended on individual freedom. A modified liberal democracy was characterized as the best form of government because of its usefulness in improving the quality of its citizens.

Utilitarianism is the slim tract which Mill put together not only to answer all the objections that had been raised against his philosophy, but also to make certain modifications to the existing theory of utilitarianism, so that it would become consistent with his ideas of liberty and democracy. The work begins by Mill pointing out that there has been, over centuries, little agreement on the criteria of differentiating right from wrong. Rejecting the idea of human beings having a moral sense like our sense of sight or smell, which can sense what is right in concrete cases, Mill put forward the criterion of 'utility' or the 'greatest happiness' principle as the basis of morality. That action is moral which increases pleasure and diminishes pain. In defending utilitarianism here, Mill made a significant change from Bentham's position. Pleasure has to be counted not only in terms of quantity but also in terms of quality. A qualitatively higher pleasure is to count for more than lower pleasures. 'It is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognize the fact, that some kinds of pleasure are more desirable and more valuable than others….It is better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a pig satisfied.'

Mill's utilitarianism differed from Bentham's by being a qualitative hedonism. According to Mill, in order to calculate the value of a pleasure one has to factor in the nature of activity from which that pleasure is being derived. Since the activity enters into the evaluation of the pleasure,

utilitarianism is no longer about brain states or mental states, but about what we actually do.

Having responded to the criticism that utilitarianism assumes an animal-like nature, Mill moved to the next serious problem. Why would individuals be interested in the happiness of others? Mill answered in terms of 'social feelings of mankind; the desire to be in unity with our fellow creatures, a powerful principle of human nature.' Claiming that 'the social state is at once so natural, so necessary and so habitual to man, that...he never conceives himself otherwise than as a member of a body', Mill found our tendency of taking an interest in others' happiness not surprising at all.

Finally, the only objection that mill took seriously was that justice, instead of utility is the foundation of morality. Mill's response was first to link justice with rights-an injustice is done when someone's rights are violated-and then to assert the rights to be defended because of their utility. 'To have a right, then, is to have something which society ought to defend me in the possession of. If the objector goes on to ask, why it ought? I can give him no other reason than general utility.' A society in which individuals are certain of enjoying their rights is the one, which according to Mill, is able to progress. Thus rights do not replace the concept of utility. For Mill, utility was the justification for rights.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 9 : Explain briefly J.S.Mills' utilitarianism? (within 200 words).

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6.7 LET US SUM UP

- Jeremy Bentham was born in 1748, in London.
- Bentham was a pioneer of English Political philosophy.
- Among the writings of Bentham published originally in English are A Fragment on Government (1776), Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation (1789), Plan of Parliamentary Reform (1817), Bentham's Radical Reform Bill (1819) and the Constitutional Code (1830).
- Bentham had planned a three-volume work for The Constitutional Code.
- Bentham was the inspiration behind a group of intellectuals in England known as the Philosophical Radicals.
- Bentham acknowledged his debt to Hume, Helvetius and Priestley in developing his own philosophy of utilitarianism.
- John Stuart Mill was born in 1806, in London, as the oldest son of the Scottish historian and philosopher, James Mill.
- Mill was a prolific writer, producing work in several disciplines.
- Mill's *A System of Logic* which he wrote in 1843, was followed by *Principles of Political Economy* in 1848. In 1859, he wrote *On Liberty*. In 1861, he wrote *Considerations on Representative Government* followed by *Utilitarianism* in 1863. *The Subjection of Women* was published in 1869, while *Autobiography* and *Three Essays on Religion*, were published posthumously in 1873 and in 1874, respectively.
- Jeremy Bentham was the founder of utilitarianism.
- A society in which individuals are certain of enjoying their rights is the one, which according to Mill, is able to progress.
- The science of utility maximization, Eudaemonics, is a kind of master science.

- Bentham provided a calculus for determining the balance between pleasure and pain gained from any action known as Felicific Calculus.
- Mill put forward the criteria of 'utility' or the 'greatest happiness' principle as the basis of morality.



6.8 FURTHER READING

- Gupta, R.C., Great Political Thinkers, Lakshmi Narain Agarwal Educational Publishers, Agra, 2009-10.
- Bentham,Jeremy, The principles of Morals and Legislation, Prometheus Books, New York, 1988.
- Jha, Shefali, Western Political Thought – From Plato to Marx, Pearson, 2010.
- Nelson, Brain R, Western Political Thought, Pearson Education, 1996.

6.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 : Jeremy Bentham was born in 1748.

Ans to Q. No. 2 : Plan of Parliamentary Reform was published in the year 1817

Ans to Q. No. 3 : True

Ans to Q. No. 4 : Pleasures of wealth and skill

Ans to Q. No. 5 : Eudaemonics is the science of utility maximization.

Ans to Q. No. 6 : False.

Ans to Q. No. 7 : 1806

Ans to Q. No. 8 : "A System of Logic" and "Principles of Political Economy".

Ans to Q. No. 9 : J.S. Mill put forward the criterion of 'utility' or the 'greatest happiness' principle as the basis of morality. That action is moral

which increases pleasure and diminishes pain. In defending utilitarianism here, Mill made a significant change from Bentham's position. Pleasure has to be counted not only in terms of quantity but also in terms of quality. A qualitatively higher pleasure is to count for more than lower pleasures. 'It is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognize the fact, that some kinds of pleasure are more desirable and more valuable than others….It is better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a pig satisfied.'

Mill's utilitarianism differed from Bentham's by being a qualitative hedonism. According to Mill, in order to calculate the value of a pleasure one has to factor in the nature of activity from which that pleasure is being derived. Since the activity enters into the evaluation of the pleasure, utilitarianism is no longer about brain states or mental states, but about what we actually do.



6.10 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q. 1 : Name two works of Mill.

Q. 2 : Name two works of Bentham.

Q. 3 : What is Felicific Calculus?

Q. 4 : Define utilitarianism.

Q. 5 : Analyse Bentham's philosophy.

Q. 6 : Discuss J.S. Mill's utilitarianism.

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UNIT 7 : ENGLISH IDEALISM- T. H. GREEN

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Learning Objectives

7.2 Introduction

7.3 T .H. Green and English Idealism

7.4 Green on state.

7.5 Green on Freedom and Rights

7.5.1 Green's views on Freedom

7.5.2 Green's views on Rights

7.6 Green on War

7.7 Other key concepts of Green

7.7.1 Punishment

7.7.2 Property

7.7.3 Natural Law

7.7.4 Societies

7.8 An Estimate of Green

7.9 Let Us Sum Up.

7.10 Further Reading

7.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

7.12 Possible Questions

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- explain about English Idealism
- discuss Green's views on State
- discuss Green's views on Freedom and Rights
- discuss Green's views on War

- explain some other important views of Green
- present an estimate of Green

7.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall discuss the philosophy of English idealism. English idealism was philosophical movement that was greatly influential in Britain from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century. The main stress of this type of idealism was on the "ideal" character of all phenomena.

7.3 ENGLISH IDEALISM AND T. H. GREEN

English Idealism, also known as Oxford Idealism, was formed in the backdrop of Industrial revolution in England. They drew Inspiration from German Idealists. Beginning with Immanuel Kant, German idealists such as G. W. Hegal , Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling etc dominated 19th-century philosophy. This tradition, which emphasized the mental or "ideal" character of all phenomena, gave birth to idealistic and subjectivist schools which led to formation of English Idealism.

Kant and Hegel did not give much importance to the representative institutions of England. They were accustomed to the authoritarianism of Germany . Hegel observed that people of England were not free in real sense and he branded England as most backward . On the other hand, Kant was of the view that the representatives of England had no scope to work independently. Such a miserable socio-political and economic conditions of England compelled some of the scholars to work out for a better, alternative and a new theory which will fit to the condition of post Industrial England. They wanted the role of the state to be redefined. The state should stop playing an inactive role of being lame and helpless onlookers. This was not the role of a responsible government. During that period , Thomas Hill Green and other Oxford Idealists emerged and they were convinced that there should be some new political philosophy to tackle

the situation of England at that time. That was the time of the utilitarians but their ideology could not address the problems of England at that time. One cannot be busy only with oneself and social problems must be treated as common social issues. They felt the need for a new beginning to be made. The fruits of democracy must benefit all. So, they echoed the sentiments of the mass people. Green himself roamed in the lanes and by-lanes of England and got acquainted with the real conditions. That is why, his idealism is also called humanist Idealism. It brought about a renaissance in the idea of Idealism. The English idealists redefined the role of the state and made it more humanist in nature. It is assumed that it is from this concept that the welfare state borrowed its basic nature.

Thomas Hill Green was not only a philosopher but also a practical politician who took keen interest in the politics of his country. He was born in Yorkshire on 11 April ,1836 in the family of Clergyman.

The political philosophy of Green is contained in the numerous works like:

- *Principles of Political Obligations(1882)*
- *Lectures on Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract*
- *Lectures on the English Revolution*
- *Prolegomena to Ethics*



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1 : What do you understand by English Idealism?

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Q 2 : Mention some important works of T.H.Green.

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7.4 GREEN ON STATE

Green was the first man in the 19th century to build a comprehensive philosophy of state. His concept of state was based on metaphysical and real political development backed by his ethics. This combination of speculative thought and practical problems made his contribution to political thought attain a unique position in the history of English political thought. So he was regarded both a philosopher and practical reformer. Green concept of state was built on a very sound and reasonable footing. He never considered state as an end in itself. It was a means to an end. He believed that the state existed for the full moral development of the individuals who comprise it. He followed a Kantian belief in developing his concept of state. That every man has worth and dignity which protects him from all kinds of exploitation for any purpose. The life of the nation has no real existence except existence of the life of the individuals. That is why the development or progress of a nation is relative , dependent on the development of the individuals in a society. That is why he accorded a negative function to the state. According to him, 'the state cannot teach morality to men, nor can it make men moral , morality consists in 'the disinterested performance of self – imposed duties'. It is to remove obstacles which prevent men from becoming moral. Inorder to remove the obstacles the state is necessary and negative functions of the state is transformed to positive functions. He wrote, 'to any Athenian slave, who might be used to gratify a master's lust, it would have been a mockery to speak of the state as a realization of freedom; and perhaps it would not be much less to speak of it as such to an untaught and under-fed denizen of a London yard gin-shops, on the right hand and on the left'. It was for the state to see that the mental and physical malnutrition, together with the gin-shops were removed. Green did not idealize the state as Plato, Hegel and the subsequent English idealist. His view on state is based on human nature. The following points clarifies green's conception of state:

- The state is a a product of human consciousness. In the words of Professor Barker, 'the human consciousness postulates liberty;

liberty involves rights, rights demand the state.' The common conciousness of the common end is the basis of the state. Hence , he considers the state as the means to achieve the ends.

- The main aim of individual life is self-realization which can be achieved through freedom. Freedom is the primary means to achieve self-realization. When the self consciousness postulates liberty it not only knows itself but also identifies itself with others.
- The individual self is the social–self because it not only wills the good of the self but also good of other individuals in the state. Here Green related rights and liberty as one of the main components in carrying out activities of the state.
- Green refuses to accept the mechanistic theory of the state because he is convinced that will, and not force is the true basis of state.
- Green accepts the organic theory of state with many qualifications.
- Green regards the state as natural since the human being is necessarily a social animal.
- Green regards freedom as a process of self development without any restraints. Such self-development will take place on freely obeying laws and customs which are seen to embody a rational scheme of justice within the community.
- State is essentially good because it guides people to understand their own moral obligations and act accordingly.
- State actions are judged by outward actions and inward will. If wrong motive brings welfare it is far better than bad action with right motive. Here he goes against the utilitarians. Every state can be judged by its practical and ideal contents . A state is good if it contains the largest possible number of happy and moral human beings.
- The state must enforce rights because rights are meaningless and gives nothing to the individuals if are not enforceable. If necessary, it should be done even by compulsion. For this, he even justified use of force by the state.

- The authority of the state must be limited both from within and outside. In order to limit the authority, the law can take cognizance of only external actions of individuals and has nothing to do with motives. The state will play an indirect role in the moral development of the individuals. It will only remove the hindrances coming in the way of the individuals. Here the individual can also limit the authority of the state by way of resistance against the state. Green is of the opinion that in certain cases public interest is best served by violation of some actual laws. For instance, one is justified if one protests against any law favouring slavery and fights fot the right of the slave to be free.
- The state is not a part of the general will. The state maintains the general will.

It can be said that Green's concept of state is also related to the rights and obligations of the individuals. The state is directed to bring common good of the individuals by securing appropriate rights and conferring appropriate liberty for their development.

In relation to the state, Green talked about sovereignty as an essential element of state. In putting forward the concept, he was inspired by Rousseau's idea of sovereignty in the form of the General Will and Austin's idea of sovereignty in the form of determinate human superiority. According to him, "Sovereign signifies a determinate person or persons; charged with the supreme coercive functions of the state, and the general will does not admit of being vested in a person or persons; yet it is true that the institutions of the political society- those by which equal rights are guaranteed to members of such a society- are an expression of, and are maintained by , a general will. The sovereign should be regarded , not in abstractions, as the wielder of coercive power, but in connection with the whole complex of institutions or of political society". Therefore by sovereign he meant a legal sovereign who has the power to enforce law and act as an agent of the general will. Green's general will is an assertion that the ultimate moving force which insprires and controls political actions is a spiritual force. It is a common conviction that that paves the way for righteousness . It is a

common consciousness which arms the agents of the state with power. It is the creator of rights, law and a system of rules so that rights can be maintained. The mission of the sovereign is to enunciate and enforce that law . Because by enforcing law full vigour and complete harmony can be maintained with one another in the society and it will then be an embodiment of rights and law. Green considers the general will as the common consciousness of the common good. The society is the product of the general will. The rights, duties and institutions emerged from this general will. The state has the functions of maintaining the general will.

Instrinsically related to this general will is political obligation without which state is meaningless. Political obligation or obedience to state can be derived from individuals in a state because it is a natural instinct of man. The individual's moral and spiritual development is possible by this way only. An individual must be sure that his or her personal wellbeing brings the wellbeing of others so that others could also avail themselves of the same opportunities. He should obey the state because it is the only means by which the hindrances on the way of his or her self-perfection can be removed. However his or her self perfection must be in consonance with social welfare. It is because the individual is not out of the society and is an integral part of the society.

7.5 GREEN ON FREEDOM AND RIGHTS

7.5.1 Green's views on Freedom

According to Green freedom is the primary means to self realization. Freedom should be enjoyed through self consciousness because in such a situation others can also enjoy freedom along with self. This can bring social development because individual self is social self. This is a positive type of freedom as such freedom generate rights and rights pave the way for social development. He considers freedom as the greatest of all blessings and it is a vital condition for moral development of the individuals. He talked about

internal freedom and was not at all interested in freedom which gives only external happiness. He wanted the individuals to be free so that they can develop their moral virtues to the fullest. The individuals should be left free from state interference for this purpose. That is why he wanted a state which will be always ready to remove the obstacles from the individual's life which come in the way of individual's moral development. He was against a parental government. Here he can be related to the Kantian form of freedom.

Not only Kant , Green even followed Hegelian idea of freedom which regard freedom to be universal and positive and which can achieved through participation in the state. However he did not follow Hegel fully but tried to follow a middle path in between Kant and Hegel. Green chose a middle path between the freedom of laissez faire where one had the freedom to do as one wished and the the freedom of both Hegel and Rousseau whose ideas of state-centric freedom seemed more than likely to end in despotism. Since he could not accept either view in its entirety, he had to find a defensible basis for positive liberty which would avoid the extremes. In this context, Green asserted that freedom is not ultimate. It was confined to the realization of self consciousness. So he developed the idea of positive freedom by which he meant, "a positive power or capacity of doing or enjoying something worth doing or enjoying and that too, something that we do or enjoy in common with others". So his positive freedom does not include freedom to do anything and everything. It includes enjoyment of those things which makes life better, because by this way self perfection can be attained.

7.5.2 Green's views on Rights

Positive freedom emanates rights. Rights on the other hand can be claimed when there is positive freedom available in a particular state. So, both are complementary as well as supplementary to each other. Like freedom, rights are necessary

to develop moral consciousness of the individuals. Green believed that rights are not the result of any contract. Individuals enjoy rights only as a member of the society which recognizes those rights. Through rights moral ends are achieved, so they are relative to morality. Most importantly there is the necessity of law. Law embodies rights and tries to promote common good. This is the reason that individuals are bound to show obligations to the state. Because state ensures the legality of the rights and makes it enforceable through law. Therefore, by rights Green implies, "the claim on an individual to will his own ideal objects and developing his capacities of reason and will".

Green was on the support of socialist rights. No one can enjoy rights out of the society. To quote Green, "The capacity, then, on the part of the individual of conceiving a good is the same for himself and others, and of being determined to action by the conception, is the foundation of rights ; and rights are the conditions of that capacity being realized. No right is justifiable or should be right except on the ground that directly or indirectly it serves this purpose. Conversely every power should be a right, i.e., society should secure to individual every power, that is necessary for realizing this capacity".

Green asserts that rights are natural but he is not in support of natural rights which were available in a pre social state. Those rights were not recognized ones, so they are not enforceable and as such rights have no meaning. He considers rights as natural for realization of moral capacities of man. His rights were broader and deeper than the actual rights granted to the citizens by the states.

Green also advocated the right to resist the state. Generally speaking, Green holds that there cannot be reasonably any right to disobey the state because the state alone is the originator of rights. To quote Green , "There can be no right to disobey or evade any particular law on the ground that it interferes with any freedom of

action, any right of managing his children or doing what he will with his own". Green advises the people to accept bad law if it hampers common good. However, such a law can be repealed through constitutional methods. He says when the people disobey the state the presumption is that they may probably be wrong and the state in all likelihood is certainly right, because the state will be speaking with the wisdom of the ages, which is superior to the wisdom of the individual men. Such a resistance may create anarchy and hamper the smooth running of the state. So Green was advocating resistance to the state only unde specific circumstances when –

- It is confirmed that a definite good is obtainable through successful opposition.
- It is backed by substantial mass support.
- If the legality of the sovereign is doubtful.
- The system of government is tyrannical.
- The government is opposed to public interest.

Thus, under the above conditions, resistance to the state becomes a duty. It becomes justifiable. Thus in the words of Green, "That if one must resist, one must, and the choice can be no one else. One may not have the right to resist but one may be right in resisting. Resistance is justified only on social grounds".



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3 : According to Green, from where do Rights emanate ? What kinds of Rights did Green support ?

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7.6 GREEN ON WAR

Green put forward his concept on war based on his idea on universal brotherhood. He was in favour of a universal society where right to life is an inherent right of all human beings and which is universally recognized. He was in favour of establishment of an International Court of Law in order to solve the conflict in between nations. Through universal brotherhood, he wanted to establish peace universally. The views of Green on war are disussed as under :

- According to Green, war is not an essential attribute of the state. It is the attribute when the state is in its imperfect form. The less imperfect a state becomes, the lesser are the chances of war.
- He vehemently opposes war because it violates basic human rights (right to life). According to Green, war could be justified as a wrong to correct another wrong , but it remains a wrong because it takes away the right to free life during war.
- He opines that war is relative . It can never be absolute.
- According to Green, war is a moral wrong because during war the loss of human life is not unintentional. Those who kill in war kills anyone and everyone intentionally and that is why it is a serious crime. He justifies his contention by arguing that there is no violation of right when a man is killed by wild animals or lightning because there are no rights in between human and nature. But the death in the battle field is an unnatural condition created by human and international agencies to feed their greed.
- He even says that war is a moral wrong because it denies the right to free life of the soldiers. They had to surrender their right to life. He asserts that, “no man has the right to surrender his right to free life”.
- The only positive feature of war is that it helps in developing the virtues of patriotism, self-sacrifice and heroism. These virtues help in maintaining social conditions for human development. But going

for war in the name of patriotism is always wrong. It can be achieved by non-violent means also.

- War is not inevitable among the states. States do not exist to go for war. War happens because states do not fulfill their duties of maintaining rights of the individuals. In the words of Green, "There is nothing in the intrinsic nature of a system of the independent state incompatible with it, but on the contrary every advance in the organization of mankind in states in the sense explained, is a step towards it. There is no such thing as an inevitable conflict between states. There is nothing in the nature of a state that gives multiplicity of states, should make the gain of the one the loss of the other. The more perfectly each one of them attains its proper object of giving free scope to the capacities of all persons living in certain range of territory, the easier it is for others to do so; and in proportion as they all do so the danger of conflict disappears". Thus, Green implied that it is the duty of every state to let its citizens enjoy rights and develop their personalities to the fullest. Conflict among states will disappear to the extent that a state is able to fulfil its basic duty of guaranteeing freedom to its citizens.

However, his extraordinary views on war were not accepted by many scholars of that time and he was highly criticized for being cosmopolitan. It was contended that he was playing with the real sense of patriotism and nationalism. But Green resonded to his critics by saying that display of force by the states is causing unnecessary misery among the states. Green saw no reason in several governments getting involved in conflict. Whatever may be the criticism levelled against Green's views, Green's indictment on war, as opined by Professor Barker, "constitutes one of the finest and strongest parts of his lectures".



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4 : What did Green say about war? Is it necessary for a society ?

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7.7 OTHER KEY CONCEPTS OF GREEN

7.7.1 Green's views on Punishment

The concept of punishment by Green is directly related to his concept of rights. Punishment is the restrictions imposed by the state authority to limit the right to free life. The main aim of this concept is maintenance of rights and duties in the state and to secure freedom of action for the moral development of all the members of the community. Punishment is the force directed against force of the criminal. It is a form of deterrent to create a terror in the criminal minded members of the state who might be tempted to commit crime. He wanted to promote just punishment which promoted moral good of the individual which decreased the criminal mentality of the individuals in the society making it peaceful in the long run.

7.7.2 Green's views on property

Green's property is a mixed bag of individualism, liberalism and idealism. He did not completely support private property. But regarded property as indispensable for development of man's personality. So, he defined property as – the sum of the instruments required for the free play of the self realizing principles in man and contribution to the common good. According to him everyone should have the right to acquire property to develop the capacity to partake common social good. Since capacities differ it is natural that amount of property acquired will also differ. So Green did not believe in equal

property. In doing so, right to property must not interfere with the good of the society and the right of self-realization of others. If so happens, then the state should play a pro-active role to intervene in accumulation of such properties. Thus, he was against landed property because it leads to creation of landlords and serfdom. He opposed family settlements also in relation to landed property. He favoured possession of small hand holdings with small proprietors tilling their own land. He supported apportionment or sharing of unearned increment by the state but on the contrary was against any limitations on the possession of capital. He justified it on the ground that more capital can be acquired without depriving others, but more land cannot be acquired without reducing the share of others.

7.7.3 Green's views on Natural law

In generating his ideas on natural law Green was against the social contractualist. According to Green law is natural in the sense that it is necessary for the realization of the end. Individuals should seek obedience to the law whether they are formulated by the state or not because law is based on reason. He places law in a privileged place and even opines that any rule or law which is inconsistent with natural law should be rejected. It is not essential that the natural law should be enforced by the society, but it should be capable of being enforced. The enforceability of natural law makes it different from morality. Natural law is an evolving concept and keeps on growing with the growth of moral consciousness.

7.7.4 Green's views on Societies

According to Green , "state is a society of societies".There are a number of societies in a state which is not created by the state and have their own identity, system of rights, etc. These

societies help the individuals to fulfill their aspirations. But he was in no way a pluralist and supported the supremacy of the state.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5 : Is punishment necessary for refinement of the societies. If so, how?

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Q 6 : Did green support private property? What kind of property did he talk about?

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Q 7: Write about Green's views on societies ?

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7.8 AN ESTIMATE OF GREEN

Green, like other political thinkers has also has its share of criticism. Regarding his theory of sovereignty and state, Hobhouse says , "in so far as it is will it is not general and so far as it is general,it is not will."

Green is criticized for not taking into account the subconscious factors which influence human actions in a state because his contention of man being purely conscious is not a universal fact.

Green's support to concentration of capital in some hands is completely illogical because it is a form of excessive wealth and concentration of capital will lead to stratification of the society.

On the other hand, scholars like Barker , Sabine, Wayper and Maxey have highlighted Green's contribution to the political thought. According to Barker, "Green was both a soaring idealist and a sober realist. We may differ with regards to certain details, but the general principles laid down by him are as sound today as they were when they were laid by him. His firm

hold on the worth of individual good is an intrinsic part of the social good, his refusal to raise the state to mystical heights, his recognition of a universal brotherhood and international law, his eagerness to place limits on the power of the state so that spontaneity in the performance of moral acts may not be deadened, his emphasis on rights, his view that property is a means for the expression of personality and his admission that in extreme cases the individual has the duty of resistance-all these are as sound today as they were when Green delivered his lectures in 1879-80."

With lots of criticism and goodness, the political theory of Green was a kind of alternative theory of his time in England. The summary of Green's theory can be understood best in the words of Sabine which he highlights as follows:

"What Green added to liberal theory was his conception of collective well being , as a precondition of individual freedom and responsibility. Consequently, sound social policy justifies the protection of common interests, such as, public health or education or a decent standard of living no less than the protection of individual rights, such as private property. The liberal legislation which he defended assumed that the end of the government is not to guarantee the greatest individual liberty but rather to ensure the conditions for at least a minimum of well being – a standard of life, of education, and of security below which good policy requires that no considerable part of the population will be allowed to go. Thus in principle, Green's revision of liberalism closed up the gap which laissez faire had placed between politics and economics and put on government the duty of regulating the economic system when it fails to produce satisfied results.



7.9 LET US SUM UP

- English Idealism, also known as Oxford Idealism, was formed in the backdrop of Industrial revolution in England. They drew Inspiration from German Idealists. The English idealists redefined the role of the state and made it more humanist in nature.

- The political philosophy of T.H. Green is contained in the numerous works like *Principles Of Political Obligations*(1882), *Lectures On Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract*, *Lectures on The English Revolution and Proligomena To Ethics*.

- Green's concept of state was build on a very sound and reasonable footing. He never considered state as an end in itself. It was a means to an end. He followed a Kantian belief in developing his concept of state. Every man has worth and dignity which protects him from all kinds of exploitation for any purpose. The life of the nation has no real existence except in relatiopn to the existence of the life of the individuals. That is why the development or progress of a nation is relative , dependent on the development of the individuals in a society. That is why he accord a negative functions of the state.

- Freedom is the primary means to self realization. Freedom should be enjoyed through self consciousness because in such a situation others can also enjoy freedom along with self. This can bring social development because individual self is social self.

- Positive freedom emanates rights. Rights can be claimed when there is positive freedom available in a particular state. So, both are complementary as well as supplementary to each other. Like freedom, rights are necessary to develop moral consciousness of the individuals.

- Individuals have the right to resist the state under certain circumstances.

- War is not an essential attribute of the state. It is the attribute when the state is in its imperfect form. He opposes war because it violates basic human rights(right to life).

- Green also put forward his views on punishment, property, natural law and societies.



7.10 FURTHER READING

1. Coker, Francis William. *Readings in Political Philosophy* . Nabu Press
2. Nelson, Brian R. (2006). *Western Political Thought* (Second Edition). New Delhi: Pearson Education.
3. Sabine G.H. (1973). History of Political Thought. New Delhi: Oxford and IBH.
4. Sharma, S.K. and Sharma, Urmila. (2003). *Western Political Thought-From Plato to Burke*. Atlantic.

7.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q. No. 1 : English Idealism also known as Oxford Idealism, was formed in the backdrop of Industrial revolution in England. They drew Inspiration from German Idealist. Immanuel Kant, German idealists such as G. W. Hegal , Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling etc dominated 19th-century English philosophy. This tradition, which emphasized the mental or "ideal" character of all phenomena, gave birth to idealistic and subjectivist schools which led to formation of English Idealism.

Ans to Q. No. 2 : Principles Of Political Obligations(1882),Lectures On Liberal Legislation And Freedom Of Contract, Lectures On The English Revolution, Proligomena To Ethics.

Ans to Q. No. 3 : Freedom. Socialist Rights.

Ans to Q. No. 4 : War is not an essential attribute of the state. It is the attribute when the state is in its imperfect form. The less imperfect a state become the lesser chances of war is there.

Green vehemently opposes war because it violates basic human rights (right to life). According to Green, war could be justified as a wrong to correct another wrong , but it remains a wrong because it takes away the right to free life during war.He

opines that war is relative. It can never be absolute. According to Green War is a moral wrong because during war the loss of human life is not unintentional. Those who kill in war kills anyone and everyone intentional and that is why it is a serious crime. He justifies his contention by arguing that there is no violation of right when a human being is killed by wild animals or lightning because there is no rights in between human and nature. But the death in battle field is an unnatural condition created by human and international agencies to feed their greed.He even says that war is a moral wrong because it denies the right to free life of the soldiers. They had to surrender their right to life. He asserts that, "no man has the right to surrender his right to free life".

Ans to Q. No. 5 : Yes. Punishment is the restrictions imposed by the state authority to limit the right to free life. The main aim of this concept is maintenance of rights and duties in the state and to secure freedom of action for the moral development of all the members of the community. Punishment is the force directed against force of the criminal. It is a form of deterent to create a terror in the criminal minded members of the state who might be tempted to commit crime. He wanted to promote just punishment which promoted moral good of the individual and decreased the criminal mentality of the individuals in the society making it peaceful in the long run.

Ans to Q. No. 6 : Yes. Green was against landed property and supported possession of small land holdings.

Ans to Q. No. 7 : According to Green , "state is a society of societies". There are a number of societies in a state which is not created by the state and have their own identity, system of rights etc. These societies help the individuals to fulfill their aspirations. But he was in no way a pluralist and supported the supremacy of the state.



7.12 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1 : Write briefly about English Idealism.

Q 2 : Discuss Green's views on State

Q 3 : Discuss Green's views on Freedom and Rights

Q 4 : Discuss Green's views on War

Q 5 : Explain the views of Green with regard to Punishment, Property, Natural Law and Societies. Present an estimate of Green

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