

WESTERN POLITICAL THOUGHT

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SYLLABI-BOOK MAPPING TABLE

| Unit | Content | Page no |
|-------------|--|----------------|
| 1 | Twilight Political Thinkers: Niccolo Machiavelli, Jean Bodin | |
| 2 | The Contractualist Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, J.J. Rousseau | |
| 3 | The Utilitarianism and Individualist: Jeremy Bentham, J.S. Mill | |
| 4 | Idealists and Socialists J.W.F Hegel, Karl Marx | |

CONTENTS

Unit- I:

TWILIGHT POLITICAL THINKERS: NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI AND JEAN BODIN

Structure

1.0 Unit Objectives

1.1 Introduction (Machiavelli 1469-1527)

1.2 Influences on Machiavelli:

1.2.1 Renaissance and its Impact

1.2.2 Machiavelli's conception of Human Nature

1.3 Machiavelli on Ethics, Religion and Politics

1.3.1 Central theme Of Prince

1.3.2 Advise to the Prince about Statecraft

1.3.3 Machiavelli's Justification for a Powerful State

1.4 Let's Sum up

1.5 Introduction (Jean Bodin: 1530-1596)

1.6 Early Life

1.7 Major Works

1.8 Major Ideas and Theories

1.8.1 The Theory of Sovereignty

1.8.2 Limitations on Sovereignty

1.8.3 State vs. Commonwealth

1.8.4 The Family as the Foundation

1.8.5 Theory of Climate (Environmental Determinism)

1.9 Critical Evaluation

1.10 Let Us Sum Up

1.11 Key Terms

1.12 Answer's to 'check your Progress'

1.13 Short-Answer Questions

1.14 Long Answer Questions

1.15 Further Readings

UNIT 2:

THE CONTRACTUALIST: Hobbes, Locke and J.J. Rousseau

Structure

2.0 Unit Objectives

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Thomas Hobbes

2.2.1 Human Nature

2.2.2 State of Nature

2.2.3 Laws of Nature and the Covenants

2.2.4 Concept of Sovereign

2.3 John Locke

2.3.1 Human Nature

2.3.2 State of Nature

2.3.3 Social contract

2.4 Jean Jacques Rousseau

2.4.1 Human Nature

2.4.2 State of Nature

2.4.3 Social Contract and General Will

2.5 Summary

2.6 Key Terms

2.7 Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’

2.8 Short-Answer Question

2.9 Long- Answer Questions

2.9 Further Reading

Unit 3

THE UTILITARIANISM AND INDIVIDUALIST: Jeremy Bentham, J.S Mill

3.0 Introduction

3.1 Objectives

3.2 Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832): Early life and works

3.3 Influence's on Bentham.

3.4 Human Nature

3.5 Moral Philosophy

3.6 Political Philosophy

3.7 Bentham's Utilitarian Principle

3.7.1 The Greatest Happiness of the greatest number

3.8 Bentham's view on Modern state

3.9 Bentham on Liberty, Rights and Law

3.10 J.S. Mill: Early life and Works

3.11 J.S. Mill on liberty:

3.12 J.S. Mill on Representative Government

2.8 J.S Mill on the Rights of Women

3.14 Summary

3.15 Key Terms

3.16 Answers to check your progress

3.17 Short – Answer Question

3.18 Long- Answer Question

3.19 Suggested Readings

UNIT - 4

IDEALIST AND SOCIALIST: George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Karl Marx

4.0 Objectives

4.1 Introduction

4.2 George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: Early life and Works

4.3 Hegel as an idealist

4.4 Hegelian's Dialectics

4.5 Hegel's views on state

4.6 Characteristic of State

4.7 Karl Marx (1818-1883): Life and works

4.8 Marx Dialectical Materialism

4.9 Materialistic interpretation of history:

4.10 Theory of Alienation:-

4.10.1 Forms of alienation

4.11 Marx's theory of Revolution

4.12 Lets sum up:

4.13 Key Terms

4.14 Answer to check your progress

4.15 Short- Answer Questions

4.16 Long- Answer Questions

4.17 Further reading

Unit- I:

TWILIGHT POLITICAL THINKERS: Niccolo Machiavelli and Jean Bodin

Structure

1.0 Unit Objectives

1.1 Introduction (Machiavelli 1469-1527)

1.2 Influences on Machiavelli:

1.2.1 Renaissance and its Impact

1.2.2 Machiavelli's conception of Human Nature

1.3 Machiavelli on Ethics, Religion and Politics

1.3.1 Central theme Of Prince

1.3.2 Advise to the Prince about Statecraft

1.3.3 Machiavelli's Justification for a Powerful State

1.4 Let's Sum up

1.5 Introduction (Jean Bodin: 1530-1596)

1.6 Early Life

1.7 Major Works

1.8 Major Ideas and Theories

1.8.1 The Theory of Sovereignty

1.8.2 Limitations on Sovereignty

1.8.3 State vs. Commonwealth

1.8.4 The Family as the Foundation

1.8.5 Theory of Climate (Environmental Determinism)

1.9 Critical Evaluation

1.10 Let Us Sum Up

1.11 Key Terms

1.12 Answer's to 'check your Progress'

1.13 Short-Answer Questions

1.14 Long Answer Questions

1.15 Further Readings

1.0 Unit Objectives

- After reading this unit, you will be able to understand:

1. Influence on Machiavelli
2. Human Nature
3. The impact of Renaissance on Machiavelli
4. Machiavelli's separation of Politics and Ethics
5. Understand the historical context in which Jean Bodin lived and wrote
6. Explain the early life and intellectual background of Bodin
7. Identify and describe his major works
8. Appreciate the significance of Bodin as a transitional thinker between medieval and modern political thought

1.1 Introduction (Machiavelli 1469-1527)

Niccolo Machiavelli was born in Florence, (Italy) in 1469 in a family with modest means. His father was a jurist. Machiavelli as a child could not receive proper education and he studied the Latin classics, especially on Roman history under the guidance of his father. As he grew young he joined the government of Florence as the secretary of Chancery. In this new capacity he got a chance to handle the departments of war and interior. Most of the diplomatic correspondent also passed through him. But with the change of power Machiavelli was not only obliged to leave the job but was thrown in the prison on a charge of conspiracy on an account of his failure to side with the new rulers. In 1513 Machiavelli produced his masterpiece 'The Prince'. Eight years later he produced 'Discourses' in 1521.

1.2 Influences on Machiavelli:

Machiavelli since his early life has been influenced by number of factors which can be seen in his philosophy some of the factors which influenced the thinking and philosophy of Machiavelli deserve mention under the following headings.

- a) *Conditions in Italy:* At the time of Machiavelli the Italian peninsula was divided into a number of small but independent states which were constantly at war. These states possessed different forms of governments; while some were republics the other were ruled by despotic rulers. No doubt by the beginning of the sixteenth century some sort of consolidation of these states had been achieved but still they were divided into five groups viz. kingdom of Naples. Territory of Roman Catholic Church, the Duchy of

Milan, the Republic of Venice and the Republic of Florence. Apart from the internal dissension amongst these states there was a serious threat to their existence due to presence of strong states like France and Spain on the borders. Machiavelli ardently desired to unity these warring states and makes them sufficiently strong so that they could deal with the foreign power effectively. With this end, Machiavelli wrote books like Art of War, the Discourse on Livy and the Prince in which he laid down the principles which he wanted these states to follow, so that they could prosper and flourish. Though Machiavelli hailed from Florence, a Republic, he pleaded for a strong ruler who could unite the country and expel the foreign invaders. He particularly considered the papacy as a great obstacle in the way of secular integration and supported gradual transfer of power from the church of the monarch.

- b) *Impact of Republic:* The Renaissance Movement which stood for the revival of ancient values and culture also exercised profound influence on Machiavelli because this movement was strongest in Florence. This movement not only revived that was ancient and had been forgotten during the medieval period, but also created a consciousness of life, a new sense of liberty, and new values of life. Man became the center of all study and God was relegated to the background. This was a sort of revolt against the authority of the Church. The impact of Renaissance on Machiavelli is quite evident from strong plea for gradual transfer of power from the church to the state.
- c) *Emergency of strong Monarchies:* the emergency of strong monarchs who had concentrated the entire political power in their own hands, which earlier rested with the feudatories and corporations, also left a deep impact on Machiavelli. Though the concentration, of absolute powers in the hands of the rulers meant a death knell of the medieval representation institutions, Machiavelli saw in it as the only remedy for the unification of Italy.

Apart from these contemporary influences, Machiavelli was also influenced by the writings of Aristotle and Marsiglio. He learnt the idea of separation of ethics and politics from Aristotle. The other important things which he borrowed from Aristotle were the idea that the state was the highest organization of human beings. The three-fold division of the states as Monarchy, Aristocracy and Democracy, and the famous historical method. Likewise, he felt the influence of Marsiglio in so far, the idea of secularism and the political utility of religion are concerned.

But without any doubt, he felt the maximum impact of the contemporary conditions. It has been rightly said of Machiavelli that he was the epitome of his times. In fact, hardly any other thinker has been more deeply influenced by the contemporary politics as Machiavelli. Sabine also says “Clear and broad as his vision of politics was Machiavelli was still in a peculiar sense an Italian of the first quarter of sixteenth century. Had he written in any other time and place, his conception of politics must have been significantly differently”.

1.2.1 Renaissance and its Impact

Laski (1936) rightly observes that “the whole of the Renaissance is in Machiavelli. There is its lust for power; its admiration for success, its carelessness of means, its rejection of medieval bonds, its frank paganism, its conviction of national unity makes for national strength. Neither his cynicism nor his praise of craftiness is sufficient to conceal the idealist in him”. To comprehend the full importance of Machiavelli’s writings and their context, it is important to understand the series of cultural, economic, social and political changes that began in the fourteenth century called the Renaissance. Its immediate impact was in Italy, which gradually spread to the rest of Europe by the late fifteenth century. The Renaissance signified a rebirth of the human spirit in the attainment of liberty, self- confidence and optimism. In contradiction to the medieval view, which had envisaged the human being as fallen and depraved in an evil world with the devil at the centre, the Renaissance captured the Greek ideal of the essential goodness of the individual, the beauty and glory of the earth, the joy of existence, the insignificance of the supernatural and the importance of the present, as compared to an irrecoverable past and an uncertain future. This return to a pre-Christian attitude towards humans, God and Nature found expression in all aspect of human Endeavour and creativity. Humanism, affirming the dignity and excellence of the human being, became the basis of comprehending the modern world. In contrast to the medieval Christian stress on asceticism, poverty, humility, misery and the worthlessness of the earthly person, Humanism defended the freedom of the human spirit and knowledge. The Renaissance signaled the breakdown of a unified Christian society.

At the centre of the Renaissance was the emergence of the new human, an ambitious restless individual, motivated by his self- interest, seeking glory and asceticism, were seen as the true ends of human existence and education. Self-fulfillment was no longer viewed as being achievement by repressing natural facilities and emotion. Jacob Burckhardt in his classic, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860) pointed out that it was the conception of the new human, the individual

motivated by fame and glory, self-actualization and happiness, rather than self-denial and religious faith that formed the essence of the Renaissance. The spirit of individualism and the cult of privacy led to the growth of self-assertion and ushered in the idea of the highest development of the individual.

Alongside the development of the modern individual was the beginning of the modern state. The idea of the modern state, omnipotent and Omni-competent, was worked out. The prince had to take charge of everything – preservation of public buildings and churches, maintenance of the municipal police, drainage of the marshes, ensuring the supply of corn, levying taxes and convincing the people of their necessity, supporting the sick and destitute, lending support to distinguished intellectuals and scholars on whose verdict rested his fame for the years to come. More than anybody else, it was Machiavelli who could understand the dynamics of this modern state and the modern individual.

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Equally important were the end of the clerical monopoly and the replacement of papal supremacy by secular, sovereign, independent states, each with its own national culture identity and language. The nation state came into existence and its success was determined not by religious or chivalric, but by political criteria. Explorations and voyages led to geographical discoveries, altering the perceptions regarding the world. The Medievalists had viewed the universe with a flat earth at the centre, hell beneath it and heaven as its canopy. The discoveries of Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) and Vasco-Da-Gama (1469-1524) enlarged the geographical horizons beyond the Mediterranean basin and Europe. A new world map magnified the view of the educated.

New geographical discoveries opened up new vistas of trade and religion. This led to growth in commerce and economic development as the basis of modern capitalism. Cities and

urban centers emerged. Rational methods of book keeping and accounting and complex banking operations mushroomed, eroding the taboo on money making, entrepreneurship and the profit motive. Education, Science and humanism ended clerical monopoly, relegating religion to the private space. The invention of printing, the establishment of libraries and universities increased and spread literacy, and revived an interest in Latin classics.

In Europe, it was Italy that experienced the onslaughts of these new commercial, entrepreneurial, and economic forces. All this reflected in the political and societal organization in Italy. Politically, Italy was divided into a number of small principalities and five large states: Milan, Venice, Florence, the papal domain and Naples. Of these, Florence was the most cultured city, the seat of the Italian Renaissance, producing some eminent and renowned figures. It was the first modern state in the world (Burckhardt 1921).

Though culturally vibrant and creative, Italy remained politically divided, weak, and a prey to the imperial ambitions of the French, German and Spanish. Most of the Italian states were ruled by an oligarchy or an individual tyrant. All of them were unable or unwilling to unite the entire peninsula. The Florentine Republic reflected severe factional conflicts and institutional breakdown. It was a period of heated constitutional experimentation, accelerated by Savonarola who expelled the Medici and destroyed their wonders and wealth.

Italians could not reconcile to the fact that an age of heightened cultural creativity and scientific discoveries coincided with loss of political liberty, leading to foreign domination. Italian society, “intellectually brilliant and artistically creative, more emancipated than many in Europe... was a prey to the worst political corruption and moral degradation” (Sabine 1973). It produced some great minds and intellects of that period, like Alexander Botticelli (1444-1510), Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519), Buonarroti Michelangelo (1475-1564) and Santi Raphael (1483-1520). Its galaxy of artists made Renaissance Italy comparable to Athens of the fifth century BC. However, while Athens flourished politically, with a vibrant participatory democracy, in Italy there was a political vacuum. The old, feudal order had begun to collapse and disintegrate, but the new age, marked by the emergence of the territorial nation state as a sovereign legal political entity was still in its embryonic form.

Writing at the time of political chaos and moral confusion, Italian unification became the chief objective of Machiavelli, who could see “clearly the direction that political evolution was taking throughout Europe. No man knew better than he the archaism of the institutions that were

begin displaced or accepted more readily the part that naked force was playing in the process. Yet no one in that age appreciated more highly the inchoate sense of national unity on which this force was obscurely based” (Sabine 1973). Machiavelli’s attachment was to his country Italy, and not to a state as an abstract entity. He desired to redeem Italy from servitude and misery. Like Dante, he dreamt of a united, regenerated and glorious Italy. In Order to achieve this, any means were justified, for the purpose was the defense and prevention of the state and its people. Considerations of justice or injustice, humanity or cruelty, glory or shame were immaterial in light of protecting the life and liberty of the country.

Freedom of the country and the common good remained the core themes of Machiavelli’s writings. A prefect state was one which promoted the common good, namely the observance of laws, honoring woman, keeping public offices open all the citizens on grounds of virtue, maintaining a moderate degree of social equality, and protecting industry, wealth and property. The freedom of the country had to be safeguarded with the help of war and explanation. War was a horror, but not worse than military defeat and subjugation. Machiavelli was the precursor of Hegel in making a realistic appraisal of war in understanding reality.

1.2.2 Machiavelli’s conception of Human Nature

Machiavelli’s concept of Human Nature was identical to John Calvin and Thomas Hobbes as he also like them didn’t believe in the goodness of human beings and human Nature. The individual, according to Machiavelli, was wicked, selfish and egoistic. He was fundamentally weak, ungrateful, exhibitionist, artificial, anxious to avoid danger and excessively desirous of gain. Lacking the honesty and justice, he was ready to act in a manner that was detrimental to the community. It was only under compulsion or when there was personal gain that an individual was ready to do good. Being essentially anti-social anarchical, selfish, greedy and sensual, the individual would readily forgive the murder of his father, but never the seizure of property. He desires power, glory and material well-being. Elsewhere, Machiavelli observed that the desire for novelty, fear and love dictated human actions. Individual establish a government with the strongest and the most courageous becoming law givers and leaders as they desire personal safety and security of possessions. Like Aristotle, he believed that the government made the individual just and fair.

Machiavelli conceived human beings as being basically restless, ambitious, aggressive and acquisitive, in a state of constant strife and anarchy. They were discontented and dissatisfied, for

human needs were unlimited, but fortune limited their possessions and capacity for enjoyment. Under such circumstance, politics got “plagued by the dilemma of limited goods and limitless ambition”. Interestingly, Machiavelli presumed that human nature remained constant, for history moved in a cyclical way, alternating between growth and decay. This enabled one to discern general laws of political behavior with a view to maximizing one’s gain. He observed that there was not much difference between how individuals lived and how they ought to live, for one who sacrificed what had to be done in favor of what ought to be done normally sowed the seeds of destruction rather than preservation.

Furthermore, Machiavelli pointed out that the human mind tended to glorify the past, decry the present and hope for a better future. Like Aristotle, Machiavelli characterized the individual as a political animal. While Aristotle implied the innate sociability of the human being, Machiavelli referred to the individual’s love for power, reputation, keenness to establish superiority over others, and the innate desire to control and dominates others. However, Machiavelli confined these traits to the elite. He did not like Hobbes; see the desire for power and domination as a universal aspiration.

Machiavelli recognized the importance of order provided by a stable, lawful political community consisting of public-spirited and virtuous citizens. Such an arrangement fulfilled the human need of being admired, respected and remembered. A ruler who preserved the state without undermining or flouting laws and or inflicting harm attained fame and respect. On the contrary, the absence of civic virtue led to moral degradation and corruption.

Check your Progress

- 1. Name some of the important works of Machiavelli?***
- 2. What are the important factors that helped in shaping the political philosophy of Machiavelli?***
- 3. ‘Renaissance movement had a deep impact on Machiavelli’, Explain?***

1.3 Machiavelli on Ethics, Religion and Politics

Machiavelli made a clear distinction between distinctions between politics on the one hand and religion and ethics on the other and in doing so he has accorded subordinate position to the latter. He ignores the ethical purpose of the state. To him state is not a means but an end in itself with its

own interest. The interest of the state justifies everything. The state has no ethics. State actions are not to be judged by individual ethics. In exercising political power, Machiavelli opines that a ruler should give priority to what is good for the state rather than what is moral or immoral. A ruler should not lag behind even in the employment of violence, cruelty and bad faith. Appreciating the good qualities of a ruler, Machiavelli emphasized that he cannot part with the bad means to be an able leader. He says public morality need not necessarily be identical with the private morality because the ends of public morality may not necessarily be identical with those of private morality. Hence Machiavelli prescribed double standard of conduct for the ruler and for the individual citizens.

Moral virtue is good for individual but they may or may not be so for the prince. For instance, it is always wrong for an individual to tell lie but sometimes it is necessary and good for the ruler to do so in the interest of the state, particularly dealing with problems of external and internal security of the state. State is the highest form of human association and has superior claim to a man's obligation. The state is neither moral nor immoral but its non-moral actions are also just. Machiavelli brings a complete divorce between politics and ethics.

He pointed out that "the keeping of faith is praiseworthy, but for the sake of maintaining political power, deceit and hypocrisy are indispensable. The prince must appear or be sincere, upright and religious but he must have his mind so disciplined that when it is necessary to save the state, he can act regardless of these. Let the prince then look to the maintenance of the state, the means will always be deemed honored and will receive general approbation." Machiavelli was clear in his conception of the relationship between religion and politics. He opined that religion should be exploited for the sake of political expediency. Otherwise, religion and politics should be kept separate, religion always being subordinated to politics. A ruler has supreme powers, and he is above the norms of moral or religious tenets. Thus, Machiavelli gives greatest importance to political power and political expediency. He holds that religious and ethical principles have only a secondary role and in no way, they should be a hindrance to the exercise of political power.

One of the reasons for Machiavelli to separate politics from ethics and religion was his contention that such separation is truer to facts of human existence. He tries to discover the actual working of a real and not an ideal political life. His purpose is to investigate how men actually live, not how they ought to live. He is not concerned with state as an instrument of good life. The state,

for him is a dynamic force. The role of the prince is to direct this force for the preservation and expansion of his power.

1.3.1 Central theme Of Prince

“The discourses” and “The art of war” are Machiavelli’s important contributions. It contains analysis of body politics. “The Prince” is a handbook on the “Art of government” and “State craft”. Hence it is said that „The Prince“ is not an academic work on political-science but it is a book on the art of governance. It is in the form of advice and addressed to any ruler in the form of a manual book.

1.3.2 Advise to the Prince about Statecraft

Machiavelli’s “The Prince” is in the form of advice given to a ruler on the state craft. Some significant aspects of the advice to the ruler are as follows:

1. End justifies the Means: It is a very famous statement of Machiavelli which he justified for the “Reason of state”. He assumed that state is highest form of human association. State is to be worshipped like a deity even by sacrificing the individual. A ruler must remember that whatever brings success and power is virtuous even cunningness, shrewdness is justified.
2. State is sovereign, autonomous and non-religious: Machiavelli states that the state is superior to all associations in the human society. It is sovereign and is autonomous, moral and religious considerations cannot bind the prince. He is above and outside the morality. He can use religion to realize his ends. Religion cannot influence politics and the church cannot control the state. In fact sovereign state enjoys absolute power over all individuals and institutions. State is must necessary of all institutions. It stands on a wholly different footing and therefore be judged by different standards. State power is the end and religion is its organ and instrument. He said politics is an independent activity with its own principles and laws.
3. A prince must combine both the qualities of a lion and a fox: Machiavelli advised the prince he should imitate the qualities of fox and lion. The imitation of the fox (cunningness, foresight) will enable him to visualize his goal and means to achieve it. The imitation of the lion will give him necessary strength and force to achieve that goal. A fox might have shrewdness and foresight, but he is powerless without necessary force of a lion. Similarly, a lion without shrewdness and prudence of a fox would be reckless. Hence a ruler who wants to be very successful must combine in himself the qualities of both fox and lion. He must

possess bravery of lion and cunningness of fox; physical force is necessary when there are anarchy and indiscipline. But law and morality are essential to check selfishness of people and to generate civic virtues.

4. Use double standard of politics: One for the ruler and another for his subjects. He said morality is not necessary for the ruler. He is creator of law and morality hence price is above the both. A ruler has primary duty of preserving the state. For this purpose, he may use instruments of lie, conspiracy, killings and massacre etc. Thus, Machiavelli prescribes double standard of morality.
5. Favored despotic ruler: Machiavelli did not recommend the republican form of Government, because republican form requires virtuous, honest and patriotic citizens. He also advised the prince to convert his monarchy into a republic. If his heirs are corrupt and misuse their power for evil purposes. According to Machiavelli foundation of Government is the reason of state Government is not created by God to punish men for their sin. Machiavelli says that the government is founded upon the weakness and insufficient capacity of men. If in a society men are corrupt and selfish and the law is powerless, then normal administration is not possible at all. A superior power is essential for bringing the society into order. The government with absolute power stops the excessive desires and control the behavior of the people.
6. Maintain strong army: He recommended constant military preparedness for the preservation of the state. Prince should organize a strong army to meet any internal and external threat to his power. Strong and regular army was must for a state for its own defense. The state should try to build up its own independent, regular and faithful army. Such an army should consist of its own citizens and be prepared not only to defend its national borders but also to expand. The citizens must be trained for army service and there should be compulsory military training for all able persons.
7. The prince must consider Human nature: According to Machiavelli rational analysis of politics must begin with an account of human nature, Machiavelli viewed the activities of man with special interest and explained human nature. He viewed men to be a compound of weakness, ungrateful, fear, lust for power and assumed all men are bad. Prominent traits of human nature are (1) there is no limit to human desires. He is selfish and aggressive. Hence there is strife and competition. (2) The masses are interested in security. They realize that

only laws of the state can ensure security hence they co-operate with the state and obey the laws. Hence a ruler who wants to be successful must ensure security of life and protection of people. (3) People must be restrained by force because force breeds fear. Only force and repression can keep control and check on the evil tendencies in man. Hence the method of government should be force and not persuasion. (4) By nature every human being is ambitious and remains unsatisfied. No human being is content with his position. He is always after domination. The enmities and wars are the outcome of this desire. Thus, human nature is selfish, power hungry, quarrelsome and guided by materialistic considerations. Only fear of punishment is a powerful bond and it never fails.

8. Prince must try to win popularity of his people: Prince should try to win popularity, goodwill and affection of his people. He should keep his subjects materially contented by not taxing them. The prince should not interfere in age old customs and traditions of his people because by nature people are conservative. He should not have craving for wealth and women of his own subjects. He should keep a watchful eye on his dissidents.
9. A prince must have council of wise men: Powerful government and internal unity were essential for any state. Prince must choose wise men in his council and should give them full liberty to speak the truth to him. He must ask them about everything and hear their opinion and afterwards deliberate by himself in his own way.
10. Prince must be free from emotions: Prince should exploit emotions of his people for the purpose of the state. He should be cool, calculating and opportunist. His suggestion is that a prince must know how to act as a beast.
11. Ordered state: In "The Prince" Machiavelli advocated absolutism and an effective government. This advocacy of absolutism was due to the fact that he had witnessed anarchy, lawlessness, corruption and misrule that prevailed in Italy of his times. He had witnessed how King Charles VIII of France had captured Florence without being offered resistance. Therefore, Machiavelli advocated a well-organized ordered and militarily strong state. Without a strong state, any country had no hope of survival in international politics. He believed that an ordered state was the only security against forces of external aggression and internal chaos.

Check your progress

1. *Describe Machiavelli's conception of the Human Nature?*
2. *The 'Prince' is a master piece of Machiavelli, Explain.*
3. *Examine Machiavelli's advice to the "Prince" for maintaining a state?*

1.3.3 Machiavelli's Justification for a Powerful State

1. He acquired practical experience of politics of his time. He was born in Florence, Italy in 1469 in a well-to-do family, when Prince Medici was at the height of his power. At the age of 25, he entered the government service as a clerk chancery. Within a very short period he was appointed as an ambassador, after that he became secretary of the king. Thus he acquired practical experience of politics. His administrative and political experience determined his views about politics.
2. As already mentioned, Machiavelli lived in Renaissance Italy and was greatly influenced by the new spirit of Renaissance. The intellectual awakening injected rational scientific approach in every sphere of human life; renaissance replaced the faith by reason. Italy was the leader of Renaissance, the most modern and urbanized country of Europe. But in Italy the wealth, intellect and artistic achievements were accompanied by moral degradation and political chaos. The worst aspect of the period during which Machiavelli lived was the rampant corruption and selfishness among the Italian rulers and the church officials. Machiavelli represents the culture which was undergoing a period of deep political crisis. Italy consisted of a very large number of small but independent states. Some of these states like Florence and Venice were republics, while others were ruled by despots. Internally these states were the home of fierce political rivalries and personal ambition and externally they were involved in a constant struggle with one another. This political division of Italy and the struggle between the states made the country weak and a prey for the ambitions of the powerful neighboring states of France, Prussia and Spain. France invaded Italy and defeated the Medici rulers. Machiavelli was witness to this tragedy. It was out of this traumatic experience that made Machiavelli conclude that unless Italy was united under a strong central government, the country would always remain under the threat of conquest and annexation by neighboring countries.

3. Machiavelli was a true patriot, thinking on the plight of Italy and to find remedies for this. He suggested a strong and unscrupulous prince for the Italy. He did not recommend the republican form of government for Italy, as it presupposes virtuous, honest and patriotic citizens, whereas the sixteenth century Italians was corrupt and selfish. Hence Machiavelli suggested a strong and powerful ruler for Italy.
4. The central theme of Machiavelli's political ideas is power. He highlighted power as an essential ingredient of politics. According to him moral code of individual prescribed by the church cannot provide guidelines to the ruler. According to Machiavelli a ruler must remember that whatever brings success is due to power. For acquiring political power, he can use any type of Means. He said politics is a constant struggle for power. All politics is power politics.
5. For Machiavelli absolute state was the End; and for this Means was power. He said the sole aim of the Prince was to make the country strong and united, establish peace and order and expel the foreign invader. To achieve this end any means would be satisfactory.

1.4 Let's Sum up

Some of the important Contributions of Machiavelli in political thought are: -

- 1) He laid the foundation of modern political thought – Machiavelli is regarded as the founder of modern political thought- 1) He is the first exponent of power-politics. 2) He is the first who put the theory of nation states. 3) He was the first thinker who separated religion from politics and justified secular state. 4) He is responsible for the growth of modern nationalism. 5) He was the first advocate of autonomy for the state. 6) Put forward the concept of supreme, sovereign state and justified all powerful central authority. 7) State is an end i.e. survival of the state is the central theme. 8) Gave a great insight for Art of Government and modern diplomacy.

1.5 Introduction (Jean Bodin: 1530-1596)

Jean Bodin occupies a central and enduring place in the development of Western political thought. Writing in the sixteenth century, a period marked by political fragmentation and religious conflict, Bodin attempted to provide a systematic and rational foundation for political authority. He is most widely known as the father of the modern theory of sovereignty, a concept that became fundamental to the emergence of the modern state. His ideas helped shift political thought away

from medieval concerns with divine authority and feudal obligations toward a more secular, legal, and institutional understanding of power.

Bodin's significance lies not only in the originality of his ideas but also in the clarity and precision with which he expressed them. Unlike earlier thinkers, who often discussed political authority in moral or theological terms, Bodin approached politics as a distinct field of study. He treated the state as a legal and institutional entity, governed by principles that could be analyzed and understood systematically. In this sense, his work represents an important step in the development of political science as an independent discipline.

Scholars such as George H. Sabine regard Bodin as one of the first thinkers to provide a comprehensive theory of the state. Sabine notes that Bodin's work marks a "decisive turning point" because it replaces medieval pluralism—where authority was divided among Church, feudal lords, and monarchs—with the idea of a single, unified sovereign power. Similarly, C. L. Wayper describes Bodin as a transitional thinker who stands "at the threshold of modern political thought," combining elements of medieval tradition with new and innovative ideas.

Bodin's intellectual contribution is also remarkable because of its interdisciplinary nature. He was not only a political philosopher but also a jurist, historian, economist, and social thinker. This broad intellectual background allowed him to examine political problems from multiple angles. His legal training gave him a strong foundation in the analysis of authority and law, while his interest in history enabled him to compare different political systems across time and place. His economic writings show an awareness of material conditions, and his reflections on society reveal a deep concern for order and stability.

His major work, *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, reflects this wide-ranging approach. In it, he discusses not only the nature of sovereignty but also issues such as family structure, property, climate, and administration. This comprehensive treatment of political life demonstrates his attempt to construct a unified theory of the state that integrates legal, social, and economic dimensions.

Bodin's writings are deeply shaped by the historical context in which he lived. The sixteenth century in France was a time of intense turmoil, particularly due to the French Wars of Religion between Catholics and Protestants. These conflicts led to widespread violence, political instability,

and the weakening of royal authority. In such a situation, the need for a strong and stable government became urgent. Bodin's theory of sovereignty can be seen as a direct response to this crisis, as he sought to justify a form of political authority capable of restoring order and preventing chaos.

At the same time, Bodin was not simply a defender of arbitrary power. His concern for justice and moral order is evident throughout his work. While he emphasized the necessity of a strong sovereign, he also insisted that political authority must operate within certain limits, such as respect for natural law and property rights. This attempt to balance authority and morality gives his thought a distinctive character.

Bodin's influence on later political thinkers is considerable. His concept of sovereignty provided the foundation for the works of Thomas Hobbes, who developed a more rigorous theory of absolute authority, and John Locke, who reinterpreted sovereignty in terms of popular consent and limited government. Although these thinkers differed from Bodin in important ways, they built upon the conceptual framework that he had established.

Jean Bodin's importance lies in his role as a pioneer of modern political thought. He transformed the way political authority was understood by introducing the concept of sovereignty as the defining feature of the state. His interdisciplinary approach, combined with his concern for order and stability, makes his work both rich and relevant. As Wayper aptly observes, Bodin's theory represents "one of the earliest and most significant attempts to bring coherence and system into political thinking."

1.6 Early Life

Jean Bodin was born in 1530 in the city of Angers, located in western France. He belonged to a modest middle-class family, and although detailed records of his early childhood are limited, it is generally believed that he received a sound education. From an early age, Bodin displayed a keen interest in learning, particularly in the fields of law, history, and classical literature. These early intellectual inclinations would later shape his scholarly career and influence his approach to political theory.

In his youth, Bodin joined a Carmelite monastery, which suggests that he initially followed a religious path. However, he did not remain there for long and eventually left the monastic life. The reasons for his departure are not entirely clear, but it is often suggested that his growing interest in secular knowledge and humanist scholarship led him to pursue a different path. This shift reflects the broader intellectual climate of the Renaissance, which encouraged the study of classical texts and emphasized human reason over purely theological explanations.

After leaving the monastery, Bodin enrolled at the University of Toulouse, one of the most prestigious centers of legal education in Europe at the time. Here, he studied law and developed a strong foundation in legal reasoning. His training in Roman law and jurisprudence had a lasting impact on his intellectual development. It is particularly evident in his later writings, where he emphasizes the importance of law, order, and authority in political life. His legal background also enabled him to define sovereignty in precise and systematic terms, distinguishing his work from that of earlier thinkers.

Following his studies, Bodin began his professional career as a lawyer. He later moved to Paris, where he became involved in public affairs and administrative work. His career brought him into close contact with the political realities of his time. He served in various official capacities and eventually became associated with the French Parliament, particularly through his participation in the Estates-General. This involvement provided him with firsthand experience of political decision-making and exposed him to the challenges of governance in a divided society.

The most significant influence on Bodin's political thought was the turbulent environment created by the French Wars of Religion. These conflicts not only disrupted social and political life but also raised fundamental questions about authority, legitimacy, and order. Bodin witnessed the breakdown of traditional institutions and the inability of existing systems to maintain peace. This experience deeply affected his thinking and led him to search for a new basis of political stability.

According to Quentin Skinner, Bodin's political theory cannot be fully understood without considering this historical context. Skinner argues that Bodin's concept of sovereignty was not merely an abstract idea but a practical response to the urgent need for political order in a fractured society. In other words, Bodin's work was shaped by the realities of his time, and his theories were intended to address concrete political problems rather than purely theoretical concerns.

Similarly, George H. Sabine emphasizes that Bodin's experiences during this period of crisis played a crucial role in the formation of his ideas. Sabine notes that Bodin's insistence on a strong and unified sovereign authority reflects his desire to overcome the divisions and conflicts that plagued France.

Bodin's early life and career provide important insights into his intellectual development. His education, professional experience, and exposure to political turmoil all contributed to shaping his ideas. They help us understand why he placed such a strong emphasis on sovereignty, order, and stability in his political theory.

1.7 Major Works

Jean Bodin wrote extensively on a variety of subjects, including politics, economics, history, and religion. However, his most famous and influential work is *Six Books of the Commonwealth* (1576). In this book, Bodin systematically presents his theory of sovereignty and discusses the nature, structure, and functions of the state. In *Six Books of the Commonwealth*, Bodin defines sovereignty as the absolute and perpetual power of the state. This work is considered a milestone in political thought because it clearly establishes the idea that a stable political system requires a central authority with ultimate power.

Another important work by Bodin is *Method for the Easy Understanding of History* (1566), where he discusses the importance of historical knowledge in understanding political systems. In this work, he also introduces early ideas about the influence of geography and climate on human behavior, which later became known as environmental determinism.

Bodin also wrote *The Response to the Paradoxes of Malestroit* (1568), an economic treatise in which he analyzed inflation and the rise in prices in Europe. This shows that Bodin was not limited to political theory but also contributed to early economic thought. Additionally, his work *Demonomania of Witches* (1580) reflects the intellectual climate of his time, where belief in witchcraft and supernatural forces was widespread. While this work may seem unusual today, it highlights the transitional nature of Bodin's thought—combining elements of medieval belief with emerging modern rationality.

Scholars such as Harold J. Laski have pointed out that Bodin's writings show "a remarkable attempt to bring order and system into political thinking," even though some of his ideas still reflect the limitations of his time.

1.8 Major Ideas and Theories

Jean Bodin's contribution to political thought lies primarily in his systematic attempt to provide a stable foundation for political authority during a time of crisis. Living through the violent upheavals of the French Wars of Religion in France, Bodin sought to explain how political order could be restored and maintained. His ideas represent a turning point from medieval political thinking, which emphasized divine authority and fragmented power, to modern political thought, which stresses centralized authority and secular governance.

Scholars such as George H. Sabine argue that Bodin's work marks "the first systematic attempt to construct a theory of the modern state." Similarly, C. L. Wayper observes that Bodin stands at the crossroads of medieval and modern thought, combining traditional ideas with innovative concepts that laid the groundwork for later thinkers. Bodin's major ideas revolve around sovereignty, the nature of political authority, the structure of the state, and the social foundations of political life. His theories were not abstract speculations but practical responses to the political instability of his time.

1.8.1 The Theory of Sovereignty

The most important and lasting contribution of Jean Bodin to political thought is his theory of sovereignty. It is not an exaggeration to say that with Bodin, the idea of the modern state begins to take a clear and systematic form. Before Bodin, political authority was understood in fragmented and overlapping ways. Power was divided among kings, feudal lords, the Church, and various local authorities. There was no single, clearly defined source of ultimate authority. Bodin's great achievement was to bring clarity and precision to this confusion by introducing the concept of sovereignty as the defining feature of the state.

To fully appreciate Bodin's theory, it is important to understand the historical context in which he was writing. Sixteenth-century France was deeply divided by religious conflict, particularly during the French Wars of Religion. These conflicts between Catholics and Protestants

led to political instability, violence, and the weakening of royal authority. Competing religious groups claimed loyalty and obedience, often challenging the authority of the king. In such a situation, the absence of a clear and supreme authority created chaos. Bodin's theory of sovereignty was a direct response to this crisis. He sought to provide a strong and stable foundation for political order that could overcome division and restore unity.

In his famous work *Six Books of the Commonwealth* (1576), Bodin defines sovereignty as the "absolute and perpetual power of the state." This definition is simple yet profound, and each term—absolute, perpetual, and power—carries significant meaning. Sovereignty, for Bodin, is not just one aspect of the state; it is its essential characteristic. Without sovereignty, there can be no state. A political community becomes a state only when there is a recognized authority that has the final say in all matters.

The first key feature of sovereignty, according to Bodin, is that it is absolute. By absolute, Bodin does not mean arbitrary or tyrannical in a crude sense, but rather that the sovereign is not subject to any higher human authority. The sovereign has the ultimate power to make laws, and no other human institution can override or challenge this authority. In medieval Europe, rulers were often seen as bound by feudal obligations, customary laws, and the authority of the Church. Bodin rejected this fragmented view of power. He argued that if a ruler is subject to the commands of others, then he cannot truly be sovereign. Sovereignty requires independence from all external human control.

However, Bodin's idea of absoluteness must be understood carefully. He did not argue that the sovereign could act without any moral restraint. Rather, he meant that the sovereign is legally supreme within the political community. This distinction between legal supremacy and moral responsibility is crucial. As George H. Sabine explains, Bodin's concept of sovereignty is "absolute in a legal sense, but not necessarily unlimited in a moral sense." This subtle distinction allows Bodin to maintain the authority of the sovereign while still acknowledging certain ethical constraints.

The second essential feature of sovereignty is that it is perpetual. By this, Bodin means that sovereignty is a continuous and enduring power. It does not depend on the lifespan or personal authority of a particular ruler. Even if a king dies or is replaced, the sovereignty of the state remains

intact. This idea is important because it separates the concept of sovereignty from the individual who exercises it. Sovereignty belongs to the state, not to the person of the ruler.

In medieval political thought, authority was often personal and temporary. Kings ruled by virtue of their personal power or divine favor, and their authority could be challenged or replaced. Bodin's idea of perpetual sovereignty introduces a sense of stability and continuity. The state becomes a permanent institution, and sovereignty becomes an enduring feature of that institution. This idea later becomes central to modern political theory, where the state is seen as a continuous entity regardless of changes in government.

The third key feature of sovereignty is that it is indivisible. Bodin strongly opposed the idea that sovereignty could be shared or divided among different authorities. In the medieval system, power was distributed among various institutions, including the monarchy, the nobility, and the Church. This often led to conflicts and confusion, as different authorities claimed the right to command obedience. Bodin argued that such division of power is incompatible with political stability.

For Bodin, sovereignty must reside in a single authority, whether it is a monarch, an aristocratic body, or the people. If sovereignty is divided, there will be no clear source of ultimate authority, and conflicts will inevitably arise. This insistence on indivisibility was one of Bodin's most radical departures from medieval thought. It provided a strong theoretical justification for centralized political power.

C. L. Wayper highlights the importance of this idea by noting that Bodin's insistence on the unity of sovereignty laid the foundation for the modern nation-state. According to Wayper, the modern state is characterized by a clear and centralized authority, and this idea can be traced back to Bodin's theory.

Another important aspect of Bodin's theory is his identification of the essential powers of sovereignty. These powers define what it means to be sovereign. According to Bodin, the sovereign has the authority to make laws, declare war and peace, appoint officials, administer justice, and levy taxes. Among these powers, the power to legislate is the most important. The ability to make and unmake laws is the ultimate expression of sovereignty.

Bodin emphasized that the sovereign is the source of law. Laws do not bind the sovereign in the same way that they bind subjects. The sovereign creates laws for the governance of society, but he is not subject to those laws because he is their author. This idea represents a significant shift from medieval thought, where rulers were often seen as bound by customary laws and traditions.

At the same time, Bodin recognized that the exercise of sovereign power must be guided by reason and justice. While the sovereign has the authority to make laws, he should do so in a way that promotes the welfare of the community. This reflects Bodin's concern for the common good, which remains an important element of his political thought.

Bodin also discussed the different forms of government based on the location of sovereignty. If sovereignty resides in one person, the government is a monarchy; if it resides in a few, it is an aristocracy; and if it resides in the people, it is a democracy. Although Bodin acknowledged all three forms, he clearly preferred monarchy. He believed that monarchy was the most effective form of government because it ensured unity and avoided the conflicts that could arise in more complex systems.

This preference for monarchy must be understood in the context of Bodin's concern for stability. In a time of civil war and religious conflict, a strong and unified authority appeared to be the best solution. As Sabine points out, Bodin's support for monarchy reflects his desire to "secure order in a divided society."

Bodin's theory of sovereignty also marks a clear break from the medieval doctrine of the supremacy of the Church. In medieval Europe, the Church often claimed authority over political matters, and rulers were expected to follow religious directives. Bodin rejected this idea and argued that the state must be independent of the Church. Sovereignty must be located within the political community, not in any external authority.

This idea was revolutionary because it challenged the long-standing dominance of the Church in political affairs. It also contributed to the development of secular political thought, where the state is seen as an independent institution with its own authority.

Despite its strengths, Bodin's theory of sovereignty has been subject to criticism. One of the main criticisms is the apparent contradiction between the absoluteness of sovereignty and the

recognition of moral limitations. If the sovereign is truly absolute, how can he be bound by natural or divine law? This tension has led some scholars to argue that Bodin's theory is inconsistent.

However, others interpret this tension as a reflection of Bodin's attempt to balance authority with morality. He wanted to create a strong and stable political system without endorsing tyranny or injustice. In this sense, his theory represents an early effort to reconcile power with ethical responsibility.

George H. Sabine suggests that Bodin's importance lies not in the perfection of his theory but in the clarity with which he formulated the concept of sovereignty. By defining sovereignty as absolute, perpetual, and indivisible, Bodin provided a framework that later thinkers could develop and refine.

Indeed, Bodin's influence on later political thought is profound. Thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes built upon Bodin's idea of absolute sovereignty, while others like John Locke reinterpreted sovereignty in terms of popular consent and limited government. Although these thinkers differed in their conclusions, they all engaged with the concept of sovereignty that Bodin had articulated.

Bodin's theory of sovereignty represents a major milestone in the history of political thought. It provides a clear and systematic understanding of political authority and lays the foundation for the modern state. By emphasizing the need for a supreme, unified, and enduring authority, Bodin addressed the central problem of political order in his time. At the same time, his recognition of moral constraints reflects his concern for justice and the common good. Despite its limitations, his theory remains a fundamental point of reference in the study of political theory.

1.8.2 Limitations on Sovereignty

While Jean Bodin is best known for his powerful and influential doctrine of sovereignty as "absolute and perpetual," it would be misleading to interpret his theory as a justification for unlimited or arbitrary rule. A careful reading of his work reveals that Bodin was equally concerned with placing moral, legal, and customary restraints on the exercise of sovereign authority. His discussion of the limitations on sovereignty reflects an attempt to balance two important objectives: the need for a strong and unified political authority, and the necessity of justice, order, and stability in society.

To understand Bodin's position, it is important to recall the historical context in which he wrote. The French Wars of Religion had created widespread instability in France. Competing religious factions challenged political authority, and the absence of a strong central power led to disorder and violence. In response, Bodin emphasized the importance of sovereignty as a means of restoring order. However, he was also aware that unchecked power could lead to tyranny and injustice. Therefore, he sought to define the limits within which sovereign authority should operate.

At the heart of Bodin's theory of limitations is the idea that, although the sovereign is not bound by human laws, he is subject to higher forms of law—namely, natural law and divine law. These laws represent universal principles of justice and morality that exist independently of human will. They are not created by the sovereign and cannot be altered by him. In this sense, they act as moral constraints on the exercise of political power.

Natural law, according to Bodin, consists of fundamental principles that are inherent in human nature and can be understood through reason. These include basic notions of justice, fairness, and the protection of life and property. The sovereign, though legally supreme, must govern in accordance with these principles. For example, Bodin insists that the sovereign cannot arbitrarily take the life or property of his subjects, as this would violate the basic principles of natural justice.

Similarly, divine law, which is derived from religious teachings, imposes moral obligations on the sovereign. As a thinker influenced by the religious environment of his time, Bodin believed that rulers are accountable to God for their actions. This belief acts as a restraint on the abuse of power, as the sovereign must ultimately answer to a higher moral authority. In this way, Bodin integrates religious and ethical considerations into his political theory without subordinating the state to the Church.

George H. Sabine observes that Bodin's recognition of natural and divine law shows that his concept of sovereignty is "not a doctrine of sheer arbitrariness." Instead, it reflects an effort to maintain a moral foundation for political authority. Similarly, C. L. Wayper notes that Bodin's sovereign, though absolute in legal terms, is "morally restrained by a higher law which he cannot violate without injustice."

In addition to natural and divine law, Bodin also acknowledges the importance of fundamental laws of the state. These are basic constitutional principles that provide stability and continuity to the political system. Among these, the most important are the laws governing succession and the protection of private property.

Bodin argues that the sovereign cannot arbitrarily change the rules of succession, as this would create uncertainty and conflict. The orderly transfer of power is essential for the stability of the state, and any attempt to alter it could lead to civil strife. Similarly, Bodin places great emphasis on the sanctity of private property. He maintains that the sovereign does not have the right to confiscate the property of his subjects without just cause. Property rights, in his view, are fundamental to social and economic stability, and their violation would undermine the legitimacy of the state.

This emphasis on property rights is particularly significant, as it anticipates later liberal theories of government. While Bodin is often associated with absolutism, his recognition of the importance of property rights suggests a concern for individual security and economic stability.

Another important limitation on sovereignty in Bodin's thought is the role of custom and tradition. Although the sovereign has the authority to make laws, Bodin advises that he should respect established customs and practices. These customs represent the accumulated wisdom of society and contribute to social cohesion. Sudden or arbitrary changes to long-standing traditions could disrupt the social order and lead to unrest.

Bodin also emphasizes the importance of good governance and prudence in the exercise of sovereign power. While the sovereign has the legal authority to act as he wishes, he should govern wisely and in the interest of the common good. This reflects Bodin's belief that political authority is not merely a matter of power but also of responsibility. The sovereign must act as a guardian of the welfare of the community.

In this context, Bodin's theory can be seen as an early attempt to distinguish between legal authority and moral responsibility. Legally, the sovereign is supreme and not bound by human laws. Morally, however, he is expected to act in accordance with principles of justice and fairness. This

dual perspective allows Bodin to defend strong political authority while also maintaining a commitment to ethical governance.

C. L. Wayper captures this duality by stating that “Bodin’s sovereign is absolute, yet not arbitrary.” This observation highlights the central tension in Bodin’s theory: the need to reconcile the idea of absolute authority with the demands of justice and morality.

Despite Bodin’s efforts, this tension has been the subject of considerable criticism. Some scholars argue that his theory is internally inconsistent. If the sovereign is truly absolute, they argue, then he cannot be bound by any limitations, whether moral or legal. Conversely, if there are real limits on his power, then his sovereignty cannot be truly absolute.

George H. Sabine points out that Bodin “never fully resolves this contradiction.” The coexistence of absolute authority and moral limitation creates ambiguity in his theory. However, Sabine also suggests that this ambiguity reflects the complexity of Bodin’s intellectual project. He was trying to address the practical problem of political instability while also preserving a commitment to justice and morality.

Another criticism of Bodin’s theory is that the limitations he proposes are largely moral rather than institutional. He does not provide a clear mechanism for enforcing these limits. For example, if the sovereign violates natural law or confiscates property unjustly, there is no institutional framework to hold him accountable. This distinguishes Bodin from later thinkers such as John Locke, who argued for institutional checks on political power, including the right of resistance.

In contrast, Bodin places his trust in the moral character and prudence of the sovereign. This reliance on the ruler’s virtue may seem inadequate from a modern perspective, where institutional safeguards are considered essential. However, it reflects the historical context in which Bodin was writing, where the development of constitutional mechanisms was still in its early stages.

It is also important to note that Bodin rejects the idea that subjects have the right to resist the sovereign. Unlike later liberal thinkers, he does not support rebellion or revolution as a means of checking political power. For Bodin, the maintenance of order and stability is of paramount

importance, and allowing resistance could lead to chaos. This position further highlights the limitations of his theory from a modern democratic perspective.

Despite these criticisms, Bodin's discussion of the limitations on sovereignty remains an important contribution to political thought. It demonstrates that even in the early stages of modern political theory, there was an awareness of the need to balance authority with justice. His recognition of natural law, divine law, and fundamental rights provides a moral framework within which political power should be exercised.

Moreover, Bodin's attempt to reconcile absolute authority with moral limitation influenced later developments in political theory. While thinkers like Thomas Hobbes emphasized the necessity of absolute sovereignty, others such as John Locke built upon the idea of limitations to develop theories of constitutional government and individual rights.

Bodin's theory of the limitations on sovereignty reflects a complex and nuanced understanding of political authority. While he strongly advocates for a powerful and unified sovereign, he also recognizes that such power must be exercised within certain moral and legal boundaries. His emphasis on natural law, divine law, fundamental laws, and property rights highlights his concern for justice and stability. Although his theory contains certain ambiguities and lacks institutional safeguards, it represents an important step in the evolution of political thought. It shows that the problem of balancing power and justice—a central concern of political theory—was already being addressed in the early modern period.

Check your progress

1. *What is Jean Bodin's concept of sovereignty?*
2. *Why did Bodin emphasize the indivisibility of sovereignty?*
3. *What are the limitations on sovereign power according to Bodin?*
4. *What are the major criticisms of Bodin's theory of sovereignty?*

1.8.3 State vs. Commonwealth

One of the most important aspects of Jean Bodin's political thought is his use of the concept of the "commonwealth" to describe what we today broadly understand as the state. However, Bodin's conception of the commonwealth is richer, wider, and more socially grounded than the modern notion of the state as merely a political or administrative structure. His analysis of the commonwealth represents a crucial step in the evolution of political theory, as it bridges medieval ideas of community with emerging modern notions of centralized political authority.

Bodin defines the commonwealth as a "rightly ordered government of a number of families, and of those things which are their common concern, by a sovereign power." This definition is significant for several reasons. First, it emphasizes that political life is not simply about rulers and institutions but about a community composed of families and shared interests. Second, it places sovereignty at the center of the political order, making it the defining feature that transforms a mere collection of individuals into a structured and organized political community.

To understand Bodin's concept of the commonwealth, it is important to distinguish it from the modern idea of the state. In contemporary political theory, the state is usually defined in terms of territory, population, government, and sovereignty. It is seen as a formal political organization with clearly defined institutions. Bodin's commonwealth, by contrast, includes not only political authority but also social and economic relationships. It is a more organic and holistic concept, reflecting the interconnectedness of different aspects of human life.

Bodin's emphasis on the commonwealth must be understood in the context of his time. Sixteenth-century France was experiencing severe political and social turmoil, particularly during the French Wars of Religion. The breakdown of traditional authority structures created a need for a new understanding of political organization. Bodin's concept of the commonwealth was an attempt to provide such an understanding by integrating social unity with political authority.

A key feature of Bodin's idea of the commonwealth is its foundation in families. Unlike modern theories that often begin with the individual as the basic unit of political analysis, Bodin starts with the family. He argues that families are the primary building blocks of society and that the commonwealth is essentially a collection of families organized under a sovereign authority. This

reflects a pre-modern and somewhat conservative outlook, where social order is seen as arising from hierarchical and natural relationships rather than from individual contracts or agreements.

The inclusion of “common possessions” in Bodin’s definition is also noteworthy. He recognizes that economic relationships are an essential part of political life. The commonwealth is not only a political entity but also an economic and social community where resources are managed and shared. This aspect of his theory shows an awareness of the material basis of political stability. A well-ordered commonwealth must ensure not only political authority but also economic well-being.

At the center of the commonwealth is sovereignty, which provides unity and direction. Without sovereignty, the commonwealth would be a loose and unorganized collection of families with no effective coordination or authority. Sovereignty transforms the community into a structured political order by establishing a clear source of command and obedience. In this sense, sovereignty is the defining feature that distinguishes a commonwealth from other forms of social organization.

George H. Sabine points out that Bodin’s concept of the commonwealth represents a major advance in political thought because it shifts attention from the personal authority of rulers to the institutional structure of the state. Instead of focusing on the qualities of individual rulers, Bodin emphasizes the organization and functioning of political authority. This marks an important step toward modern political science, where institutions rather than individuals become the primary focus of analysis.

Bodin further develops his theory by classifying different forms of commonwealth based on the location of sovereignty. He identifies three main types: monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. In a monarchy, sovereignty resides in a single ruler; in an aristocracy, it resides in a small group; and in a democracy, it resides in the people as a whole. This classification is not entirely new, as it draws on classical traditions, particularly those of Aristotle. However, Bodin’s contribution lies in linking these forms directly to the concept of sovereignty.

For Bodin, the form of government is determined by who holds sovereign power. This is a more precise and systematic way of classifying political systems compared to earlier approaches, which often focused on moral or ethical criteria. By grounding his classification in the concept of

sovereignty, Bodin provides a clearer analytical framework for understanding different types of political organization.

Despite recognizing all three forms of commonwealth, Bodin clearly expresses a preference for monarchy. He argues that monarchy is the most stable and effective form of government because it ensures unity of command. In a monarchy, decisions can be made quickly and consistently, without the conflicts and delays that may arise in more complex systems. This preference reflects Bodin's concern with order and stability, which were urgently needed in his time.

C. L. Wayper notes that Bodin's support for monarchy should be understood in the context of his desire to avoid the chaos and division that characterized the French Wars of Religion. Wayper argues that Bodin was less concerned with the form of government itself than with the need for effective and stable authority. Monarchy, in his view, was simply the most practical means of achieving this goal.

At the same time, Bodin's concept of the commonwealth retains certain elements of medieval thought. His emphasis on hierarchy, family, and social order reflects a worldview in which society is seen as an organic whole with clearly defined roles and relationships. This contrasts with later modern theories, such as those of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, which emphasize individual rights and social contracts.

This combination of old and new elements is what makes Bodin a transitional thinker. On the one hand, he introduces modern concepts such as sovereignty and the centralized state. On the other hand, he retains traditional ideas about social hierarchy and the importance of family. This dual character of his thought reflects the broader transition from medieval to modern political theory.

Another important aspect of Bodin's concept of the commonwealth is his emphasis on order and justice. He argues that the purpose of the commonwealth is not merely to maintain power but to ensure the well-being of its members. The sovereign has a duty to govern in a way that promotes justice and protects the interests of the community. This reflects Bodin's belief that political authority must be guided by moral principles.

However, Bodin does not provide a clear mechanism for ensuring that the sovereign fulfills this duty. As discussed earlier, his theory relies largely on moral constraints rather than institutional checks. This is one of the limitations of his thought, as it leaves open the possibility of abuse of power.

George H. Sabine highlights this limitation by noting that while Bodin provides a strong theoretical foundation for the state, he does not fully address the problem of controlling sovereign power. Nevertheless, Sabine acknowledges that Bodin's work represents a significant step forward in the development of political theory.

In modern political thought, the term "state" has largely replaced "commonwealth," and the focus has shifted toward legal and institutional definitions. However, Bodin's broader conception of the commonwealth remains relevant because it reminds us that political life is deeply connected to social and economic relationships. The state is not just a set of institutions; it is a community of people with shared interests and values.

Bodin's distinction between the commonwealth and the modern idea of the state highlights the richness and complexity of his political thought. His concept of the commonwealth integrates political authority with social and economic life, providing a holistic understanding of the political community. By placing sovereignty at the center of this concept, he lays the foundation for modern theories of the state. At the same time, his emphasis on family, hierarchy, and social order reflects the enduring influence of medieval ideas. This combination of innovation and tradition makes Bodin's theory of the commonwealth a crucial link in the development of Western political thought.

1.8.4 The Family as the Foundation

One of the most distinctive and often overlooked aspects of Jean Bodin's political theory is his emphasis on the family as the foundational unit of the political community. While much attention is usually given to his theory of sovereignty, Bodin's understanding of the state cannot be fully grasped without examining his view that the commonwealth is built upon families. In contrast to later modern thinkers who begin with the individual as the primary unit of analysis, Bodin starts with the family as the basic and natural unit of society. This approach reflects both his intellectual context and his attempt to provide a stable and enduring basis for political order.

Bodin defines the commonwealth as a “rightly ordered government of a number of families and of those things which are their common concern, by a sovereign power.” This definition immediately highlights the centrality of the family in his political thought. The state, for Bodin, is not an artificial construct created through a social contract among individuals, but a natural extension of smaller social units, the most important of which is the family. In this sense, the family serves as the building block of political life, providing the structure, discipline, and moral foundation upon which the larger political order rests.

To understand Bodin’s emphasis on the family, it is important to consider the intellectual and historical context in which he was writing. Sixteenth-century France was characterized by social hierarchy, religious authority, and strong patriarchal norms. The French Wars of Religion further disrupted social and political stability, leading thinkers like Bodin to search for stable and enduring foundations of order. In such a context, the family appeared as a natural and reliable unit of organization, capable of providing continuity and discipline even in times of crisis.

Bodin’s conception of the family is deeply rooted in the idea of patriarchal authority. He argues that within the family, authority is exercised by the head, typically the father, who governs the household and its members. This authority is not merely practical but also moral and legal. The father is responsible for maintaining order, ensuring the well-being of family members, and managing the family’s property. For Bodin, this form of authority is natural and necessary, as it reflects the inherent structure of human society.

The importance of this idea lies in the analogy that Bodin draws between the family and the state. Just as the father governs the family, the sovereign governs the commonwealth. This analogy is central to Bodin’s political theory because it provides a model for understanding political authority. The authority of the sovereign is seen as an extension of the authority exercised within the family. Both are hierarchical, both are necessary for maintaining order, and both are justified by their role in promoting the welfare of the community.

C. L. Wayper points out that Bodin’s emphasis on the family reflects his conservative outlook and his desire to preserve traditional social structures. According to Wayper, Bodin saw the

family as a source of stability in a rapidly changing world. By grounding political authority in the familiar and enduring structure of the family, Bodin sought to provide a sense of continuity and legitimacy to the state.

In addition to its role as a model of authority, the family also plays a crucial role in the economic life of the commonwealth. Bodin emphasizes that families are responsible for the production, management, and transmission of property. The economic activities of families contribute to the overall prosperity of the state. This aspect of his theory highlights the interconnectedness of social, economic, and political life. The stability of the commonwealth depends not only on political authority but also on the proper functioning of its basic social units.

Bodin's recognition of the importance of property within the family is particularly significant. He regards property as a fundamental right that must be protected by the sovereign. The family, as the primary unit of property ownership, becomes central to the economic structure of the state. By safeguarding the rights of families to own and manage property, the sovereign ensures economic stability and social order. This emphasis on property anticipates later developments in political theory, particularly in the works of thinkers like John Locke, who also highlighted the importance of property rights.

Another important aspect of Bodin's theory is his understanding of the family as a moral and educational institution. The family is not only a unit of authority and economic activity but also a place where individuals learn values, discipline, and social norms. It is within the family that individuals are socialized and prepared for participation in the larger political community. In this sense, the family serves as a training ground for citizenship.

George H. Sabine notes that Bodin's theory of the family provides a crucial link between his social and political ideas. According to Sabine, Bodin viewed the family as the foundation upon which the entire structure of the commonwealth is built. Without strong and stable families, the political order would lack the necessary support and cohesion.

At the same time, Bodin's emphasis on patriarchal authority has been subject to criticism from modern scholars. His view of the family reinforces hierarchical and unequal relationships, particularly between men and women. In Bodin's theory, authority is concentrated in the hands of

the male head of the household, and other members are expected to obey. This perspective reflects the social norms of his time but is at odds with contemporary values of equality and individual rights.

Modern critics argue that Bodin's analogy between the family and the state can be problematic. By equating political authority with paternal authority, he risks justifying authoritarian forms of government. If the sovereign is seen as a father figure, then subjects may be expected to obey without question, just as children obey their parents. This can undermine the development of democratic principles and individual freedoms.

However, it is important to evaluate Bodin's ideas within their historical context. His emphasis on hierarchy and authority was a response to the chaos and instability of his time. In a society torn apart by conflict, the need for order and discipline appeared more urgent than the demand for individual liberty. Bodin's theory of the family reflects this priority, as it seeks to establish a stable and coherent foundation for political life.

Despite its limitations, Bodin's analysis of the family remains an important contribution to political thought. It highlights the fact that political systems are deeply rooted in social structures and cannot be understood in isolation. The state is not simply a set of institutions; it is a community built upon relationships, values, and shared practices. By emphasizing the role of the family, Bodin reminds us that the stability of the political order depends on the strength of its social foundations.

Furthermore, Bodin's theory anticipates later sociological approaches to politics, which emphasize the importance of social institutions in shaping political behavior. Although he did not develop a full sociological theory, his recognition of the interplay between family, economy, and politics points in that direction. His work can thus be seen as an early attempt to integrate different dimensions of social life into a unified framework.

Bodin's view of the family as the foundation of the commonwealth is a key element of his political theory. It reflects his belief that political authority must be rooted in natural and enduring social structures. The family provides a model of authority, a basis for economic activity, and a source of moral and social values. While his emphasis on patriarchal hierarchy has been criticized, it also highlights his concern for order and stability in a time of crisis. As C. L. Wayper suggests,

Bodin's theory of the family reveals the depth and complexity of his thought, showing that his understanding of politics extends beyond institutions to include the broader fabric of social life.

1.8.5 Theory of Climate (Environmental Determinism)

An important yet often less emphasized aspect of Jean Bodin's political thought is his theory of climate, which is commonly described as an early form of environmental determinism. While Bodin is primarily remembered for his theory of sovereignty, his reflections on the influence of geography and climate on human behavior and political institutions reveal the breadth of his intellectual interests. In this respect, Bodin goes beyond purely legal and political analysis and attempts to integrate natural, social, and historical factors into his understanding of political life.

Bodin develops his theory of climate most clearly in his work *Method for the Easy Understanding of History* (1566). In this work, he argues that the physical environment—particularly climate—plays a significant role in shaping the character, habits, and institutions of human societies. This idea represents an early attempt to apply a more scientific and empirical approach to the study of politics, moving away from purely theological or moral explanations.

At the core of Bodin's theory is the belief that climate influences the physical and psychological characteristics of people. These characteristics, in turn, affect the type of political systems that develop in different regions. For Bodin, human behavior is not determined solely by reason or free will; it is also shaped by natural conditions such as temperature, geography, and environment. This perspective reflects a broader Renaissance interest in understanding the natural world and its impact on human life.

Bodin classifies the world into different climatic zones and associates each zone with particular traits. According to him, people living in colder climates—such as those in northern regions—tend to be physically strong, courageous, and independent. These qualities make them resistant to authority and more inclined toward freedom. As a result, such societies are less likely to accept absolute rule and may favor more participatory forms of government.

In contrast, people living in warmer climates—particularly in southern regions—are described by Bodin as more passive, emotional, and less inclined toward resistance. He suggests that such populations are more likely to accept authoritarian forms of rule because they lack the

same degree of physical and mental vigor as those in colder climates. While these observations may appear simplistic or stereotypical today, they reflect an early attempt to connect environmental conditions with political behavior.

Between these extremes lies the temperate zone, which Bodin regards as the most balanced and favorable environment. According to him, people living in temperate climates possess a combination of physical strength and intellectual capacity. They are neither too harsh nor too passive, making them better suited for rational thought and stable political organization. Bodin believed that such regions were more likely to produce well-ordered and durable political systems.

George H. Sabine describes Bodin's theory of climate as a "pioneering effort to apply scientific reasoning to political analysis." Sabine acknowledges that while Bodin's conclusions may not meet modern standards of scientific accuracy, his attempt to move beyond purely moral or theological explanations marks an important development in political thought. By considering environmental factors, Bodin expands the scope of political theory and introduces a more empirical dimension.

Bodin's theory of climate also reflects his interest in comparative politics. By examining different regions and their political systems, he seeks to identify patterns and relationships between environment and governance. This comparative approach is significant because it moves political theory toward a more systematic and analytical framework. Instead of focusing on a single ideal form of government, Bodin recognizes that different societies may develop different political systems based on their specific conditions.

C. L. Wayper highlights this aspect of Bodin's thought by noting that his theory of climate demonstrates "a remarkable breadth of intellectual curiosity." Wayper argues that Bodin was among the first thinkers to recognize that political systems cannot be understood in isolation from their social and environmental context. This insight anticipates later developments in political sociology and comparative politics.

Another important implication of Bodin's theory is that it introduces a form of relativism into political thought. If climate and environment influence political systems, then it follows that no single form of government can be universally applicable. What works in one region may not work

in another. This idea challenges the classical tradition, which often sought to identify the best or ideal form of government for all societies. Bodin, by contrast, suggests that political systems must be adapted to the specific conditions of each society.

This perspective also has practical implications for governance. Bodin argues that rulers should take into account the characteristics of their people and the conditions of their environment when designing laws and institutions. A system that is effective in one context may fail in another if it does not align with the nature of the population. This emphasis on adaptation and flexibility reflects a pragmatic approach to politics.

Despite its innovative aspects, Bodin's theory of climate has been widely criticized. One of the main criticisms is that it relies on generalizations and stereotypes. His descriptions of people in different climatic zones often lack empirical evidence and are based on limited observations. Modern scholars argue that human behavior and political systems are influenced by a complex interplay of factors, including culture, history, economy, and institutions, rather than climate alone.

Another criticism is that Bodin's theory can be interpreted as deterministic, suggesting that human behavior is largely shaped by environmental conditions. This view leaves little room for human agency, creativity, or change. In reality, societies have demonstrated the ability to adapt to their environments and to develop diverse political systems regardless of climatic conditions.

George H. Sabine acknowledges these limitations but emphasizes that Bodin's contribution lies in his attempt to broaden the scope of political analysis. Sabine argues that Bodin's theory should be seen as an initial attempt rather than a definitive explanation. It opened the door for later thinkers to explore the relationship between environment and politics in a more systematic and evidence-based manner.

Indeed, Bodin's theory of climate had a significant influence on later thinkers, most notably Montesquieu. In his famous work *The Spirit of the Laws*, Montesquieu develops a more refined and sophisticated theory of the relationship between climate and political institutions. While Montesquieu's analysis is more nuanced and less deterministic, it builds upon the foundation laid by Bodin.

Bodin's theory also reflects the broader intellectual climate of the Renaissance, which was characterized by a growing interest in science, observation, and empirical inquiry. By incorporating environmental factors into his analysis, Bodin aligns himself with this intellectual movement and contributes to the development of a more scientific approach to political thought.

At a deeper level, Bodin's theory of climate can be seen as part of his broader effort to understand the complexity of political life. Just as he integrates legal, social, and economic factors in his analysis of the commonwealth, he also recognizes the importance of natural conditions. This holistic approach distinguishes him from earlier thinkers who focused primarily on moral or theological aspects.

However, it is important to note that Bodin does not reduce politics entirely to environmental factors. His theory of sovereignty remains central to his political thought, and climate is only one of many factors that influence political systems. In this sense, his theory of climate complements rather than replaces his analysis of political authority.

Bodin's theory of climate represents an important and innovative aspect of his political thought. It reflects his attempt to understand the relationship between environment and politics and to incorporate natural factors into the study of political systems. While his conclusions may not be scientifically accurate by modern standards, his approach marks an important step toward a more empirical and comparative study of politics. As C. L. Wayper observes, Bodin's theory demonstrates his attempt to integrate different fields of knowledge and to develop a comprehensive understanding of political life. Despite its limitations, it remains a significant contribution to the evolution of political theory.

Check your progress

1. *How does Bodin define the commonwealth?*
2. *What role does the family play in Bodin's political theory?*
3. *Explain Bodin's theory of climate.*

1.9 Critical Evaluation

Jean Bodin's political theory occupies a crucial place in the transition from medieval to modern political thought. His most significant contribution, the theory of sovereignty, has been widely appreciated for laying the foundation of the modern state. At a time of intense political instability during the French Wars of Religion, Bodin's emphasis on a strong and unified authority was both timely and necessary. His ideas helped justify the consolidation of political power in emerging nation-states and provided a framework for maintaining order and stability.

One of the major strengths of Bodin's thought is his clear and systematic formulation of sovereignty. Unlike earlier thinkers, he defined sovereignty in precise legal and political terms. George H. Sabine observes that Bodin's concept of sovereignty marks "the beginning of modern political science," as it shifts the focus from moral and theological concerns to legal and institutional analysis. Similarly, C. L. Wayper appreciates Bodin for giving "a coherent and durable concept of political authority," which influenced later thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes.

Another important contribution of Bodin is his insistence on the indivisibility of sovereignty. By rejecting the medieval idea of divided authority between Church and State, he emphasized the need for a single, supreme power within the political community. This idea played a key role in the development of the modern nation-state and the principle of state sovereignty in international relations.

However, Bodin's theory is not without its limitations. One of the major criticisms is the apparent contradiction between his claim that sovereignty is absolute and his recognition of limitations on sovereign power. While he argues that the sovereign is not bound by human laws, he also insists that the sovereign must respect natural law, divine law, and fundamental laws of the state. Critics argue that this creates ambiguity in his theory. As Sabine points out, Bodin "never fully resolves the tension between absolute authority and moral limitation."

Another limitation of Bodin's thought is his preference for monarchy. Although he classifies different forms of government, he clearly favors monarchy as the best system. This bias reflects the political context of his time but limits the applicability of his theory in modern democratic societies.

C. L. Wayper notes that Bodin's support for monarchy shows his concern for order rather than liberty, which later became a central value in political theory.

Bodin's theory of the family has also been criticized for its patriarchal nature. By comparing the authority of the sovereign to that of a father over the family, he reinforces hierarchical social relations. Modern scholars argue that this perspective ignores issues of equality and individual rights, which are central to contemporary political thought.

Similarly, his theory of climate (environmental determinism) has been criticized for being overly simplistic and based on generalizations. While it represents an early attempt to link environment and politics, it lacks empirical support and often relies on stereotypes. However, it is important to recognize that Bodin was among the first thinkers to explore such relationships, which were later developed more systematically by Montesquieu.

Despite these criticisms, Bodin's contribution remains significant. His work represents a crucial step in the evolution of political thought, bridging the gap between medieval and modern ideas. As Sabine rightly concludes, Bodin's theory, though imperfect, "opened the way for a more scientific and systematic study of politics."

1.10 Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, we have examined the life and ideas of Jean Bodin, one of the most important transitional thinkers in Western political thought. Writing in a period of political and religious conflict in France, Bodin sought to provide a stable foundation for political authority.

His most important contribution is the theory of sovereignty, which he defined as the absolute and perpetual power of the state. He emphasized that sovereignty must be indivisible and centralized in order to maintain order and stability. At the same time, he recognized certain moral and legal limitations on sovereign power, which reflect his attempt to balance authority with justice.

Bodin's concept of the commonwealth highlights the importance of social and economic relationships in political life, while his emphasis on the family underscores the role of basic social institutions in shaping the state. His theory of climate represents an early effort to understand the influence of environmental factors on political systems.

1.11 Key Terms

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Chancery | - A high court of equity in England and Wales with common-law functions and jurisdiction over causes in equity |
| Papacy | - the system of government of the Roman Catholic Church of which the pope is the supreme head |
| Renaissance | - the transitional movement in Europe between medieval and modern times beginning in the 14th century in Italy, lasting into the 17th century, and marked by a humanistic revival of classical influence expressed in a flowering of the arts and literature and by the beginnings of modern science |
| Monarchs | - a person who reigns over a kingdom or empire: such as: a sovereign ruler or as a constitutional king or queen |
| Paganism | - a religion other than one of the main world religions, specifically a non-Christian or pre-Christian religion. |
| Asceticism | - severe self-discipline and avoiding of all forms of indulgence, typically for religious reasons. |
| Anarchical | - is a situation in which there is no organization and control, especially in society due to an absence of effective Government. |
| Absolutism | - is a political system in which a single ruler, group or a political party has complete power/domination over a country. |
| Statecraft | - The art of running a public affair; Statesmanship. |
| Republic | - it is a political order whose head of the state is not a monarch and in modern times is usually a president. |
| Sovereignty | - Supreme and absolute power of the state |
| Commonwealth | - Political community governed by a sovereign authority |
| Natural Law | - Universal principles of justice and morality |
| Divine Law | - Laws derived from religious teachings |
| Patriarchy | - Social system where authority is held by male heads of families |

1.12 Answer's to 'check your Progress'

1. There are many works of Machiavelli, but some of the important works are 'The Prince', and 'The Discourses'.
2. Machiavelli was greatly influenced by the conditions of Italy as the Italian peninsula was divided into a number of small but independent states which were constantly at war. Machiavelli wanted to unite these independent states and unity could only be possible under a Monarchy.
3. Renaissance Movement exercised profound influence on Machiavelli because the movement not only revived that was ancient and had been forgotten during the medieval period, but also created a consciousness of life, a new sense of liberty, and new values of life.
4. Alike Hobbes, Machiavelli was also conceived that the individual was wicked, selfish and egoistic. He was fundamentally weak, ungrateful, exhibitionist, artificial, anxious to avoid danger and excessively desirous of gain.
5. Machiavelli's "The Prince" is considered as a master piece because it consists of advice given to a ruler on the state craft.
6. Machiavelli came up with a list of suggestions for the prince in order to establish a strong and stable state. A prince must combine both the qualities of a lion and a fox, Use double standard of politics, Maintain strong army etc.
7. Sovereignty is the absolute and perpetual power of the state, which is supreme and indivisible.
8. Bodin emphasized indivisibility to avoid conflict and ensure political stability.
9. Sovereign power is limited by natural law, divine law, and fundamental laws of the state.
10. The commonwealth is a political community consisting of families and their common interests governed by a sovereign authority.
11. The family is the basic unit of society and serves as the foundation of the state.
12. Bodin's theory of climate suggests that environmental factors influence human behavior and political systems.
13. Criticisms include contradictions in his theory, support for monarchy, patriarchal views, and lack of empirical basis in his climate theory.

1.13 Short-Answer Questions

1. When was Machiavelli's 'The Discourses' written?
2. Why is Machiavelli considered as the Father of modern political theory?
3. What is the similarity between Thomas Hobbes and Machiavelli's concept of Human Nature?
4. Why according to Machiavelli state as an apex institution?
5. Define sovereignty according to Jean Bodin.
6. What are the essential features of sovereignty?
7. What is meant by the commonwealth?
8. How does Bodin justify monarchy?
9. What is natural law in Bodin's theory?
10. Explain the role of family in political organization.

1.14 Long- Answer Questions

1. Write a note on the spirit of the Renaissance.
2. Examine Machiavelli's concept of Human nature.
3. Analyse Machiavelli's thought on ethics and religion.
4. Machiavelli wanted to establish a strong 'Monarch' comment?
5. Discuss Machiavelli as a modern political thinker.
6. Critically examine Jean Bodin's theory of sovereignty.
7. Discuss the limitations on sovereignty in Bodin's political thought.
8. Explain Bodin's concept of the commonwealth and its significance.
9. Analyze the role of family in Bodin's theory of the state.
10. Assess Jean Bodin as a transitional thinker between medieval and modern political thought.

1.15 Further Readings

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Mukherjee Subrata, Ramaswamy Sushila (2015). *A History of Political Thought- Plato to Marx*. New Delhi: PHI Learning Private Limited.

Sabine, GH. (1973): *A history of Political Theory*, 4th ed., revised by T.L Thorson, New Delhi, oxford and IBH, First Published in 1937.

George H. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory (comprehensive and widely used text)*
C. L. Wayper, *Political Thought (clear and concise explanations)*

Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Vol. I & II (advanced and analytical)*

William Ebenstein, *Great Political Thinkers: Plato to the Present*

Brian Nelson, *Western Political Thought*

Andrew Heywood, *political Theory: An Introduction (useful for conceptual clarity)*

Maurice Cranston, *Western Political Philosophers*

UNIT 2:

THE CONTRACTUALIST: Hobbes, Locke and J.J. Rousseau

Structure

2.0 Unit Objectives

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Thomas Hobbes

2.2.1 Human Nature

2.2.2 State of Nature

2.2.3 Laws of Nature and the Covenants

2.2.4 Concept of Sovereign

2.3 John Locke

2.3.1 Human Nature

2.3.2 State of Nature

2.3.3 Social contract

2.4 Jean Jacques Rousseau

2.4.1 Human Nature

2.4.2 State of Nature

2.4.3 Social Contract and General Will

2.5 Summary

2.6 Key Terms

2.7 Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’

2.8 Short-Answer Question

2.9 Long- Answer Questions

2.10 Further Reading

2.0 Unit Objectives

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

- Explain the political ideas of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau.
- Explain the origin of state according to social contract theory.

2.1 Introduction

The origin of state, when and how the state came into existence is a mystery. Nobody knows how and can give evidence about the origin of the state. In the study of Political Science, the origin of the state theory became a centre during 16th-17th century among the scholars. A number of political thinkers have suggested the different theories of the origin of the state. Some of the prominent theories are:

1. The Theory of Divine Origin
2. The Force Theory
3. The Patriarchal and Matriarchal theories
4. The Historical and Evolutionary theory
5. The Marxian theory
6. The Social Contract theory

The Social Contract theory of state is propounded by the trio philosophers- Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau. These three thinkers believed in social contract as the basis of the origin of the state. Therefore, they are known as Contractualists to the origin of the state. As per these three thinkers natural social instinct of man has made enormous contribution to the growth of the state. This theory holds that the state is the result of a deliberate and voluntary agreement on the part of primitive men emerging from a state of nature. It assumes that there was a period in human history when there was no state and no political law. This pre-civil or pre-political period was considered as state of nature. In this state of nature the only law which governed human relations was the law of nature and human instinct. Contractualist believed that the state of nature was either too idyllic to last long or too inconvenient and unbearable for man to put up with it. Hence man in this state of nature soon abandoned the primitive state and set up a political society through social contract among them. As a result of the social contract or covenant each man lost his natural liberty in part or in whole and in its place men obtained the security and protection of the state provided by political law. Contractualist believed that the state as manmade institution created by a contract. To justify the origin of state as manmade, the contract assumed that there was a state of nature. In that state of nature was depicted different conditions of human nature by the three thinkers. Though these three thinkers depicted different conditions and situations of state of nature, human nature and types of contract but the harmony of the contractualist is that the state was created by man through contract or covenant.

2.2 Thomas Hobbes (1581-1679):

Life sketch

Thomas Hobbes, an English philosopher born in Malmesbury in 1581 A.D. to a humble family of an Anglican clergyman's. Hobbes was a brilliant youth but his parents could not afford to give higher education. It was, however, with the intervention of his relative that Hobbes could be sent to Oxford at the age of 15. After completing his studies he joined a powerful Cavendish family as a tutor which fortunately gave patronage to the tutor. It was due to this patronage that Hobbes could travel throughout Europe. There he could meet leading scientists and literary figures and was impressed by those intellectual minds. In 1610, England was in the jaws of civil war and thus facing a great constitutional crisis between monarchy and republicanism. He had seen with his own eyes the bloodshed and fighting which made him think that was blood thirsty and had an animal like instinct. He was a brilliant student but timid in nature. He could not bear the bloodshed situation and he fled to France to find a shelter. He was in France for quite a long time that's how he was influenced by the French political system. His patronage to the royal family made him to support the monarchy.

Influence on Hobbes:

Hobbes was influenced by the condition of time and situation of England and France during that time. He was also influenced by the great philosopher like Glaucon, Plato and Hooker in respect of social contract, Machiavelli on human nature, Grotius on law of nature as dictates of reason, Bodin on concept of sovereignty, Galileo on mechanical nature of world and Descartes and Euclid on geometry.

He studied physics, geometry, psychology and politics. That's why he used the scientific materialism method to understand the politics and society.

His writings and works:

Political philosophy of Hobbes was expressed in his writings. In 1640, *De-corpore politico* was published which deals with human nature. In the first part of the book he has tried to express that fear and glory are two dominating factors in human nature but it is fear which regulates man's actions and saves him from becoming savage. In this part he has given the idea of absolute and inalienable monarchy to tame the brutish nature of man.

His another work De-cive (1612) was published. In this book he stresses further in establishment of superior authority of the state by saying that both spiritual and temporal lords should bow before the authority of lord sovereign. That means he further strengthen the sovereign authority.

His finest work was his Leviathan that has made him immortal and elucidated the vivid view of state of nature and vis-a-vis of man there. It was published in 1651 which gave a solid foundation to the social contract theory of origin of state. Later on it was further strengthen and supported by Locke and Rousseau. In this book he has dealt with the origin of state and nature of sovereign and finally the creation of absolute, invisible and inalienable authority of the sovereign which knows no limitation from anyone.

2.2.1 Human Nature:

Hobbes was essentially product of his time. He witnessed the cruel and chaos during that time in England. It was the influenced of his time that he felt man is by nature nasty, brutish and selfish. Man required a strong authority to check or control him. He, therefore, pleaded for a strong monarch on to check the selfish habits of man.

Hobbes philosophy to derive the reason for the creation of state begins with analysis of political problem it was essential that human nature should be clearly understood. He tried to give a scientific explanation which determines the human nature. Hobbes presumed that motion of particles create sensation in human mind. He also believes that there is relationship between stimulus and sensation. It is a result of stimulus and sensation by which mental phenomenon came into being. Moving particles create sensation and all mental phenomena are the result of sensations. These moving particles generate active and receptive forces, desires and aversions. These two principles of emotions is result of moving particles in brain. He believes that emotions and passions are inborn and reason is artificial.

He also presumes that movement of particles either helps on the way of vitality and on that depends, desires and aversions. Each man desires something which will enhance his vitality and pleasure. To Hobbes conception of good or bad is nothing fixed. It is ever changing phenomenon and subjective in nature. So as human desires go on changing there is no final goal of life. The end of every man is continued success in getting his desired things. Life is self centered and his desire for security is mans fundamental need. The desire for security is most essential thing which makes

man to maintain balance and co-existence in the society. It is the man's concern for security that deters the man to become as wild beast. Each one is solitary individual and thus each one has his own concept of pleasure, pain, good and bad.

Hobbes conception of human nature was essentially based on two basic tenets. First, all man are equal. Second is men fight with each other. Unlike Machiavelli, Hobbes believed that man was not an idle spectator in political drama. He was always ready to struggle and achieve something noble, gentle and higher. The desire to achieve more and more makes men fight with each other always. Hobbes said that no individual is capable of behavior independent of external stimuli. His reaction is with reference to the environments around him.

Hobbes concept on his ideas about human nature is the pivot around which his whole philosophy revolves. Hobbes concept of sovereignty is based on his ideas about human nature. He believes that the state of nature (pre-civil society) was an uncontrolled society because of brutish, selfish and nasty nature of man. That society was full of chaos and unbearable, turbulent and war. The men desire to get rid of that ugly and undesirable atmosphere. Thus, the man made a contract and as a result the state came into being with political power and authority.

2.2.2 State of nature:

Hobbes believed that before man came in the civil society they lived in the state of nature. The state of nature is an imaginary view of pre-civil and pre-political society. In the state of nature people were guided only by passion and desire. Hobbes has given a very gloomy picture of man at that stage. There were no state, authority, laws and regulations. He did not give any historical evidence or date when it happen but it is an imaginary view that once upon a time there was a state of nature. At this stage pre-civil society man were guided by natural instinct being inherent in the individuals. Hobbes believed that human nature were brutish, nasty, selfish and quarrelsome. Every individual were competitors of the other and thus it become difficult to satisfy all. There were always conflict between man to man and man to natural conditions. Every man has feelings of superiority and wishes to outdo the others. This makes the competition unavoidable and everyone was potential enemy of other for acquiring wealth, reputation, honor and power and wisdom. That's why there was continuous fight against the other. Because of the uncivilized and unsocial nature of man, the state of nature was dark, unhappy, chaos and short. People lived in constant fear from each other. Man was without any civil society, art and culture. There was no common law and no common lawgiver. He says in his Leviathan, that in such state of affairs there is no place for

industry, no navigation, no knowledge of the face of the earth, no letter and no society. What was worst of all, there was continual fear and danger of violent death. The life of man was solitary, poor, nasty and unhappy. The fear of being surpassed by others in power and desire for admiration and recognition as superior.

He believes that in the state of nature essentially and basically all were un-social, selfish and brute. Man was without society, art and culture but in security was the only secure thing in that pre-state society.

2.2.3 Hobbes theory of origin of state

Hobbes believed that before people came in the society they lived in the state of nature where they were nasty and brutish. They lived in constant fear from each other. According to Hobbes at the first stage there was realization that if all the people obeyed laws of nature they could live together in harmony. It was thereafter that they felt that since all were short sighted to follow these rules, therefore, there was a need of powerful sovereign who could enforce these rules. Since the people were antisocial, therefore need for a power which was respected by all was badly felt. Mere words are not enough. These could be overthrown at any time by a powerful person and compelled others to accept his viewpoint. Any person whose strength was more could take it into his head to put others to trouble. In order to avoid such situation, Hobbes thinks it necessary to create a supreme authority. According to Hobbes, it was the dictate of reason, in other word he said that “the counsels of prudence” make men to realize and understand the necessity of common rulers or sovereign body. “Following the dictates of reason Hobbes individuals undertake not to exercise their natural right to everything. But the surrender of natural right alone is not sufficient unless there is some guarantee that they will not violate the contract on the impulse of passions. So such guarantee is to be created as the passions can understand only force. Hence an artificial person, a Leviathan, an all powerful sovereign is created by the individuals themselves for keeping them in check” (R.M.Bhagat.p.511)

At the time when all individuals make up their mind to end the state of nature is that they enter into what Hobbes calls ‘contract’. Each individual made a contract with every other individual. By this contract they promised to each other, not to will their own will. In other way they undertake to accept a limitation on their will. According to him unless there was common sovereign power to regulate this competition, conflicts, clashes and quarrel were unavoidable. In

that there was also no distinction between right and wrong or just and unjust. There was also no concept of private property. Everyone owned that much which he could forcibly acquire.

After surrendering their own will they accepted their limitations. They submitted to the will of one in the hope of getting peace and security which are to be found in the state. This contract among the individuals is the basis of Hobbes on origin of state. It was to remove constant fear that men thought of surrendering their rights or will to a sovereign body as a protector to whom they wanted to be custodian of their rights, duties and social justice. According to Hobbes the individual made a contract among themselves without the ruler or sovereign being party to it.

Nature of Contract:

In this contract the sovereign was not the party. People themselves were a party. They agreed to surrender all their rights except that of life to a supreme power (state). That supreme power remained out of the contract. Thus, whereas before the contract all were equal, after that out of all equals one superior was created in form of state. That superior represented the power of all individuals and became above the equals. All rights were transferred to a common depository. "Though this gives the impression of a deliberate selection of their ruler by the individuals but actually this was only a desperate submission of the weaklings to the powerful with the hope that the latter will protect their lives which were in imminent danger in the state of nature." (Bhagat, p.512). Then it was not a contract between unequals, but between those who were equal with each other on their own, without any compulsion and without any fear. Hobbes called 'commonwealth or sovereign or Leviathan was an artificial body made out of contract. He believed that sovereign cannot be unjust, because he is not a party to the contract. The contract was perpetual and irrevocable. The contract once entered cannot be revoked. It is binding not only on this generation but on succeeding generations as well. A lawfully constituted sovereign can be replaced only by a unanimous decision of the commonwealth. Hobbes state gets sovereign powers by institution and not by acquisition. This is how the state was created as per Hobbes. The individual resigned his natural rights to state. The second law of nature of Hobbes, men should agree to lay down the natural rights to everything has cumulatively resulted in the creation of an all powerful sovereign. It is thus that a lawful government is brought into existence. Thus the society comes into being as well.

Features of Hobbes Contract:

1. The parties to the contract are not groups or associations but the individuals living in the state of nature. The contract was not between a superior and an inferior or between a sovereign and his subjects but among equals of their own free volition.
2. The sovereign authority in the state is the artificial creation of the contract. According to Hobbes there is no distinction between state and society and between state and government.
3. The sovereign is not a party to the contract and he can never make a breach of the contract. Sovereign cannot be unjust. Therefore, he is infallible.
4. The contract made by the individual is perpetual and irrevocable. If there is any violation of the social contract it means return to the anarchy state of nature.
5. Minority are subjected to the majority at the time of contract. If minority rebel the majority that means they would remain outside the civil society and can be justly destroyed by the majority.
6. The state is the result of contract and is bound to protect individual's life from inside or outside encroachments.
7. His theory of social contract arose because he was out to support to a particular system of government that is absolute monarchy.

2.2.4 Hobbes concept of Sovereignty:

Hobbes contends that the sovereign must be absolutely supreme and all powerful. He allows exception to the absolute power of the state. At the time of contract individual surrender all their rights except natural right (right to life). The subject's liberty to defend his own life even against sovereign. They created the sovereign in order to save their lives. The obedience to the sovereign lasts so long as he can protect the subjects. The moment he is unable to do so or become ineffective, the subject can overthrow him and elect another sovereign. If the government fails to give the security which is the only reason for subjects' submission the individuals have the right to disobey a weak sovereign. If the Leviathan (Sovereign) fails to give desired protection, men are then back to the state of nature and free to obey a defecto monarch. Hobbes sovereign can be limit by the law of nature and laws of God. Otherwise sovereign is not bound by any earthly power.

Besides the limitations Hobbes mentioned certain duties that the sovereign has to ascertain. The first is the general duty of being successful by performing the duties which he was instituted.

The second duty of Hobbes's sovereign is that to make only equitable and necessary laws. The laws become inequitable when they violate the articles of peace. The main concern of the sovereign is to watch that no individual infringes the rights of any other individual or life and liberty. Hobbes Leviathan has nothing to do with development work, the cultivation of moral virtue, art and literature. All these things left to the individuals to pursue. Hence it has been rightly said that "Hobbes's Leviathan is a policeman, not an instructor".

2.2.5 Criticism on Hobbes Philosophy:

1. Hobbes depicted the negative attributes of human nature. Human nature cannot be concluded with one sided. Human nature is neither so reasonable nor so unreasonable. Human being has both good and bad nature. If men were so egoistic and savage, they would never be able to set up a government.
2. Hobbes state of nature, he could not give any evidence or proof of being existence of state of nature. There is no historical evidence that can confirm the existence of the state of nature.
3. His contract is not a charter of freedom, rather becomes the bond of slavery. The individual lose their liberty altogether and get nothing but the chains.
4. The contract once for all, their rulers. The ruler once chosen may prove to be corrupt. But due to the fear of relapse into the state of nature the people would be helpless in replacing the sovereign.
5. His theory is that it puts the cart before the horse. It is the society come first then state and government but his contract has reversed the same order of precedence.
6. He fails to give convincing theory of ever binding contract on all generations to come, grandchildren or great grand children has no right to reverse the contract made by his forefather even they want to do so.
7. Prof. Vaughn criticizes on Hobbes theory that it has given only two choices to his individual that is their slavery or anarchy.
8. Hobbes sovereign may be one person, two persons or many persons. But his preference is for one.

Check your progress

1. *Write a note on Hobbs human nature*
2. *Discuss Hobbs idea of Social Contract*
3. *Discuss Hobbs theory of Sovereignty*

2.3 John Locke (1632-1704)

Life Sketch

John Locke is one of the greatest figures in the history of political thought. He was a renowned English philosopher who was born in the year 1632 in the family of a puritan lawyer. He too studied at Oxford. He was a physician by profession. His patronage to Lord Ashley (the then chancellor of England) gave him an opportunity to become a political philosopher. Later on, Locke fled to Holland with Lord Ashley to take refuge where he found a free society in operation. He came to contact with the William of oranges. With the fall of Stuart monarchy, William of oranges was called to England to occupy the vacant throne. The new king appointed him as commissioner of Appeals. In this way Locke had long patronage to the Royal of England.

Another turning point of his life was when he witnessed the Glorious Revolution of England in 1688. This silent revolution established supremacy of people over monarchy. This made Locke feel that the people were efficient and capable enough to decide their own government and also could sit in judgment over the actions of their sovereign.

His works:

He wrote as many as 35 books, but his important works in his philosophy are:

- 3 His letters on toleration (1689)
- 4 Treaties on civil government. He wrote two treaties the first treaties refuting Filmer and second treaties devoted to the social contract on origin of state.
- 5 “Essays concerning human understanding” which deals with the empirical theory.
- 6 Fundamental constitution concerning California.

But essence of his political thought is found in his book “second treatise on civil government”. He was the father of philosophical liberalism, a great champion of the rights of men, a prophet of consent in politics, and a great supporter of the course of individuals. His political philosophy was contained in two essays with the sole object of defending the Glorious revolution.

Influence on Locke:

Each and every political thinker is influenced by his time. Locke was no exception to this.

1. His association with Earl of Shaftesbury: As already said from the very start of life Locke came in contact with Lord Ashley, who was the founder of Wing party of England. His

association with Lord Ashley gave him an opportunity to have had direct experience of practical political affairs. Lord Ashley himself was personally opposed to monarchy and had been charged with treason on his alleged support to the cause of restoration. Locke also liked and supported the idea of Lord Ashley in this regard. As Wapner rightly points out “this association with brilliant but erratic Shaftesbury was to influence Locke’s life, just as his connection with the Devonshire had influenced Hobbes and it gave him what Hobbes lacked, direct experience of practical political affairs.” (Wapner, political thought, p.65.).

2. Glorious Revolution of 1688: The second powerful influence on Locke or rather the starting point of his philosophy was the Glorious Revolution. Just as Hobbes got the clue to his philosophy from the civil war, Locke found it from the Glorious Revolution in which English people peacefully and bloodlessly overthrown their monarch and established a more responsible government. This had a great impact on Locke. He formed a good opinion about human nature. He learnt from the revolution that men are quite capable of ruling themselves. The Glorious revolution was bound to mould the concept of human nature in Locke’s philosophy as did the civil wars in case of Hobbes.
3. Filmer, Hobbes, Hooker and Sydney: The third powerful influence on Locke was that of Filmer, Hobbes and Hooker. Both Filmer and Hobbes supported absolute government though on different ground. Filmer in his book “Patriarcha” enunciated the theory of divine origin of the state and justified the restoration of the Stuart kings. Hobbes had justified the absolute monarchy on the basis of utility. Locke was in favor of constitutional government which should work for the welfare of the people. The first treatise on civil government were written to refute Filmer and second treatise on civil government was written to refute the Hobbes ideas. He strongly disputed the political ideas of both these philosophers and also the basis on which he had been developed his theory. On the other hand Hooker believed in the theory of consent and that of contract as well. Both these theories found favor with Locke. Then another influence on Locke was that of Sydney. Sydney strongly attacked Filmer and Hobbes. He believed that government was created by the people for their own security and personal interest. He concluded that the authority resided with the people. Thus Locke borrowed his ideas from him though he presented them in his own way.

2.3.1 Locke's concept of human nature:

Locke's political theory like that of Hobbes rest on a certain conception of human nature. This determines the end or purpose for which the state exists on both moral and psychological levels and also determines the means for attaining this end. For both the philosophers, the purpose of the state is peace, security and well being of its individual members. But both differ fundamentally about the way in which the end is to be achieved as their conceptions of human motivation differ profoundly. Thus, for understanding Locke's political theory it needs to start with his view on human nature.

"Mind is a Tabula rasa"- means human knowledge is acquired by experience. At the time of birth of a person, mind is like a clean state, a blank paper on which nothing has been written.

Locke's conception of human nature has been summed up in his Essay on human understanding. Unlike Hobbes, Locke believed that man was rational as reason was the dominant factor in individual and social life. For him, men were basically good, decent, orderly, social minded and quite capable of ruling themselves, were also naturally and innately more or less equal.

To Locke, all men are naturally equal, there being nothing more evident that the creatures of the same species and rank, promiscuously born to all same advantages of nature and the use of the same faculties, should also be equal one amongst another without subordination and subjection. The natural liberty of man is to be free from any superior power on earth, and not to be under the will or legislative authority of man, but to have only the law of nature for his rule. Every man is the equal of every other and that he has rights which belong to him simply as a human being and not on account of his pre-eminence in strength, wealth or position. Of course, Locke admits that there may be some differences in men regarding strength and ability, but such differences may be the result of experiences, environments, education, etc. If one man appears wise and another stupid, it may simply mean that one man has had a better up bringing than the other. Then according to Locke, men are not only rational, decent, orderly and social but also utilitarian. Locke holds the view that the object of all human action is to substitute pleasure for pain. According to Locke "what has an aptness to produce pleasure in us is what we call good, and what is apt to produce pain in us we call evil." Man has natural rights (life, liberty and property), these rights belong to and can be exercised and respected by only rational human beings.

This pleasure or utility becomes one of the bases of Locke's covenant which gives peace and harmony to individuals and makes sure of protection of their rights which makes life worth

living and worth enjoying. Locke's views on human nature are basically moral and rational creatures. They are not always selfish, but sometimes altruistic also. Another important idea is that all human beings are born equal, not physically speaking as in the case of Hobbes but morally speaking. Like Hobbes, Locke also believed that state, society and government exist to protect those in indefeasible rights which they have not created. But he differed from Hobbes on regarding the motive power behind all human behavior. Hobbes regarded instinct of self preservation as the basic motive power while Locke thinks in terms of pleasures and pain. Unlike Hobbes, he fails to give any scientific basis for his concept of human nature. According to Locke, human beings are reasonable, social, cooperative and sympathetic. Men of these qualities lived in the state of nature prior to their formation of the civil society.

2.3.2 Locke's State of Nature:

Like Hobbes, Locke also conceives of a situation in which individuals live without the control and the regulation of the state. Like his predecessor, he also calls this situation as state of nature. Locke's state of nature is vertically opposite to that of Hobbes. Locke's theory and his ideas about the state of nature are closely linked with his ideas of human nature. Hobbes notorious state of war of all against all becomes with Locke the state of good will, mutual assistance and preservation of peace. Hobbes had conceived of the state of nature was rule by law of jungle, fear and fraud prevailed. There was anarchy and constant war. Hobbes believed that the state of nature as a condition in which men lived even before the society came into existence. It was a sort of pre-social condition. For Locke, on the other hand, the state of nature is a pre-political rather than pre-social condition. The condition in which Locke's individuals find themselves is more than a society an organized society. Hobbes believed that in the state of nature there was perpetual war, nasty and selfish people quarreled with each other. But for Locke in the state of nature there was natural goodwill and a situation of perfect peace prevailed. He also believed that in the state of nature the life was not intolerable and there was no perpetual hostility but peace and reason prevailed. The fellow beings were socially inclined towards each other and they had bond of union among themselves. There was spirit of sociability and brotherhood. They live peaceful, innocent and happy lives. They were equal and free and possessed of the right to property. Locke conceived that the condition of state of nature was conducive and peaceful because of divine nature of human being. "Reason in man which finds ultimate manifestation in law of nature which is defined as the 'spark

of divine nature' induces man to be socially inclined towards his fellow beings." (Bhagat.p.574). Thus life of the people in Locke's state of nature was just, peaceful and happy in contrast to the one depicted by Hobbes.

Locke believed that the people before joining the civil state there was an organized society. In that organized society, the law of nature is not as Hobbes had made it, but rather its condition precedent. It is a set of rules which governs, at times and all places the conduct of men. The arbiter is reason and in the state of nature was rule by reason that reveals that men are equal. This is the basic principle as per Locke that equality take birth men's natural rights, which he calls right of life/liberty and property. Men are free and equal to act as they think fit within the bound of law of nature. The individuals have liberty but no license. This right to liberty is his right to do whatever he was as long as that it does not contradict with the law of nature. And reason tells the men as to what to do at particular set of circumstances. The law of nature, through reason defines what is right and what is wrong. If a violation of the law of nature occurs, the right of execution of the penalty has been given to every man. In Locke state of nature, every individual is authorized to judge wrong person and execute the judgment against the culprit. The enforcement agency of the law of nature is every individual who will act according to his own judgment. 'Law of nature not only accords rights to men, it imposes duties also. It commands them to do what they can to preserve others.

The law of nature governed in the state of nature. He believed with Grotius that law of nature was not only legal in character but it represented moral and rational reasoning of the society. According to Locke "The state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges every man and reason which is that law teaches all mankind who will but consult it that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty and possessions." Though the state of nature was nice and peaceful as per Locke's but the peace was not secure.

The law of nature which rules the state of nature was deficient in three points. Due to deficient in the law of nature it was inconvenient for every individual. Thus they entered into contract to remove the inconvenient.

1. The first deficiency of the law of nature is the lack of an established, settled and known law. Every individual interprets it in his own way. There is definitely a lot of confusion and uncertainty about the law of nature.
2. The second defect is the lack of a known, indifferent and impartial judge. Every individual is the judge and executioner. There is no third party judge who has no personal link in disputes. In that case, the individual who become judge in their own conflicts with others, there are chances that the rule will influence by passions and revenge. There is no common organ for interpretation and execution of the law of nature.
3. The third point of defect is the lack of an executive power to enforce just decision. The individuals themselves have to enforce laws in the state of nature. Due to differences of like and dislike and conflicts of interests disputes arise which cannot be settled without their being a power executive.

Apart from the inconvenient in Locke's state of nature, there is also a problem of insecurity of their property. Thus the people agreed upon to make contract to remove the difficulties of the state of nature.

2.3.3 Locke on Social Contract or Origin of State:

Locke believed that the human nature is good and social. It is obvious that they live in relative peace and harmony with their fellow beings. People were neither nasty nor uncivilized nor brutish but they lived happily and peacefully with each other. They enjoyed certain natural rights and there was no perpetual war in state of nature. It is certain inconvenience that people wanted to remove and enter into contract. Out of that contract state came into being.

According to Locke, the people created civil state because it was their internal desire to establish contract with each other to overcome certain difficulties. Uncertainty about common decisions and common interpreter of law and also to enforce the decisions of common approved social laws were the consideration with the people to join civil state and leave the state of nature. Locke himself says that "It is unreasonable for men to be judges in their own cases, self love will make men partial to themselves and their friends, and on the other hand ill will, passion and revenge will carry them too far in punishing others; and hence nothing but confusion and disorder

will follow.” Men’s inability to keep his natural rights against injustice was another reason which forced him to think of leaving the state of nature. Since everybody was competent to punish the other for breach of law, the confusion was bound to originate, which could be avoided only when there was a common law giver, law interpreter and law executer.

Locke believed that the people abandoned the state of nature and joined the civil state in order to avoid inconveniences and confusions which arose because of every man becoming a sole interpreter of law. Then another reason for man’s uniting into a commonwealth and putting themselves under government was the preservation of their property. Man’s property was not secure as that should have been. According to Locke property preceded society, state and government. In his views rights are attributes of individual and come to him with his birth including right to property. That means right of life, liberty and estate (property) are natural rights of man.

Locke concept of property

Right to property hold a special concept and character in Locke’s contract theory. He uses it in two senses. In broad sense, it includes the right to life, liberty and estate. In the narrow sense, it is used only for the right to possess and retain one’s estate. His broad view of property has connection with the social contract. Locke says that the individuals enter into the contract and institute the state only in order to preserve their property. Property here is used in the broad sense. He has discussed that in the state of nature there were three deficiencies in the law of nature. Due to uncertainties and confusion of law of nature, lack of uniform administering agency and the lack of impartial judge, the protection of the three rights of the individuals was at stake. Hence they made a contract and created a state. The political community or commonwealth or state created by such a contract tried to remove the three inconveniences and to protect the rights of individuals. Thus according to Locke property precedes society, state and government. The institution of political society is generated in order to preserve and get secure the rights of individual. The society and government exist with the sole object to protect and preserve the natural right of life, liberty and state. These rights were born with individual and hence the society and state cannot claim it.

Life, liberty and property of the individuals can be secured in the civil society if these three conditions are fulfilled: First, the standard interpretation of the law of nature. Secondly, an impartial authority to apply this interpretation as between the individuals. Thirdly, the employment of the

force of the community to executing the judgment of this authority. In other words, the rights can be protected only if the three organs of the government are created-legislature, the executive and the judiciary. So in order to protect their rights better, the individuals enter into contract.

Locke's Nature of Contract:

- i) It is a contract of every one with every other individual, to unite and constitute a community. Unlike Hobbes contract, which was general and total, Locke's contract is limited and specific in character. So Locke's individual do not surrender all their rights in whole to be agreed upon third party but only the right of interacting the law of nature and the protection of their natural rights. The other rights and power were retained with individuals.
- ii) Locke's contract is a political contract rather than a social contract. Unlike Hobbes, society was there. An organized society already existed as per Locke's views. Hence it is misnomer to call Locke's contract a social contract. In Hobbes, a government is created directly by the contract. Both Locke believed that government draws its authority from the political community and hold it in trust.
- iii) Unlike Hobbes, the individuals do not resign their rights to be single individual of an assembly of men but in the community as a whole which the state came into being. The main tasks of the state are to interpret and enforce the law of nature to punish the guilty person. Locke's contract does not create any absolute and unlimited sovereign power. Supreme power lies with the people even after the contract.
- iv) Like Hooker, Locke says that political society is formed with the consent of the people. That means the contract was not imposed from above, but something that comes from below. The contract was unanimous and as per the consent of the individuals. Every person living in the state of nature agrees to form a political society. But while entering into contract all the parties agree to submit, henceforth, to the determination of the majority. That the will of the majority must prevail over the minority is inevitable on the ground of sheer necessity, since without such rule the corporate action is impossible.
- v) Like Hobbes's, Locke's contract is also irrevocable once it made. According to Locke's a person who has signed the contract can never again in the liberty of the state of nature. Even if the government is dissolved, the individual cannot go back to the state of nature.

- Once in a political community, individual will have to remain in it and submit to the decision of the majority.
- vi) Locke's contract is the contract of consent. He says that a contract to which each generation must consent. It is just contrast to Hobbes who had said of a contract in which once the agreement was made it was binding on all the future generations.
 - vii) In Locke's contract, the community came into being out of contract. At the time of original contract the individuals hand over certain rights to the community which thus becomes the beneficiary of the contract.
 - viii) Locke believes in the historicity of the contract. He believes that there was some time in history when people lived in the state of nature. It is the primitive society, which was switched over to the political society, such a contract might have been made tacitly if not expressly.
 - ix) Unlike Hobbes's contract, Locke's contract does not put an end to the law of nature. The law of nature becomes more important which is enhanced by the institution of the state. It is for the protection of natural rights which are themselves the gifts of law of nature and for the interpretation of law of nature that the state and government exist.
 - x) Unlike Hobbes, Locke's contract is not a bond of slavery, rather a charter of freedom. Individual do not lose anything by contract. Instead the difficulties and inconveniences in the enforcement of their rights are sought to be removed by this contract.

2.3.4 Locke on Revolution:

Locke was in favor of Glorious Revolution of 1688. The major aim of Locke was to defend the moral validity of the Glorious Revolution. He has devoted a large space to discuss the right to resist tyranny. In view, the individual have every right to rise against tyranny and revolt against it if the government failed to protect their rights. In his view, government holds power in trust only for the welfare of the community. If the government fails to perform purposes of the trust, the people have every right to revolt. They can take to arms and set up new government.

The government loses its legitimacy as soon as it becomes arbitrary and exceeds its authority. He has however, made it clear that right to revolution is a reserve right and need not be misunderstood as encouragement to rebellion. The revolutions should be considered as last resort when the other methods have failed. He however, has said this right should be treated valid if it is supported by majority. Thus Locke revealed his love for individualism through

theory of revolution. According to him, the people had power, although not the right, to remove a government whose policies they are curtailing their rights. He believed that people had certain basic minimum rights and that no authority in the state had any right to snatch these rights from him. His love for individuals is clearly reflected when he assumes that individual is everything and that state is only means to achieve certain ends. It is the duty of the state to preserve natural rights of the individual and that revolution is justified when such rights are curtailed, disregarded or disrespected. As soon as the people rise in revolt there is sufficient indication of betrayal and the legislature becomes defunct for all practical purposes.

2.3.4 Criticism:

Locke's theory of contract can be criticized on the following ground:

1. Contradiction in his ideas of natural rights which is inherent in man and theory of "Tabula Rasa". He begins his theory of Tabula Rasa empty mind or blank knowledge during a birth, but again says that man has innate rights to liberty, life and property. Without social relationship his natural rights cannot be define in terms.
2. Locke does not give any logical or scientific ground as to why human beings are social or good or capable of ruling themselves.
3. Contradiction on idea of individual morality. On one hand it has been said that each and every individual wants maximum pleasure for the self. On the other hand he enjoys upon his people that they should struggle for maximum public and general happiness. One fails to understand as to how the individual, who cannot but seek his own pleasure can be required morally to wish for general happiness.
4. Locke probably did not realize that majority could also be tyrannical. The rights in his case are transferred to the majority of people. If right are to be taken away from the individual, it does not matter whether by majority or one individual. Therefore there is no guarantee that majority can never be tyrannous.
5. Regarding unanimous consent of generation after generation to make a contract is doubtful. There is no guarantee the future generation would thoroughly follow their past generation.
6. There is contradiction on his idea of contract and majority. If contract is unanimous than how can the majority decision be prevail on minority? If majority decisions

- overpower the minority than it is not unanimous consent rather minority are compel or force to abide by the majority.
7. His theory of consent do not justify every time. In practice we find the most of the political societies are founded and maintained force. Conception of consent is vague and utopian and no societies founded on consent have ever existed.
 8. Locke's natural rights in the state of nature are idealistic and impracticable. How rights could exist in the state of nature unless they are recognized by the sovereign? But the sovereign does not exist in the state of nature. It is difficult to think of rights without the authority of law.
 9. Law of nature was something complete, finite and finished as per Locke's view. He did not explain as to where from the law of nature originated. Hence his theory of law of nature is incomplete and unconvincing.
 10. It is doubtful whether Locke created a society or a government.

Check your Progress

1. *Discuss Locke's idea on State of Nature.*
2. *Discuss Locke's view on Social Contract*
3. *Discuss Locke's theory of Revolution*

2.4 Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778):

Life sketch:

Rousseau is one of the controversial political thinkers, because his ideas contradict itself. He was born in 1712 in Geneva. His parents originally belong to France and taken shelter in Switzerland. He lost his mother at the time of birth and he was brought up by a single parent. He was very much interested in studies. Adventure and romance inspired limitless imagination in him. Studying such topics was quite uncommon for a boy of his age in those days who could only understand but not realize the complexities of the study. His father used to read to him aloud romance and adventures all through the light. This is the education he got. Rousseau grew into an easy going and irresponsible and passionate man. He could not reconcile himself to the common trends of Europe and left his home at the tender age of 16 to wander like a vagabond. Unlike Hobbes and Locke he could not get proper education nor get neither employment nor patronage of a

noble. He had experience the life of poverty and deprivation. He changed his profession many times due to lack of perseverance. There came a time when he became completely frustrated with his life and himself. Then came the turning point in his life. While on his way to visit Detroit, he came to know about an essay competition to be conducted by the Dijon Academy on the topic 'Has the Revival of the Sciences and the Arts helped to purify or to corrupt Morals'. He participated and won the prize for his essay. He became famous overnight, but he could not adapt himself to the high social environment in which he had been placed. This also provided him an opportunity to come in touch with the intellectuals and publicists of his age in France. But being poor, he could not win their high esteem and he died in poverty in 1778 A.D.

His Writings:

Woman and writing was his only hobbies. He wrote some famous essay and books. Some of his famous works are:

1. Essay on "Has the progress of science and arts contributed to corrupt or purify the morale?" (1749)
2. The origin of inequality in 1753
3. La Nouvello Hodoise in 1761
4. Social Contract in 1762
5. Emile (1762)
6. The confession
7. The Dialogues
8. The Reveries

His writings were revolutionary in character and finally stirred the authorities' old regime to action. He was a fearless critic of the misdeeds of the old regime. Rousseau's publications were very popular even in his own lifetime. His concept of popular sovereignty appeal to masses. It found a solution for the irrational and despotic rule of France. Thus he became one of the popular influences for the French Revolution.

Influence on Rousseau:

Rousseau though he could not get formal education but he was ferocious reader of all the great master minds of political thought. He borrowed few ideas from them. He was much influenced by Hobbes and Machiavelli who depicted man as selfish, nasty, brutish and self centered. But he believed that by nature man is reasonable, thought provoking and acted with

goodwill towards others. He is mostly influenced either by Plato and Locke. He borrowed two basic ideas from Plato. First, political subjection is essentially ethical. It is only a secondary matter if the state maintains law and order. Secondly like Plato, he also believed that the community itself is the chief moralizing agency and therefore represents the highest moral order and value.

The main influence on Rousseau is that of Locke. Locke's ideas of concept of Natural Rights, the State of Nature, the ultimate sovereignty of community, theory of consent of the people had a lasting influence on Rousseau. Rousseau is profoundly influenced by such ideas of Locke, and starts where Locke starts but ends by reaching a very different conclusion. Part of Rousseau's philosophy is devoted to the attempt at solving certain problems which had been left as open question by Locke.

Another source or reason on Rousseau's political philosophy is moulded by his personal life and experience. He was unstable, dejected and frustrated person. He was living at a time it was being increasingly felt that political equality without economic equality was meaningless. He therefore could not remain influenced by these communistic tendencies of his times.

2.4.1 Rousseau on Human Nature:

He believed that man by nature has no evil tendencies but it is because of wrong social actions which made me evil and bitterly quarrelsome with others. According to Rousseau the original man or the natural man is nothing but pure instinct free from all artificialities and at liberty to do anything, of them one is 'self love.' Man's first preference as per natural law is to attend to his preservation and he is the master in devising ways and means for securing such preservation. That means that nature destines man to be free and independent in all respects. Freedom to act according to the dictates of instincts seems to be the birth right of man according to Rousseau. Second natural instinct is the gregarious instinct. That is sympathy or instinct of mutual aid. These instincts, Rousseau believed always make our struggle for existence easier and do us more good than harm.

There was every possibility of the clashing of either these instincts at one time or the other. As a result of clash another instinct called conscience emerges. This conscience is something above education and instincts. Reasoning comes only when the complexities of problems come to the front.

These two instincts give birth to the earliest of all societies and the natural one namely the family. Up to this stage of development, everything is natural and man remains as free as he was born. Beyond this stage, everything become unnatural and man is everywhere in chains. It means that original man was free and independent as his actions were based on instincts, but his efforts to make himself perfect tied him so much in artificiality and conventions that he found himself bound in chains everywhere. Man was born good but the wrong social customs and institutions made him corrupt. When man's evil part becomes powerful he had to be subjected to the power of the state. Reason was the outgrowth of human development. Reason was not natural with man but artificial. Reason tells what is right what is wrong. In his prize winning essay, Discourse on Arts and Science, he said that man is by nature good and has been degraded by the impact of social institutions. Man was ignorant and innocent and thus was happy. He believed that nature has also gifted mankind the freedom to choose his own path which distinguishes a man from an animal. This freedom is essential for the perfection of mankind.

2.4.2 Rousseau's State of Nature:

Rousseau believed that in the state of nature all lived an isolated life and had neither ties of obligation nor of duties. Man did not know how to deliver a speech and had no care for dress. He was not even afraid of death and had no fear of loss property or family because men had neither property nor family. Men lived free, healthy, honest, and happy lives. To him everyone then was in peaceful ignorance. But that blissful age was not to survive long. Men could not lead a solitary life. The element of reason in human mind and existence of inequality in powers of individuals induced one individual to own private property. That was like the Adam's fall. He therefore said "the first man, having enclosed a piece of ground, he thought himself of saying 'this is mine and found other people simple enough to believe him, was the first real founder of civil society.'" Man's social instinct compelled him to live in groups. Social institutions began to gradually develop. Then everybody found himself in chains everywhere, though it was his own doing. Though individual may be in chains everywhere, yet if this phenomenon is of his own volition then such chains is legitimate. But if the chains are based on force, such phenomenon cannot be justified.

Rousseau believed that this institution of private property, which entered the society, disturbed the whole atmosphere of pre-civil state. "It came as a serpent and bit all. It brought misery, sorrow and evil in the minds of men who were otherwise good and noble." To Rousseau "so long as man remained content with their rustic huts and confined themselves to such arts as did not require several hands, they live free, healthy and happy lives so long as pleasures of mutual and independent intercourse; from the moment it appeared advantageous to anyone to have provisions for two, equality disappeared, property was introduced; work become indispensable and the vast forests became smiling fields; which men had to water with sweat of his brows, and where slavery and misery were soon seen to germinate and grow up with the crops." Further he believed that with the passage of time many other complicate problems also came to the man. Private property created a problem and the society was divided into rich and poor. There was also a division labor and thus whole social set up was disturbed.

Rousseau also begins with the state of nature like Hobbes and Locke. But his concept of state of nature is very different from that. In Rousseau's state of nature all men were equal and living peacefully and having joint ownership over all property. People were living simple and natural life. Rationality, morality and artificiality had not yet crept into their lives. The life was not, yet organized. His state of nature is not historical but hypothetical one. In the hypothetical state of nature men only were possessed with gregarious instinct. Everybody lived with peace and harmony. The man in the state of nature was leading the happy and carefree life of truth, without fixed abode, roaming about, with his herd like a nomad. The man in Rousseau's state of nature was noble savage. Men life was self sufficient; there was no law, no morality and no family. Noble savage was basing his behavior purely on instincts. The state of nature was prudish and blissful. His description of state of nature is more romantic than real, more poetic than practical. People enjoy the bliss of liberty.

According to him the origin of civil society lies in the institution of private property. It became a cursed as Adams's biblical fall. In the state of nature prior to the conception of private property there was no question of "Thine and Mine". Everything was owned in common by all. The land was filled in common and the grain was distributed according to their needs. According to his word "the scramble for land and other private property resulted in war, murder,

wretches and horror.” The people started leading a miserable life. They wanted to get rid of that state of things in which they found themselves. Thus we find that in Rousseau’s state of nature there were two stages or periods.

- 1) Pre-property state of nature and
- 2) Post-property state of nature.

Pre-property state of nature was ideal while the post property state of nature was trouble. Therefore, social contract comes as device to solve the trouble state of things. Thereby the state came into being.

2.4.3 Rousseau’s Social Contract:

Rousseau’s concept of social contract is a kind of mixture of the views of Hobbes and Locke and a sort of improvement upon the two. According to him, soon after the idea of the private property, the society became disorder, disturbed and chaos. There they began to feel the necessity of bringing about the old order of calmness and happy life. This problem was solved by the creation of a social or a political association to which all the members of the society agreed. Reconciliation between the individual on the one hand and society on the other was to be arrived at by the way of contract. He agreed with Locke that individuals consent was necessary for binding him in the contract.

Rousseau combines the method of Hobbes with the substance of Locke while he talks about the individuals surrender their rights to the body politics. Like Locke he believed that as a result of contract what emerges is the political society and not society as such. The society existed even before. The improvement made by Rousseau upon Hobbes and Locke is that, according to Rousseau what emerges as a result of his contract is an organism with a will, as against the ideas of Hobbes and Locke of an artificial thing. “The body politics” is also a moral being possessed of a will. Such a will, he calls a General Will. “Each member puts his person and all his power in common under the supreme direction of the general will, and, in our corporate capacity, we receive each member is an invisible part of the whole.” The contract was made by the individual to arrive at the best possible reconciliation of liberty and authority. “Each gave himself unreservedly to the whole community-surrendered all his rights and liberties.” Thus equality preserved, but in giving himself to the community as a whole, each gave himself to nobody in particular. Thus liberty was preserved. While people came into contract by mutual alienating all the liberties, not to any human superior but to General Will, of which every

individual is an integral part. They transfer their freedom from themselves as individuals to themselves collectively. By such contract a political society was created. The creation of political society was based on the consent of all members. His consent is the constant flow that comes the General Will; as every individual is a constant participant in the General Will.

By this contract, the state of nature came to an end. The political society came into being. The contract substitute justice for injustice and equal for inequality. Man is transformed from stupid and limited animal to an intelligent man. Individual became rational and moral. Every individual became as active participant of the General Will. According to Rousseau, out of the contract only political society or the state comes into being, with the powerful and sovereign General Will as the central figure of the society. Rousseau thinks of government only as subservient agent of the political society or community in order to implement the decisions of the General Will. Here Rousseau disagrees both with Hobbes and Locke. Hobbes's contract brings forth both the state and the government. Similarly Locke's view that government come into being as a result of second contract. But Rousseau disagrees both in this regard.

Features of Rousseau's Contract:

1. Surrender to society: Individual surrendered his everything to society and yet as a member of society he retained everything with himself.
2. Gain to everyone: In his contract everyone seemed to be the gainer and none appeared to be a loser.
3. Surrender to state: The rights were surrendered not to an individual but to a body to whom everyone surrendered.
4. Organic concept: The contract had organic character. It was moral, collective and had a public person.
5. Transformation: Under this contract an individual got material and moral transformation.

2.4.4 Rousseau's Concept of General Will:

According to Rousseau men grew uncomfortable which was caused by the serpent of private property in the state of nature. The anarchy conditions also brought in the society the idea of private society. Hence man thought to do away with anarchy by creating a sovereign through social contract. The contract concluded by a pact between the individuals and the community consisting of the individuals who formed the political society. The individuals surrendered all their powers and

rights to the community as a whole and bowed before the General Will, which was the Sovereign (State)

Rousseau believed that there are types of will which are different from the General Will. They are:

- 7 Actual Will: By actual will Rousseau understood the will which was selfish, irrational and thought of the good of the individual alone. It has no concern with the welfare of the society. It was the will of self centre.
- 8 Real Will: Real will was something higher, nobler and supreme. It was concerned more about the well being of all of them than that of an individual. It was more social than anti-social, more collective than individualistic. Real will was permanent and transitory. It was based on reason and criticism. Thus it was goodwill.

The General Will was the sum total of Real Wills of the individuals which were based on reason and farsightedness. It was will of all the individuals for the collective welfare. But Rousseau said that the General Will was not the sum total of good and bad will of the individuals by a method of plus and minus but was something nobler. It was the product of deliberations, discussions and consciousness. Everybody was free in General Will. Further Rousseau tried to distinguish between the General Will and the will of all. General Will considered about the good of the community as a whole whereas will of all was only majority will and considered about the welfare of few only. The will of all could become General Will when the selfish ends are taken away from it.

Attributes of General Will:

1. It is indivisible: It cannot be divided
2. It is unrepresentable.
3. It is unlimited, absolute and supreme.
4. It is inalienable.
5. It is infallible
6. It is right will.
7. It is disinterested
8. It is non-executive and impersonal

2.4.5 Contradiction in Rousseau's philosophy:

Rousseau was the last important social contract philosopher. But there are many self-contradictions in his philosophy. Contradictory points are as follows:

1. Individualist: In his Emile, he represents himself as an individualist. He said that the people should be educated for their own sake
2. Absolutist: Whereas on the one hand, Rousseau was an individualist, on the other hand an absolutist. He tried to justify the chains in which man was tied. His General will is absolute and infallible. Man has no right against General will.
3. Democrat: He was democrat also when he said General will is nothing else but the will of the people. French Revolution slogan's "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" have been derived from Rousseau's ideas of General will.
4. Socialist: Rousseau was not only a democrat but also a socialist. It was his "Discourse on Inequality" which became the basis of the socialist movement in 19th century. As a true socialist he believed that private property was the source of all problems and inequality in the society.
5. Thus Rousseau is considered as one the most controversial and self contradict philosopher of his time. These contradictory and inconsistency in his philosophy might have been because of his trouble life and he did not have any proper education in his life.

2.4.6 Criticism:

1. Confused: Theory of General Will is confused. There is no clear explanation about the difference of real and actual will. Rousseau has no clear conception of General Will.
2. No difference in General Will and Will of all: Rousseau has tried to distinguish between 'General Will' and 'Will of all' which is in practice is impossible to achieve. He has provides us with no standard judgment whether a decision taken by the people represents the General Will or merely a Will of all.
3. Unanimous and not Majority Will: General Will of Rousseau is unanimous will and not a majority. Unanimous will and decisions are possible only in the animal and not in human.
4. Wills cannot be divided: According to him, essential will is rational and represent sum total. However, individuals and their wills are corporate. It is impossible to distinguish the wills of individuals.
5. No reconciliation of General Will and Justice: Rousseau believes that General Will is the standard of justice. But by this conception he created more confusion. Justice is equally abstract conception and reconciling the two is not only impossible but undesirable.

6. General Will cannot be reconciled with freedom: Rousseau has tried to reconcile individual freedom with the authority of the General Will or freedom with force but has failed to do so.
7. Distinction in General Will and Individual good: Rousseau tried to distinguish between the individual and state. In actual practice, however, the state consists of individuals and their interests are inseparable.
8. Direct Representation not possible in nation state: Rousseau's General Will refers to the direct representation, but in the nation it is not possible. It can only be applicable on small state or community.

In spite of criticism to his philosophy in different angle, but we cannot forget his brilliant presentation of his ideas which became the foundation of the modern Democratic Republic state.

- 1) Will not force is the basis of state. It has made the community realize the worth of human cooperation.
- 2) Theory of General Will is the basis of true democracy in the true sense.
- 3) Idea of General Good
- 4) Corporate character of state.
- 5) Theory of nation state

He was the forerunner of English and German idealism. After Aristotle, it was Rousseau who preached that man was a political animal. His gospel of political people as ultimate authority has become the central pillar of modern democracy.

Check your Progress

1. *Discuss Rousseau's view on Human Nature*
2. *Discuss Rousseau's view on state of Nature*
3. *Discuss Rousseau's theory of General Will.*

2.5 Summary

This unit has examined the social-contract theories of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, showing how each offers a distinct account of human nature, the state

of nature, and the origin and purpose of the state. Together they constitute the contractualist tradition: each explains political authority as grounded in human agreement, but they differ sharply in diagnosis and prescription. Hobbes emphasizes security and the need for coercive authority; Locke emphasizes individual rights, limited government, and the right of resistance; Rousseau stresses popular sovereignty, civic equality, and the moral formation of citizens.

In sum, the Contractualists collectively shift the origin of political authority from divine or merely coercive sources to human deliberation and agreement. Their rival pictures of human nature and political purpose continue to inform contemporary debates about the balance between liberty and order, the limits of state power, and the bases of democratic legitimacy.

2.6 Key Terms

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Contractualist | : someone who believes that moral rules are only valid if they are based on a mutual agreement |
| Leviathan | : Something or someone that is extremely large and powerful |
| Commonwealth | : A self-governing political community, state, or republic founded for the common good of its people |
| Infallible | : Incapable of making mistakes, error free |
| Sovereignty | : The supreme, absolute authority |
| Estate | : Property or possessions |
| Contract | : A written legal agreement |
| Discourse | : A long and serious discussion of a subject in speech or writing |
| Legitimate | : Acceptable according to the law |
| General Will | : Collective desire of citizens directed toward the common good |
| Actual will | : Self-interested desires or actions of a person |

2.7 Answer's to 'check your Progress'

- Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau are the greatest pioneer of Contractualist tradition in political theory.
- Hobbes used the expression 'right of nature' or 'natural rights' in a variety of ways, but there are two general categories under which his different usages might be classified.
- Locke's theory of natural rights and property is one of the important themes in Locke's political philosophy.
- In Locke's theory of sovereignty he has created a limited sovereign.
- The creation of popular sovereignty by vesting it in the General Will was a unique contribution of Rousseau which led to the foundation of modern democracy.

2.8 Short-Answer Question

1. According to Hobbes what is the "Right of Nature" that individuals possess before the social contract?
2. Why does Hobbes refer to the Sovereign as a "Leviathan"?
3. What does Locke mean by the term "Tabula Rasa"?
4. Explain Locke's concept of "Property".
5. What does Rousseau mean by the "Noble Savage"?
6. Explain the difference between an "Actual Will" and "Real Will."

2.9 Long- Answer Questions

1. Discuss how Hobbes's "scientific" analysis of human nature serves as the foundational pivot for his political theory.
2. Critically evaluate Hobbes's political philosophy.
3. "Locke's contract is not a bond of slavery, but a charter of freedom." Evaluate.
4. Compare and contrast the Social Contract theories of Hobbes and Locke.
5. Examine Rousseau's conception of the revolt against reason.
6. Examine the General Will as the central pillar of Rousseau's philosophy.

2.10 Further Reading:-

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Unit 3

THE UTILITARIANISM AND INDIVIDUALIST: Jeremy Bentham, J.S Mill

3.0 Objectives

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832): Early life and works

3.3 Influence's on Bentham.

3.4 Human Nature

3.5 Moral Philosophy

3.6 Political Philosophy

3.7 Bentham's Utilitarian Principle

3.7.1 The Greatest Happiness of the greatest number

3.8 Bentham's view on Modern state

3.9 Bentham on Liberty, Rights and Law

3.10 J.S. Mill: Early life and Works

3.11 J.S. Mill on liberty:

3.12 J.S. Mill on Representative Government

3.13 J.S Mill on the Rights of Women

3.14 Summary

3.15 Key Terms

3.16 Answers to check your progress

3.17 Short – Answer Question

3.18 Long- Answer Question

3.19 Suggested Readings

3.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to understand:

1. Understand the early life and writings of Bentham and J.S.Mill
2. Important sources and influences on Bentham
3. Understand Bentham's Human nature, moral and political philosophy
4. Bentham's Principle of Utility
5. Concept of Modern State
6. Bentham's idea on Law and liberty

7. J.S. Mill's views on Liberty
8. Mill's idea on Rights of women
9. Mill's view in Representative Government

3.1 Introduction

Jeremy Bentham is considered as the father of utilitarian school of thought and is primarily known today for his moral philosophy, especially his principle of utilitarianism, which evaluates actions based upon their consequences. The relevant consequences, in particular, are the overall happiness created for everyone affected by the action. Influenced by many enlightenment thinkers, especially empiricists such as John Locke and David Hume, Bentham developed an ethical theory grounded in a largely empiricist account of human nature. He famously held a hedonistic account of both motivation and value according to which what is fundamentally valuable and what ultimately motivates us is pleasure and pain. Happiness, according to Bentham, is thus a matter of experiencing pleasure and lack of pain.

On the other John Stuart Mill, an English philosopher, Economist and Administrator, was the most influential philosopher in the western world during the nineteenth century and, is regarded as the champion of individualism and liberty. Despite of numerous flaws in his theories, he succeeded in providing an alternative to existing views on moral and politics and their foundation which was both specific and cohesive enough to give a markedly liberal tendency to social and political opinion. Mill cannot be ranked among the greatest of pure philosopher, either for his originality or for his synthesizing power. His work in Logic, however, he brought new ground and gave a badly needed impetus to the study of the subject. In his political theory, liberalism made a transition from Laissez faire to an active role for the state, from a negative to a positive conception of liberty and from a atomistic to a more social conception of individuality, while J.S. Mill was a liberal, he could also be regarded, at the same time, as a reluctant democrat, a pluralist, a cooperative socialist, an elitist and importantly a feminist.

3.2 Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832): Early life and works

Jeremy Bentham was born in a well-to-do family England in 1748. His father was a learned lawyer and wanted his son to follow his profession. After receiving his education at west minister school and Queen College Oxford, he entered the Lincoln's Inn in 1763. In 1769 he was called to

the Bar. But as Bentham was more interested in the problems of social welfare than practice of law, he gave up the practice and devoted himself to the study of the defects of the legal system with a view to effect necessary reform in the system. Although he never practiced law, Bentham did write a great deal of philosophy of law, spending most of his life critiquing the existing law and strongly advocating legal reform. Throughout his work, he critiques various natural accounts of law which claim, for example, that liberty, rights, and so on exist independent of government. In this way, Bentham arguably developed an early form of what is now often called "legal positivism." Beyond such critiques, he ultimately maintained that putting his moral theory into consistent practice would yield results in legal theory by providing justification for social, political, and legal institutions.

Writing was the centre of Bentham's life. He shut himself away in remote cottages and even when in London described himself as a 'hermit'. Increasingly, the hermit merely produced large sheets of manuscript, and the task of selecting from these and turning them into books was left to others, such as the young John Stuart Mill, who produced five large volumes of Bentham's thought on evidence from a much larger mass of nearly illegible manuscript. When Bentham died he left 70,000 sheets of foolscap manuscript behind him – theoretical work, but also highly detailed designs for states, prisons, banknotes, and much else. His principal writings on language, ontology and the philosophy of law were only published posthumously. Bentham's best works are *Fragments of Government* (1776) ; *Essays on political Tactics* (1791); *Discourses on civil and Penal Legislation* (1802); *The theory of punishments and Rewards* (1811) ; *A Treatise on judicial Evidence* (1813); *Paper upon Codification and public instruction* (1817); *The book of Fallacies* (1824); *Catechism of parliamentary Reforms* (1809); *principles of International law* etc.

3.3 Influence's on Bentham.

Like other thinkers, Bentham was also greatly influenced by several conditions of his times. Bentham lived and wrote at a time when the people of England did not enjoy any political rights. The lot of laborers, a prisoner etc. was quite miserable. The emergence of Britain as a leading colonial power had resulted in new out book. But it was the American War of Independence and the French Revolution of 1789 which exercised maximum influenced his philosophy and thought.

Among the political thinkers who influenced Bentham, Hume and Priestley exercised profound influence on him. He drew the concept of utility mainly from Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature* and Priestley's *Essays on Government*. However, Prof. Hallowell says that Bentham is indebted to the French philosopher Helvetius for his concept of 'utility'; this view is not acceptable

to most of the scholars. Bentham himself admits that he borrowed the idea of utility from Priestley. He says, as soon as "I discovered it, I cried out as it were an inward ecstasy" He was also greatly influenced by Mill. Bentham's love for democracy and democratic institutions bear a testimony to this influence.

3.4 Human Nature

For Bentham, morals and legislation can be described scientifically, but such a description requires an account of human nature. Just as nature is explained through reference to the laws of physics, so human behavior can be explained by reference to the two primary motives of pleasure and pain; this is the theory of psychological hedonism. There is, Bentham admits, no direct proof of such an analysis of human motivation—though he holds that it is clear that, in acting, all people implicitly refer to it. At the beginning of the *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Bentham writes: 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: every effort we can make to throw off our subjection, will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it. From this we see that, for Bentham, pleasure and pain serve not only as explanations for action, but they also define one's good. It is, in short, on the basis of pleasures and pains, which can exist only in individuals, that Bentham thought one could construct a calculus of value.

Related to this fundamental hedonism is a view of the individual as exhibiting a natural, rational self-interest—a form of psychological egoism. In his "Remarks on Bentham's Philosophy" (1833), Mill cites Bentham's *The Book of Fallacies* (London: Hunt, 1824, pp. 392-3) that "in every human, self-regarding interest is predominant over social interest; each person's own individual interest over the interests of all other persons taken together." Fundamental to the nature and activity of individuals, then, is their own well-being, and reason—as a natural capability of the person—is considered to be subservient to this end.

Bentham believed that the nature of the human person can be adequately described without mention of social relationships. To begin with, the idea of "relation" is but a "fictitious entity," though necessary for "convenience of discourse." And, more specifically, he remarks that "the community is a fictitious body," and it is but "the sum of the interests of the several members who compose it." Thus, the extension of the term "individual" is, in the main, no greater and no less than

the biological entity. Bentham's view, then, is that the individual—the basic unit of the social sphere—is an "atom" and there is no "self" or "individual" greater than the human individual. A person's relations with others—even if important—are not essential and describe nothing that is, strictly speaking, necessary to its being what it is.

Finally, the picture of the human person presented by Bentham is based on a psychological association indebted to David Hartley and Hume; Bentham's analysis of "habit" (which is essential to his understanding of society and especially political society) particularly reflects association presuppositions. On this view, pleasure and pain are objective states and can be measured in terms of their intensity, duration, certainty, proximity, fecundity and purity. This allows both for an objective determination of an activity or state and for a comparison with others.

Bentham's understanding of human nature reveals, in short, a psychological, ontological, and also moral individualism where, to extend the critique of utilitarianism made by Graeme Duncan and John Gray (1979), "the individual human being is conceived as the source of values and as himself the supreme value."

Check your Progress

- 1. *Why is Bentham known as the father of Utilitarian school of thought?***
- 2. *Mention some names of early utilitarian's.***
- 3. *Mention some of the important works of Jeremy Bentham.***
- 4. *From who did Bentham drew his idea of utility.***

3.5 Moral Philosophy

As Elie Halevy (1904) notes, there are three principal characteristics of which constitute the basis of Bentham's moral and political philosophy: (i) the greatest happiness principle, (ii) universal egoism and (iii) the artificial identification of one's interests with those of others. Though these characteristics are present throughout his work, they are particularly evident in the *Introduction to*

the Principles of Morals and Legislation, where Bentham is concerned with articulating rational principles that would provide a basis and guide for legal, social and moral reform.

To begin with, Bentham's moral philosophy reflects what he calls at different times "the greatest happiness principle" or "the principle of utility"—a term which he borrows from Hume. In adverting to this principle, however, he was not referring to just the usefulness of things or actions, but to the extent to which these things or actions promote the general happiness. Specifically, then, what is morally obligatory is that which produces the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people, happiness being determined by reference to the presence of pleasure and the absence of pain. Thus, Bentham writes, "By the principle of utility is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question: or, what is the same thing in other words, to promote or to oppose that happiness." And Bentham emphasizes that this applies to "every action whatsoever". That which does not maximize the greatest happiness (such as an act of pure ascetic sacrifice) is, therefore, morally wrong. (Unlike some of the previous attempts at articulating a universal hedonism, Bentham's approach is thoroughly naturalistic.)

Bentham's moral philosophy, then, clearly reflects his psychological view that the primary motivators in human beings are pleasure and pain. Bentham admits that his version of the principle of utility is something that does not admit of direct proof, but he notes that this is not a problem as some explanatory principles do not admit of any such proof and all explanation must start somewhere. But this, by itself, does not explain why another's happiness—or the general happiness—should count. And, in fact, he provides a number of suggestions that could serve as answers to the question of why we should be concerned with the happiness of others.

First, Bentham says, the principle of utility is something to which individuals, in acting, refer either explicitly or implicitly, and this is something that can be ascertained and confirmed by simple observation. Indeed, Bentham held that all existing systems of morality can be "reduced to the principles of sympathy and antipathy," which is precisely that which defines utility. A second argument found in Bentham is that, if pleasure is the good, then it is good irrespective of whose pleasure it is. Thus, a moral injunction to pursue or maximize pleasure has force independently of the specific interests of the person acting. Bentham also suggests that individuals would reasonably seek the general happiness simply because the interests of others are inextricably bound up with their own, though he recognized that this is something that is easy for individuals to ignore.

Nevertheless, Bentham envisages a solution to this as well. Specifically, he proposes that making this identification of interests obvious and, when necessary, bringing diverse interests together would be the responsibility of the legislator.

Finally, Bentham held that there are advantages to a moral philosophy based on a principle of utility. To begin with, the principle of utility is clear (compared to other moral principles), allows for objective and disinterested public discussion, and enables decisions to be made where there seem to be conflicts of (*prima facie*) legitimate interests. Moreover, in calculating the pleasures and pains involved in carrying out a course of action (the "hedonic calculus"), there is a fundamental commitment to human equality. The principle of utility presupposes that "one man is worth just the same as another man" and so there is a guarantee that in calculating the greatest happiness "each person is to count for one and no one for more than one."

For Bentham, then, there is no inconsistency between the greatest happiness principle and his psychological hedonism and egoism. Thus, he writes that moral philosophy or ethics can be simply described as "the art of directing men's action to the production of the greatest possible quantity of happiness, on the part of those whose interest is in view."

3.6 Political Philosophy

Bentham was regarded as the central figure of a group of intellectuals called, by Elie Halevy (1904), "the philosophic radicals," of which both Mill and Herbert Spencer can be counted among the "spiritual descendants." While it would be too strong to claim that the ideas of the philosophic radicals reflected a common political theory, it is nevertheless correct to say that they agreed that many of the social problems of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century England were due to an antiquated legal system and to the control of the economy by a hereditary landed gentry opposed to modern capitalist institutions. As discussed in the preceding section, for Bentham, the principles that govern morals also govern politics and law, and political reform requires a clear understanding of human nature. While he develops a number of principles already present in Anglo-Saxon political philosophy, he breaks with that tradition in significant ways.

In his earliest work, *A Fragment on Government* (1776), which is an excerpt from a longer work published only in 1928 as *Comment on Blackstone's Commentaries*, Bentham attacked the legal theory of Sir William Blackstone. Bentham's target was, primarily, Blackstone's defense of tradition in law. Bentham advocated the rational revision of the legal system, a restructuring of the process of

determining responsibility and of punishment, and a more extensive freedom of contract. This, he believed, would favor not only the development of the community, but the personal development of the individual.

Bentham's attack on Blackstone targeted more than the latter's use of tradition however. Against Blackstone and a number of earlier thinkers (including Locke), Bentham repudiated many of the concepts underlying their political philosophies, such as natural right, state of nature, and social contract. Bentham then attempted to outline positive alternatives to the preceding "traditionalisms." Not only did he work to reform and restructure existing institutions, but he promoted broader suffrage and self (that is, representative) government.

3.7 Bentham's Utilitarian Principle

Bentham is generally given the credit of being the first to emphasize the principle of utility. However it is not correct. He was not the original proponent of the principles because Hume and Priestley in England, Helvetius in France and Beccaria in Italy had already talked of it. Bentham simply emphasized the significance of this principle and made it the basic principle of his political thought. Emphasizing the importance of Bentham's contributions in this regard Prof. Massey says. Spinoza and Hume undoubtedly gave him the leading clues; Priestley's Essay on government suggested the 'pain' and 'pleasure' criterion; and Hutcheson's moral philosophy furnished the phrase-the greatest happiness of the greatest number-which arrested public attention. Bentham added the concept of utility as a mathematical computation of satisfaction worked out by balancing pains against pleasures and supplied the ideology by which this was expanded into a system of political thought".

As Bentham wanted to remove the defects present in the English law and judicial procedure, he could not reconcile with the plea that the English common law was faultless because it had an ancient origin and was developed by eminent jurists. He had no respect for the antiquity and wanted that the law must be in keeping with the needs of today, and that the sole criterion of those needs must be the greatest number of man. In other words he insisted that the old laws must be judged on the basis of their utility. If any existing law did not contribute to the happiness of the individual it should be discarded.

According to Bentham all the actions of man were motivated by the considerations of 'pleasure' and 'pain' and every man tried to get pleasure and avoid pain. In his words nature has

placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure; it is for them to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do. On the other 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 say, in all we think; every effort we make to throw off our subjections will serve but to demonstrate and confirm it. In words a man may pretend to adjure their empire: but in reality he will remain subject to it all the while”.

Bentham tried to formulate a scale of values for the various kinds of pleasures and classified them. He believed that the pleasures and pains could be measured with the help of seven factors viz. intensity duration, certainty, propinquity, fecundity, purity and extensiveness. On the basis of these principles Bentham himself classified these pleasures. He gave a list of 14 simple pleasures and 12 simple pains. He argued that all other pains or pleasures were the compound of these. The fourteen simple pleasures enumerated piety, benevolence, malevolence, memory, imagination, expectation, as-association and relief. The twelve simple pains enumerated piety, benevolence malevolence memory, imagination, expectation, association and relief. The twelve simple pains enumerated by Bentham were privation, sense, awkwardness, ill-name, enmity, expectation association etc. the goodness and badness of an act was to be determined on the basis of these pleasures and pains. Thus an act was good or right if it produced a surplus of pleasure over pain and bad or wrong if it produced more pain than pleasure. Bentham made as the sole criteria for judging all the actions. He asserted it was the duty of the legislator and moralists to “sum up all the values of all the pleasure on the one side and those all the pains on the other. The balance, if it be on the side of pleasure, will give the good tendency of the act upon the whole while respect to the interest of that individual person; it on the side of pain, the bad tendency of it upon the whole”. In short, to Bentham the principle of utility is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question. I say of every action whatsoever, and therefore not only of every action of a private individual, but of every measure of Government”.

The principle of utility propounded by Bentham exercised profound influenced on the legislators and statesmen in the nineteenth century. It provided them the yardstick by which they could measure the usefulness of a particular law. In the words of Ivor Brown the principle has “an immense value because it denied the infallibility of the supreme person who endeavors’ to foist his own type of happiness upon other whom he believed to be the pitiful dupes of ignorance”.

3.7.1 The Greatest Happiness of the greatest number

In this book introduction to the principles of morals and legislation, Bentham made a few basic assumptions to simplify and systematize morals, law and politics. According to him man seeks pleasure and avoids pain. The state exists to regulate this pursuit with minimum of interference. Utility is an abstract term and Bentham used this term to indicate happiness. For him, everything that brings happiness has utility. Everything that brings misery is not utilitarian. The doctrine of utility is a Hedonistic concept. Bentham considered all experience as pleasurable or painful or both. He defined pleasure as individual sensation. To him happiness is a state of mind. He holds that pleasure must be pursued as a matter of natural inclination. However, happiness is not the piling up of all pleasures; it represents the net result after pursuing a number of pleasures. He thought happiness was the surplus over pain.

Bentham feels that there can be only a quantitative distinction between one pleasure and another. He also tells us how to measure pain and pleasures. For this purpose he introduces his famous Felicific Calculus. While measuring pain and pleasure Bentham takes the following factor into consideration. They are intensity, duration, certainty or uncertainty and proximity or remoteness. The value of pain or pleasure depends upon these considerations. Bentham attaches great importance to pleasure and pain.

In a famous passage Bentham says "Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters-pleasure and pain. To them we refer, all our decisions, every resolve that we make in life" for Bentham, everything is measured in terms of pleasure and pain. He says "an adherent to the principle of utility holds virtue to be a good thing by reason only of the pleasures which results from the practice of it, he considers vice to be a bad thing by reason only of the pains which follows in its train." Bentham observes that a man should not only aim at his own pleasure but also at the collective happiness of the greatest number of people. He argued for utilitarian legislation which seeks to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number. According to Bentham, every individual being a selfish creature will aim only at his personal happiness. Therefore, he says that man ought to aim at the happiness of everybody in general. Further he says that man should aim at the greatest happiness of the greatest number. So it is a matter for hedonistic calculus, summing up pleasure and pains in any particular case and balancing the pleasure against the pain, considering the number of persons affected and seeing whether the law contemplated produces the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Briefly, the point of the view of jermy

Bentham may be summed up as, all man desire happiness, which may be defined as the surplus of pleasure over pain. Pleasure and pain are therefore, the main springs of human action.

Check your Progress

- 1. What are the principal characteristics of which constitute the basis of Bentham's moral and political philosophy?*
- 2. According to Bentham what is the motivating factors of all human actions.*
- 3. Nature has placed mankind under the Governance of which sovereign masters.*

3.8 Bentham's view on Modern state

Bentham regarded the nation of the modern state as an ideal, an aspiration, and examined the techniques of state building and methods that would promote modernization. He regarded diversity and fragility within political order as inevitable. For Bentham, the state was a legal entity with individualism as its ethical basis. He was categorical that modernization required two things: first, it needed a broad-based and diversified legal system which would take into account individuals' desires; and second, institutions that would support the legal system, namely bureaucratization of public service and legislation as a continual process, accommodating both change and diversity. Bentham characterized the state as a legal entity, with individualism as its ethical basis. "Bentham's theory brought together in a particular way the two great themes of modern political thought: individualism and the modern sovereign state" (Hume1981:238).

Bentham preserved the individualist nation of moral autonomy, with priority to individual interests. He also recognized that these Autonomous individuals, governed by their interest, constituted themselves into fragile groupings which the state had to maintain through discipline cohesion; of it had to be an effective body. Through institutions and other techniques, the community was made responsive to the state, but the state was not allowed the temple on individual interests and wills. It would have to protect them by getting the individuals involved in the state through consent, or by representing them as a meters and judges of the state's actions. Bentham thought of ideas and devices to grantee governmental protection of individual interest, namely the public happiness should be the object of public policy, government was a trust (as it was in the case of Locke), with legislation as the primary function, and that uniformity, clarity, order and

consistency were essential to bought law and order. He was equally conscious of the need for institutional safeguards to ensure that the government pursued public interest. He contended that the reason for misrule was that the government was controlled by those whose interest it was to perpetuate bad governance. This could be changed if people who desired good government were made to take charge.

Bentham was confident that representation would ensure congruence between the interests of the government and those the community as a whole. It was for this reason that he championed universal adult franchise, and early as 1770 recommended it to all those who could read the list of voters.

As opposed to natural rights and natural law, Bentham recognized legal laws and rights that were enacted and enforced by a duly constituted political authority or the state. A state was sovereign, being primarily a law making body. He define the state or political society as, *A number of person (whom we may style subjects) are supposed to be in the habit of paying obedience to a person, or a assemblage of persons, of a known and certain description (whom we may call governor or governors) such person all together (subject and governed) are said to be in a state of political society* (Bentham 1977: 140).

Interestingly, Bentham opposed the concept of division of powers for three reasons. First, he argued that if the rulers were already accountable to the people, there was no need for additional checks. Division of power by itself did not secure and protect constitutional liberty. Second, even with the divisions would give the minorities the right to veto legislation. He could foresee evil consequence in the displacement of majority rule. Third, he argued that in the absence of effective opposition, division of power would be redundant. He emphasized the importance of accountability of the rulers, instead of division of powers, as not only good in itself, but also good as a means of constitutional liberty.

3.9 Bentham on Liberty, Rights and Law

Liberty, according to Bentham is the absence of restraints and coercion. He had tried to link the idea of civil and political liberty to security. A government establishes a framework of security through law, within which the individual enjoys liberty. The government also through the enactment of civil laws secures right to property, prevents interference and encourages healthy commercial competitiveness. In the realm of the criminal law, government protects the individual against crime

through a system of criminal code, police force and the judiciary. At the level of constitutional law, the government guarantees against misrule, abuse and arbitrary exercise of power.

Bentham recognized the importance of right as being crucial for the security of the individual. He defined right and duty in the context of positive law, sovereign, and sanctions are concrete terms whereas right and duties are abstract concepts. The former are tangible and identifiable. The latter terms assumed sense only if translated into propositions about laws and sanctions. Duty implies an action by the sovereign on pain of some sanction. Whereas when we talk of right- it means that one benefitted from another's performance of an action which is required of him by a sovereign on pain of sanction.

A law, in Bentham's thought, is the expression of a will in the form of a command. Nature or reason or justice cannot be the supreme power in a state, because they cannot make law. According to Bentham God and man do the only forms of existence possess will? Therefore, law in any precise sense must emanate from one of them. The great task of law in this world is to reconcile interests- so to regulate the motive of self interest that it shall operate, even against its will, towards the production of the greatest happiness. This it does by attaching artificial pain or punishment to certain actions of a particular kind which would not be conducive to the general happiness. It cannot, and it ought not try to, concern itself with all actions which would not be conducive to the general happiness.

Since law emanates from human will, law making will have to be evaluated in its capacity to promote happiness. Bentham believed that without positive law, human life would be intolerable, insecure and miserable. Law must be the command of a superior authority. It is only when such an authority is habitually obeyed that Bentham is prepared to admit the existence of civil society. He rejects both natural law and natural right.

3.10 J.S. Mill: Early life and Works

J.S. Mill was born in London on 20th May, 1806. He was the eldest son of James Mill and Harriet Burrow Mill. Outwardly, his life was not eventful. He was educated by his father and never attended school. His education did not include any children's books or toys, for he started to learn Greek at the age of 4 and Latin at 8. By the time he was 10, he had read many of Plato's dialogues, logic and history.

In 1823, at the age of 17 years, he becomes a clerk in the East India Company, where his father was a high official, and worked there until 1858. Mill got an opportunity to sit in parliament

from 1866 to 1868. As a Parliamentarian, he could not stick to his radical party and even many a time displeased party bosses by speaking against party line. In parliament, he stood for the protection of the interest of the laboring classes, women suffrage and land reforms in Ireland.

Mill started publishing various articles on philosophy and politics since his teenage. Mill got his fame through his writing in Westminster Review and London Review and also in many other journals of his time. He was a prolific writer and he wrote on various branches of knowledge with equal mastery. Some of his important works are:-

1. System of Logic (1843)
2. Principles of political economy (1848)
3. On liberty (1859)
4. Utilitarianism (1863)
5. Women suffrage (1873) etc.

Mill acknowledged that both of his works "*On liberty*" and "*Women Suffrage*" were joint endeavors with Harriet Hardy Taylor. Whom, he met in 1830. Harriet was a married woman. After the death of Harriet's husband, Mill married Harriet after 19 years of friendship.

Mill's health did not run well and it further deteriorated after his retirement. He was not yearly old towards the closing years of 1850's but protracted illness made him ill and weak. Finally, he died in 1873 A.D.

3.11 J.S. Mill on liberty:

In fact, Mill's greatest contribution to Benthamite school of thought was his changed concept of liberty to suit his time. Bentham had pleaded for reforms and with the passage of time; state had to yield to his opinion. This, however, gave rise to the increased scope of state activity. The individual were politically growing conscious and then Parliament was concentrating all powers in its own hand. Further, Bentham pleaded for more and more powers to legislature which in practice produced dangerous effects. It was under these circumstances that Mill comes out as champion of individual liberty to protect the individual from the tyranny of the legislative, majority dominance and so called public opinion.

In his essay "*On liberty*" which was published in 1859, Mill sought to demonstrate the danger to which individual liberty was exposed in a democracy. Mill believed that in present form of democracy, the rule of all does not mean the rule of each man by himself. Some people rule the

others. Again, what is commonly known as the will of the people is in practice is the will of majority. The will of minority is neglected. Mill called this rule of the majority, the oppression or dictatorship or despotism of majority. This short coming of democracy is deplorable but it is the fact and democracy must be saved from it. Mill says, “Whenever there is an ascendant class, a large portion of the morality of the country emanates from its class interests and its feeling of class superiority. So, Mill denounces both the tyranny of opinion and superiority of class. In a real democracy, both these must not be allowed to prevail.

Mill defends liberty of individual to ensure fullest development of his personality. He identifies the major areas in which liberty of an individual must be protected.

1. Freedom of Thought and Expression:-

Mill believed that freedom of thought and expression belongs to an individual’s inwards domain of consciousness. Mill asserts that it is illegitimate for state to interfere with the liberty of thought and expression. He assumes that it is to the advantage of mankind that knowledge should increase among and must be possessed by as many of them as possible. So, Mill strongly believed that it was wrong to think in any way that any authority on earth had a right to suppress the opinion of others. Even a single dissent opinion should not be suppressed because it was disgracing to human race. Such a denial could possibly result in exchanging error for truth. So, everyone should be given essential basic liberties for expression of self as it is essential for self development of an individual. It also helps for the mental development and spiritual originality of individual. So, Mill stressed for the need and necessity of varieties of opinions.

2. Freedom of action:-

To understand the freedom of action, Mill has given the” Harm principle”. According to these principles, he divided the human actions into two types, that is, self-regarding actions and others regarding actions.

According to Mill, self regarding actions are that actions which are concerned to self and has no affects to the community. He advocated for complete freedom in the case of self regarding actions. In simple words, Mill was of the opinion that so far as individual action concerning his own self were concerned and which did not prejudice his action about other, to that extent, he was free and there were no limitation on him. However, in the case of other regarding actions i.e. in mattes which do affect the others or community or when his actions influence others, in that case, he was bounded by certain limitation. Mill conceded the right of the community to coerce the individual if

his conduct is prejudicial to its welfare. Mill supported the rational interference by state or authority in case of others regarding actions.

Mill, however, put certain restriction on the enjoyment of liberty. Only those who were mature could enjoy that. He had no care for social customs and conventions nor had anything to say about age-old institutions. However, he believed that in the interest of individual liberty, it was essential that the state should deny liberty in case where it felt that individual was not acting in his self interest.

Criticism:-

Despite of being regarded as the champion of individualism and liberty, he has been severely criticized on many issues. Barker has characterized him as the champion of empty liberty. Some of the grounds on which he has been criticized are as follows.

1. Mill held atomistic conception of society which became a great obstacle in his concept of liberty. He could not declare society as an organic growth but simply an aggregate of isolated individuals.
2. Mill has divided the human actions into Self regarding actions and others regarding actions. So far self regarding actions are concerned, he is completely free and his independence should not be checked. But there, he is wrong. Moreover, it is not possible to divide human actions practically.
3. Mill has not dealt with individual as a part of society but in isolation. But in actual practice that is not possible. In fact, individuals can enjoy liberty only when he is part of society.
4. He has made the state autocrat and has also allowed it to interfere in individuals affairs in the name of safeguarding his liberty. This, in actual practice, is dangerous.
5. He is also been criticized that he is not consistent in so far as his concept of liberty is concerned. He is not clear whether liberty is absence of restraints or freedom to do what one desires.
6. Another drawback of his concept is that his approach is negative in nature. He stress on what others should not do, but silent on what others should do. Thus, he does not have positive suggestions in this regards.

Check your progress

- 1. Identify Mills various areas of Liberty**
- 2. Write a note on Barkers view on Mills liberty**

3.12 J.S. Mill on Representative Government

J.S. Mill as champions of individual liberty was of the opinion that representative government, if rightly and properly constituted, was an ideal one. He believes that liberty and democracy, taken together, can create the possibility of human excellence. Development of independence mind and autonomous judgment of an individual is necessary for social progress. These can be possible through the liberty. So, Mill believed that representative government is essential for the protection and enhancement of liberty as well as human reason. If we do not have a representative government, the rulers are likely to make arbitrary laws and create a atmosphere of tyranny. So, Representative Government is the most suitable device for the enactment of laws based on human reason and the principle of liberty. Moreover, it makes government accountable to the citizenry and creates wiser citizens capable of pursuing the public interests.

Mill's on voting system and election

Mill believed that all should be given the right to vote. But he did not favored the Ballot System or secrete voting system. According to him, vote was a trust and not a right and thus, the right to vote means loading one with great responsibility. It was moral duty of all to exercise this right for general and collective good. So, he pleaded for open system of voting. He supported the voting right for all, at the same time, he was reluctant to believe that all were not competent enough to exercise that right properly and had interest in national affairs. He believed that different individuals are having different capacity. Hence, some citizens should have a larger share in the process of governance than others. In view of this, Mill sought for "Plural voting system". Those who had better abilities and capabilities should have weightage in exercising votes. Accordingly, all adult should have a vote but the wiser and more talented should have more votes than the ignorant and less capable.

Mill had closely observed the democracy of his time. So he felt that democracy was heading towards tyranny. He strongly felt that minorities were not being properly and sufficiently represented according to their voting strength. He also felt that the majority was trying to suppress the views of minority apart from ruling them. He, therefore, favors the idea of Proportional Representation System of election based on single transferable vote. This, he felt, would give the minorities' more or less equal representation. It will also check unjust domination of numerical majority and will give adequate and proper representation to both. He also felt that men of caliber

and intelligence will be distinguished from those of ignorance. So, he pleaded for certain basic qualification for voters.

Mill also favored and pleaded for the women's voters' right. He said that the external differences between men and women would disappear once women were given social and political freedom.

Criticism:-

Some of the drawbacks in his ideas about the representative government are as follows.

1. In order to make the working of democracy a successful, Mill has suggested public voting as against the secret ballot system and go for open voting. But he had forgotten that his system is bound to result not only in intimidation and corruption but also in many social tension and lifelong hostilities. The people will then not be in position to fearlessly cast their vote.
2. He also favored plural system of voting. If followed, it is bound to divide the society into classes.
3. He also opposed the basic principle of democracy that all are equal. He advocate for certain qualification for voters. This is bound to make legislative a body of elitist group or class. Moreover, it will disfranchise vast majority from voting rights. And thus, legislative will no longer be a representative body.

3.13 J.S Mill on the Rights of Women

J.S. Mill, better known as the champion of individual liberty, was also one of the early advocates of equal rights for women. In view of the present day popularity of feminism, Mill's defense of feminist cause has assumed a special significance. His essay on "*The subjection of women*" published in 1869, is now being highly appreciated and read more closely. In this work, he has strongly maintained that there is no known difference between men and women and that would justify attributing different rights to them.

Mill argued that women are naturally worse of some things than men and should, therefore, be discourage or forbidden from doing them. He says that, we simply do not know what women are capable of; because, we have never let them try - one cannot make authoritative statement without evidence. We cannot stop women from trying things because they might not be able to do them. Whether they can or not do them, be found out in practice. In reality, we do not know what women's nature is. Because it is so wrapped up in how they have been raised.

Mill pointed out that opposition to sexual equality was not based on reason. He agreed that the majority opinion favored inequality, but this, he contended went against reason. The basis for such a supposition was that it was derived from the generality of the practice in history of human kind and hence, was regarded as good. But the Mill pointed out that the subordination of women was only due to fact that they were physically not as strong as men. In fact, the origin of women's subjugation was in physically force, of the allegedly superior bodily strength of men. Consequently, patience, resignation and submission to power, have been regarded as characteristic of a gentle and graceful women. So, Mill lamented that the subjection of women was similar to slavery.

Mill looks on other side of fact too. He pointed out that the rule of men over women was not entirely based on force. Women also accepted it voluntarily without complain and become consenting parties to their subordination. Men, on their part, expected not only obedience, but even affection from women.

Mill lamented that half of mankind - the women - have so long been held in subjection to the other half the men. He questioned the grounds of this subjection of women to men in the eye of law as well as custom. He argue that the biological differences between men and women cannot be logically involved to justify the exclusion of women from the suffrage, from the professional and from all the avenues of progress which have so far remained open to men.

So, Mill strongly pleaded for improving women's position by giving them suffrage, education and employment opportunities. Mill believed that the improvement in the position of women as concern is not restricted to women alone, but of entire human kind. So, in his book '*The subjection of women*', he made strong claim for equal status in three key areas: Women's right to vote, Right to equal opportunities in education and Employment.

As a parliamentarian, Mill supported a married women's property bill. He contended that England had to move beyond the "savage state" where marriage was based on the idea that one had to have absolute power over the other. Mill further pointed out that marriage did not give the women the dignity and equal status that she ought to get. Once married, she was totally under the control of her husband. She was denied by law over right to her children and property. Hence, they must have the right to property, inheritance and custody.

Mill further argued that, men alone should not be trusted with absolute power because it may lead to brutalization of women. Mill also convinced that if suitable domestic help was made

possible, then women, and in particular, the talented and exceptional ones, could take up a profession or a vocation.

So, in this book” *Representative Government*”, commented that difference of sex could not be the basis of political rights. So, he pleaded for women’s voting right.

According to Mill, the solution of above discussion is to give the women, the freedom of choice, whether married or unmarried. He defended the right of individual women who wanted the opportunity to choose a life other than that of motherhood and marriage. He also defended the right of exceptional women to have the freedom of choice and make the home a dignified and honorable place. So, equality as a legal right between the sexes was Mill’s main concern.

Check your progress

- 1. Discuss Mill’s idea on representative government**
- 2. Discuss Mill’s view on women rights**

3.14 Summary

J.S. Mill transformed utilitarianism into a modern defense of individual autonomy. In *On Liberty*, he introduced the "Harm Principle," arguing that society can only rightfully interfere with an individual to prevent harm to others. He championed absolute freedom of thought and expression as vital for human progress. In governance, Mill advocated for representative democracy but cautioned against the "tyranny of the majority," proposing proportional representation and plural voting to protect intellectual excellence. Finally, he was a pioneering feminist, arguing that the subjection of women was a vestige of physical force that hindered the development of all humanity.

3.15 Key Terms

Utilitarianism- Utilitarianism is a moral theory that advocates actions that promote overall happiness or pleasure and rejects actions that cause unhappiness or harm. A utilitarian philosophy, when directed to making social, economic, or political decisions, aims for the betterment of society. The philosophy is associated with Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, two towering British philosophers, and political thinkers.

Enlightenment thinkers- The Age of Enlightenment was an intellectual and philosophical movement that dominated the world of ideas in Europe during the 18th century. The Enlightenment emerged out of a European intellectual and scholarly movement known as Renaissance humanism. Some consider the publication of Isaac Newton's *Principia Mathematica* (1687) as the first major enlightenment work. French historians traditionally date the Enlightenment from 1715 to 1789, from the beginning of the reign of Louis XV until the French Revolution. Most end it with the turn of the 19th century. Philosophers and scientists of the period widely circulated their ideas through meetings at scientific academies, Masonic lodges, literary salons, coffeehouses and in printed books, journals, and pamphlets. The ideas of the Enlightenment undermined the authority of the monarchy and the Church and paved the way for the political revolutions of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Empiricist- The theory that all knowledge is based on experience derived from the senses. Stimulated by the rise of experimental science, it developed in the 17th and 18th centuries, expounded in particular by John Locke, George Berkeley, and David Hume.

Hedonism - Hedonism is a school of thought that argues that the pursuit of pleasure and intrinsic goods are the primary or most important goals of human life. A hedonist strives to maximize net pleasure (pleasure minus pain). However upon finally gaining said pleasure, happiness may remain stationary.

Ethical hedonism – it is the idea that all people have the right to do everything in their power to achieve the greatest amount of pleasure possible to them. It is also the idea that every person's pleasure should far surpass their amount of pain. Ethical hedonism is said to have been started by Aristippus of Cyrene, a student of Socrates. He held the idea that pleasure is the highest good.

Radicals - a person who advocates thorough or complete political or social change, or a member of a political party or section of a party pursuing such aims.

Principle of Utility- The principle of utility states that actions or behaviors are right in so far as they promote happiness or pleasure, wrong as they tend to produce unhappiness or pain. Hence, utility is a teleological principle. Many utilitarian's believe that pleasure and pain are objective states and can be, more or less, quantified.

Pleasure and Pain Theory-The pain pleasure theory of motivation is based upon the assumption that human nature seeks pleasure and avoids pain.

Liberalism: Theory which favors greatest possible freedom for the individual.

Utilitarianism: It is the moral, social and political theory states that whatever measure or policy maximizes the positive balance of pleasure over pain across a population or for a person.

Subjugation: It defines the state of gaining control over somebody or something.

Representative Government: A form of government which is elected by the people. It represents the will of the people. It is also called as popular government.

Suffrage: It refers to the privilege of participating in the determination of political matters submitted to the electorate; Voting.

3.16 Answers to ‘check your progress.’

1. Bentham is widely regarded as the father of Utilitarian school of thought for his concept of utility and his principles of pain and pleasure.
2. The seeds of the concept of utility can be found in hedonists Aristippus and Epicurus. The tradition of utilitarianism properly began with Bentham, J.S mill, Hume and Priestley.
3. Some of the most important works of Bentham’s are Fragments of Government (1776); Essays on political Tactics (1791); Discourses on civil and Penal Legislation (1802); The theory of punishments and Rewards (1811).
4. He drew the concept of utility mainly from Hume’s Treatise of Human Nature and Priestley’s Essays on Government.
5. The principal characteristics which constitute the basis of Bentham's moral and political philosophy are (i) the greatest happiness principle, (ii) universal egoism and (iii) the artificial identification of one's interests with those of others.
6. According to Bentham all the actions of man were motivated by the considerations of ‘pleasure’ and ‘pain’.
7. Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*.
8. Mill holds a very important and proud place in England political system. He moulded and improved utilitarianism in such a way that it could face the challenge of time and could survive in the face of all odds. Had Mill not appeared at scene it would have been a different story altogether.
9. The credit for raising a voice for female suffrage goes to Mill. He was the first utilitarian who stood for universal adult suffrage and not for manhood suffrage as was preached and propagated by his teacher Bentham.

10. Then again credit goes to Mill for raising voice for individualism. Before him, Bentham had also stood for individualism but his individual was an isolated entity struggling for his own pleasures and pains. But individual of Mill was thinking in terms of not external pleasures but only in terms of internal sanction and conscience. He thought not in term of individual but collective happiness.

11. In those days when democracy has not got deep root in the world, Mill's pleaded for democracy. He was of the view that democratic outlook was a matter than rough and rustic dictatorship. He appealed the people to realize the strength of vote and to cast their votes very judiciously. It was really his great contribution to politics and political philosophy.

12. Another salient point of Mill's philosophy is that he preached for liberty which was a bold step in those days. He went to extent of saying that he did not like that individual should be put in any way even under the control of their legislatures. Like a very great realist and champion of liberty he stood for the combination of administrator and legislators.

13. Another contribution of Mills is his support for minority representation. Though this is still a problem yet he made an attempt to solve it. He was thus a true and real supporter of democracy. One cannot deny that unless minorities are properly represented the whole system of democracy is bound to fall.

3.17 Short – Answer Questions

1. Examine the important contributions of Bentham.
2. Write a short note on Bentham's concept of Liberty.
3. Examine Bentham's idea on Rights.
4. What is J.S. Mill's "Harm Principle"?
5. What did Mill mean by the "Tyranny of the Majority"?
6. Discuss J.S. Mill's Freedom of Thought and Expression.

3.18 Long- Answer Questions

1. 'Pain and pleasure' is the linchpin on which the principle of Utility is based, comment.
2. Examine Bentham's concept of modern state.
3. Write an essay on 'Greatest happiness of the greatest number' as advocated by Bentham.

4. Analyze Mill's views on Representative Government.
5. Evaluate J.S. Mill as a pioneer of Feminism.
6. Examine J.S Mill as champion of Individual Liberty.

3.19 Suggested Readings

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UNIT - 4

IDEALIST AND SOCIALIST: George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Karl Marx

Structure

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: Early life and Works
- 4.3 Hegel as an idealist
- 4.4 Hegelian's Dialectics
- 4.5 Hegel's views on state
- 4.7 Characteristic of State
- 4.7 Karl Marx (1818-1883): Life and works
- 4.8 Marx Dialectical Materialism
- 4.9 Materialistic interpretation of history:
- 4.10 Theory of Alienation:-
 - 4.10.1 Forms of alienation
- 4.11 Marx's theory of Revolution
- 4.12 Lets sum up:
- 4.13 Key Terms
- 4.14 Answer to check your progress
- 4.15 Short- Answer Questions
- 4.16 Long- Answer Questions
- 4.17 Further reading

4.0 Objectives

After reading this unit, you will be able to understand:

- Early life and the works of George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel.
- Hegel's Method of Dialectics
- Hegel's views on State.
- Early life and works of Karl Marx.
- Marx's views on the state
- Theory of Alienation

- Theory of revolution and
- Criticisms of Marx's theory.

4.1 Introduction

To understand the development of modern political thought, one must look at the transition from Idealism to Socialism, a shift largely defined by the intellectual relationship between Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Karl Marx. While both thinkers used a similar logical framework to explain how history moves, they disagreed fundamentally on what actually drives humanity forward: ideas or economics.

Hegel's philosophy is rooted in Idealism, the belief that reality is a product of the mind or "Spirit" (*Geist*). He viewed history as a rational process—a grand journey where humanity moves toward greater self-awareness and freedom. Karl Marx, originally a student of Hegelian thought, famously claimed he found Hegel "standing on his head" and sought to turn him "right side up." This led to the birth of Historical Materialism. The transition from Hegel to Marx represents one of the most significant pivots in social science. Hegel provided the method: the Dialectic (change through conflict). Marx provided the subject: Economics and Class (change through material revolution).

While Hegel sought to understand the world through the evolution of thought, Marx famously concluded that "the philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it." This shift laid the groundwork for the socialist and communist movements that would define the 20th century.

4.2 George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: Early life and Works

George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was an eminent German Philosopher and one of the chief exponents of idealism. He was born in a middle class protestant family in 1770 at Stuttgart in Germany. His father was a civil servant. The solvent financial position enabled his father to give young Hegel the best possible education. He was graduated from Tubingen in 1793 with a certificate. After the death of his father in 1799, he inherited certain amount of money which he thought sufficient and went to Jena to get chance in that university. In 1801, he was appointed as a

private teacher and began lecture on logic and metaphysic. As a teacher he earned wide reputation in 1805, he was given the post of professorship which was highly coveted in those days.

With the invasion of Napoleon's army in Prussia in 1806, University of Jena was closed and he was in great financial crisis. Later he was offered professorship at Heidelberg in which he stay till 1818. Then he went to Berlin to take chair of philosophy left vacant by the death of Fichte. At Berlin, Hegel's fame reached far and wide and within a short time he became an international figure. In the University of Berlin he continued to stay till his death in 1831. His major works include the following:

1. Phenomenology of spirit (1807)
2. Science of Logic (1812)
3. Encyclopedia of philosophical science(1817)
4. Philosophy of Rights (1821)
5. Philosophy of History (1837)

4.3 Hegel as an idealist

The idealism refers to a philosophical outlook which holds that idea, spirit, and consciousness is the essence of the universe and that all forms of physical existence as well as social and Political institutions are the manifestation of the prevailing idea at a particular historical point of times. It is a reaction against the liberal and the individualistic theory. It based on ethics and rejects the idea that human welfare can be measured in terms of actual or material comforts and satisfaction. In this sense, idealism is opposite to materialism.

After the death of last great philosopher of Utilitarian School of Thought, their whole philosophy came under severe criticism. Even the chief exponent of utilitarianism, J.S. mill was also been criticized as the prophet of empty liberty without no clear vision about the rights. Europe strongly began to feel that the utilitarian philosophy had reduced state simply to an aggregate of individuals who were after seeking pleasure and avoiding pains. They felt that this school of thought had failed to address their problems. It was at this stage that the idealism came to front to solve the problems which the Europe seriously faced. This soon spread throughout the world. The philosophers might differ in details but basically their ideas remained unchanged.

So far German idealism is concerned; there was a chequered and colorful background. It originated in the idealism of Plato and Aristotle and than for several centuries, it was buried in

oblivion. Then it was resuscitated in the hands of Rousseau. From him, it went to the German philosopher Kant and then to Fichte. Gettel has rightly commented that, “*the climax of German idealism in political philosophy was reached in the speculation of Hegel*”. The profound knowledge and extraordinary genius of this philosopher not only enriched the idealist philosophy, but also raised it to the pinnacle of glory. Hegel is the greatest idealist political philosopher who exalted the state into the position of god. He regarded the state as a perfect rationality and an absolute fixed end in itself. The state is a moral organism and it is the sole organizer of rights and guardian of moral values. It poses a super personality representing the best individual will. Hegel says that, “*The state is a self-conscious ethical substance and a self-knowing and self-actualizing individual.....the State is a march of God upon Earth*”.

Hegel’s system including politics is the largest expression of his cultural idealism. He made philosophy and also idealism a concrete historical factor and drew history into philosophy. Hegelian idealism is often referred to an absolute idealism because it provides us with a set of categories in terms of which all human experiences of the past and present can be understood.

German idealist Kant wanted to see all powerful state and for that reason he did not accept John Lock’s concept of liberalization. He rather inclined to the absolutism of Thomas Hobbes and J.J. Rousseau. Hegel’s idealism accommodated this philosophy of Kant. His idealism teaches that man must show unconditional obedience to state. The morality, freedom and will of the individual are not separated from those of the state. So, Hegel’s philosopher thought of institutions are repugnant to the all-round development of human personality and idealism. According to him, idea constitutes the true motor of history whereas what gives momentum to history is the development of idea. All the changes in society, economy, polity and cultural take place because of development of ideas. So, for him, the world is the manifestation of absolute idea.

4.4 Hegelian’s Dialectics

Philosophy of dialectics as expounded by Hegel is nothing new, but only a development of methods as initiated by Kant. His main objective of discussing dialectic was to reveal the necessity of history which he felt was a growth. In the development of his idea, he got inspiration from the writings of Greek thinkers who believed that each force gave birth to an opposite force. This method was successfully applied by Plato. Immanuel Kant also applied this method successfully to study the contradictions arising from the employment of reason to the impressions received through

the sense. Then, Hegel applied this method to identify the process whereby such contradictions are resolved for arriving at a higher place of truth. His method is based on the principle of contradiction. He described these processes in terms of thesis (The initial idea), antithesis (the opposite or contradicting idea) and finally, Synthesis (absolute idea that result from the contradiction between thesis and antithesis).

The term "dialectic" has been derived from the Greek word "Dialektos" (Discuss) and "Dialektike" (art of debate and discussion). It means, dialectic is a method of investigation of truth through the art of disputation. That is by the process of argument and counter argument. To him, contradiction is not hindrance but indication of progress and can be removed by valid and convincing arguments on both sides rather than by the use of force or coercion. So, contradiction is eternal and moving ahead since the beginning of the world.

According to Hegel, the Dialectic is a triadic movement – a movement in which a finite object or motion develops contradiction and passes over into its own negations. Triadic movement means that every idea or motion or event produces a contrary idea or force. Contradictions started with initial idea (thesis) and contradicting or opposing idea (antithesis). Their conflict produces a new third force which dissolves and displaces the pre-existing ideas (thesis and antithesis). This third force is the synthesis and it drew qualities from both. The synthesis is not a compromise between thesis and antithesis nor does it represent the victory of one over the other. Both the thesis and antithesis are present in the synthesis but in a higher and more perfect form. Again, the synthesis turns into thesis and it produces its opposite. And, thus, the process goes on till it reaches perfection or an absolute idea. For example, if man in the thesis and women is the antithesis, the synthesis is the family, a higher form of thesis and antithesis. Again, if the family is thesis and civil society in antithesis, the synthesis is a higher form i.e. The State.

In other words, the initial idea (thesis) does not represent absolute truth. The opposite idea (antithesis), which is just the opposite or negation of thesis, too, does not represent absolute truth, when thesis and antithesis contradict with each other; they tend to destroy each other's untrue elements. As a result, the synthesis, which consist of the element of both thesis and antithesis developed. Synthesis is relatively free from the untrue elements of both thesis and antithesis and thus, nearer to the truth or perfect. Again, synthesis takes the position of new idea again and undergoes the same process of contradiction with antithesis and resulted into the emergence of new

synthesis. This process of negation of negation continues till it reaches the stage of absolute idea which is free from contradiction.

Hegel believed that the philosophy of history represents partial truth and thus each facts supplements the others. From this, he developed that the theory of dialectics determines the graph of human progress from inorganic world to organic world of plants and animals. The men are the ultimate or highest end of physical evolution. Thus, beyond man, there can be no further physical evolution. Man evolves intellectually and morally through the above discussed triadic principles.

Hegel considered that the agent of idea of progress is this man and the state is the agents of the dialectics and the idea of progress.

Criticism:-

Hegel's theory of dialectic has undergone severe criticism on many grounds as follows.

1. Hegel's philosophy of change has preaches for war. This cannot be justified on any ground.
2. According to Hegel, dialectic explains the logic of history-a conception which is not clear. His concept is rather selective process which neither possible nor clear.
3. According to Hegel, culmination of everything comes in due course. In other words, there is no need to make any specific efforts for achieving any aim or object and that is the natural process of history. But he is basically wrong. It is fatal to preach and follow such an idea in practice. It makes mankind fatalist which is bound to retard the progress of civilization.
4. Hegel has also been criticized on the ground that, though unsuccessful, he tried to combine revolution ad conservatism together, which is complete opposite in concept. These two opposite concept cannot go together in actual practice.
5. His philosophy of dialectics is self contradictory. It at one and at the same time believes in active as well as passive. It is the result of struggle that thesis and anti thesis are to be achieved and that these are pre destined and lastly, it is rational and at the same time vague.

Check your progress

1. *What is "Absolute Idealism"?*
2. *Describe the Triadic Movement*
3. *What are the primary criticisms of Hegel's Dialectics?*

4.5 Hegel's views on state

To start with Hegel's views on state, we should address his two main concern or issue.

Firstly, theoretically, Hegel's view is different from that of liberal understanding of State. The liberalist believes that the state is the product of individual's activities or will. Individual plays major role in constructing the state. State is authored by individual. So, liberalist viewed State as threat to individual liberty. They considered State as "necessary evils". So, they restricted the role of State in individual's life. But for Hegel, state is the result of spirit or the expression of absolute idea. He considered State as "March of God upon Earth". So, individual enjoys full freedom under State. The individual realize his actual freedom by obeying the State. Hegel considered individual and State in two different domains which is opposed to each other. For Hegel, these two opposite domain should be united to result into a higher or more perfect form. He explains it through his method called "Dialectic Method".

Secondly, to explain the origin of state, Hegel has successfully adopted a method called Dialectics method. Through this method, Hegel explained that the state is the result of Dialectical process. He argues that every social change is the result of development of idea.

Hegel believed that, originally, man was like many other animals. But now he has reached the final stage of physical evolution. As a conscious being, he does not like to live alone. He likes to live with others and to form association. Hegel says that the earliest form of association was the family which is built upon the feeling of love and affections. Hegel called family as thesis. In order to meet their growing demands, people move for better and larger society i.e. civil society which Hegel called as an antithesis.

The family is thus, thesis while the civil society is the antithesis. The clash between thesis and antithesis produces synthesis which is the state, the higher form of both the thesis and antithesis. So, the final stage of dialectical process is the state. In Hegelian formulation, there can be no change. It is not only the super-organism but also the highest manifestation of idea or spirit or reason.

The state is, therefore, the embodiment of rational freedom, realizing and recognizing itself in an objective form. It is the idea or spirit in the eternal manifestation of human will and its freedom. Whatever spiritual realities a man can possess, he can possess only through the State.

4.6 Characteristic of State

It is a divine State:-

Hegel's state is a mechanism, but it is a mechanism for different purpose. It's not an instrument to maximize the happiness of individual nor is it an institution to preserve the life, liberty and property of man. It is a super organism. Thus, the State is product of long, unconscious but divinely ordained growth. It is not the outcome of any contract. Hegel's state was not real but the highest form of reality. Hegel considered state as "The March of God on Earth".

It is an Organic State:-

According to Hegel, State is a natural growth. It regarded the state as an organism or an ethical whole. State is a whole and it must be comprehend as whole. Its parts are always inferior to the whole. Individuals are considered as parts. They can realize their best self only by merger with the state.

Thus, according to Hegel, the citizen is part of a valuable whole and has value as such; but isolated from the whole, he is useless. All the worth which the human being possess, it is possess only through the State. Outside the State, the individual has no value and therefore, the state make the individual and is supreme.

The State as a moral institution:-

Hegel regarded the state as a moral institution. The moral law cannot bind the state because the state is the creator of morality. The State fixes the standard of morality for its citizens. A man does not possess the wisdom to challenge the morality or ethics of the state. Man's activities are guided by his conscience, but conscience cannot tell what is right and just. That decision is taken by the State. Man is just a machine to perform Duty.

State represents perfect rationality:-

Hegel gave a systematic and vigorous exposition of the theory of idealism. According to him, the State represents, "perfect rationality" and "it is the embodiment of reasons". To him, rational is the real. What is rational is actual and what is actual is rational. This is how the idealist applies metaphysics to the State.

State is sovereign:-

Another feature of Hegel's State is that the State is sovereign both in national and international affairs. In relation to other State, its own safety is of prime consideration. It cannot make any compromise. To safeguard its own interest and protect its own sovereignty is the highest morality.

The state is an end in itself:-

Hegel's state is an end in itself. State's will is considered to be superior to the individual's will. The state has a personality and the development of individual's personality can take place only through the personality of the state. It's through the state, the real personality of an individual express himself.

Real freedom lies in the state:-

According to Hegel, the State represents the real freedom or real will. It is this will which should be supreme in society. Real will alone represent the common good. It is based on reason and rationality. The state represents this free moral will which is the duty of individual to obey this will.

War is not an absolute evil:-

Hegel believed that state is an absolute power on earth and as such every state is absolute and sovereign autonomous. He, therefore, does not liked the idea of any state being absorbed or conquered by the other. He, very clearly says that war is reality which must be accepted. Not only this, but he clearly says that for a number of reasons wars are wholesome. Peace stagnate both men as well as nations. If the body politics is to be provided necessary stimulus, it is essential that there should be the wars.

Constitutional monarchy as the best form of government:-

According to Hegel, the best form of government is the constitutional monarchy of the type of Prussia of his time. It would be better if it is hereditary. Out of three branches of the Government, legislature is the thesis or universal aspect. The administrative wins are the antithesis or particular aspect. The monarch who represents the best in the two is the synthesis. According to Hegel, sovereignty of state resides in monarch not in the people. Hegel dislike for the parliamentary system of England. He denounced territorial representation and propounded functional representation.

Criticism:-

1. Hegel has stress that state is an end in itself that man without state cannot progress and show what is best in itself. But his conception has been put to criticism that the state can never be end in itself. He has not only made the state an absolute identity but also has given it a totalitarian concept which is against the spirit of liberty and democracy.
2. Another criticism is that if his theory is taken to its logical conclusions, then it will go very near to idea of Fascism, which in actual practice has been rejected by the world and has considered danger to world peace.
3. His philosophy subordinate individual to the state. Giving absolute power to state may create danger of exploitation and subordination leading to slavery by those who held the power.
4. Hegel considered state as “March of god on earth”. State is sole creator of morality and no moral law can bind the state. But, if the state do not advance or promote or accept moral code, then it is bound to wither away and state authority shall have no rights to govern the people.

Check your progress

1. *Explain the Dialectical origin of the State*
2. *What does it mean to say the State is "Organic"?*
3. *"The State is a march of God upon Earth." Explain*

4.7 Karl Marx (1818-1883): Life and works

The philosophy of Marxism or scientific socialism or communism, is of paramount in the contemporary world. A socialist philosophy, as expounded by Karl Marx and subsequently modified and improved by Marxists like Lenin, Stalin and others, opened a new era in world political philosophy.

Karl Marx, the founder and chief exponent of communism, was born on 5th May, 1818 in the city of Trier of Rhine province, Prussia. His father was a Lawyer by profession. His homeland was industrially as much advance province in the state and as such since his very birth; he saw the exploitation of the poor by the rich.

At the age of 17 years, he joined Bonn University as law student. In 1837, he went to University of Berlin where he met Jenny and fell in love with her.

In 1841, Marx submitted his thesis to Jena University and obtained the degree of doctor of Philosophy. In 1842, Marx met Engels in Paris. Engels was a brilliant intellectual who agreed with Marx on most of the social and economic issues.

In 1845, Engel brought Marx to England where he was introduced to the founder of German Workers educational Association. The year later in 1847, a congress of all the workers associations was held in London and the outcome of that was the formation of “International communist league”. It was here that both Engels and Marx were assigned to formidable task of preparing a manifesto which subsequently became Bible of communist world. Both of them believed that capitalism was bound to end and on its debris of working classes were bound to come to power. On account of his radical revolutionary view, he was expelled from Germany in 1849. He stayed in England where his condition was very miserable. He and his family had to live purely of the mercy and goodwill of his old friend Engels.

Though, Marx was fighting against all odds and analysis the causes of world poverty. Yet his personal life was not happy. In 1881, his wife expired and in 1883, his eldest daughter died. Both the incident gave a heavy blow to the health of this great philosopher who lost much of his initiative. Under great distress he himself died in March, 14, 1883. Some of his great works are:-

1. Poverty of philosophy (1847)
2. Communist Manifesto (1848)
3. Wage, Labor and Capital (1849)
4. Contribution to the critique of political economy (1859)
5. Das Kapital (1867,1885 and 1894)]

4.8 Marx Dialectical Materialism

Basic conception of Marxian political philosophy is the doctrine of dialectical materialism. The concept is not the original idea of Marx. In fact, He borrowed this from Hegel, though earlier to Hegel, the term was also been used by the Sophists. This term was known to denote method of disputation. Plato used this concept for resolving conflict of divergent ideas or in other words, it was a system by which logical conclusion could be arrived at. Both the Hegel and Marx agreed that

the dialectical implies the process through which development or growth take place. But they differ from each other on the issue or factor which helps these changes or growth.

It is imperative to understand Hegel's dialectics for clear understanding of Marx's dialectical materialism. According to Hegel, this world moves and changes constantly. The basic of this movement is the idea or the world spirit. According to him, history is not merely the chronology of events but is an orderly scheme of growth. This development is possible through dialectical process which is based on the principle of contradiction or tussle. To explain these, he developed method of triadic movement called as dialectical method. In which initial idea (thesis) contradict with opposite ideas (anti-thesis) and finally gives new idea in higher and more perfect form (synthesis). Again synthesis turns into thesis and the process continues until it reaches into final truth or absolute idea.

Marx accepted Hegelian dialectics but rejected his idea that world is regulated by absolute idea or world spirit. He was materialistic in this regard.

While Hegel's dialectic is known as "Dialectical Idealism", Marx preferred to call his as "Dialectical materialism". Marx believed that Hegel has wrongly interpreted dialectics by making material conditions dependent upon ideas. He said, "*I find Hegel standing upon his head. It is my duty to make him stand upon his feet*". Marx believed that man produces in society in order to satisfy their needs. In the process, they enter into certain relation of production which he called as mode of production or Substructure upon which the social, political, ideology, tradition etc. stand. He called it as super structure. So mode of production in material life determines the general character of social, political and spiritual process of life.

So, he replaced Hegel's idea of world spirit or idea by matter. According to Marx, Matter and not the world spirit in the basis of dialectics, material object is the basis of the world. According to him, matter evolved and it moves towards growth constantly. The evolution take place through dialectical process, that is matter evolved through thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis.

4.9 Materialistic interpretation of history:

Marx found dialectical materialism very useful and applied that to historical and social condition of his time. He, thus, gave the ideas of materialistic interpretation of history.

Marx believed that reason or spirit could not be the moving forces in history but that those factor which determine political and social changes should be brought in line with material

conditions. He also believed that reason or spirit did not change the course of history. Marx says that “*it is not the consciousness of men that determine their social existence, but on the contrary, it is their social existence that determines their consciousness*”.

Marx interpreted all historical events by means of materialistic interpretation of history. According to him, all political institutions, social system, trade, industry, art and craft, customs and practices, tradition, religion and every aspect of life of any country of any age are determined by the material condition prevailing there. All the social and political revolution described in history is determined by the material condition of life.

Marx did not agree with the interpretation of historian on the progressive development of man. According to him, all the historical events are basically determined by the changes in the economic sphere. Man's conduct is determined not by ideas of ethics, religion, or nationalism but by economic condition.

Marx describes six stages of history involving the condition prevailing in past, present, and future:-

- a) ***Age of Primitive communism:*** - This was the stage of class less society without class struggle. Because in this, stage man depends on nature. Ideas of private property did not exist. Everyone was equal.
- b) ***Age of Slavery:*** -with the changes of material conditions, individual started farming and rearing animals. Private property appeared. Those possess property become rulers. They enslaved others and forced them to labour for them.
- c) ***Age of Feudalism:*** - Material condition changed again. Means of production improved and crafts developed. Feudal lords possessed all the means of production. They were virtually slaves even in that period. According to Marx, these two classes of, landlords and farmers clashed with each other for their economic interests.
- d) ***Age of Capitalism:*** - Capitalism was formed in the age of feudalism. There appeared the industrial age when big industries were under private ownership. This capitalist class owned the means of productions. Now the society was divided into capitalist and working class. Capitalist always exploits the working class for their personal benefits. Due to massive exploitation, the labour class becomes conscious of its interest. This result in class struggle.
- e) ***Age of Dictatorship of the protectorate:*** - According to dialectical materialism theory, the working class will defeat the capitalist class and owned the means of production and

will result into age of dictatorship of protectorate. The working class will apply all power of the state to destroy the remnants of capitalism.

- f) **Age of stateless society:** - This is the final stage of human history or ultimate objective of Marxism. He called it a classless society. He said that this would be climax of human progress when there will be neither exploiter nor exploited and thus, state will wither away automatically.

Criticism:-

1. Beyond all doubts, theory of historical materialism is a great contribution of Marx to the modern world. But he, at the same time, severely been criticized on the ground that he completely ignored the non economic factors. According to Marx, economic or materialistic factor alone is responsible for the social, political and economic changes in the society. He has ignored non economic factors like religion, language, political condition etc. these factors also play their own role and undoubtedly the powerful forces in society.
2. Marx forgot the role of ideologies. If economic factors give birth to ideologies, equally, the ideologies also give birth to various political and social conditions which altogether changed the economic conditions of the people.

Check your progress

1. **Describe Marxian Dialectics.**
2. **Discuss Marxian materialistic interpretation of History**

4.10 Theory of Alienation:-

The Theory of Alienation is one of the central points of Marx's philosophy. According to Marx, it is the development and all embracing character of capitalism that leads alienation. Man is deviated from society, from other man, from species etc.

Term alienation means the estrangement. Alienation is a socio-physiological condition which denotes a state of estrangement of individual from themselves or from other or from a specific situation or process. Alienation occurs when a person withdraws or becomes isolated from their environment or from other people.

According to Marx, the human beings have been alienated from the product of their work. Labour has just become a commodity like any other and the work has been transferred into physical thing which people buy without even thinking of the human being who are involved in it. They have become materially estranged from what they originally were. Man produces commodities, but he is deprived of the fruits of his labour. He lives on meager wage offered by the capitalist and the profit is enjoyed by them. He is alienated from his own activities. Its implication is that the work he performs cannot give him satisfaction. He does not love work. The work is simply a source of livelihood. He is mentally alienated. Marx says that while for the medieval craftsman or even for the peasant, work was a source of livelihood as well as means of self-expression, but for the industrial workers. It is merely a means to protect him from starvation.

Marx stresses another point in this connection. It is not true that only the working class is the victim of alienation. Even all other classes or people come under the all-embracing influence of alienation. The propertied class or capitalist and the proletariat or working class represent the same human self-alienation. But the former feels comfortable and confirmed in self-alienation, knowing that this alienation is its own power and processing its semblance of human existence. The latter feel it ruined in the alienation and sees in its importance and the activity of an inhuman existence. Alienation, thus produce a twofold effects, wealth for one class and poverty or misery for another class.

According to Marx, there are mainly two reasons that lead alienation:-

Mechanization of production: - Due to industrialization, the machines are put to productions. Machines produces more and in shorter time than labour. Thus, machines replace the human labour in production, leading to alienation.

Division of labour: - Alienation of man from his work is also a result of the fragmentation of the working process through division of labour.

Apart from above notion of alienation, Marx also sees alienation in related to religion. Marx argues that science has revealed enormous secrets of nature and their relation with man that the relation has become more perfectly intelligible and reasonable. But in capitalist world, this relationship remains hidden in layer of religion and metaphysics. Beneath the cover of religion, the capitalist keep on the exploitation of workers who are called upon to attribute their poverty to their sins and to seek redemption in paradise. They are, therefore, kept in illusion about their miserable situation created by their capitalist tormentors. In the capitalist system, man's condition is growing

worse and greater need to come out from all illusion as such. Marx says that “the religion is thus used by the capitalist as the opium of the people”. So, he advocated man’s liberation from the fear of the unknown or abstract ideas or to say from the terror of religion.

4.10.1 Forms of alienation

Political alienation:-

Marx asserted that every individual has two role or manifestation, Firstly, as a member of civil society and secondly as a member of state or political system. As a member of society, there is no doubt that he is free, but as a member of state, he is bound by various restriction in the form of material condition or environment created by the capitalist mode of production.

Marx considered state as class instrument to exploit the working class. State is designed to look after the interest of capitalist. According to Marx, within the general framework of the capitalist state land regal system, human certainty is carried on as an alien, a coerced activity, as force labour, as an activity which is under domination. Because of this domination and coercion, the state assumes the character of an alienation institution.

Economic alienation:-

Economic alienation is most important part of Marx’s theory of alienation. Marx believed that in the primitive mode of production develops; there was no division of labour. But with the progress of society, the mode of production develops. Rise of population and other factor ultimately lead to the division of labour. There was a time when division of labour was good for worker and for economy as a whole. But the capitalist misused it for the purpose of augmenting his personal benefits. This division leads to curse for working class. The job is no longer source of his pleasure but merely means of livelihood. Alienation, thus, develops between the worker and job.

Alienation of human power:-

Marx says that, man is directly a natural being. As a natural being, man has certain natural needs and power to achieve that needs. But the objects or source of satisfying that needs remain outside of him. He has no control over these objects. But these objects are indispensable for him. The gulf between what he wants and what he gets remain always conspicuous. Consequently, he is suffering. So, he makes all sorts of efforts to satisfy those needs. He devotes all his energy and efforts exclusively to the satisfaction of his own appetite. According to Marx, when men are determined to fulfill the desires which are exclusively personal, a barrier is created which leads to

alienation. In capitalist system, tendency to satisfy personal desire at the cost of the interest of other persists. The capitalist purchase the labour and pay a nominal amount of the wages to the workers. The surplus value is harvested by them. This selfishness is one of the prime causes of alienation.

Alienation and class society:-

According to Marx, alienation is specifically the product of class society, through the control of the means of production, ways of distribution of those products and control of the entire administration, capitalist creates values and institution or system which helps to fulfill their needs and interest at the cost of the workers. They develop concept of mortality which differ from true mortality. Their values, institutions, moral concept, ideas and ideal are not universally accepted. All these are framed and propagate in the background of bourgeois interest. The distinction between two is, therefore, the potential source of alienation.

4.11 Marx's theory of Revolution

Karl Marx has based his whole political philosophy in the right of economic struggle between rich and poor. It is a struggle in which rich are exploiting the poor and getting wealth because of the labour of the millions of workers. All the means of production are controlled by the rich. The poor have labour which is perishable commodity and cannot preserve it. Labours are paid less for their labour than what is due to him. Surplus value goes to rich. He goes on accumulating his profits and a stage is reached when he become monopolist. In this way, rich become richer and poor become poorer.

Marx sees whole episode into two stages. Till the stage of "class in self" everything remains in peace, though class struggle exists. Individual simply knows in which class he belongs to. But with the stage of "class for self", the people realize where there position is. The workers are conscious about their suffering. They started to realize the exploitation meted out to them by selfish capitalist class. In this way, the gaps between rich and poor become wider. Class struggle reached to its optimum. According to Marx, conflict or contradiction is the main source of revolution. It has twofold of effects. One limits the efficacy of ruling class and the other raises the consciousness and organizing capacity of the proletarians. With the accumulation of capital both the exploitation and misery of the workers grow more and more. Sometimes some of the workers are paid high wages, but that does not help in the alleviation of misery. The workers are also dehumanized. They become

parts of the machine. But, according to Marx, mere appearance of conflict is not enough to create a revolutionary situation. The antagonism must reach the stage of maturity and this is possible only in developed capitalism.

Marx said that revolution is not ready made thing which the workers will get on demand. Existence of contradiction and consciousness is very much vital for revolution. It is unnatural to assume that workers are not well aware of it. It may be that the consciousness is not enough for revolution. However, the existence of both is essential for revolution.

Marx argues that socialism would come gradually but it would start only after the revolution and establishment of a proletarian state. Marx opines that in order to establish proletarian state, they should control the means of production. First of all, they should try to win the existing battle of democracy. He was suggested that working class of the world should be united and form group or association and that these classes should try to come to power through electioneering and with the help of ballots. Once they have come to power by peaceful means they should try to settle themselves permanently and should also make themselves secure in their seats.

According to Marx, once the working class owned the means of productions. They should embark upon the task of socializing capital. However, it was not essential to all together over through the laws passed by the capitalist. He believed that all those loss which made the workers politically and economically strong should be retained. But, the capitalist would always resist the process of democratization. They will not be willing to easily hand over the power so strongly held by them. They will resist and stick to that firmly and strongly and will even put serious obstacles in the way of working class. According to Marx, in such circumstances, the working classes shall have no gone but to use forces to overthrow the capitalist. In his communist manifesto, he said that *“communist openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at the communist revolution”*

Marx was not hesitant to preach the use of force, which according to him was a necessary method for bringing about a revolution.

Having capture political power by force, the working class will set about the task of rising victoriously at democracy. First of all, they will smash the capitalist state and form the working class government, which Marx said are the foundation of true democratic institution. It will work for economic emancipation of labour. These institutions will work under the guidance of proletarian party which will lead the new governing class. And then will follow the expropriation of landed

property. The new government will own all the capitalist private properties, means of production etc. Thus, the dictatorship of proletariat will establish. Proletariat will organize as the dominating class, which used its own force to dissolve the state and defeat its enemies.

Marx says that the working formulae of proletarian state, therefore, shall be “*from each according to his capacity, to each according to his work.*”

Marx says that the proletarian revolution will destroy not only the bourgeois state but the state itself. Therefore, it will become a stateless or classless dictatorship. Therefore, to Marx, dictatorship of proletariat is a transitioned stage towards classless society.

After eliminating the capitalist class or bourgeois, there will be no classes left. All the means of production and exchange will be publicly owned. Wealth and property stand abolished. Discrimination and exploitation cease. There are no owner and worker; everyone is a worker. Neither exploiters nor exploited exist. Surplus value is eliminated. Production is organized on a planned basis so that competitive wastes are eliminated and there is supply of maximum of needs wanted by the consumers. Work is available for everyone. There is cooperative living and collective responsibility. Communism has now been achieved, which is the ultimate objective of communism.

Criticism:-

1. Communism of Karl Marx has been criticized as a creed of violence and hatred. It openly preaches the theory of revolution and class war. According to Marx, history is nothing but a record of class struggle between the rich and poor. Force can bring changes in the society. Revolution is not illegal. Hence, his philosophy is considered as highly revolutionary philosophy.
2. Marx idea of overthrowing the capitalist class by working class was both evolutionary and revolutionary. He is not concern with the methods but with the ends of the struggle. This is not much correct because goals achieved by proper means are always more lasting and are of permanent duration than those by improper methods or means.
3. Marx theory has also been criticized on the ground that, he made the problem rather too simple. He presented his philosophy in such a way as if workers overthrow of capitalist system- a very natural and will be brought out without any serious complications. This is misleading for working classes and their sympathizers. It may give set back to the cause of working classes by making them unaware of the realities of the struggle.

Check your progress

1. *What is the literal meaning of the term "alienation"?*
2. *Why does Marx describe religion as the "opium of the people"?*
3. *What is the difference between a "Class-in-itself" and a "Class-for-itself"?*
4. *What are the two defining characteristics of the "Age of Stateless Society"?*

4.12 Lets sum up:

The transition from Hegel to Marx marks the most critical turning point in modern political theory, shifting the focus from the heavens of thought to the realities of the material world. Hegel's Absolute Idealism provided a powerful framework for understanding history as a purposeful journey of the "Spirit" toward freedom. By establishing the Dialectic—the movement through thesis, antithesis, and synthesis—Hegel showed that progress arises from contradiction. He viewed the State as the ultimate moral authority, a "divine" entity where individual and collective interests finally harmonize.

However, Karl Marx revolutionized this method by grounding it in Materialism. By arguing that economic conditions (the Base) dictate the social and political life (the Superstructure), Marx transformed philosophy into a tool for social change. His theory of Class Struggle replaced Hegel's "clash of ideas" with a physical battle over the means of production. While Hegel sought to reconcile the individual with the State, Marx sought to liberate the worker from the State and the "alienation" inherent in capitalism.

Ultimately, while Hegel's legacy remains in the realm of intellectual and institutional ethics, Marx's "Scientific Socialism" provided the blueprint for global revolutionary movements. Together, they define the tension of the modern era: whether humanity is shaped by the ideas it holds or by the economic systems it builds.

4.13 Key Terms

- Idealism*** : Refers to one of the two principal trends in philosophy which, in oppose to materialism, holds that idea, spirit or consciousness are primary and that nature, being or matter are secondary.
- Dialectical Process*** : According to Hegel, the term used for the process which characterized historical changes in which there has been a necessary movement from thesis to anti- thesis, followed by synthesis, which is the higher or perfect idea.
- Totalitarianism*** : It is the state where political rulers control every aspect of private and social life in a society, as well as having so extensive a political power that virtually no liberty or autonomy in decision making is left to individuals or groups outside the system.
- Capitalism*** : The social system which is based on private capitalist ownership of means of production.
- Proletariat*** : Class of wage labourers deprives of means of productions and exploited by Bourgeoisie.
- Alienation*** : In Marxist analysis, alienation is the systematic result of living in a socially stratified society, because being a mechanistic part of a social class alienates a person from his/ her humanity.
- Revolution*** : change of the state's government or political structure by force of arms or other, less violent yet effective means of coercion.
- Bourgeois*** : Person from middle class in the society, concentrating on material things and gaining or maintenance of vested interests. Also called as capitalist by Marx

4.14 Answer to 'check your progress.'

- It was Hegel's philosophy of dialectic which reached a realistic conclusion that the world culture was not the monopoly of one nation but essence of cultures of all states and that world culture represented the best of all the nations.
- Hegel's another contribution is that he was tried to prove that the whole universe is coherent whole. He believes in reason and perfection and like a realist feels that all rational was real is rational.

- Then his contribution is that he has properly assessed the value of history and place of personalities and events in the making of history. Still, more credit goes to him for clarifying his stand without any ambiguity.
- He has also given the idea that man is an end in itself and not means to an end and that state is required to promote the welfare of all. His views are highly valued even today.
- Hegel is regarded as the spiritual father of Bismarck it has been said that what Hegel demanded in theory was carried out in actual practice by Bismarck. The later, under the influence of former carried forward the idea of nation state based on force and the idea of state as an organic whole.
- Marx was the first great thinker who laid stress on economic factor and thus brought to the front the great factor which had hitherto been ignored. He has thus done a great service to the world at large. He would have done still greater a service had he not over-stressed that. But bringing economics to the front is of no less significance.
- For the first time he logically discussed the theory of class struggle. His discussion of the class struggle brought class consciousness and thus working classes which had hitherto been ignored came to light. These classes also began to realize that they have their own role to play and that took a significant and important role, not only in production but also in deciding the methods of production.
- Then another credit worthy contribution of Marx's philosophy is that he made the depressed classes realize that their problems could not be solved individually but that these shall be solved collectively. He gave the evergreen slogan 'Lets the workers of the world unite'.
- Another significant contribution of Marx is that he logically discussed the philosophy of trade cycle and the system of production. For the first time perhaps he discussed that the capitalist produces not keeping in view the needs to the people but his own margin of profit.
- We may congratulate Marx for his making the whole philosophy scientific. His approach was convincing and appealing. He approached the heads and heart of the worker and toiling classes. Not only had this but even the capitalists begun to tremble before his philosophy. In spite of his inaccuracies, he tried and represented the problems in a very rational way. It is, therefore, logical to say that he was a scientific thinker.

4.15 Short- Answer Questions

1. Write the name of some of the great works of Hegel.
2. Write a short note on Hegelian Dialectic.
3. What influenced Hegel's political philosophy?
4. What do you mean by the term Alienation?
5. Write a short note on the term Dialectical Materialism.
6. What do you mean by communism?
7. Give some of the important works of Karl Marx.
8. Write short note on Class struggle.
9. What is Surplus Value?
10. Write a note on classless society as ultimate aims of communism.

4.16 Long- Answer Questions

1. Discuss briefly the early life and works of Hegel.
2. "The state is a divine idea as exists on earth". (Hegel). Discuss.
3. Critically examine Hegel as an absolute Idealist.
4. Explain the ideas of dialectic and historical necessity in the thoughts of Hegel.
5. "Hegel is prophet of Totalitarianism". Discuss this statement in view to his idea of state.
6. Discuss briefly the silent feature of Hegel's political philosophy and also the contribution which he has made to political philosophy of his age.
7. Discuss briefly about the early life and writing of Karl Marx.
8. Discuss the basic political ideas of Karl Marx. What was the source of his thought?
9. State and examine Marxian concept of Materialistic interpretation of history.
10. Critically examines Marxian theory of economic determination.
11. Critically examine the Marxian theory of the origin and functions of the state.
12. "Marxian programme of action is both Revolutionary as well as Evolutionary". Discuss.
13. Write a critical essay on the theme of alienation in Marxian philosophy.

4.17 Further reading

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